



To:

Local Authorities in Wales
(For the attention of Student Finance Officers)

April 2012

Dear Colleague

HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT IN 2012/13:

Introduction of the New Fee Grant (Regulation 20) in Academic Year 2012/13

Local Authorities will be aware of the increased possibility of fraudulent activity with the introduction of the new fee grant for students ordinarily resident in Wales (see also 'Preventing Fraud: Audit Guidance 2011/12').

There are four areas which require particular attention (in addition to the 10% check regime):

- a) ordinary residence
- b) identity
- c) household income
- d) separation of duties.

a) **ordinary residence**

As usual, the rules on 'ordinary residence' are set out in the '*Assessing Eligibility Guidance 2012/13*' but below is a summary of the example questions originally set out in SFWIN 02/07 regarding student residency:

The purpose of moving to Wales will be a main consideration. Note that if the move is wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving education, then the applicant will not be entitled to support from Student Finance Wales.

Each case has to be decided on its merits.

Therefore, in order to determine the issue of ordinary residence, a number of matters will be relevant:



- (1) What is the purpose of the move?
- (2) If it is alleged to be for other than education purposes, what evidence is there to support this?
- (3) If an applicant rents/purchases property in Wales prior to the start of the academic year, is there evidence of residence at that property during that period?
- (4) If an applicant claims to have moved so as to work in Wales, what evidence is there to support this and is the work temporary/permanent, full time/part time?
- (5) Where an income assessment has been undertaken on household income, where is the household located? Is the household located other than where the applicant claims to be ordinarily resident?
- (6) How long has the applicant resided in Wales prior to the start of the academic term?
- (7) If the applicant claims to have moved as part of a relocation of the student's family, is there evidence of this?

b) identity

Applicants are required to submit original documentation and a certified copy will only be deemed acceptable in exceptional circumstances where the document has been verified by a third party professional person.

c) household income

As summarised in the current Audit Guidance:

- verifying the form P60 with supporting wage slips and bank statements;
- undertaking “reasonableness” checks on financial information from those with self-employed status, when the income declared approaches or is below DWP benefit levels;
- undertaking checks to establish the make-up of the household, particularly where applications are received from single parent households;
- verifying benefit entitlement when students applied for a second or subsequent loan.

d) separation of duties

Please refer to ‘Separating duties – recommended approach’ in the Audit Guidance.

