

STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION NOTE:

**2010/11: ARRANGEMENTS FOR STUDENTS
FUNDED UNDER THE STUDENT SUPPORT
REGULATIONS**

TO:

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (for the attention of Student Support Awards Officers)

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

DEVOLVED ADMINISTRATIONS

THE STUDENT LOANS COMPANY

SSIN 01/10

July 2009

Dear Colleague

HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT IN ENGLAND IN 2010/11:

THE EDUCATION (STUDENT SUPPORT) REGULATIONS 2009 (2009 No. 1555)

The Education (Student Support) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 2009/1555) were laid before Parliament on 1st July 2009 and will come into force on 1st September 2009, subject to consideration by Parliament. They introduce changes to support for students starting their courses in the 2010/11 Academic Year and also make amendments to the Education (Student Support) (No. 2) Regulations 2008 (S.I. 2008/1582) ("the 2008 (No.2) Regulations"), as amended by the Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations 2008 (S.I.2008/2094) and the Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2008 (S.I.2008/2939) for the 2009/10 Academic Year.

The main changes in the Regulations for 2010/11 were announced by the Minister of State on 1st July 2009. They increase the amounts of grants for tuition fees (for those students who are still eligible for such grants), student

loans for tuition fees and part-time fee and course grants in line with inflation and align the support packages for full-time and part-time postgraduate initial teacher training students with those for full-time and part-time undergraduates. Maximum amounts and household income thresholds for loans and grants for living costs that are available for eligible full-time students, will remain at 2009/10 levels from 1st September 2010. The other changes are mainly minor and technical.

All the changes are summarised in the Annex below and in the Explanatory Memorandum which will be available on the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) website at:

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si200915>

Electronic copies of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2009 can also be downloaded from the same website.

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

Changes for 2010/11

a) Changes to loan and grant thresholds and maximum amounts. (Regulations 24, 31, 32, 33, 35, 99, 120, 121, 137 and 138).

As set out in the Minister of State's statement of 1st July 2009, the maximum fee loan, fee contribution loan and fee grant for eligible full-time students will be increased by 2.04% from 1st September 2010. The maximum fee and course grants available for eligible part-time and full-time distance learning students will also be increased by 2.04% from 1st September 2010. The same increase will apply to household income thresholds that determine how much fee and course support is available for part-time and full-time distance learning students.

Maximum amounts and household income thresholds for loans and grants for living costs that are available for eligible full-time students, will remain at 2009/10 levels from 1st September 2010

b) Support for students on courses of initial teacher training. (Regulation 2(1) in the definition of a flexible postgraduate course for the initial training of teachers and definitions of type 1, type 2 and type 3 teacher training students. Regulations 6, 13, 14, 20, 24, 38, 73, 137).

From 1st September 2010, new students starting full-time postgraduate or equivalent initial teacher training (ITT) courses will be eligible for the same maintenance support package as full-time undergraduate students. All new students on postgraduate ITT courses will be eligible to apply for a fully means tested maintenance grant or special support grant of up to £2,906. New students on incomes above £34,000 will no longer be eligible for a guaranteed minimum grant of £1,106; however most students will receive an equivalent amount of support as a loan.

From 1st September 2010, new students starting part-time ITT courses will no longer be eligible for the full-time fee and maintenance support package. However, they will be eligible to apply for a part-time means-tested fee grant of up to £1,230 (the maximum will depend on the intensity of study on the course) and a means-tested course grant of up to £265.

New students starting flexible postgraduate ITT courses of a year or more in length in the 2010/11 academic year, will also be eligible for the part-time fee grant and course grant. However, flexible postgraduate ITT courses of less than one academic year in length will no longer attract support.

Students who started their ITT course before 1st September 2010, who are continuing their course in 2010/11, will be eligible for the same package of

support that they were receiving in 2009/10.

These changes will align support arrangements for students starting full-time and part-time postgraduate ITT courses with those on other full-time and part-time courses. They will ensure that support will be targeted at students on the lowest incomes.

