



The Undergraduate Finance Guide you can Bank On

(September 2011/12 entrants)

Just see how the benefits add up

It's really important to understand the ins and outs of student finance before you go to university.

The two main expenses you'll have during your time at Staffordshire University will be tuition fees and living costs. Fortunately, depending on your circumstances, all sorts of help could be available.

In this straightforward guide for full-time undergraduates, we look at what you'll be able to claim, what you'll have to repay and how to apply.

If you need to know more, simply refer to the useful contacts we've included.

IMPORTANT STUFF
The information contained in this guide was correct at the time of printing for full-time UK undergraduate students going to university in the academic year 2011/2012, so please check to see if there have been any changes before you begin your studies. **Please note:** if you have done any previous study at Higher Education Level, please seek advice from Student Finance England or the Student Advice Centre (see useful contacts section) as the student funding you are entitled to may be affected.

- How "Residual Household Income" is calculated:**
- For 2011-12 starters, it is calculated using gross taxable household income in the 2009-10 tax year (unless the parent/partner is self-employed).
 - Deductions are then made for any other dependent children and for some types of pension payments (the types are listed on the student finance application form). Any parental/partner contribution is based on this final figure.
 - NB: if gross income has dropped by 15% or more since the 2009-10 tax year, do inform Student Finance England of this and ask if they will use income from the 2011-12 tax year instead.

- Whose income is included?**
- Always the student's un-earned income (often £0).
 - Usually the income of the parent/s the student lived with before starting the course (including step-parents).
 - The income of siblings is never included.
 - If you have been classed as an independent student and you live with a partner, their income will be included but your parents/step-parents income will be ignored.

TUITION FEES – AND HOW TO PAY THEM

The Tuition Fee Loan
Your biggest annual expense as a student will probably be your tuition fees. Some students (often with help from mum and dad) choose to pay their tuition fees upfront or by interest-free instalments. Most take out a Tuition Fee Loan with the Student Loans Company which then pays the fees direct to the university in February and May of each academic year.

- You can apply for a Tuition Fee Loan each academic year unless you already have an Honours degree.
- There's nothing to repay until you graduate and are earning more than £15,000 per annum.
- For more info on paying upfront or by instalments, call the University Finance Office on (01785) 353383 or (01785) 353537.

2011/12 Staffordshire University tuition fees for full-time undergraduate students

First Degree (BA, BSc, BEng)	£3,375
• Foundation Year of an integrated First Degree course (level Zero)	£2,363
• Foundation Degree (FD)	£2,363
• Higher National Diploma (HND)	£2,363

These fees usually rise in line with inflation each academic year.

Students whose course expects them to complete a year in industry, will be able to take advantage of a very low tuition fee, which the University has put in place to support placement students. For example, in 2010/2011, the tuition fee for the placement year was £654.

THE STUDENT MAINTENANCE LOAN

- This loan is to help with living costs including rent, food, bills and travel.
- You can borrow up to £4,950 per academic year if you are living away from home or up to £3,838 if living with parents.
- You must be under 60 at the start of the course and not have an Honours degree.
- Regardless of family income, you can claim at least 72% of the maximum amount.
- The loan will be reduced if you receive a Maintenance Grant. (Please see the Maintenance Grant section for further details.)

When will you receive the loan?
It will be split into three equal instalments and paid into your bank account by the Student Loans Company. The first will be paid 3 to 4 working days after enrolment. The second and third will be paid in January, and after the Easter break.

- When does it have to be repaid?**
- Not until you graduate and are earning more than £15,000 per annum.

EXTRA MONEY FOR LONGER COURSES
Most Staffordshire University courses are approximately 4 weeks longer than standard university courses - and Fast-track courses are even longer. To help you get by, you could be entitled to an extra £83 per week if living away from home or £54 per week if you are living with parents. You will be assessed for this extra allowance when you apply for a Student Maintenance Loan. If you are eligible, it will be added to your Student Loan and repaid in the same way.

MAINTENANCE GRANT — OR — SPECIAL SUPPORT GRANT

- This grant provides extra money each year towards living costs.
- It is paid in addition to the Student Loan.
- The amount you'll receive depends on your residual household income*.
- It does not need to be repaid!

