



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

To:

Higher Education Institutions in Wales providing designated Higher Education courses
Further Education Institutions in Wales providing designated Higher Education courses
Private Institutions providing designated Higher Education courses
The Student Loans Company
UCAS
The Open University in Wales
Student Finance Wales Stakeholder Group
NUS Wales
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
Universities Wales
Colleges Wales
and other interested bodies

March 2016

Dear Colleague

HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT IN 2016/17

The Education (Student Support) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (WSI 2016 No. 77 (W.34))

The Education (Student Support) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 (referred to as “the Regulations”) came into force on 22 February 2016. The Regulations amend the package of support available for students who are ordinarily resident in Wales and taking designated higher education courses in the academic year beginning on or after 1 September 2016.

Electronic copies of The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2016 will shortly be available to download from the OPSI website at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

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 or this Information Notice, please contact, in the first instance, the Higher Education Division, Welsh Government - email studentfinancedivision@wales.gsi.gov.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



Student Support Regulations for Academic Year 2016/17: summary of changes

Basic full-time student support package for 2016/17

New full-time students who are ordinarily resident in Wales will, subject to eligibility be entitled to the following package of student support for courses from 1 September 2016:

- a non means-tested tuition fee loan up to £3,900;
- a non means-tested tuition fee grant to cover the difference between the maximum tuition fee loan available and the tuition fee actually charged by the UK university (a maximum grant of £5,100 if a tuition fee of £9,000 is charged);
- a means-tested Welsh Government Learning Grant (maintenance grant) of up to £5,161 depending on household income;
- a means-tested maintenance loan (up to £4,786 if living at parents' home, up to £6,183 if living away from parents' home, and up to £8,662 if studying in London).

In addition to this, the *Cancellation of Student Loans for Living Costs Liability (Wales) Regulations 2016* make provision for a partial cancellation of maintenance loan of up to £1,500 once repayment of the relevant loan has begun.

Summary of Full-Time support changes

Changes in the amounts of tuition fee loans and grants

Students who commenced their studies on or after 1 September 2012 will be entitled to tuition fee support to cover the cost of their course or of up to £9,000 per annum, whichever is less. The maximum fee chargeable by higher education institutions in England, Wales and Scotland is unchanged at £9,000. Support will consist of an entitlement to a non means-tested tuition fee loan and that being raised to £3,900, alongside a non means-tested tuition fee grant of up to £5,100. Eligible new system students who are continuing a designated course provided by an institution in Northern Ireland, and who began that course before 1 September 2012, will be able to claim an increased non means-tested tuition fee loan of up to £3,925 to reflect the increase in the maximum fees allowable there, which have been raised from £3,805. The fee support package remains unchanged for other continuing students who commenced their courses before September 2012.

Increases in the amounts of loans for living costs

The loans for living costs are increased by an average of around 10%. Students who started their studies on or after the 1 September 2012 will be eligible for a maximum



maintenance loan of £6,183 (depending on household income) or £8,662 if the student studies in London.

The removal of qualification to the Childcare Grant (CCG) where an eligible student declares an entitlement to Tax Free Childcare (TFC)

The UK Government is expecting to introduce Tax Free Childcare (TFC) for working families in early 2017. The UK Government will pay 20% of childcare costs up to a maximum of £10,000 – up to £2,000 for each child up to the age of 12. Both parents must be in work and earning under £150,000. Whilst it is unlikely that many students in higher education will be entitled to TFC, there is a possibility that a small number of full-time students on lower household incomes could be double funded through TFC and the CCG.

This instrument amends the 2015 Regulations to prevent a student from receiving CCG where that student (or the student's partner) has made a statement that they are eligible for TFC for a three month entitlement period.

Provision to allow Welsh Ministers to revoke or suspend designation of higher education courses

Whilst it is arguable that the power to revoke or suspend the designation of courses was implicit within the 2015 Regulations, these amending regulations expressly confer the ability for Welsh Ministers to revoke or suspend designation of courses of higher education on a case by case basis.

