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Introduction to Student Funding 2022-2023

Section 1 - Application Process

1. Who should complete the Student Funding Application?

Students starting the following courses should complete this form:

- Access to Higher Education (SWAP) - Arts & Social Sciences
- Access to Higher Education (SWAP) - Primary Education
- Access to Higher Education (SWAP) - Celtic Culture with Gaelic
- National Certificate (NC) - Rural Skills
- National Certificate (NC) - Arts & Social Sciences
- Preparation for Further Education

If you are studying at HNC/HND level, please contact:

Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)

www.saas.gov.uk

2. When should I apply?

A Student Funding Application will be sent out to you once you have accepted an unconditional place at College.

If your application form and evidence is received after the course starts, your payments may be delayed due to the volume of applications. Students are asked to complete and submit their application with supporting documentation as soon as possible.

3. Application Closing Dates

You will receive an acknowledgement email when we receive your application form. If you do not receive an email within 2 weeks of sending your form, please contact us.

It can take up to 6 weeks for your application to be assessed. This is due to the volume of applications received. **Apply early!**

We will only send you an award notice when your application is fully complete. This means we must have all of the information and evidence required.

We will contact you in writing if we require further information or evidence to complete our assessment.

4. What to do if your Application is declined?

Each application is assessed against a clear set of criteria, most of which is set by bodies outside the College such as the Scottish Funding Council or Scottish

Government. If declined, you will receive a letter/email from the College outlining the reason(s).

If your application has been declined, and you do not agree with this decision, you can make a formal appeal against this decision. You should write to:

Business & Resource Manager
 Newbattle Abbey College
 Newbattle Road
 Dalkeith
 EH22 3LL

Please provide full information about your funding appeal, enclosing any additional documentary evidence to support your claim for funding.

All appeals are fully investigated.

5. Funding available/Weekly Maintenance Amounts

<u>EMA</u> Students who are aged 16 or 17 years of age on the date the course starts (some 18 year olds depending on circumstances)	<u>Parentally Supported</u> 20 - 24 years of age	<u>Self-Supporting</u> 25 years of age and above	<u>Personal Allowance if residential</u>	<u>Student Accommodation</u>
£30.00 per week	£89.42 per week at parental home £113.00 per week away from parental home	£113.00 per week	£33.03 per week	£126.12 per week (deducted at source)

**Students eligible to remain on Universal Credit while attending College will receive £28.00 per week.

**Students under 18 away from parental home will receive £44.92 per week.

** If you are currently in care or are a care leaver, you can apply for a Care Experienced Award of £202.50 per week. This is for anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked-after background at any stage of their life, no matter how short. This care may have been provided in one of many different

settings such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care or looked after at home with a supervision requirement. You will be asked to complete a Care Experience Evidence Form.

** Dependants Allowance £60.80 per week

Please contact the Admin Office for further clarification regarding funding available.

6. Previous Study and Finance

If you have been a full-time student or received funding within the last six years, please contact the Admin Team to find out if there are any restrictions on your eligibility for funding.

7. Supporting evidence required

A document checklist can be found at the end of this document. (Appendix 1).

8. Residency

To be considered as a Scottish home student you must meet **all** of the following three conditions:

1. You normally live in Scotland on the first day of the first academic year of your course (usually the 1st August) **AND**
2. You have been living in the UK for 3 years before starting your course **AND**
3. You are a UK national or have “settled status” (this means you have no restrictions on how long you can stay).

If you do not meet all of these conditions, you may still be eligible for some elements of support if you meet the requirements of one of the other UK residency categories listed:

- You are an EU national, or a family member of an EU national with settled/pre-settled status
- You are a refugee
- You are under humanitarian protection (as a result of a failed application for Asylum)
- You are a migrant worker
- You are a child of a Swiss national; or
- You are a child of a Turkish worker
- You are a Syrian Refugee (Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme)
- You must also normally be living in Scotland on the first day of the first academic year of the course.

Further information for EU students can be found **on the SAAS website**.

If you normally live in Orkney or Shetland you should apply to College for EMA only. You need to apply to your local Islands Authority if you wish to be considered for bursary funding.

Students from England and Wales should apply to their own Local Education Authority and those from Northern Ireland to the Education Authority.

Section 2 - Types of Funding Available

1. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Eligibility

For a young person to receive EMA support they must first meet all of the eligibility criteria. This includes: meeting residency criteria

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2007/156/contents/made>; having a household income under the EMA income threshold of:

- £24,421 with no other dependent children in the household
- £26,884 with other dependent children in the household

And taking part in an eligible course of learning.