How much you'll receive and when
The grant will be split into three equal instalments and paid into your bank account by the Student Loans Company. The first will be paid 3 to 4 working days after enrolment. The second and third will be paid in January, and after the Easter break.

See how much Maintenance Grant plus Student Loan you could receive

Residual Household Income	Maintenance Grant	Student Maintenance Loan
£25,000 or below	£2,906	£3,497
£30,000	£1,906	£3,997
£34,000	£1,106	£4,397
£40,000	£711	£4,595
£45,000	£381	£4,760
£50,020	£50	£4,925
£50,778	Nil	£4,950

Please note: if you are living at home, you will receive less student loan than that stated above

MAINTENANCE GRANT — OR — SPECIAL SUPPORT GRANT

- Depending on your circumstances, you could receive a Special Support Grant instead of a Maintenance Grant. You cannot receive both.
- It provides extra money towards living costs each year in addition to the Student Loan.
- Unlike the Maintenance Grant, it won't reduce the amount of Maintenance Loan you receive.
- It does not need to be repaid!

You will be assessed for the Special Support Grant if:

- You have dependent children and do not have a partner,
- OR you have dependent children and your partner is also a full-time student,
- OR you are over 60,
- OR you are eligible for certain disability benefits.

How much you'll receive and when

- The grant will be split into three equal instalments and paid into your bank account by the Student Loans Company. The first will be paid 3 to 4 working days after enrolment. The second and third will be paid in January, and after the Easter break.

See how much Special Support Grant plus Student Loan you could receive*

Residual Household Income	Special Support Grant	Student Maintenance Loan
£25,000	£2,906	£4,950
£30,000	£1,906	£4,950
£34,000	£1,106	£4,950
£40,000	£711	£4,950
£45,000	£381	£4,950
£50,020	£50	£4,950
£50,778	Nil	£4,950

Please note: if you are living at home, you will receive less student loan than that stated above.

THE UNIVERSITY BURSARY

- This bursary is given by the university to help with general course costs.
- Whether you receive a University Bursary depends upon your household income.
- It does not need to be repaid!
- No bursary is available to students with a residual household income of above £30,810.

See how much University Bursary you could receive

Type of Course	Residual Household Income	Bursary per academic year
First Degree	£21,000 or less	£1,000
	£21,001 to £30,810	£500
Foundation Year	£21,000 or less	£700
	£21,001 to £30,810	£350
Foundation Degree	£21,000 or less	£700
	£21,001 to £30,810	£350
Higher National Diploma	£21,000 or less	£700
	£21,001 to £30,810	£350

When will the Bursary be paid?
If you are entitled to a Bursary, the University will send you a letter stating how much you have been given. This amount will be paid into your bank account in two equal instalments each academic year: half in March and half in May.

* Whether you receive the full Student Maintenance Loan, get a Maintenance Grant or a Special Support Grant will depend on your parents'/step-parents'/partner's income in the previous tax year. However, if you are at least 25 OR are estranged from your parents, OR have a dependent child, OR have supported yourself financially for at least 3 years prior to the start of the course, you will be classed as an independent student. This means that your parents'/step-parents' income will not be taken into account.

We've gone a long way ... to make sure you don't miss out on a thing

Extra financial help for ...



Social Work students

If you are a full-time Social Work student, you can also apply for a Social Work Bursary. Further information at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

- Available to all full-time undergraduate Social Work students.
- Not means tested – household income isn't taken into account.
- Awarded each academic year and split into three equal instalments.
- It does not need to be repaid!

Even if you already have an Honours degree, you can apply for a Student Loan if studying for a Social Work degree. Contact Student Finance England for further details.



PGCE students

If you are returning to university to complete a Post Graduate Certificate in Education, you will be able to claim:

- Tuition Fee Loan (as an undergraduate student).
- Student Maintenance Loan.
- Maintenance Grant or Special Support Grant.
- University Bursary.
- Training Bursary worth £4,000 - £9,000.



Disabled students

- You may be entitled to claim a Disabled Students Allowance if you incur extra course costs as a direct result of your disability.
- The amount you receive will depend on the support you need.

