

I want to let you know what happens in the real world when people have to change modes of transport with an Opal card. I am currently unemployed & have only recently been granted access to the Student Concession card. Prior to that I used the Adult Opal. So I will be quoting pricing at the Adult rate.

I live in Botany, up towards Kelloggs, about 1.5km from Botany Road. I sometimes need to travel to Carlingford. There are three ways to get there from Botany. The first is to catch a bus into the city (soon to be catch two buses into the city, thanks to the changes to take effect in early October), alight from the bus at Bathurst & Elizabeth Streets, walk to Druitt St & catch a Metro bus heading to Parramatta. The cost for this journey is \$4.50 each way, for a total cost of \$9. The alternate way to get to Carlingford from home is to catch the bus from home to either Redfern or Central (Redfern is NOT wheelchair accessible & if I am having mobility issues, I need to use the lifts at Central), then catch a train to either Epping or Parramatta & then a bus from the station to Carlingford. The cost for the bus, train, bus option varies depending on which train I catch. Via Epping the cost is \$8.97 and via Parramatta the cost is \$10.36 one way. The return journey, involving a train, would therefore put me at the \$15 daily limit. So catching the train, which is the quicker way to travel, has a \$6 daily penalty.

To rub salt in the expensive wound, because each segment of the journey is within an hour of the one preceding it, despite charging me three fares, it counts as only one trip towards the weekly target of 8 chargeable trips per week! I almost wouldn't mind the extra cost if each segment counted as separate chargeable trips. It would mean a return journey to Carlingford would give me 6 trips, but now it only counts as 2. Yet if I catch the two buses each way, it also counts as 2, but the cost is much lower.

Once the new bus changes come into effect in the CBD in October here is what it would cost to go from home in Botany to Bathurst St by bus only, or Town Hall Station by changing to a train to complete the journey. To travel from my home in Botany to Bathurst Street is \$3.50 by bus only. The return journey is \$4.50, I presume because the return bus stop is north of Bathurst St & the inbound stop is South of Bathurst St. If you decide to travel to Town Hall Station, the bus fare to Green Square, Redfern or Central is \$3.50. The train fare from Green Square, Redfern or Central to Town Hall is \$3.38. This makes the bus, train journey almost double the cost of the bus only journey. \$6.88 as opposed to only \$3.50. Why should people be penalised because they need to change to a train? And again, despite being charge for two separate segments for the trip, the bus, train journey counts as only 1 trip for the weekly 8 trips.

The way Opal works at the moment, discriminates against people who need to change mode of transport. This is not fair. If you are going to charge each segment separately, then they should count as separate trips towards the weekly 8 trips.

Fares should be priced according to the fare rate type of the first segment of a multi modal journey. If someone starts the journey in a bus, then all the fares in the journey should be at bus rates according to distance from the starting point. If a journey starts by train, then all segments should be charged at train rates, according to distance from the starting point. This is when each segment occurs within the hour transfer time limit from the segment before it. Currently, the transfer window does not apply to multi modal journeys in practical terms. Despite transferring within an hour from bus onto a train, & then onto a second train, each segment is charged separately. Traveling via Epping, the individual segments are \$3.50 for the bus, \$3.37 for the off peak train & then \$2.10 for the final bus. Even though the getting onto the train is less than an hour after arriving at the station on the bus, & catching the final bus at Epping is less than an hour after arriving at the first station to travel to Epping! So it is clear that multi modal passengers don't really get a 'transfer' fare at all.

This anomaly needs to be corrected. On the whole Opal works well & I make sure that when I have money, I keep my card well topped up with funds. It is just this thing with the multi modal fares that gets me annoyed. If you are holding public hearings, I am willing to come & give testimony & explain what I have experienced in my travels with Opal.

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