



## Dependants' Grants - Childcare Grant

What is Childcare Grant? 

How do students apply for Childcare Grant? 

How do students confirm their childcare costs? 



## What is Childcare Grant?

Childcare Grant helps towards childcare costs for students who have a dependent child aged under 15 at the beginning of the academic year (or under 17 if the child has special educational needs) and they're in registered or approved childcare. It's based on their household income and doesn't normally have to be paid back.



## Who qualifies for Childcare Grant?

Full-time undergraduate and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students at universities or colleges in the UK can apply for Childcare Grant if, at the beginning of the academic year, they have:

- at least one dependent child under 15 who is in registered or approved childcare, or
- at least one dependent child under 17, who has special educational needs and is in registered or approved childcare.

If during the academic year the student, or their husband, wife, civil partner or partner receive:

- the childcare element of either Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit,
- Tax-Free Childcare from HM Revenue and Customs, or
- Childcare Allowance from the National Health Service (NHS)

they won't be able to get Childcare Grant at the same time. They can choose to receive Childcare Grant instead, but they'll need to stop receiving support from these sources.

Students won't be able to get Childcare Grant if their childcare provider is:

- their partner,
- a relative of their child and providing care in their child's home,
- a relative of their child **and**
  - approved under the Approval of Child Care Providers Scheme in Wales, or the Approval of Home Child Care Providers Scheme in Northern Ireland, and
  - providing care away from the child's home.

Students who can apply for an NHS bursary aren't able to get Childcare Grant and should visit [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students) for more information about the extra help available to them.

## What is registered or approved childcare?



Students can only get Childcare Grant if their childcare provider is in England and registered or approved by:

- Ofsted
- the Care Quality Commission
- an equivalent inspection body appointed by the Secretary of State to inspect certain independent schools

If their childcare provider is in Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland they must be registered or approved by a regulatory body that inspects childcare in the country they're based.

Students may also qualify for Childcare Grant if they're studying abroad as part of their UK course and are using childcare provided under a Ministry of Defence accreditation scheme.

## How much Childcare Grant is available?



The amount of Childcare Grant available to a student depends on their household income and how much they are charged by their childcare provider.

Their household income is the income of their husband, wife, civil partner or partner (if they have one) and that of any dependants.

Eligible students can apply for up to 85% of their actual childcare costs during term times and holidays. The amount they can receive is capped at £155.24 a week for one child or £266.15 a week if they have two or more children.

We'll work out how much Childcare Grant a student can get using their estimate of their childcare costs. We'll confirm the actual amounts they've been charged three times during the academic year and adjust their payments if we need to.

It's important for students to apply as early as possible so their payment is ready for the start of their course. If the student can't give details of their childcare provider when they complete their Childcare Grant application form they can still apply. We'll cap their first payment at £120.02 a week or 85% of their estimated costs, whichever is less.

The earliest they can claim for Childcare Grant is the first day of the academic year, for most courses this is 1 September. In the final year of their course, the Childcare Grant can only be paid until the last day of their final term.

If the student has to pay for childcare between the start of their academic year and the start of their course their first payment will cover this period. If the student has to pay for childcare during their summer holidays, this will be included in their third instalment.

## How do students apply for Childcare Grant?



### 1. Fill in the main student finance application

To apply for Childcare Grant the student must fill in all the relevant sections of the main application for student finance. The quickest way to do this is online at [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)

The student should tell us on their main application that they want to apply for Childcare Grant. We'll send them a separate Childcare Grant application form (CCG1). This form asks for details about their children, childcare provider(s) and an estimate of their weekly childcare costs. This form can also be downloaded from [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)

**It's important for the student to give a realistic estimate of their costs to avoid having to repay anything later.**

We'll ask for additional evidence, for example their child's birth certificate and evidence to show the child is dependent on the student. The student must send all the evidence we ask for as soon as possible otherwise their application may be delayed. You can find out more about the evidence they'll need to send on the Dependants' Grants – evidence factsheet.

Students must apply within nine months of the start of the academic year.

#### Students who started their course before 1 August 2013

Students who started their course before 1 August 2013 will also be asked to give details of any financial commitments they had before the start of their course. They must give an estimate of the annual totals for each commitment. If they give monthly payment amounts we won't be able to consider the actual amount they pay during the year and they may not get all the Dependants' Grants they're entitled to at the beginning of the year. We'll contact these students at the end of the academic year to ask for evidence of their household income and financial commitments. You can find more information about this on the Dependants' Grants – finalisation factsheet.

## 2. We'll send the student a Student Finance Entitlement letter

We'll assess the student's application based on the information they've given us and send them a letter telling them how much student finance, including Childcare Grant and any other Dependants' Grants they're entitled to.

## 3. We'll pay the student

We'll pay the first payment of Childcare Grant directly to the student, at the same time as their other loan and/or Dependants' Grants payments once they've registered at university or college. Childcare Grant is usually paid in three instalments during the academic year. Before we can pay the second or third instalments we'll ask the student to confirm their actual childcare costs.

## How do students confirm their childcare costs?



We'll ask the student to confirm their actual childcare costs by filling in a Childcare Costs Confirmation form (CCG2) three times during the academic year. **Each of these forms covers one childcare period.**

Eight weeks after the start of the academic year we'll send the student their first CCG2. This form should be completed by the childcare provider to confirm the **actual weekly amounts** they've charged the student for childcare. The form also allows the student to give updated estimates of their childcare costs for the remainder of the academic year.

The second CCG2 form will be sent 21 weeks after the start of the academic year, and the final one towards the end of the academic year. The table below gives details of the childcare periods.

	September course start	January course start	April course start	July course start
Period 1	1 September 2016 - 24 October 2016	1 January 2017 - 19 February 2017	1 April 2017 - 21 May 2017	1 July 2017 - 20 August 2017
Period 2	25 October 2016 - 22 January 2017	20 February 2017 - 21 May 2017	22 May 2017 - 20 August 2017	21 August 2017 - 19 November 2017
Period 3	23 January 2017 - 31 August 2017	22 May 2017 - 31 December 2017	21 August 2017 - 31 March 2018	20 November 2017 - 30 June 2018
Period 3 (final year students)	23 January 2017 - last day of final term	22 May 2017 - last day of final term	21 August 2017 - last day of final term	20 November 2017 - last day of final term

We'll use the actual childcare costs provided by the childcare provider to make sure the student has been paid the correct amount of Childcare Grant. If they've been underpaid we'll pay them anything they're owed in their next instalment, or as soon as possible if they're not due another payment. If the student has been overpaid we'll reduce their next instalment or arrange another way to repay if they aren't due any more payments.

The letter sent with the CCG2 form will advise when the form must be returned. If they don't return their form in time their next Childcare Grant payment will be delayed.

If the student doesn't return their form at all, they will lose their entitlement to Childcare Grant and we'll make arrangements for them to repay any amount they've already received.

## Does getting the Childcare Grant affect benefits?



No, Childcare Grant won't be taken into account by HM Revenue and Customs, Jobcentre Plus or the local Housing Benefit office when any income-related benefits are worked out.

For more information about getting benefits, students should visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

[www.practitioners.slc.co.uk](http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk)

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Student Finance England is a service provided by the Student Loans Company.  
We provide financial support on behalf of the UK Government to students from England entering higher education in the UK.

