

STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION NOTE:

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/13 : ARRANGEMENTS
FOR STUDENTS FUNDED UNDER THE EDUCATION
(STUDENT SUPPORT) REGULATIONS 2011**

TO:

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
IN THE UNITED KINGDOM PROVIDING DESIGNATED HIGHER
EDUCATION COURSES

DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS

THE STUDENT LOANS COMPANY

SSIN 01/12

August 2011

Dear Colleague

HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT IN ENGLAND IN 2012/13:

**THE EDUCATION (STUDENT SUPPORT) REGULATIONS 2011 (S.I. 2011
No. 1986)**

The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 2011 No. 1986) (“the Regulations”) were laid before Parliament on 11 August 2011 and will come into force on 1 September 2011. They introduce changes to support for students starting and continuing their courses in the 2012/13 Academic Year.

The main changes in the Regulations for new students starting courses from September 2012 were initially announced by the Minister of State on 3 November 2010 with a further statement by the Secretary of State on 8 December 2010.

New full-time students will be eligible to apply for increased loans to meet the costs of their tuition at higher education institutions (HEIs), subject to the revised tuition caps under the Higher Education (Higher Amount) (England) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/3020) and the Higher Education (Basic Amount) (England) Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/3021) which were passed by Parliament in December 2010. New full-time students will also be eligible to apply for

increased maintenance grants and loans for living costs.

The Regulations also introduce, for the first time, tuition loans for students beginning part-time courses and full-time distance learning courses on or after 1 September 2012. The Government plans to introduce, for the first time, tuition caps for part-time courses, through changes to legislation in the Education Bill and subsequent regulations.

For continuing students, the Regulations increase the amounts of grants for tuition (for those full-time students who are still eligible for such grants), and the amounts of student loans for tuition for eligible full-time students. They increase maximum maintenance grant amounts. Maximum amounts for loans for living costs remain at 2011/12 levels for 2012/13. Support packages for continuing part-time and full-time distance learning students will also remain at 2011/12 levels from 1 September 2012. Student support for new and continuing students is set out in Annex A.

Other changes to the Regulations are set out below and in Annex B:

- Tuition support arrangements for English domiciled students starting full-time and part-time courses at institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland from September 2012;
- Defining the circumstances in which students will be eligible for the tuition and living costs support package available for students continuing their courses;
- Changes to the Secretary of State's responsibilities to make tuition loan payments to higher education institutions;
- Changing the annual intensity of study criterion to 25% for part-time and postgraduate disabled students' allowances;
- Arrangements to allow prisoners to be eligible for tuition loans for part-time study;
- Tuition support arrangements for graduate-entry courses in Medicine and Dentistry.

The changes are also summarised in the Explanatory Memorandum to the Regulations which is available on the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) website at:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/1986/pdfs/ukxiem_20111986_en.pdf

Electronic copies of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2011 (S.I. 2011 No. 1986) can be downloaded from the same website at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2011/1986/contents/made>

Those organisations needing paper copies of the regulations and Explanatory Memorandum should phone, email or write to the Stationery Office (please see contact details below).

ENQUIRIES

If you have any queries about the Student Support Regulations, please contact, in the first instance, the Student Finance England Practitioner Support Team - telephone 0845 6020583; email: SSIN_queries@slc.co.uk

ORDERING COPIES OF THE STUDENT SUPPORT REGULATIONS

The Regulations can be ordered from The Stationery Office at:

TSO Orders/ Post Cash Dept
PO Box 29
Norwich
NR3 1GN

Telephone: 0870 600 5522

Email: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Online: www.tsoshop.co.uk

