

As per phone conversation today, Friday 23rd April 2004, regarding the report on the disability discrimination act.

HECS funding is offered for many courses and most people choose a course based purely on what they enjoy doing - as it should be. However as those with a disability are much more limited when choosing an area of future employment, perhaps the current limitations regarding HECS could be made more flexible.

The health problems I have encountered have led to an intense interest in naturopathy, with an Austudy approved degree course (completed mostly by correspondence) available through the Australian College of Natural Medicine. The conditions of the actual working environment would seem ideal for someone with muscular difficulties and poor hearing such as myself - clients by appointment, controlled hearing environment & neither standing or sitting for extended periods of time. I have been unable to locate a source of funding for the course, and as my only source of income is the Disability Support Pension I find the upfront fees prohibitive.

Therefore I would greatly appreciate consideration be given to the following -
HECS funding for recipients of a Disability Support Pension for Austudy approved degree courses at private institutions when a comparable course is not available at Universities or TAFE Colleges and covered by HECS.

Many thanks,

Di Black