

FEDERAL LABOR LEADER KEVIN RUDD MP

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR A COMPETITIVE FUTURE - FEDERAL LABOR'S PLAN FOR IMPROVED AND EXPANDED COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

To boost Australia's international competitiveness, a Rudd Labor Government will significantly improve and expand Australia's Commonwealth Scholarship program.

Federal Labor's \$202 million *Scholarships for a Competitive Future* policy will significantly boost the research and development capacity of Australia's universities.

Increasing the research capacity in our universities will ensure Australia can stay ahead in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Over four years from the start of the 2009 university year, Federal Labor's *Scholarships for a Competitive Future* will:

- **Double** from 44,000 to 88,000 the number of undergraduate students receiving a Commonwealth Learning Scholarship, including accommodation bursaries; and
- **Double** from 4,800 to 9,600 the number of postgraduate students receiving an Australian Postgraduate Award for their PhD or Masters by Research.

Scholarships for a Competitive Future will also create two new categories of Commonwealth Scholarships open to Australian undergraduate students:

- National Priority Scholarships – for students in priority areas such as nursing, teaching, medicine, dentistry, allied health, maths, science, and engineering.
- National Accommodation Scholarships - for students relocating interstate to study a specialist course not available near their home.

Australia cannot afford to stand still while our competitors in the region are making significant progress in expanding their research and development capacity. We need to act now just to keep up.

Increasing Australia's competitiveness by boosting our R&D capacity

As Australia becomes more integrated with an intensely competitive global economy, we must find new sources of competitive advantage.

Investment in our people – in our human capital - is essential for creating an innovative and productive workforce that can adapt in a rapidly changing world.

The successful advanced economies of the future will be those that can add most value, through human effort and ingenuity, to their traditional strengths in every sector.

That means higher education is critical to Australia becoming a more productive and prosperous nation.

Australia's universities are drivers of innovation and research, and the training ground for the highly skilled professionals Australia needs for our future growth.

Expanding eligibility for Commonwealth Learning Scholarships

The Commonwealth Learning Scholarships program currently has two elements: Education Costs and Accommodation Scholarships.

Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships are valued at \$2,120 per year for up to four years targeted at students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarships provide \$4,240 per year for up to four years to students from regional and remote areas who move away from home to commence university.

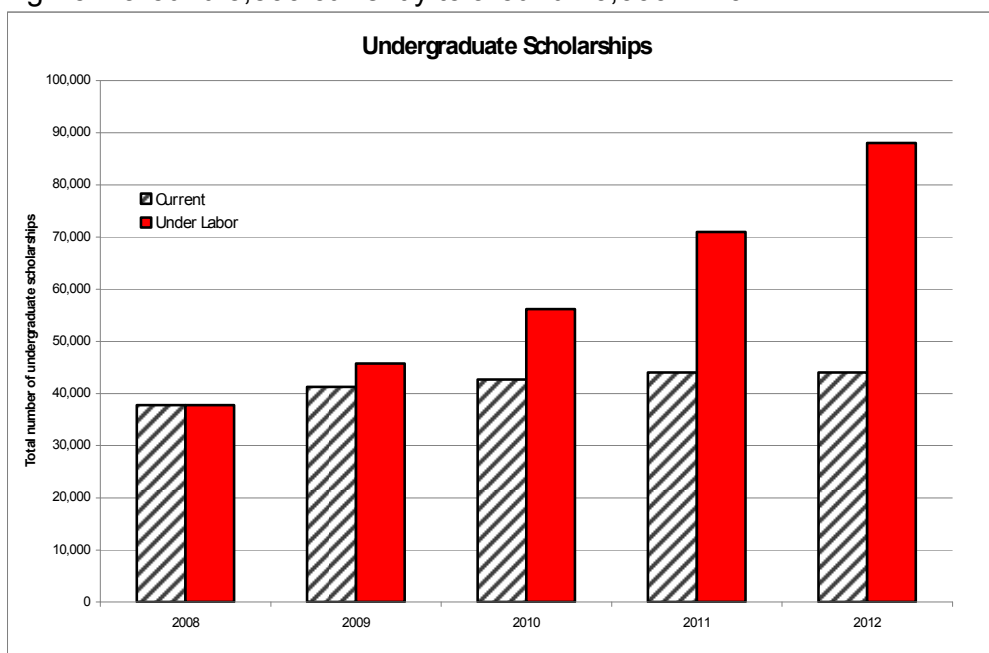
Labor will introduce two additional Commonwealth Scholarship categories.

