



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Student Finance Wales Information Notice

SFWIN 07/2020

Amendments to be included in the Student Support
Regulations for Academic Year 2021/22

December 2020

Amendments to be included in the Student Support Regulations for Academic Year 2021/22

The Education (Student Finance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Wales) Regulations 2021 (“the 2021 Regulations”) are currently being drafted and, once made, will provide support for students ordinarily resident in Wales taking a designated course of higher education.

The 2021 Regulations are due to come into force on 26 February 2021.

The 2021 Regulations apply to academic years beginning on or after 1 August 2021 and make the changes as set out below:

1. Financial package

Regulations are being amended to change the amount of undergraduate support in line with established policy, as follows:

- to **increase** the overall amount of Disabled Student’s Grant (DSGs) available to new and continuing students (i.e. all cohorts) ordinarily resident in Wales;
- to **increase** the amount of Grants for Dependents available to new and continuing students (i.e. all cohorts) ordinarily resident in Wales by the projected rate of inflation (3.05 per cent);
- 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 2021 (National Living Wage hourly rate £9.20);
- 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 by the projected rate of inflation to reflect cost of living increases; and
- 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 so that overall tuition fee support is unchanged.

The Postgraduate Master’s Regulations are being amended to **increase** the amount of support by RPIX from £17,489 to £18,025, by increasing the amount of loan. This will apply to new students only, those starting courses on or after 1 August 2021.

The Postgraduate Doctoral Loan Regulations are being amended to increase the amount of support by RPIX from £26,445 to £27,265. Doctoral support is loan only. Again, this will be for new students starting courses on or after 1 August 2021, a change from the previous uplift.

Further detail on this is included in SFWIN 06/2020, in relation to publication of the Financial Memo.

2. Disabled Students' Grants (DSGs) (known as Disabled Students' Allowances)

Regulations are being amended to enable more flexibility for students and to create parity for all disabled students:

- There are currently four allowance category thresholds available to students. Three of these (non-medical helper allowance, specialist equipment and general allowance for other disability related expenditure) will be amalgamated into a single category. Travel will remain as a separate allowance with no predefined threshold, as it currently operates.
- The support available to postgraduate students will be aligned with that of undergraduate students.
- The support available to part time students will be aligned with that of full time students.

The cap on the new combined allowance (excluding travel) for 2021/22 will be £31,831. This cap is the same for full-time or part-time students studying at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

In addition, an amendment is being made to ensure that undergraduate and postgraduate students, who become eligible students after the start of the academic year under the event provisions, will qualify for full DSG support from the date on which they become an eligible student.

Both new and continuing students will benefit from these changes in 2021/22 academic year.

3. Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) Coding Changes

Regulation 25 of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2018 provides, for courses beginning on or after 1 August 2018, for a part-time student to be eligible for support where he/she may not otherwise be. In particular, a part-time student will be eligible for support despite having attained a first degree from a UK institution if he/she is studying one of the courses listed in regulation 25(2) case 3. Regulation 81(28) of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2017 makes the same provision for courses beginning before 1 August 2018.

The exempt subjects are defined using HECoS¹. The Higher Education Statistics Agency revises the classification from time-to-time and has recently updated from version 1.2 to 1.3.3. Version 1.2 is due to be deprecated on 31 July 2021. A previous Information Notice (SFWIN 02/2020) described how the changes will affect the exempt subjects.

The regulations provide an exemption for courses with a Common Aggregation Hierarchy ('CAH') code of 'CAH07 Physical Sciences', among others. References to the CAH codes will be updated in the regulations. It will be necessary to ensure that three subjects which now map to the revised CAH07 are not classed as exemptions

¹ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/innovation/hecos>