



Dependants' Grants - Childcare Grant

What is Childcare Grant? 

How do students apply for Childcare Grant? 

How do students confirm their childcare costs? 



What is Childcare Grant?

Childcare Grant helps with childcare costs for students who have dependent children aged under 15 at the beginning of the academic year (or under 17 if the child has special educational needs) in registered or approved childcare. It's based on their household income and doesn't usually have to be paid back.



Who qualifies for Childcare Grant?

Full-time undergraduate and postgraduate Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students at universities or colleges in the UK can apply for Childcare Grant if, at the beginning of the academic year, they have:

- at least one dependent child under 15 who is in registered or approved childcare, or
- at least one dependent child under 17, who has special educational needs, and is in registered or approved childcare.

If, during the academic year, the student, or their husband, wife, civil partner or partner receives:

- the childcare element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit, or
- Tax-Free Childcare from HM Revenue & Customs,

they won't be able to get Childcare Grant at the same time, but they can choose to get Childcare Grant instead.

If they started their course before 1 August 2017

They won't be able to get Childcare Grant if the student, or their husband, wife, civil partner or partner, get Childcare Allowance from the NHS but they can choose to get Childcare Grant from us instead.

Students won't be able to get Childcare Grant if their childcare provider is:

- their partner,
- a relative of their child and providing care in their child's home, or
- a relative of their child and is:
 - approved under the Approval of Child Care Providers Scheme in Wales, or the Approval of Home Child Care Providers Scheme in Northern Ireland, and
 - providing care away from the child's home.

What is registered or approved childcare?



Students can only get Childcare Grant if their childcare provider is in England and registered or approved by:

- Ofsted
- the Care Quality Commission
- an equivalent inspection body appointed by the Secretary of State to inspect certain independent schools

If their childcare provider is in Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland, they must be registered or approved by the regulatory body that inspects childcare in the country they're based.

Students may also qualify for Childcare Grant if they're studying abroad as part of their UK course and are using childcare provided under a Ministry of Defence accreditation scheme.

How much Childcare Grant is available?



The amount of Childcare Grant available to a student depends on their household income and how much they are charged by their childcare provider.

Their household income is the income of their husband, wife, civil partner or partner (if they have one) and any dependants.

Students can apply for up to 85% of their actual childcare costs during term times and holidays. The amount they can receive is capped at £159.59 a week for one child or £273.60 a week for two or more children.

We'll work out how much Childcare Grant a student can get using their estimate of their childcare costs. We'll confirm the actual amounts they've been charged three times during the academic year and adjust their payments if we need to.

It's important for students to apply as early as possible so their payment is ready for the start of their course. If the student can't give details of their childcare provider on their Childcare Grant application form, they should still apply, but we'll cap their first payment at £123.38 a week or 85% of their estimated costs, whichever is less.

The earliest they can claim for Childcare Grant is the first day of the academic year, which is usually 1 September. In the final year of their course, the Childcare Grant can only be paid until the last day of their final term.

If the student has to pay for childcare between the start of their academic year and the start of their course, their first payment will cover this period. If the student has to pay for childcare during their summer holidays, this will be included in their third payment.

How do students apply for Childcare Grant?



1. Fill in the main student finance application

To apply for Childcare Grant, the student should fill in the main application for student finance and tick the box to tell us they want to apply for Childcare Grant. The quickest way to do this is online at **www.gov.uk/studentfinance**

They should then fill in and return a Childcare Grant application form (CCG1), which can be downloaded from their online account. This form asks for details about their children, childcare provider(s) and an estimate of their weekly childcare costs. We can also post them a copy of the form, but this will take longer.

To avoid having to repay anything, it's important for the student to give a realistic estimate of their costs.

We'll also ask for additional evidence, for example their child's birth certificate and evidence to show the child is dependent on the student. The student must send all the evidence we ask for as soon as possible, otherwise their application may be delayed. You can find out more about the evidence they'll need to send on the 'Dependants' Grants – evidence' factsheet.

Students must apply for Childcare Grant within nine months of the start of the academic year.

Students who started their course before 1 August 2013

Students who started their course before 1 August 2013 will also be asked to give details of any financial commitments they had before the start of their course. They must give an estimate of the annual totals for each commitment. If they give monthly payment amounts, we won't be able to consider the actual amount they pay during the year and they may not get all the Dependants' Grants they're entitled to at the beginning of the year. We'll contact these students at the end of the academic year to ask for evidence of their household income and financial commitments. You can find more information about this on the 'Dependants' Grants – finalisation' factsheet.

2. We'll send the student a Student Finance Entitlement letter

We'll assess the student's application and send them a letter telling them how much student finance they can get, including any Childcare Grant.

3. We'll pay the student

We'll pay any Childcare Grant directly into the student's bank account in three instalments, usually at the same time as any other student finance they get. But before we can pay the second or third instalments, we'll ask the student to confirm their actual childcare costs.

How do students confirm their childcare costs?



At three points during the academic year, we'll send the student a Childcare Costs Confirmation form (CCG2).

This form should be completed by the childcare provider to confirm the **actual** weekly amounts they've charged the student for childcare. The form also allows the student to give updated estimates of their childcare costs for the remainder of the academic year.

The table below gives details of the childcare periods.

	September course start	January course start	April course start	July course start
Period 1	1 September 2017 - 22 October 2017	1 January 2018 - 25 February 2018	1 April 2018 - 20 May 2018	1 July 2018 - 19 August 2018
Period 2	23 October 2017 - 21 January 2018	26 February 2018 - 27 May 2018	21 May 2018 - 19 August 2018	20 August 2018 - 18 November 2018
Period 3	22 January 2018 - 31 August 2018	28 May 2018 - 31 December 2018	20 August 2018 - 31 March 2019	19 November 2018 - 30 June 2019
Period 3 (final year students)	22 January 2018 - last day of final term	28 May 2018 - last day of final term	20 August 2018 - last day of final term	19 November 2018 - last day of final term

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We'll use the actual childcare costs provided by the childcare provider to make sure the student has been paid the correct amount of Childcare Grant. If they've been underpaid, we'll pay them the rest of the money they're entitled to. If the student has been overpaid, we'll reduce their next instalment by the amount we've overpaid them. If this isn't possible, we'll arrange another way for them to repay the amount they weren't entitled to.

The letter sent with the CCG2 form will advise when the form must be returned - if they don't return their form in time, their next Childcare Grant payment will be delayed.

If the student doesn't return their form at all, they will lose their entitlement to Childcare Grant and we'll ask them to repay any amount they've already received.

Does getting the Childcare Grant affect benefits?



No. Childcare Grant won't be taken into account by HM Revenue & Customs, Jobcentre Plus or the local Housing Benefit office when any income-related benefits are worked out.

For more information about getting benefits, students should visit www.gov.uk

www.practitioners.slc.co.uk

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