

## **The Education Tax Refund**

With the new school year fast approaching it is important to consider if you will be eligible to claim the Education Tax Offset, and if you are eligible to ensure you keep eligible expense receipts in order to claim the refund.

### **What is The Education Tax Refund?**

The education tax refund (ETR) is a refundable tax offset available to qualifying taxpayers incurring specified education expenditure in respect of their children attending primary or secondary school.

Families and approved care organisations can claim 50% of their eligible educational expenses if either of the following apply:

- they received family tax benefit (FTB) Part A for the child, or
- a payment was made for the child that stopped them from receiving FTB Part A for that child (i.e. youth allowance)

For the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011, you can claim up to:

- \$794 for each eligible child in primary school - that is, a refund of \$397
- \$1,588 for each eligible child in secondary school - that is, a refund of \$794.

The amount of the refund increases each year by the Consumer Price Index.

If your expenses exceed your refund limit for the year, any excess can go towards your following year's refund claim, as long as you are still eligible

### **What Can I Claim?**

The Government has changed the Education Tax Refund to include school-approved uniforms, purchased from 1 July 2011. Items of clothing including hats, footwear and sports uniforms approved by a school as its uniform may be claimed in your 2012 tax return.

**So from 1 July 2011 start keeping receipts for school uniform items so you can claim them next year.**

- home computers and laptops
- printers, USB flash drives, disability aids for use of computers
- computer repairs
- home internet connections
- computer software for educational use
- school textbooks and other printed learning material
- stationery and printer inks
- prescribed trade tools (secondary students)
- school uniform expenses (School approved Uniforms including school approved hats, footwear and sports uniforms, purchased after 1 July 2011 will be claimable in the 2011-12 financial year)

## **What Can't I Claim?**

- School fees (School Fees are not eligible education expenses for the purposes of the ETR. If a school fee includes eligible items, such as textbooks or stationery, the school must be able to identify the value of the eligible items in order for the amounts to be claimable)
- school subject levies (For example, payment for consumables for particular subjects such as woodwork, art or home science)
- student attendance at school-based extra-curricular activities, such as excursions and camps
- tutoring costs
- computer games and consoles
- musical instruments
- sporting equipment
- building levies
- library book fees
- school photos
- donations
- tuckshop expenses
- waiting list fees
- transport
- membership fees.

## **How Can I Claim the ETR?**

The refund is to be claimed in your income tax return, however if you are not required to lodge an income tax return, a claim for the refund can be made by completing the Education Tax Refund for Individuals claim form, which is available, with instructions, on the Tax Office website. The form is required to be lodged by October 31.

If you have any queries in regards to the Education Tax Offset contact this office.