



ABSTUDY students – Tax File Numbers

This factsheet provides information on how ABSTUDY students can get a Tax File Number (TFN).

A student aged 16 or older will be asked by Centrelink to provide a TFN to ensure their ABSTUDY assistance remains payable. ABSTUDY assistance will be suspended until the student either provides their TFN or lodges a claim for a TFN with Centrelink for referral to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

From birth, a child can apply for a TFN at any age.

To ensure ABSTUDY assistance remains payable to a student throughout their secondary schooling, a student's primary school can work with a student to claim a TFN when they lodge their application for ABSTUDY. This will particularly assist students who do not have enough documents of identification, as an authorised referee (outlined below) can help fill in their TFN application form.

Apply at Centrelink

As ABSTUDY boarding students are applying for a TFN to remain eligible for ABSTUDY assistance once they turn 16, they can complete their application for a TFN at their local Centrelink Service Centre (<https://findus.humanservices.gov.au/findnearest.asp>).

Centrelink staff can also help complete a TFN form and send it back to the ATO when it has been completed.

Applying for a TFN - Online

The best way to apply for a TFN is online. Students need to:

- complete the form *Australian residents – TFN application* (available online at <https://identityservice.auspost.com.au/ato/landing>) and print it out, then
- book an interview at Australia Post or certain Australia Post Licensed Post Office (LPO) locations (which can be organised online at <https://auspost.com.au/locate/post-office/ato-individual-tfn-services>). When going for the interview, it is important the student brings a completed printout of their *Australian residents – TFN application* form and any supporting documents.

Applying for a TFN - Paper

Students can request a paper form called *Tax file number – application for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (NAT 1589)* be sent to their school address or usual place of residence. To get one sent to you, please contact the ATO Indigenous helpline on 13 10 30 or visit the ATO website at <https://www.ato.gov.au/About-ATO/Contact-us/order-publications/>.

If a student doesn't have enough documents of identification, they will need to ask a referee to fill in page 7 of their form. This must be an authorised referee, and can include:

- a council chairperson,
- community manager,
- school principal,
- minister of religion,
- doctor,
- senior nursing sister, or
- an authorised government officer (e.g. police officer, Centrelink agent or nurse).

The referee must have known the student for a period of greater than 12 months.

Once completed, there are two ways to apply for a TFN using this form:

- apply at Centrelink, or
- post the form and any supporting documents to the ATO.

Post the form and documents to the ATO

The student or school can also post the completed form back to the ATO, including copies of any original supporting documents.

The supporting documents must be certified by an authorised person, a list is outlined above.

The Department of Social Services is working with the ATO to ensure appropriate contact and information is provided to both relevant secondary schools with ABSTUDY boarding students and primary schools with cohorts of exiting students who may be eligible for ABSTUDY assistance.

What happens if the student loses or forgets their TFN?

If a student loses or forgets their TFN, they can contact the ATO on 13 28 61 between 8.00am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday. They can also phone Saturday between 10.00am to 4.00pm from 1 July to 31 October.

Top tip: *work with primary schools to encourage students to claim a TFN when lodging an application for ABSTUDY.*