



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

Amendments to be included in the Student Support Regulations for the academic year 2023 to 2024

Describes the main and supplementary loan and grant rates, contribution rates and tuition fee rates for undergraduate and postgraduate support in the 2023 to 2024 academic year.

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Overview

The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2023 (“the 2023 Regulations”) are currently being drafted and, once made, will provide support for eligible students taking a designated course of higher education.

The 2023 Regulations, which are due to come into force in February 2023, apply to academic years beginning on or after 1 August 2023 and make the changes as set out below.

Financial package

Regulations are being amended to change the amount of undergraduate and postgraduate support in line with established policy. Where the support is raised by the projected rate of inflation, this is in line with the estimates of forecast inflation as measured by RPIX in the year to Q1 2024 and published by the OBR in March 2022. The amendments are outlined below.

Maintenance support

- to increase the amount of maintenance loan available to those students who began their courses on or after 1 August 2018, to ensure that the overall maintenance package reflects the National Living Wage projection for 2023. The amount of maintenance support will rise by 9.4 per cent between 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024. The loan element of support is increased accordingly
- to increase the amount of maintenance loan available to those students who began their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2018

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by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent

Other support grants

- to increase the overall amount of Disabled Student's Grant available to new and continuing students by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent
- to increase the amount of Grants for Dependants available to new and continuing students by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent

Undergraduate full-time fee support

- to decrease the amount of tuition fee grant and increase the amount of tuition fee loan for those students who began their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2018 by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent so that overall tuition fee support is unchanged

Postgraduates

- to increase the amount of support payable to postgraduate Master's students starting courses on or after 1 August 2023 by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent, by increasing the amount of loan
- to increase the amount of support for doctoral students starting courses on or after 1 August 2023 by the projected rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent

Further detail on this will be included in a Student Finance Wales Information Notice, in relation to publication of the Financial Memorandum.

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Postgraduate doctoral loan support

Current policy enables doctoral students to receive a maximum annual amount of £10,609 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Education (Postgraduate Doctoral Degree Loans) (Wales) Regulations 2018. This amount has not been increased since the introduction of postgraduate doctoral loans in academic year 2018 to 2019 despite the loan itself increasing. Therefore, an amendment is being made to increase the maximum amount of loan payable in an academic year to reflect 50 per cent of the total amount of loan available (£28,395 in academic year 2023 to 2024).

Grants for Dependants (GfDs): income disregards

In the 2018 to 2019 academic year the calculation process for determining entitlement to GfDs was revised and the level of income 'disregards' increased. An amendment is being made to increase the level of income disregards by the projection rate of inflation of 1.8 per cent for new and continuing students.

Grants for Dependants (GfDs): intensity bandings for part-time students

Part-time students must currently be studying at an intensity of 50 per cent of a full-time equivalent course to be eligible for GfDs. The amount to which they are entitled is pro-rated by this intensity, as follows:

- an entitlement of 50 per cent of the full-time equivalent grant where the intensity of study for the academic year is at least 50 per cent but less than 60 per cent of a full-time equivalent course

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- 60 per cent where the intensity of study is at least 60 per cent but less than 75 per cent
- 75 per cent where the intensity of study is at least 75 per cent or more

Amendments will be made which will enable eligible part-time students to qualify for GfDs when studying at an intensity of study of 25 per cent or more. The additional bandings will apply:

- an entitlement of 25 per cent of the full-time equivalent grant where the intensity of study for the academic year is at least 25 per cent but less than 30 per cent of a full-time equivalent course
- 30 per cent where the intensity of study is at least 30 per cent but less than 40 per cent
- 40 per cent where the intensity of study is at least 40 per cent but less than 50 per cent

Family members of other persons settled in the UK

An amendment is being made to ensure comparability between family members of UK nationals and of other persons settled in the UK. Students who begin a course in the 2023 to 2024 academic year will be eligible for home fee status, the tuition fee cap, tuition fee loans, and postgraduate support.

Students from British Overseas Territories (BOTs) and EU Overseas Territories (EUOTs)

An amendment is being made to make provision for persons who have settled status in the UK, and those covered by the various Withdrawal Agreements, who

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come from specified BOTs to study in Wales to be eligible for undergraduate tuition fee support and postgraduate support from academic year 2023 to 2024. This ensures comparability between settled persons in these territories and those resident elsewhere.

An amendment is also being made to extend this provision to persons with protected rights who will be able to count periods of residence in specified EUOTs as part of the normal three-year qualifying period for eligibility for tuition fee support and postgraduate support. This ensures comparability with settled persons who come from specified BOTs.

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