A technical change is made to the calculation of the maximum amount of loan for living costs to which certain teacher training students are entitled for clarity.

Changes for 2009/10 and 2010/11

c) Support for part-time and full-time distance learning students who wish to 'top-up' their existing qualification to a higher level qualification. (Regulations 120, 137 and Schedule 5, paragraphs 7 and 8).

From 1st September 2010, all new students starting a part-time or full-time distance learning course who already hold a lower level qualification such as a foundation degree will be eligible to apply for support to 'top-up' their qualification to a higher level (e.g. to an honours degree), regardless of where they are studying, the subject they are taking and whether or not there is a break in study.

This change aligns more closely the rules for part-time students and full-time distance learning students who wish to 'top-up' to a higher level qualification with those for full-time students. It removes a restriction in the Regulations which prevents students holding a first degree (such as a foundation degree) from a UK University or College from 'topping-up' their qualification to an honours degree, unless the second qualification is taken in the same subject at the same institution immediately after the first qualification.

An amendment is made for the 2008 (No.2) Regulations to ensure that the restriction remains in place for the 2009/10 academic year.

d) Removal of Provisions on Interest and Insolvency. (Regulation 4(1)).

Provisions relating to the interest chargeable on the loans (in relation to England) and the consequences of the insolvency of a borrower (in relation to England and Wales and Northern Ireland) have previously been contained in the 2008 (No.2) Regulations. As these provisions sit more logically within Regulations that deal with repayment of student loans, they have been removed from these Regulations and the 2008 (No.2) Regulations and inserted within the Education (Student Loans) (Repayments) Regulations 2009 (S.I. 2009/470) taking effect from 1st September 2009. This is intended to increase clarity and simplicity.

e) Technical Amendment to ensure that full-time students who transfer courses or who wish to 'top up' their previous qualification to a higher level qualification will retain the package of support they received on their first course.

(Regulation 2(1) in the definition of 2008 cohort and 2009 cohort students and Schedule 5, paragraph 1).

Currently, most students who started their course in the 2008/09 Academic Year, known as 2008 cohort students, are eligible for the same package of maintenance grant and loan support throughout their course. However, 2008 cohort students who started a course in 2008/09 and who are transferring to another course in 2010/11, or who started a course in 2008/09 and who wish to 'top up' their first course to a higher level (e.g. to an honours degree) in 2010/11, will be eligible for the different package of maintenance support available for students starting their courses in 2010/11. This fails to meet the policy intention that transferring students or students going 'end-on' to a higher level course should retain the same support package as they had when they started their original course.

The definition of a 2008 cohort student in Regulation 2(1) is therefore being changed to ensure that 2008 cohort students transferring courses in 2010/11 or starting a higher level course in 2010/11 immediately after completing a preliminary course (such as a Foundation Degree) will remain as 2008 cohort students on their second course and will continue to be eligible for the same package of maintenance support as they had when they started their first course. The same change is being made to the definition of a 2008 Cohort Student in the 2008 (No.2) Regulations.

A similar change is also being made to the definition of a 2009 cohort student in Regulation 2(1), which covers most students who started their course in the 2009/10 Academic Year, to take account of students transferring their courses in 2010/11 or starting a higher level course in 2010/11 immediately after completing a preliminary course.

f) Technical Amendment to ensure that the Regulations reflect the policy intention for transferring students.

(Regulations 14, 20 and Schedule 5, paragraphs 2 and 3).

When a student transfers from one course to another, that student retains his or her entitlement to the same package of student support that was available when he or she started the original course. In 2009, new rules were introduced preventing a student holding an equivalent or higher level qualification from the UK or abroad from receiving support for a further course.

An amendment is being made to Regulation 14(1) to ensure that students

transferring to a course on or after 1st September 2009 from a course beginning before 1st September 2009 continue to be eligible for the same support arrangements which were in place when they started their original course. The same change is being made to Regulation 14(1) of the 2008 (No.2) Regulations with consequential amendments.