How your other disability benefits may change when you become a student:

- **Disability Living Allowance or Incapacity Benefit:** you can continue to receive this as a full-time student.
- **Income Support (on grounds of illness):** if you receive Income Support, this may stop once you become a full-time student because of your level of student income.
- **Employment Support Allowance:** once you become a full-time student, you cannot continue to receive Income-based Employment Support Allowance unless you receive Disability Living Allowance. Please seek further advice from the Student Advice Centre if you are receiving Contribution-based Employment Support Allowance.
- **Housing Benefit:** You are eligible to apply for this if you are receiving Employment Support Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Disability Living Allowance or you have been signed off work by a Doctor for at least 28 weeks and continue to be signed off.

Please note: your Student Loan and any Dependants Allowance will be counted as income when assessing you for Income Support and Housing Benefit.

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Students with children

Additional financial help available to you includes:

- **Parent Learning Allowance 2011/12 figures**
- Available if you have dependent children.
- Worth up to £1,508 per academic year depending on household income.
- **It does not need to be repaid!**

Childcare Grant

- Covers 85% of your registered or accredited actual childcare costs, up to:
 - o £148.75 per week for one child,
 - o £255.00 per week for two or more children.
- Amount received depends on your household income.
- **It does not need to be repaid!**

Not sure what your childcare costs will be? Don't wait to apply for your Childcare Grant! Give an estimate but make sure you provide your actual childcare costs once you begin your studies.

Adult Dependant Grant

- This is a grant for students with a spouse/adult who is wholly or mainly financially dependent on them.
- Amount received will depend on your own and your dependant's income.
- The maximum grant available for 2010/11 is £2,642
- **It does not need to be repaid!**

Social Security Benefits and Tax Credits

- **Income Support** – as of 25th October 2010, you can apply if you are a single parent responsible for a child aged 7 and under.
- **Jobseekers Allowance** - You can apply over the summer vacation if you are single and responsible for a child aged under 16 years (depending on the age of your youngest child you may be able to claim IS instead) OR you are a couple who are both full time students and responsible for a child under the age of 16. The person claiming must be 'available for and actively seeking work' and meet other Jobseekers Allowance rules.
- **Housing Benefit**
 - You can apply if:
 - o you are a single parent responsible for a dependent child aged under 20,
 - o you are a couple, both full-time students, and responsible for a dependent child aged under 20.

Please note: your Student Loan, Dependants Allowance and any Working Tax Credit will be counted as income when assessing you for Income Support and Housing Benefit.

- **Child Tax Credit** – you can apply if you have an income of less than £58,175 per year (up to £66,350 per year if you have a child under one).
- **Working Tax Credit:** you can apply if you (or your partner) have a dependent child and work at least 16 hours per week.



Other sources of finance

Care Leavers

If you're coming to university from Local Authority care, contact your Local Authority Leaving Care Team to see if any additional financial support may be available.

Student overdrafts

Most high street banks offer interest-free overdrafts with their student current accounts, providing you have a good credit rating. If you cannot get a current account, ask for a basic bank account – this does not include an overdraft facility.

Funderfinder

If you've weighed up everything you're entitled to and still think you need extra help, visit the University Careers and Employability Service as they have access to a program called Funderfinder. This searches through a database of trust charities and advises which of these may be able to offer you further help.

Access to Learning Fund (ALF)

If you need extra financial support, help may be available through the Access to Learning Fund. The fund cannot pay tuition fees and you cannot apply until you have enrolled on a course and received your first Student Loan instalment. If you receive an award from this discretionary fund, there's nothing to repay unless you leave the course. Visit: www.staffs.ac.uk/askalf

Part-time work and work on campus

Just the job!

Every year the Students' Union at Staffordshire University recruits and trains over 200 students for part-time jobs in the Union. It's the perfect way to earn extra cash and gain useful workplace skills!

