Julian Leeser MP
Shadow Minister for Education
Shadow Minister for Indigenous Australians
Federal Member for Berowra

MEDIA RELEASE

22 October 2026

JASON CLARE PRAISES OUTCOMES OF JOB-READY GRADUATES SCHEME

Surprisingly, Minister for Education Jason Clare has in the last week issued successive statements highlighting the positive outcomes of the Job Ready Graduates package.

In Parliament on 13 October, and subsequently in an official media release on 15 October, Minister Clare relied on un-released Departmental data to highlight enrolment growth in areas that benefited from the Job Ready Graduates (**JRG**) package. He followed up yesterday with a media release praising job outcomes in areas that benefited from JRG.

Both of the Minister's media releases highlighted strong commencements and strong employment outcomes for cohorts that benefited from JRG – including education, nursing and engineering. The releases also both highlighted outcomes for students from regions and the bush, who also explicitly benefited from the JRG scheme.

There is extraordinarily strong alignment between the Minister's claims to success, and the cohorts that benefited from JRG, as highlighted on the table below.

The Coalition has consistently said the scheme should be reviewed – but that the review must be an honest and balanced review that takes into account all aspects of the package.

Quotes attributable to Julian Leeser MP

"I'm glad the Minister is highlighting these strong, positive outcomes that seem to have been generated since the introduction of the Job Ready Graduates scheme."

"If you are a nurse or a teacher who graduated in the last five years, you paid 42 per cent less in university fees because of Job Ready Graduates, and that's why Labor kept the scheme in its last five budgets."

"What the Minister is saying now is that, not only are we seeing growth in those priority fields that benefited from Job Ready Graduates, but we're also actually seeing better employment outcomes as well."

"That's why Labor has spent 5 years ignoring vested interests who say that Job Ready Graduates should be repealed. They know that repealing Job Ready Graduates means every

single teaching, nursing and STEM student would pay much more to go to university, and it would mean worse outcomes for kids from the regions and the bush."

Job Ready Graduates change	Education Minister's claims
Student contributions reductions from JRG • Teaching—fees reduced by 42% • Health (allied and other health)—fees reduced by 18% • Nursing (incl. midwifery)—fees reduced by 42% • Engineering—fees reduced by 18% • Clinical Psychology (postgraduate)— fees reduced by 42% • Science—fees reduced by 18%	**15 October media release** "Commencements were also up in some of the professions Australia needs most: • Teaching is up 7.7 per cent. • Health (including nursing and midwifery) is up 6.6 per cent. • Social Work is up 15.7 per cent. • Engineering is up 10.5 per cent. • Clinical Psychology is up 9.8 per cent. • Science is up 6.8 per cent." **21 October media release** "Higher education students continue to have strong job prospects, with teaching, nursing and engineering students recording some of the strongest employment outcomes."
Supports for regional and Indigenous students The JRG package bundled together several distinct mechanisms to increase tertiary attainment in regional and remote areas: • Established demand-driven places for regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. • Introduced the Tertiary Access Payment (TAP) – a means-tested relocation payment of up to $5,000 for outer-regional or remote school leavers going to full-time higher education. • Funding Integration – Merged separate equity pools into the Indigenous, Regional and Low SES Attainment Fund.	**15 October media release** "New Semester 1 data for 2026 from the Department of Education shows a 5.3 per cent increase in Australian students starting a university degree compared to the same time last year. That includes more students from disadvantaged backgrounds: • Students from the regions and the bush were up 5 per cent. • Students from poor backgrounds were up around 7 per cent. • First Nations student commencements were up more than 8 per cent." **21 October media release** "Higher education students continue to have strong job prospects…This is even higher for students from the regions and the bush."

ENDS

Media contact: Chantelle Fornari ❙ 0427 998 927 ❙ chantelle.fornari@aph.gov.au