

Media Release

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Independent schools challenge flawed fee portrayal by ASG

The Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA) cautions parents about glossy marketing campaigns for education focused financial products that misrepresent the cost of Independent school fees.

Education contribution fund provider Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) has this year suggested the national median fee for a metropolitan Independent school is \$14,116. However, ISCA's research indicates **the median fee for an Australian metropolitan Independent school is \$6,685 per annum.**

ISCA Executive Director Barry Wallett said, "The most recent official data available shows that nationally, more than three-quarters of metropolitan Independent schools are charging fees below ASG's stated median of \$14,116. ASG's methodology does not adequately reflect the diversity of fees charged by the Independent school sector."

Mr Wallett added, "Independent schools reflect the social and economic diversity of Australia and are predominantly attended by middle-income families. Fees vary greatly, with the majority being far more affordable than ASG's modelling suggests. In addition, there are numerous ways parents can save on costs such as scholarships, all-inclusive fees, discounts for siblings or lump sum payments. ISCA strongly encourages parents to do their own research on the fees of the schools that interest them."

ISCA's school fee information is derived from data on fees collected from all Australian Independent schools in 2017 (the most recent year for which accurate data is available).

ASG state that their fee estimates have been calculated based on the annual median costs, rather than the mean fee (used in previous years). They state that these estimates are based on a sample of schools constructed by Monash University using data from the *Good Schools Guide*.

Australian Scholarships Group (ASG) estimated metropolitan median fees-only. Independent schools 2019

	National	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT
Primary	\$9,664	\$16,537	\$17,960	\$2,521	\$4,660	\$5,633	\$7,693	n/a	\$7,489
Secondary	\$19,556	\$31,645	\$27,455	\$14,746	\$14,632	\$13,664	\$16,851	n/a	\$11,656

ISCA overview of median fees charged by Australian metropolitan Independent schools in 2017²

Median³ fee per student, metropolitan only (including primary, secondary and combined schools) .

	National	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS ⁴	NT ⁴	ACT
Median ³	6,685	6,432	9,084	6,244	5,441	6,244	3,411	3,195	8,571

Ranges of metropolitan Independent school fees (including primary, secondary and combined schools) 2017⁵

	National	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS ⁴	NT ⁴	ACT
\$20,000 and above	14%	15%	26%	3%	7%	9%	0%	0%	12%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	9%	10%	10%	7%	11%	5%	3%	0%	6%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	10%	11%	11%	14%	4%	7%	16%	0%	12%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	31%	26%	24%	39%	33%	45%	13%	20%	47%
\$0,000 - \$4,999	36%	39%	29%	37%	44%	34%	68%	80%	24%

¹ ASG state that Estimated costs for tuition have been calculated based on the annual median costs, rather than the mean fee (used in previous years. They state the fee estimates are based on a sample of schools constructed by Monash University using data from the The Good Schools Guide available (www.goodschools.com.au/).

² ISCA's school fee information is derived from data on fees collected from all Australian Independent schools in 2017, which is the most recent year for which accurate data is available.

³ *Median* denotes the dollar value lying at the midpoint of the range of fees charged.

⁴ For statistical purposes no Northern Territory or Tasmania schools are regarded as metropolitan. Therefore, figures quoted here are for the entire Northern Territory and Tasmania.

⁵ Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

ENDS

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