- National Priority Scholarships valued at \$2,120 per year for up to four years targeted at students enrolling in priority areas such as nursing, teaching, medicine, dentistry, allied health, maths, science, and engineering.
- New National Accommodation Scholarships valued at \$4,240 per year for up to four years to students relocating interstate to study a specialist course not available near their home. For example, a Sydney student could relocate to James Cook University in Townsville to study tropical biology, or a Melbourne student could relocate to Perth to study minerals petroleum resource engineering.

The value of the scholarships will be indexed.

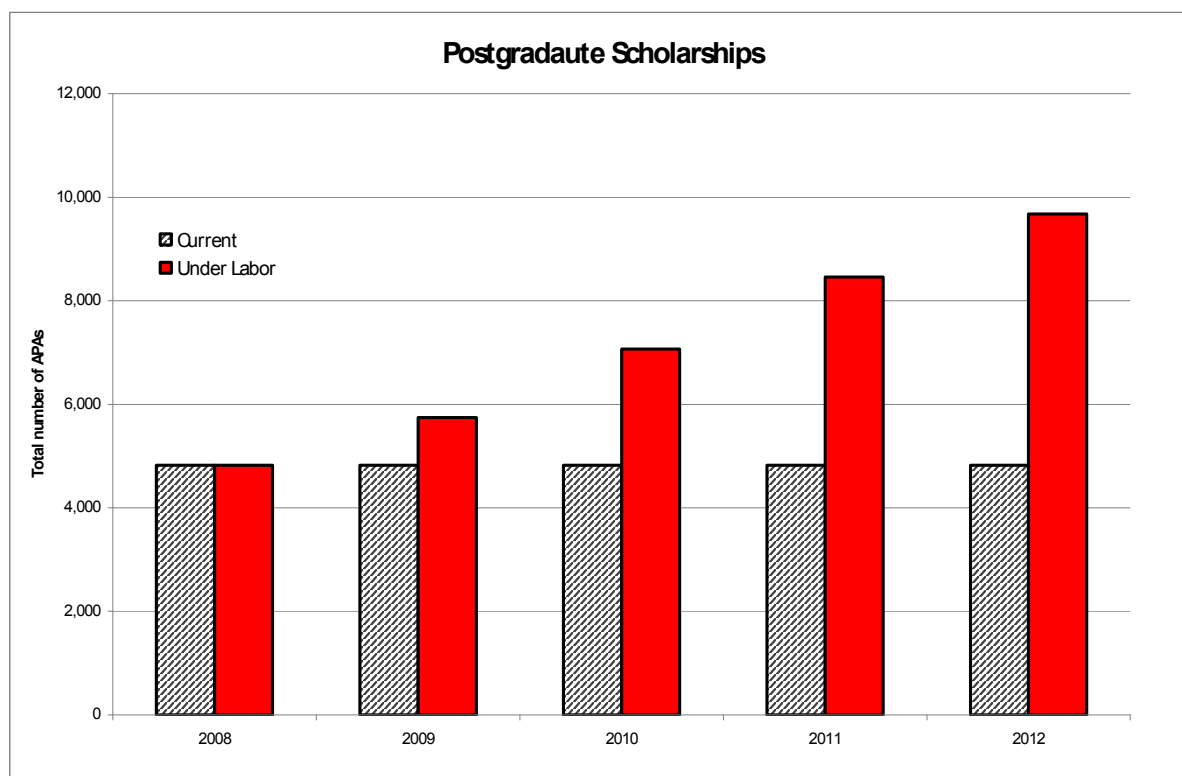
Double the number of Scholarships

Under *Scholarships for a Competitive Future*, the total number of Commonwealth Learning Scholarships will double from around 44,000 to 88,000. The number of commencing scholarships each year will steadily increase from 12,000 in 2008 to 29,000 in 2012. This includes the number of commencing Accommodation Scholarships increasing from around 3,500 currently to around 10,000 in 2012



There are currently around 40,000 higher degree by research students in Australia, yet only 1,500 new Australian Postgraduate Awards are granted each year. The Australian Postgraduate Award provides an annual stipend of \$19,500 for up to three and a half years for PhD candidates and two years for Masters by research.

Under Labor's *Scholarships for a Competitive Future*, the total number of commencing Australian Postgraduate Awards allocated each year will steadily increase from 1,580 in 2008 to 3,500 in 2012. Under Federal Labor's plan nearly 10,000 postgraduate research students will be supported each year by 2012.



Financial implications

Federal Labor's *Scholarships for a Competitive Future* for undergraduate and postgraduate students is fully costed and funded.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS – IMPACT ON UNDERLYING CASH BALANCE (\$M):

| | 2007-0 | 2008-09 | 2009-1 | 2010-1 | Total |
|--|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| Investing in undergraduate and postgraduate scholarships | | 16.0 | 60.0 | 125.0 | 201.0 |
| Net impact | 0.0 | 16.0 | 60.0 | 125.0 | 201.0 |

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