

THINKING OF GOING TO UNIVERSITY PART-TIME IN 2012?

Facts on financial support for part-time students starting courses from September 2012¹

Working, looking after family, juggling responsibilities? The great news is that, from 2012, people wanting to start a part-time higher education course will no longer have to pay upfront for their tuition costs.

For the first time, new part-time students from England studying for their first degree or other designated higher education course will have access to a government subsidised loan if they are studying at least 25% of a full-time course.

More information:

From September 2012, universities and other higher education institutions will be able to charge up to £6,000 a year for their full-time courses. Some will be able to charge up to £9,000 a year – but they will need to meet strict criteria to make sure that all eligible students, regardless of background, can access those courses. Subject to approval by Parliament, the maximum tuition charges for part-time courses will be capped at 75% of the full-time amounts. This means that universities and other providers will be able to charge up to £4,500 per year, or up to £6,750 if, as for full-time courses, they meet the strict criteria on access.

Contact the university or college you are interested in for further information.

NO UPFRONT COSTS

- You don't have to pay for your course yourself upfront if you are studying for a degree for the first time.
- You can get a loan to cover the cost of your tuition, which you only start to pay back when you are earning over £21,000 a year.

For more information about the financial support available and the benefits of going to university or college, visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

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¹ This information is primarily aimed at those who are considering studying at publicly-funded higher education institutions. You may still be able to apply for student support for your tuition if you are studying on a designated course with an alternative provider – up to a maximum tuition loan of £4,500 for part-time courses.

Our National Scholarship Programme

From 2012 a National Scholarship Programme, worth £150 million a year by 2014/15, will help people from lower income households access higher education. Details will be available on university and college websites from summer 2011.

How loan repayments are expected to work

- You will begin to repay your loan from the April three years after the start date of your course, or the April after you finish your course if that's sooner. But you only start to pay back when you are earning over £21,000 a year.
- You repay 9% of your income above £21,000. So, for example, if your salary was £25,000, the 9% would only apply to £4,000, meaning you would repay around £30 per month.
- The table below shows some salaries and typical repayments.
- If your salary falls below £21,000, your repayments stop – for example if you take a career break or are unemployed. Repayments only start again when you earn over £21,000.
- Loan repayments will be deducted from your salary, normally through the tax system.
- Any loan you have not repaid after 30 years is written off.

Salary	Amount of salary from which 9% will be deducted	Monthly repayment
£25,000	£4,000	£30.00
£30,000	£9,000	£67.50
£35,000	£14,000	£105.00
£40,000	£19,000	£142.50
£45,000	£24,000	£180.00
£50,000	£29,000	£217.50
£55,000	£34,000	£255.00
£60,000	£39,000	£292.50

Rates of interest

The Government's plans are that:

- Interest on your loan will be applied at inflation (RPI – Retail Price Index) plus 3% while you are studying, and up until the April you are due to start repaying. From the April you're due to start repaying:
 - For those whose income is £21,000 or less, interest will be applied at the rate of inflation (RPI).
 - For those whose income is between £21,000 and £41,000, interest will be applied between RPI and RPI + 3% on a gradual scale depending on income.
 - For those whose income is £41,000 or more, interest will be applied at RPI + 3%.

Other questions

Q: Will I be eligible for a grant or loan to help with living costs?

A: No. Those on part-time courses are able to combine study and work, and access other Government benefits, so there won't be any maintenance support for part-timers.

Q: Will loan repayments affect my ability to take out another loan?

A: This would be a decision for the loan provider, but student loan information won't be shared with credit reference agencies by Student Finance England.

Q: Will loan repayments affect my ability to get a mortgage?

A: The Council of Mortgage Lenders has advised that a student loan is very unlikely to impact materially on someone's ability to get a mortgage. The amount you are able to borrow may depend on disposable income.

Q: What control do graduates have over how much they pay back per month?

A: Graduates do not have control over how much they repay each month via the tax system. It is deducted at source and is 9% of income over £21,000.

Q: I am a student from Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland – will this apply to me?

A: No. Students who normally live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland will receive financial support for university from the Scottish Government, the Welsh Assembly Government or the Northern Ireland Executive (as appropriate).

Q: I am an EU student intending to study in England – will this apply to me?

A: EU students from outside the UK who meet certain eligibility criteria will have access to a loan to cover the cost of their tuition.