ANNEX A

Summary of Student Support Package for the 2012/13 Academic Year		
<i>Mode of Study</i>	<i>Support Package</i>	<i>Changes for 2012/13</i>
<i>Tuition support</i>		
Full time, full time distance learning	Tuition loans for students starting their course from September 2012 onwards.	<u>Maximum tuition loan amount</u> For courses at publicly funded HEIs: £9,000; For courses at alternatively funded HEIs: £6,000.
Part time	Tuition loans for students starting their course from September 2012 onwards.	<u>Maximum tuition loan amount</u> For courses at publicly funded HEIs: £6,750; For courses at alternatively funded HEIs: £4,500. Students must be studying at a minimum 25% intensity in comparison with a full-time course in (i) each academic year of the course and (ii) for the duration of the course in order to receive tuition support.
Full time	Tuition loans for continuing students.	Maximum amount increased from £3,375 to £3,465.
Full time	Tuition grants and tuition contribution loans for continuing old system students.	Maximum amount increased from £1,345 to £1,380.
<i>Maintenance support</i>		
Full time	Maintenance grants and loans for students starting their course from September 2012 onwards.	Maximum maintenance grant of £3,250 for income up to £25,000; partial grant between £3,249 - £50 for income between £25,001 and £42,600. Maximum maintenance loan: £4,375 (parental home); £7,675 (London); £5,500 (elsewhere); £6,535 (overseas). 35% of the maximum loan amount is subject to a means test.

Full time	Maintenance grants and loans for continuing students	Maximum maintenance grant increased to £2,984. No changes to maximum loan amounts from 2011/12.
Full time	Higher education grants for continuing old system students.	No change to tapers, thresholds and maximum amounts from 2011/12.
Part time, full time distance learning	Fee grants and course grants for continuing students	No change to tapers, thresholds and maximum amounts from 2011/12.
<i>Targeted and other support</i>		
Full time	Adult dependants' grant, childcare grant, parents' learning allowance, long courses loan and travel grant for new and continuing students.	No change to tapers, thresholds and maximum amounts from 2011/12.
Full time, part time, full time distance learning, postgraduate.	Disabled students' allowances (DSAs).	No change to maximum amounts. New students starting part time and part time postgraduate courses from September 2012 must be studying at 25% course intensity in each academic year to receive DSA support.

ANNEX B

OTHER POLICY AND TECHNICAL CHANGES TO THE STUDENT SUPPORT REGULATIONS FOR 2012/13.

1) Tuition loans for English domiciled students starting full-time and part-time courses at institutions in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland from September 2012.

Students who normally live in England who are starting their courses at publicly funded HEIs in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland from September 2012 onwards will be eligible for loans to cover tuition charges up to a maximum of £9,000 for full-time courses or up to £6,750 for part-time courses.

2) Defining the circumstances in which students will be eligible for the tuition and living costs support package available for students continuing their courses.

Students who started their courses in 2011/12 or earlier and who are continuing their studies in 2012/13 will be eligible for support under the student finance arrangements that applied in 2011/12, which have been adjusted for 2012/13 (see Annex A).

Certain students transferring courses in 2012/13 or starting courses immediately after completing a lower level course will be treated as continuing students and continue to be eligible for support under the existing student finance arrangements.

The two categories are:

- Students who started a course before 1 September 2012 and who transfer to a second course on or after 1 September 2012, where the mode of study remains the same for both courses.
- Students who start an Honours Degree higher level course on or after 1 September 2012, immediately after completing a lower level CertHE, DipHE, HNC, HND, Foundation Degree or Ordinary Degree which started before 1 September 2012, where the mode of study remains the same for both courses. The Regulations categorise these Honours Degree courses as 'end-on' courses.

The definition of an 'end-on' course for students starting those courses on or after 1 September 2012 has been changed to apply only where the mode of study on the 'end-on' course remains the same as on the lower level course. Students taking a higher level course where the mode of study changes (e.g. from full-time to part-time) will be subject to the student finance arrangements applying to new students from September 2012 onwards.

Students transferring courses from September 2012 onwards, where the mode of study changes, will also be subject to the new tuition charge and student support arrangements when they start their second course.

Students starting their courses in England in August 2012 will be eligible to apply for the same tuition and living costs support as students continuing their courses in 2012/13. Students who normally live in England who are starting full-time courses at Scottish, Welsh or Northern Irish HEIs in August 2012 will also be eligible to apply for living costs grants and loans available to students continuing their courses in 2011/12. They will also be eligible to apply for loans of up to £9,000 to meet the costs of their tuition. HEIs in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not subject to the existing lower tuition charge caps that apply to English HEIs whose full-time courses start before 1 September 2012.

3) Changes to the Secretary of State's responsibilities to make tuition loan payments to higher education institutions.

For new and continuing full-time students in 2012/13, the Regulations make provision for tuition loan payments to be made in instalments to HEIs. Instalment payments will be made once the Secretary of State has received a request for payment and an HEI has confirmed that the student is attending (or in the case of new distance learning students starting their courses on or after 2012, undertaking) their courses. The Regulations remove the current requirement for the Secretary of State not to pay tuition loans for full-time courses until a period of three months has elapsed from the first day of the academic year.

