



HM Government

# Your Guide to Student Finance

Thinking of going to university or college in 2020/21?  
You won't have to pay tuition fees upfront at most institutions.

[gov.uk/student-finance](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance)



If you live in England (either all or most of the time) and are studying for your first higher education qualification, you won't have to pay any tuition fees upfront at most universities and colleges.

Loans are available to cover your tuition fees and help with your living costs. You won't pay a penny back until you've left university or college and start earning over a certain amount. Your loan is written off after 30 years, even if you haven't paid it all back.

Additional support is also available for those who need it.

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## What financial support can I get?

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### **The main types of financial support available are Tuition Fee Loans and Maintenance Loans.**

- These are not like bank loans
- If you change your mind, you can cancel your loan application any time before the start of term when it is paid to your university or college (tuition fee loan) or into your bank account (maintenance loan)
- You will only have to start making repayments from the April after you've left your course, and only when you are earning above a certain amount.

A Tuition Fee Loan helps you to pay for your course.

Full-time students at most universities and colleges – where the government's maximum fee cap applies – can apply for a Tuition Fee Loan of up to £9,250 per year to cover the full cost of their tuition fees.

There are some universities and colleges whose maximum fees aren't capped by the government. If you choose to study at one of these, you will be able to apply for a Tuition Fee Loan of up to £6,165 for a standard full-time course. This could mean you're not able to borrow the full cost of your tuition fees. You can check tuition fees on the websites of any university or college you're interested in.

A Maintenance Loan helps towards your living costs, such as food, rent and books.

The amount you can borrow depends on your household income, your course and where you live and study. For 2020/21, the amounts are up to:

- £7,747 a year if you live with your parents
- £9,203 a year if you live away from home and study outside London
- £12,010 a year if you live away from home and study in London
- £10,539 a year if you study overseas as part of your UK course.

See what you may be eligible for at [gov.uk/student-finance-calculator](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-calculator)

Student loans are paid and collected by Student Finance England, which is part of the Student Loans Company.

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## Extra Support

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### Disabled Students' Allowances

Disabled students can receive a range of support while in higher education, both from their university or college, and also through Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). DSAs are available to help with additional costs that you may face in relation to your studies because of your disability.

DSAs are not means tested and do not have to be repaid.

[gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas](https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas)

### Nursing, Midwifery And Allied Health Profession Courses

From September 2020, new and continuing students on eligible pre-registration nursing, midwifery and many allied health profession courses at English universities will receive at least £5,000 a year in additional, non-repayable funding to help with living costs. There will also be up to £3,000 of further funding available, for childcare costs and some students studying in regions or specialisms that are struggling to recruit.

This funding will not have to be repaid, and you will also be able to access the standard support package from the Student Loans Company, including tuition fee and maintenance loans.

Funding is also available through the NHS Learning Support Fund for travel and accommodation costs for clinical placements, childcare and for students facing financial hardship.

[www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/learning-support-fund](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/learning-support-fund)

### Childcare

If you're a full-time student with dependent children you might be able to get extra funding to help with certain costs.

[gov.uk/childcare-grant](https://www.gov.uk/childcare-grant)  
[gov.uk/parents-learning-allowance](https://www.gov.uk/parents-learning-allowance)

## Bursaries And Scholarships

Many universities and colleges offer their own bursaries (grants) and scholarships to students. Each provider decides what support they'll offer – so you should contact your chosen university or college directly to find out more.

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## Repayment

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Your monthly repayments are based on how much you earn, not what you borrow.

You won't start to repay your loan until you've left your course and you're earning more than the repayment threshold. Until March 2020 this is £25,725 per year / £2,143 a month / £494 a week. From April 2020 this will increase to £26,575 per year.

Your employer will deduct repayments from your salary, in the same way as tax and national insurance contributions. If you're self-employed, you'll make repayments as part of your self-assessment return to HMRC, the same way that you'd pay self-employed taxes.

Your repayments will be 9% of your salary above the threshold. So, if you currently earn £27,725 annually, you'll repay 9% of £2,000 over the year – that's £15 a month.

If you stop working, or your income drops below the repayment threshold, your repayments will stop – and only start again when your income is over the threshold.

If you haven't paid back all of your loan 30 years after you're due to start repaying, it will be written off (as long as you are not in any breach of your repayment requirements). You won't need to repay anything more, no matter how much you might be earning then.



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## Interest Rates (%)

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Interest is charged on your loan from the day you receive your first loan instalment until it's repaid in full, or until 30 years after you are due to start repaying – at which point your outstanding loan and any interest will be written off.

While you're studying – and until the April after you leave university or college – you'll be charged interest at the Retail Price Index (RPI) plus 3%. RPI is currently set at 2.4%.

From the April after you leave your course the amount of interest will vary, depending on your income.

If you are earning under the repayment threshold your interest will be charged at RPI only. As you start to earn more your interest rate will increase on a sliding scale, up to RPI + 3% when you're earning over the higher interest threshold (currently £46,305 per year).

After leaving your course, it's really important to keep the Student Loans Company up to date with your current address, including if you're studying, working or travelling abroad. If you don't, you will be charged interest at RPI + 3%, whatever you're earning.

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## Next Steps

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- Register an account at [gov.uk/student-finance](https://www.gov.uk/student-finance)
- The main window for student loan applications is in the spring (usually February to the end of May).
- Do your research

### Student Finance

- [discoveruni.gov.uk](https://discoveruni.gov.uk)
- [thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance](https://thestudentroom.co.uk/student-finance)
- [savethestudent.org](https://savethestudent.org)
- [ucas.com](https://ucas.com)
- [apprenticeships.gov.uk](https://apprenticeships.gov.uk)
- [nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)

### Budgeting

- [moneyadviceservice.org.uk](https://moneyadviceservice.org.uk)
- [moneysavingexpert.com/students](https://moneysavingexpert.com/students)
- [citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk)