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The cost of university education to jump 32 per cent in the next decade

Students from regional Australia will continue to pay a significant premium for a university education according to exclusive research released today.

The ASG Planning for University Index has discovered the cost of a university education is set to escalate by 32 per cent in the next decade.

The first year course costs for accounting, law, veterinary science and medicine degrees are estimated to jump from \$10,440 per year in 2016 to \$13,801 in 2026, while the cost of a journalism, nursing, teaching or psychology degree in the first year, is estimated to rise by \$2,014 to \$8,270 in 2026.

The ASG Planning for University Index, compiled by the member owned organisation, considers a range of variables including university course fees and expenses for transport, computers, study placements and rent to estimate the true cost of a university education.

The ASG study forecasts that regional students will be the hardest hit, particularly as they are more likely to have to move away from home to attend university.

The ASG Cost of University Index also reveals that living costs are estimated to increase by up to 23 per cent in the next decade for students who live away from home, with a three year photography degree estimated to cost up to \$102,580 in living expenses by 2026, a jump of almost \$20,000.

Students who live at home while attending university will be up to \$63,712 better off in 2026 than students who rent, with a three year photography degree estimated to cost up to \$38,868 in living expenses.

When university course costs and living expenses (renting) are combined, ASG estimates the cost of a four year law degree will jump up to \$40,256 in the next decade to \$195,909 in 2026, with a six year medicine degree forecast to rise by up to \$62,295 to \$301,159 in 2026.

Emily Dafter lives away from home to study a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Communications and Media at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney.

"I always knew that it was going to be expensive and living costs are ridiculous. I am working 20 hours a week and paying for things I would have never been paying for at home like rent which is about \$400 a fortnight and transport.

"Getting an internship is important during my course, but because it is unpaid and I'm not living at home, it has stopped me from applying because I cannot afford not get paid.

"Receiving the ASG scholarship payments has been really helpful and I am so thankful to my parents. It also gives them peace of mind when I tell them what I have used the scholarship money on because I normally do not share too much of my financial information with them," said Ms Dafter.

ASG research also found that 56 per cent of university students were either concerned or very concerned about being able to meet their current course and living expenses.

ASG CEO John Velegrinis says a university education can put significant financial pressure on family budgets.

“Many parents plan for their children’s early learning, primary and secondary education, only to be blindsided by university course fees and living expenses.

“The cost of sending three children to university can place enormous strain on the family budget and could cost some families close to one million dollars,” says Mr Velegrinis..

He says students who live at home while attending university will be financially better off than students who rent, but it’s not necessarily great news for parents. Rural students in particular have a greater need to relocate in order to pursue university studies and the costs involved are not discretionary.

“The ASG Planning for University research discovered almost 60 per cent of students will rely on their parents for financial support while at university, adding a further financial strain on the family budget,” says Mr Velegrinis.

ASG helps parents create educational opportunities for their children. They provide parents with a structured means to prepare for the cost of their children’s education, irrespective of their background.

Parents and students can use ASG’s free online HELP debt calculator, which allows students and parents to model the total costs of a university education. By factoring in the cost of interest associated with any debt because of study, students and parents are given a true and complete picture of the cost of university.

For more information about ASG call 131 ASG (131 274) or visit www.asg.com.au

Summary of total university costs in 2016 and 2026.

Course	Total course costs only		Total course and living costs in shared accommodation		Total course and living costs in family home	
	2016	2026	2016	2026	2016	2026
Photography (3 years)	\$19,304	\$25,518	\$102,524	\$128,098	\$53,781	\$64,386
Psychology (4 years)	\$26,106	\$34,510	\$138,193	\$172,829	\$72,331	\$86,680
Horticulture (3 years)	\$27,515	\$36,372	\$110,735	\$138,952	\$61,992	\$75,240
Accounting (3 years)	\$32,215	\$42,585	\$115,435	\$145,165	\$66,692	\$81,453
Engineering (4 years)	\$37,211	\$49,189	\$149,298	\$187,508	\$83,436	\$101,359
Law (4 years)	\$43,566	\$57,590	\$155,653	\$195,909	\$89,791	\$109,760
Veterinary Science (5 years)	\$55,239	\$73,021	\$196,787	\$247,895	\$113,349	\$138,675
Medicine (6 years)	\$67,243	\$88,888	\$238,864	\$301,159	\$137,376	\$168,213

Further information

For comprehensive summary sheets detailing the cost of a university education visit:
www.asg.com.au/unicosts

To use ASG's HELP debt calculator and predict the cost of education visit:
<http://www.asg.com.au/calculator>

Editor's notes

The Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) is a member owned organisation, helping to create educational opportunities for children. ASG has been helping families and their children for more than 40 years. During this time, more than 520,000 children have been enrolled with ASG and more than \$2.3 billion in education benefits and scholarship payments returned to members. For more information visit: www.asg.com.au

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