

Aviation courses landing students in serious debt

The Commonwealth Ombudsman, as the VET Student Loans Ombudsman, has today published an issues paper on Commercial Pilot Licence diplomas that can leave students with large VET Student Loan debts, even if they don't complete their studies.

Statement attributable to Iain Anderson:

"Students can accrue debts of \$90,000 plus a 20 per cent loan fee, totalling nearly \$110,000, in as little as four months. This becomes a real problem when something goes wrong, and the student doesn't finish their qualification".

"I hope that providers who deliver expensive Aviation courses read the issues paper and implement our recommendations, to ensure that those students who can't complete are not burdened with unreasonable debts".

Further issues identified in the paper include:

- Providers dividing the overall cost into the minimum periods allowable (3), taking a third of the course cost at each census date.
- Providers charging for expensive flight hours during periods where they deliver mostly theory training.
- Providers continuing to charge course fees when students are not engaging in study due to complaints or progress issues.
- Providers enrolling students who do not meet medical requirements or have the academic aptitude to complete the diploma.
- Providers not being transparent about potential out-of-pocket expenses and post-qualification career prospects.

Read the full issues paper on our [website](#).

For media enquiries email media@ombudsman.gov.au.