

DEADLINE
31 MAY 2011

student finance [england](#)

A GUIDE TO FINANCIAL SUPPORT

FOR NEW FULL-TIME HIGHER
EDUCATION STUDENTS 2011/2012



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Student Finance England is here to help and can offer you financial support when you need it most – during your studies.

Depending on your circumstances, your course and where you study, you may be able to receive a range of financial help and support in the form of grants and bursaries (which you don't have to pay back) and loans (which you do). There's also extra help for those with special circumstances, for example, if you have children or adult dependants, a disability, mental-health condition or specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia or dyspraxia.

You can also get more information from **www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance** and from your school, university or college or follow Student Finance England on Facebook and Twitter to get updates.



facebook.com/SFEngland



twitter.com/sf_england

There are a number of specialist organisations that are able to help and support you with advice and guidance – details of these can also be found on the website.



Introduction

Student Finance Wheel

If you're thinking about going to university or college this year, our guide will help you find out everything you need to know about higher education student finance. The student finance wheel is your step-by-step guide to finding out what financial help you can get and how you go about getting it. This guide breaks down each step in more detail.



1 Find out about student finance

Make sure you do your homework – everything you need to know is on www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance.

There's a lot of help available to you while you're studying. The main types of finance are grants and bursaries (which you don't have to pay back) and loans (which you do). The following table shows what you might be able to get and what it's for. Fact sheets explaining each area in more detail can be found on **www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance**.

What can I get?	What is it for?	Do I have to pay it back?	Find out more (fact sheet reference)
Tuition Fee Loan	Up to £3,375 to help with the cost of your tuition fees.	Yes	What can I get? (FS02)
Maintenance Grant (or Special Support Grant)	Up to £2,906, depending on your household income, to help with your living costs.	No	What can I get? (FS02)
Maintenance Loan	Up to £6,928, depending on where you live and study and your household income, to help with your living costs.	Yes	What can I get? (FS02)
Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)	Available to students who have extra costs because of a disability, mental-health condition or specific learning difficulty. DSAs do not depend on household income. How much you will get depends entirely on your circumstances, but can help to pay for specialist equipment or a non-medical helper, travel or other extra costs.	No	Disabled Students' Allowances (FS05)





What can I get?	What is it for?	Do I have to pay it back?	Find out more (fact sheet reference)
Childcare Grant	Help for childcare costs if you have dependent children aged under 15 (or under 17 if the child has special educational needs) in registered or approved childcare. You can get up to £148.75 a week for one child or up to £255 if you have two or more children.	No	Students with children or adult dependants (FS06)
Parents' Learning Allowance	Help with course-related costs if you have dependent children. You can get up to £1,508 a year depending on your income and that of your dependants.	No	Students with children or adult dependants (FS06)
Adult Dependants' Grant	Help if you have an adult who depends on you financially. You can get up to £2,642 a year depending on your income and that of your dependants.	No	Students with children or adult dependants (FS06)
Bursaries and scholarships	Extra help from your university or college.	No	What can I get? (FS02)

2 How can you find out what you're entitled to?

You can get a personalised online quote by providing some information about yourself, your course and your household income at Directgov using the student finance calculator.

This lets you see how much you could get while you're studying. You can get quotes for up to five different universities, colleges or courses to let you compare costs and work out the best choice for you financially.

For more detailed information go to **www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinancecalculator**

Once you've used the calculator you can:

- save your quote and go back to it later;
- email it to yourself; or
- transfer the information from the calculator to your online application – saving you time and effort.



3 How and when to apply

For more detailed information on how to apply see the 'Apply and get paid' fact sheet (FS03).

You don't have to wait until you've accepted a course to apply for student finance. If you haven't accepted a place yet, create your student finance account and apply using your first choice of course. You can easily change your course or university details online later. So **apply online now** and have everything in place for starting your course.

If you're only applying for the Tuition Fee Loan and the basic Maintenance Loan entitlement (the bit that doesn't depend on your household income), you can fill in and send us your application without your parent's or partner's involvement.

But, if you're applying for finance that depends on your household income, we will ask your parents or partner to give us some information about themselves and your household income. If you're not filling in the application together, your parents or partner can log on and fill in their part at another time. **But remember, your application isn't complete and can't be assessed until we have all the information we need.**

We don't normally need you or your parents or partners to send any evidence of your household income to us when you apply for student finance. However, we may contact you at a later date and ask you to send us evidence in support of your application.

Before you start your online application make sure you have the following to hand: passport; university and course details; bank details; National Insurance Number and your parent's or partner's details, including their National Insurance Number and income if needed. Make sure you fill in all the relevant questions correctly as this will help us process your application quickly.

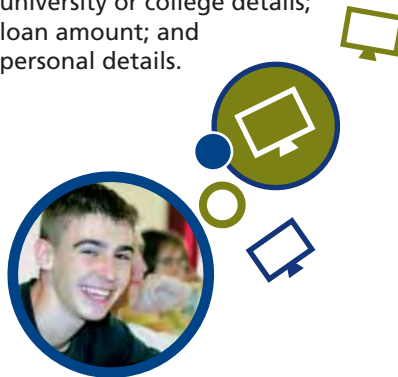
Deadline...31 May 2011

You need to fill in and submit your application for student finance before 31 May 2011 to be sure you have your money when you start your course.