Course Eligibility

- A course of school education;
- A course of non-advanced education at home which has been approved by the Education Authority;
- A course of non-advanced education elsewhere under the supervision of the Education Authority, (including Learning Agreements/Action Plans), or
- A course of non advanced education at college

AGE

Recipients will normally be aged between 16 and 19 (inclusive). However, as with school students, college students and those on Learning Agreements/Action plans and not enrolled in school or college should follow the school intake dates of eligibility to maintain consistency across all recipients. This means some young people may start receiving EMA at the age of 15 years.

The two intakes of eligibility reflect the two school leaving dates in Scotland (set out below). Eligibility for continuing students should be reassessed at the start of each academic year. Young people on Learning Agreements/Action Plans not enrolled at school or college will apply at the point of signing their agreement.

EMA is not available to young people still in compulsory school education.

Autumn Intake

This will coincide with the start of the academic year following the summer school leaving date (last day of term before the summer holiday). Students who have reached the statutory school leaving age in the May prior to the current academic year will be eligible under this intake (i.e., those students who turn 16 between 1 March and the 30 September of the current year).

Winter Intake

This will coincide with the start of the term/course following the Christmas holidays. Students who would be eligible to leave school at the winter leaving

date (those whose 16th birthday falls between 1 October and the last day in February) become eligible for an EMA from the start of the term following the winter leaving date.

Your EMA payment is paid in arrears directly into your bank account and is dependent on attendance, conduct and progress. You are expected to attend all classes and cover any absences appropriately, each week to be eligible for your EMA payment. No allowance is payable for holiday period. Further information regarding payment dates etc., will be contained in your award letter.

An Individual Learning Agreement will be drawn up which will outline the attendance, progress and conduct requirements. EMA students will also be assessed for a Further Education Bursary award for assistance with travel costs and study materials where applicable.

2. Further Education Bursary

The eligibility rules set out by the Scottish Funding Council that the College has to adhere to are:

A student should only be deemed eligible for an award if all of the following criteria apply:

- They are residentially eligible
- They are beyond their statutory school leaving date and have left school
- They do not currently receive income replacement benefits or alternative funds and are not eligible to receive these during the course
- They have not previously received bursary or SAAS support or equivalent towards their maintenance, study or travel costs. Students who are ineligible due to this receive may still be eligible to receive bursary support.
- They are not adding to or improving an existing advanced level qualification. This is regardless of whether or not the student has received funding for their previous course and if the student possesses a qualification equivalent to SCQF Level 7 (HNC) or above.

Your award may include:

Maintenance Allowance

This is a means tested allowance to cover daily living costs while you attend College. If you are likely to be in receipt of an income replacement benefit while attending college, you will not be awarded a bursary maintenance allowance. This is detailed in the table above marked "Funding Available."

Travel

This allowance is to pay for your travel costs to attend College. You will only be eligible for this allowance if you live more than two miles away from College. The amount you receive is calculated on the cheapest form of public transport

available (usually student zonal tickets, First Bus) and will be paid only on the number of days you attend College. Under 22s can apply for free travel.

3. Student Assistance Fund

Students who experience unexpected financial difficulties due to unforeseen circumstances while they are at College may be eligible for assistance from our Discretionary Fund.

4. Residential Students

Students who are residential at College will receive a personal allowance as detailed in the above table marked “Funding Available.” However, you are requested to leave the residences during the Winter Break when you will receive a maintenance allowance for two weeks. This will be detailed in your award letter. Your accommodation will be deducted at source.

5. Student Information Scotland

www.studentinformation.gov.scot

The Scottish Government’s guide to student funding and finance, including a comprehensive funding checker and budget calculator.

Section 3 - Award Assessment

1. How will I be told what my award is?

Once your application has been assessed, the College will notify you of the details. If the award is provisional you will have to bring in additional information. Please retain this so that you know when your payments will be paid and how much you will receive. Also the Department of Work & Pensions will require this information if you submit a claim to them at a later date.

2. Means Testing

Bursary and EMA awards are means tested; as such your income and/or the income of your parent(s) or your partner/spouse will be taken into consideration when assessing your award.

When assessing parental or spouse/partner income, the College will use gross income (earned and unearned) received in the previous tax years (2021-2022 i.e., 6.4.21 - 5.4.22).

