



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

Student Finance Wales Information Notice: Education Maintenance Allowance scheme and Welsh Government Learning Grant (further education) scheme 2022 to 2023

The funding arrangements for the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Welsh Government Learning Grant (further education) schemes 2022 to 2023 (SFWIN 05/2022).

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This Information Notice provides details of the income assessed Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and Welsh Government Learning Grant (Further Education) (WGLG (FE)) schemes for academic year 2022 to 2023. Please ensure that this Information Notice is circulated to all staff and colleagues who help to administer the schemes.

A copy of the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes for 2022 to 2023 will be available to view on the Welsh Government's [funding and finance for students](#) webpage.

Application forms

The Student Finance Wales service for EMA and WGLG (FE) for 2022 to 2023 opened on 25 April 2022. As in previous years, bilingual application packs for new academic year will be issued to registered learning centres. The new forms and guidance notes about eligibility and entitlement for academic year 2022 to 2023 will also be available to download from [Student Finance Wales](#).

The grant awards and income thresholds for the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes have been maintained for academic year 2022 to 2023.

The Student Finance Wales bilingual customer service can be contacted on 0300 200 4050. Croesawir galwadau yn Gymraeg / Calls are welcomed in Welsh.

Residency categories

Details about residency categories and EU Exit changes for academic year 2022 to 2023 are set out in the tables in the Annex attached.

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Matters of residency and immigration are complex and if applicants require advice when completing their application for support, they should refer to the relevant application notes or contact the Student Finance Wales service. However, Student Finance Wales will only be able to determine eligibility and entitlement following receipt of a fully completed application with appropriate supporting evidence.

The EMA and WGLG (FE) application and guidance notes for academic year 2022 to 2023 will reflect the changes.

WGLG (FE) Scheme – financial assessment of household income

Changes will be made to the financial assessment of household income in the WGLG (FE) Scheme for academic year 2022 to 2023, as follows:

- independent students will be aligned with dependent students and sponsors/partners for the purposes of income assessment. This means for 2022 to 2023 applicants who are Independent students will be asked to provide income information for the tax year 2020 to 2021. The change allows Student Finance Wales to verify household income details with HMRC.
- to mirror that of Dependent students and parents and partners, Independent students will be able to request a Current Year Income assessment if there has been a non-temporary drop in their household income since the tax year 2020 to 2021.
- dependent students will be aligned with independent students and be able to provide details for permitted income deductions.

The WGLG (FE) application form and supporting guidance notes will reflect the above changes.

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Covid-19 arrangements: attendance, backdated EMA payments and signing learning agreements

The discretionary arrangements introduced in response to managing the COVID-19 situation will be maintained for the 2022 to 2023 academic year. Details can be found in the previously published [Information Notice \(04/2020\)](#).

Enquiries

If you have any queries, please contact the Higher Education Division, Welsh Government - email studentfinancedivision@gov.wales. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

A copy of this Information Notice can be downloaded in Welsh or English from the Welsh Government's [funding and finance for students](#) webpage.

Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.

Annex

A change will be made to the following eligible student category in the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes:

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Category**Change for 2022 to 2023**

Protected persons and their family members.

This category currently provides for a person (and/or relevant family member) granted leave to enter or remain on the grounds of:

- humanitarian protection
- stateless leave
- section 67 leave to remain
- calais leave

The category will be extended to include persons (and/or relevant family members) who are granted leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy or Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme.

This is similar to the change made for Higher Education student support for 2022 to 2023 and communicated in [Information Notice \(01/2022\)](#).

Other important changes relating to the EU Exit changes:

Subject**Change for 2022 to 2023**

Removal of provisions relating to the EU Settlement Scheme 'grace period'.

The 'application deadline' and 'grace period' associated with the EU Settlement Scheme ended on 30 June 2021. These are provided for in the Citizens' Rights (Application Deadline and Temporary Protection) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

A person was able to apply for leave under the EU Settlement Scheme until the application deadline of 30 June 2021. Certain rights conferred by the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016 are also maintained, despite the revocation of those regulations, until that date –

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Subject	Change for 2022 to 2023
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the 'grace period'. Further, where the grace period has ended and a person has made a valid application which has not been decided, the period is extended until a decision is made – the 'relevant period'

Provision was made in the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes to ensure that those applying for student support, and who had applied for leave to remain under the EU Settlement Scheme during the grace period were not inadvertently made ineligible for student support. A necessary amendment will be made to the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes to remove references to the grace period (only).

Family member definitions of EEA/Swiss workers.	Guidance on family member definitions is being updated in application forms to better align with definitions in the EMA and WGLG (FE) schemes. This will make clearer the family member definitions across the relevant different residence categories.
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Frontier worker permit or other equivalent evidence.	Frontier workers will be able to provide either a frontier worker permit or other, alternative evidence that they are a frontier worker. Where a frontier worker permit is not provided, alternative evidence would need to confirm that the person is either an employed frontier worker or self-employed frontier worker who is working in the UK. SLC's guidance and applications will be aligned to this rule.
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Late joining family members of EEA/Swiss nationals who entered the UK before 31 December 2020.	<p>The EU Settlement Scheme allows certain family members to come to the UK after 31 December 2020 to join an EEA or Swiss national who is already in the UK. The joining family member has to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme once they arrive in the UK and generally has 90 days from their arrival date to do so.</p> <p>A joining eligible family member has citizens' rights from the date of their arrival in the UK, whether or not they have applied for or been awarded pre-settled status. Student Finance Wales may, therefore, assess an applicant for student funding prior to the date pre-settled status is granted, subject to meeting the rules set out in the EU Settlement Scheme.</p>
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