If you apply after this date, you might not get all your money on time, but we will try to make an initial assessment so you have some money as close to the start of your course as possible.

If any of your details change after you have sent us your application for student finance, don't worry – it's easy to update. Using your online student finance account you can make changes to:

- your course details;
- your university or college details;
- your loan amount; and
- your personal details.



4 Evidence you may need to provide

For more information on what evidence you might be asked to provide see the 'Student finance evidence' fact sheet (F504)

In most cases the evidence we need can be provided easily by filling in the appropriate details on the application. By providing your UK passport number and your parent's or partner's National Insurance Numbers we can automatically check your identity and household income and process your application as quickly as possible.

However in certain situations you, or your parents or partner, may have to send us evidence such as a non-UK passport, a birth certificate or a P60.

Once you have completed your online application you will see a list of evidence that you may need to send. Remember to send this straight away. If you don't, your student finance might be delayed and you might not be paid on time. Remember to include your customer reference number on everything you send us.

We can't process your application until we have all the information and evidence we ask for.



5 Receive notification of what you will get

Once we have assessed your application, we will send you a Financial Notification letter showing what student finance you are entitled to. You should **keep this letter** as you might have to show it to your university or college when you register.

This letter will include a declaration that you must sign and return to us.



6 Starting university or college

Remember to register – we can't pay you until you do!

You have to register at your university or college before we can make your first payment. You will usually do this in the first week of your course and you may have to take along your Financial Notification letter, so make sure you keep this safe.

Once you have registered, your university or college will let us know you are attending and we will make your payment. You don't need to do anything other than register. It can then take two to three days for the money to reach your account, depending on your bank.

We will pay any Maintenance Grant or Loan to your bank account and your Tuition Fee Loan directly to your university or college.

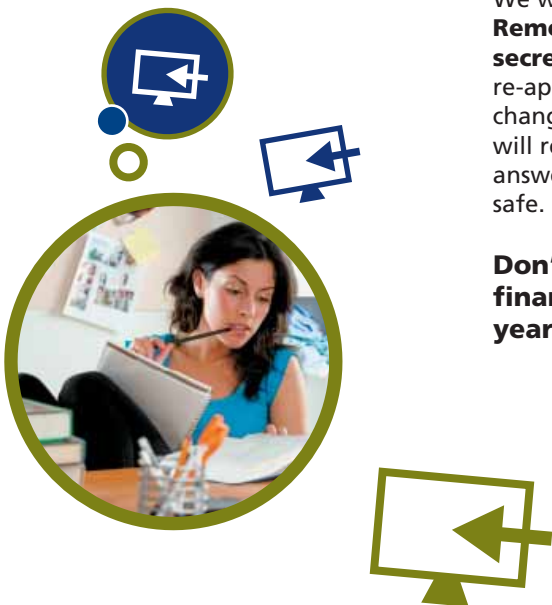


7 Re-applying next year

You need to apply for student finance for each year of your course. Fees may go up each year and grant and loan amounts may change too.

We will contact you when you need to re-apply. **Remember to keep your password and secret answer safe** as you'll need these to re-apply each year or to let us know about any changes to your details. Your parents or partner will receive their own password and secret answer so they will also need to keep these safe.

Don't forget, the amount of student finance available may change each year!



8 Repaying your loan

For more detailed repayment information go to www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk or see the 'Understanding Repayment' fact sheet (FS08).

Repaying your student loans once you have finished studying is straightforward and the amount you repay each month is linked to your earnings.

Once you've finished studying, you will have to repay any Tuition Fee Loans and Maintenance Loans – but not until you are earning more than £1,250 a month (£15,000 a year or £288 a week). Student loans are subsidised by the Government and, although interest is charged on a student loan, the interest rates are much lower than most commercial loans.



Here are some important points about repayment.

- Your repayments are based on how much you earn once you finish studying.
- Your employer will automatically take 9% of your salary above this threshold through the UK tax system (Pay As You Earn - PAYE) or through self-assessment if you are self employed.
- If your income stops or falls below the repayment threshold, your repayments will automatically stop.
- If you want to make voluntary repayments to pay your loan off more quickly, you can do this any time using our repayment website at www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk.

Take a look at the following table to see how it might work for you

Income each year before tax	Monthly salary	Approximate monthly repayment
£15,000 or less	£1,250 or less	0
£18,000	£1,500	£22
£21,000	£1,750	£45
£25,000	£2,083	£75
£30,000	£2,500	£112

You will pay interest on your student loan and the rate of interest may change. You'll find the latest information about interest rates on student loans at www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk/interest.

If you have any questions about repayment go to www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk.

Other sources of information

Educational Grants Advisory Service (EGAS)

EGAS is an independent advice agency for people who want to get funding for further or higher education. It is mainly concerned with helping students who are not eligible for funding from the Government.

You can phone the information line on **0207 254 6251** or visit their website at **www.family-action.org.uk**.

The EGAS office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2pm to 4pm.

National Union of Students (NUS)

You can get more information from the NUS website at **www.nus.org.uk**.

Scholarship Search UK

This provides information about other sources of funding for undergraduates.

Website: **www.scholarship-search.org.uk**.



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This booklet is for guidance only and is not a statement of law.

Applying for student finance?

Deadline - 31 May 2011

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