3. Exemption from Parental Contribution

A financial assessment based on gross parental income is undertaken for all students under twenty five years of age unless you can evidence independent status to show you are a self-supporting student.

If you are estranged, have no contact (for whatever reason) with parents or in Local Authority Care, you will be required to submit official documentation to support your claim for exemption from a parental assessment. This evidence must be from a reputable source such as a Social Worker, Key Worker or Homeless Persons Unit who can confirm your estrangement.

If you are Care Experienced, a Care Leaver or a Looked After Young Person you will be exempt from a parental assessment. You will be required to complete a Care Experience Evidence Form. If you are currently in receipt of any benefit income, we will take this into consideration when assessing you for your funding award.

4. Student Income

A financial assessment is also undertaken against your income and your contribution is assessed on the personal income that you receive during the period of your course. Your award will be reduced on a pound for pound basis for unearned income in excess of £21.77 per week. You will be asked to provide evidence of all your income.

Section 4 - After funding is awarded and the course has started

1. Change of Circumstances

If during your time at College your income or personal circumstances change for any reason, you must inform the Admin Team immediately to enable a reassessment of your award. This also includes a change of address.

Failure to do so may result in your application for support being cancelled and action will be taken to recover any money paid to you to which you are not entitled.

2. Payments

Payments are paid into your own or joint bank accounts and are dependent on your attendance, conduct and progress. EMA payments are every two weeks; bursary payments every four weeks. However, due to College holidays and closures this is not always possible. You will be informed of any change in payment date.

3. Responsibilities

You must ensure that you complete all College enrolment procedures. Payment will not be authorised until this is done and your entitlement to support will only start from the date of your enrolment.

Your award is dependent on your attendance, conduct and progress during your time at College for which the award was made. In cases where your conduct and/or progress and/or attendance is unsatisfactory in any given period without any satisfactory explanation, your payments will be suspended. If you withdraw from your course and have been overpaid, you will be required to repay this overpayment.

4. Jobseekers and Universal Credits

As a general rule, full-time students do not qualify for benefits and you must cancel your claim for Jobseekers' Allowance when you enrol on your course and submit your P45 or letter from DWP confirming the benefit end date. Your College payments will stop if you do not submit evidence of benefit end date, if you are no longer entitled to stay on this benefit.

You must check with DWP whether you will be allowed to remain on your benefit as some students are eligible to continue to claim benefits while attending College. Students who can remain on Universal Credits while on their course are

eligible for Universal Credit top up bursary - please see above marked “Funding Available.”

5. Overpayment of Award

Your award may be revised by the College at any time if:

- You fail to comply with the terms and conditions of the award
- You have omitted to submit any relevant documentation
- You have made a false declaration in your funding application
- An error has been made in calculation of your award

If you have any questions about student funding, please contact us on the details above.

Appendix 1

Document Checklist

Please use to check you have submitted all the necessary evidence to support your funding application. **ONLY SUBMIT WHAT IS RELEVANT TO YOU.** This list is intended as a guide and may not cover the full range of evidence required. Your award may be delayed if you do not enclose the correct documentary evidence

All Students

(All students must provide one form of identification)

- Birth Certificate or Passport

Care Experienced Students

- A completed Care Experience Evidence Form

Parentally Supported Students

- Evidence of any unearned income

Proof of Parental Income:

- If employed: P60 (2021/2022) or Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) (2021/2022)
- If unemployed: DWP Letter of Entitlement (dated within the last 6 months) or Benefits Certificate (attached to Student Funding Application)

Proof of Other Dependents

- Birth certificates of any other dependent children in household
- Evidence of any maintenance payments e.g., CSA letter

Applying for Self-Supporting Status

Proof of Income:

- P60's and/or DWP entitlement letters covering 3 full tax years

Self Supporting Students

Proof of Student Income:

- Evidence of any unearned income

If married or living with a partner:

- Marriage certificate or proof of co-habitation e.g. Council Tax Notice

Proof of Spouse/Partners Income:

- If employed: P60 (2021/2022) or Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) (2021/2022)
- If self-employed: Accountant Certificate (attached to Student Funding Application)
- If unemployed: DWP Letter of Entitlement (dated within the last 6 months) or Benefits Certificate (attached to Student Funding Application)

Proof of Other Dependents

- Birth certificates of any other dependent children in household
- Evidence of any maintenance payments e.g., CSA Proof of Other Dependents

If you are under 18 years and apply for assistance with course expenses and travel costs only, you do not need to submit evidence of your parent(s)/guardian(s) income only your identification.