For new part-time students starting their courses from September 2012 who will be eligible to apply for tuition loans, an HEI will be required to confirm that the student is attending their course two weeks after the start of the academic year. This confirmation will trigger the first instalment payment of tuition loan to the HEI. Subsequent payments of loan for the academic year will not require HEIs to confirm that the student is attending or undertaking a part-time course but the institution must inform the Secretary of State (whose functions in this respect are mostly carried out by the Student Loans Company) when a student ceases to attend or undertake their course.

4) Changing the annual intensity of study criterion to 25% for part-time and postgraduate disabled students' allowances.

New rules relating to intensity of study that will apply to new students for part-time on or after 1st September 2012, will also apply to part-time DSAs. New part-time students will be eligible to apply for DSAs if their course can normally be completed in not more than four times that required to complete a full-time equivalent course. In addition, new part-time students will also be required to study at a minimum 25% intensity in each academic year

compared with an equivalent full-time course in order to be eligible for DSAs.

The same changes are being made to the Regulations in relation to DSAs for new part-time postgraduate students starting their courses from September 2012.

5) Allowing prisoners to be eligible for tuition loans for part-time study.

Currently prisoners may only receive assistance through the student support package for tuition loans for full-time study at an institution. Prisoners who are undertaking full-time distance learning or part-time courses are not eligible for support through the student support system.

From September 2012, new students who are prisoners may be eligible to apply for tuition loans for all modes of study. A definition of an eligible prisoner has been added to the Regulations. Eligible prisoners will be those who fulfil the general eligibility criteria for student support, who hold authorisation from the appropriate authority within the institution of detention to study the course, and who are serving a custodial sentence with a release date that falls within 6 years of the first day of the first academic year of the course. Eligible prisoners starting their courses from September 2012 onwards will not be entitled to apply for grants and loans for living costs (including disabled students' allowances).

6) Allowing overpayments of tuition loan to be recovered from students.

Currently, the Regulations only permit an overpayment of tuition loan to be recovered from HEIs. This provision is extended from 2012/13 to allow the Secretary of State to recover loans from a former student directly where the HEI cannot be involved in the recovery process, for example, where the student and/or their sponsor has made an error on the student finance application form. The agreed changes will reduce the number of cases where overpayments of tuition loans have to be written off because they cannot be recovered from the HEI or it is not appropriate to recover from them.

7) Clarifying the conditions for course designation

A new designation condition is being introduced to ensure all designated courses should, on successful completion, lead to a qualification awarded or validated by a body that is recognised to grant UK Degrees (i.e. the body has UK degree awarding powers.)

There will be two exceptions to this. Higher National Diploma or Higher National Certificates which are awarded by BTEC or the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Courses which are

subject to their own approval processes managed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills or the Department for Education.

This condition will apply to all full and part-time undergraduate courses starting on or after 1 September 2012.

8) Tuition loans for graduate-entry courses in Medicine and Dentistry

Changes are being made to the Regulations to ensure that graduates starting a four year accelerated undergraduate degree course in medicine or three year course in dentistry on or after 1 September 2012 will be able to apply for a tuition loan for each year of their course.

Students starting a course on or after 1 September 2012 will be expected to self-fund the first £3,465 towards their tuition costs in year 1 and will be able to access a tuition loan to cover any remaining amount up to a total maximum tuition charge of £9,000. In years 2 - 4 the Department of Health will contribute £3,465 towards the tuition charge and graduates can apply for a tuition loan to make up the full cost of their tuition as in year one.

This change will mean that this group of students will have to find no more up-front tuition charges than those starting their courses in 2011/12.

9) Removing References relating to Support for Dance and Drama Courses

A minor change is being made to the Regulations to remove references to the Education (Student Support) (Dance and Drama) Regulations (D&D Regulations). These were introduced in 1998 to provide grants for fees and maintenance and loans for maintenance for eligible students attending specified dance and drama courses for the duration of their course. Dance and drama students starting their courses since 2004 have been eligible to apply for student support under the Student Support Regulations and there are now no longer any students receiving support under the D & D Regulations, which are revoked.