Job Zone

- JobZone, part of Staffordshire University's Careers Centre, provides a number of FREE services for students and graduates, including:
 - Our JobShop which advertises part-time and holiday work for students
 - Become a Staffordshire University Student Ambassador – get a competitive rate of pay and a wide range of experiences, which will enhance your CV and give you real skills for the workplace
 - Jobs after graduating
 - Paid work experience
 - Voluntary work
 - Online graduate fairs
 - For 24/7 access to jobs and online registration for FREE job alerts go to www.staffs.ac.uk/jobzone

Council Tax

If you are a full-time student living with other full-time students, then you will not be liable to pay Council Tax. Full-time students living with non-students are also not liable for Council Tax but the house will still attract the tax which the non-student will have to pay. If there is only one adult non-student in the house, the Council Tax bill should be reduced by 25%. This has been the position since 6th April 2004.



Working out your student income

Now use the figures in this guide to work out how much you could be entitled to and how much you'll need to repay. The total yearly amount you'll have to live on has to cover everything... rent, bills, food, books, travel, going out, childcare costs, you name it!

FINANCIAL HELP AVAILABLE	AMOUNT I'LL RECEIVE	IS IT REPAYABLE?
Tuition Fee Loan (paid directly to the university)	£	Yes
Student Maintenance Loan	£	Yes
Maintenance Grant OR Special Support Grant	£	No
University Bursary	£	No
Social Work Bursary (Social Work students)	£	No
Parent Learning Allowance	£	No
Childcare Grant	£	No
Adult Dependant Grant	£	No
Social Security Benefits	£	No
Tax Credits	£	No
Disability Benefits	£	No
TOTAL YEARLY AMOUNT YOU'LL HAVE TO LIVE ON:	£	

When do the Tuition Fee Loan and Maintenance Loan need to be repaid?

- Repayments start in the April after you finish the course, providing you are earning more than £15,000 per annum.
- Interest is charged from the point at which you start receiving the Student Maintenance Loan and Tuition Fee Loan.

TUITION FEE LOAN AND MAINTENANCE LOAN REPAYMENT CHART

Income	Monthly repayment
£16,000	£7
£17,000	£15
£18,000	£22
£19,000	£30
£20,000	£37
£21,000	£45
£22,000	£52
£23,000	£60
£24,000	£67



Applying for financial support

TYPE OF SUPPORT	HOW AND WHERE TO APPLY	WHEN TO APPLY
Tuition Fee Loan Student Maintenance Loan Maintenance Grant Special Support Grant University Bursary Parent Learning Allowance Adult Dependant Grant	Complete a PN1 form online or download to submit a paper copy. Or request a paper copy from the Student Finance England Contact Centre. Visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance In your 2nd and 3rd year of study, you will need to complete a PR1 form.	You can apply soon after you have completed your UCAS form. An ideal time would be January, February, March.
Childcare Grant	Complete a CCG1 form. Student Finance England will send this form if you have said on your PN1 form that you need help with childcare costs.	
Disabled Students Allowance	Complete a DSA1 form from Student Finance England.	
Social Work Bursary	Download a form from the NHS Business Services Authority website http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students .	As early as possible prior to starting your course.
Teacher Training Bursary	Contact the Teaching Information Line on 0800 389 2500 for further information	

I've already started my course. Can I still apply for financial support?

- Yes, you can apply for financial support up to 9 months from the beginning of the September of each academic year. But please apply as early as possible so that you are assessed in time for the start of the next academic year.

What happens once I've applied?

- Once you have been assessed by Student Finance England you will receive a financial assessment form (stating what financial support you've been given) and a payment schedule from the Student Loans Company. (This will state when monies will be paid into your bank account.)
- Please keep these documents safe, different people will need to see them over the academic year.



Useful contacts

Student Finance England
www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
0845 300 5090

Student Loans Company
www.sl.c.co.uk
Student Support Helpline: 0845 602 0583

Staffordshire University Student Guidance Officers
Stoke: 01782 292768
Stafford: 01785 353749

Money Doctors Service
The Students' Advice Centre
Staffordshire University
Students' Union
Stoke: 01782 294469
Stafford: 01785 353425
moneydoctors@staffs.ac.uk
www.staffsunion.com/moneydoctors

The Student Enabling Centre, Staffordshire University
t: 01782 294977
e: disability@staffs.ac.uk

Access to Learning Fund (ALF)
www.staffs.ac.uk/askalf

