

# Student Finance After Brexit Webinar Transcript

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## Transcript

**PAUL SMITH:** Hello, I'm Paul Smith, Head of Partner Services at the Student Loans Company, and I welcome you to our webinar Student Finance after Brexit, where we explore the implications for student finance, access and eligibility in England, Wales and Northern Ireland following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

This briefing will run for approximately one and a half to two hours, including a live Q&A session and will explain changes to student support regulations, examine changes to student eligibility, new evidence requirements and updates to the application process, in response to the new post-withdrawal immigration rules coming into force.

We aim to help and enable you, as professionals and practitioners in giving advice and guidance to students, to incorporate student finance into the information you provide and so we hope that this new information can be included and will prove invaluable in ensuring prospective students are aware of their entitlement to Student Finance.

This event is being subtitled live, as you can see below, so we will also be providing a verbatim transcript for the video on demand version, which will be available following the completion of the webinar programme. We are aiming for the middle of March to do this. I am now pleased to introduce Kevin McMullen, a regional manager from the Funding Information Services Team, who will take you through the briefing.

Thank you

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Thank you, Paul. Welcome to today's webinar about the UK's exit from the EU and the effect on student finance eligibility and entitlement in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The content will be broken up into manageable sections. We will also use real world examples to help explain and put context to the extensive changes in the new policy. Whilst we will spend more time focussing on the changes that will impact the majority of our EU and EEA nationals, for completeness, we will also reference policy changes that we suspect will have less of an impact or affect fewer applicants. Before we move into the detail of the presentation, there are a couple of essential points to make you aware of.

In this first section, we will look at Citizens' Rights and the European Union Settlement Scheme. Free movement for EU, EEA, Swiss and UK nationals was permitted until the end of the transition period, which was 31st of December 2020. But from 1st of January 2021, a new points-based immigration system will apply. Nationals and their respective family members who were living in the UK by the end of the transition period will have Citizens' Rights under the EU Withdrawal Agreement. And those with Citizens' Rights can continue to legally reside in the UK and enjoy associated rights.

With the exception of some instances that we will look at, the rights of those who move to the UK after the end of the transition period will be subject to the new points-based immigration system. Further details on the general rules around Citizens' Rights can be found on the government advice page at the website shown on the slide.



Those with Citizens' Rights can apply for a status under the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme. The scheme has been open since March 2019 and will continue to be open until 30th of June 2021. In certain circumstances, family members can join an EEA or Swiss national in the UK after the end of the transition period and still apply to the Settlement Scheme. In this instance, applications can be considered after the deadline. Family members who are granted a status will have the same rights in the UK whether or not they arrived in the UK by the end of the transition period.

Applicants to the scheme will be awarded one of two statuses - Settled or Pre-Settled Status. Settled status will be awarded if the applicant has a minimum of five years continuous, lawful residence in the UK. Pre-Settled status will be awarded if the applicant has a shorter period of UK residence, anything less than five continuous years. Once the applicant has completed five years of continuous lawful residence in the UK, they are able to change their Pre-Settled status to Settled status. Any decision to award Pre-Settled or Settled status is taken solely by the Home Office, who own and operate the EU Settlement Scheme. Any queries around the scheme or the resulting status award should be directed to the Home Office via the links on the GOV.UK website.

So what might this look like in terms of numbers? Well, as of 31st of December 2020 there were over four and a half million applications made to the EU Settlement Scheme, with 54% being awarded Settled status and 43% Pre-Settled status.

Those individuals that are awarded Pre-Settled or Settled status will be able to work in the UK, use the NHS, enrol or continue in study, access public funds such as benefits and pensions and be permitted to travel in and out of the UK. Students from the EU, EEA or Switzerland starting courses from August 2021 will not be eligible for home fee status or funding unless they meet one of the following criteria: They have a status granted under the EU Settlement Scheme or they are an Irish national living in the UK and Islands or the country of Ireland referred to collectively as the Common Travel Area.

Our first example to illustrate the importance of gaining a status looks at Daniela, a Romanian national who arrives in England in April 21. She will be subject to the points-based immigration system as she arrived after the end of the transition period on 31st of December. She previously lived in France and she starts a degree course in October 21. Daniela is ineligible for any support as she is an EU national who does not have Citizens' Rights, meaning that she cannot get a status under the Settlement Scheme.

In a similar case, Eliska is a Czech national who moved to the UK in March 16. However, she does not apply to the scheme before the 30th of June 2021 closing date. She applies to SFE for support for a course starting in September 21 but is ineligible for support as she did not apply for a status as such, she cannot be awarded Pre-Settled or Settled status.

Before we focus on the courses that start in Academic Year 21, it is worth taking some time to remind ourselves about the support in the current Academic Year and the current policy for our continuing students. All four UK territories confirmed that student support policy rules and home free status are unaffected by EU exit for students who started a course in Academic Year 2020 or earlier. Support will continue on the same eligibility grounds until these students have completed their course, even if that course started after the end of the transition period. So importantly, this will include any courses starting between January and July 21, which is still within Academic Year 2020.

EU, EEA and Swiss national students and their respective eligible family members will continue to be eligible for student support from all four UK territories, irrespective of how long the course lasts or if the student transfers course. This applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.



For an idea of scale and an attempt to put into context the number of students that will be impacted by these changes, in 2019 there were just over 56 thousand EU students in receipt of Tuition Fee support from Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales and Student Finance Northern Ireland.

The overwhelming majority of these applications were to study at institutions in England, but there continues to be a significant number of students in Wales, with fewer at institutions in Northern Ireland. As we move on into academic year 21, students will continue to be funded based on where they are ordinarily resident in the UK.

Information and guidance for both students and practitioners regarding the post-Brexit student finance eligibility changes are available across government and SLC websites and our social media channels. Please share these links via your own institution website and social media channels to promote and encourage understanding of the new guidance.

In this section, we will examine in more detail those students that do have Settled or Pre-Settled status and how this status can impact their student support. Students with Settled status, that is, students that have lived in the UK and Islands for a continuous five-year period will be able to access full undergraduate support, Postgraduate Loans and if studying at a Learning Provider in England FE Advanced Learner Loans.

However, there are some long standing additional requirements alongside this. They must also be ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for three years prior to the start of the course and be ordinarily resident in the home domicile on the first day of the first year of their course. Settled status allows holders to spend up to five years in a row outside the UK without losing this status.

To demonstrate a straightforward example of students with Settled status, we will look at Adelina, a Spanish national who moved to the UK in March 2015. She is granted Settled status in June 2020 and applies to SFE for support for a course starting in England in September 21. She is eligible for full SFE support because she has Settled status and she is ordinarily resident in England on the first day of her course and has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for three years prior to the first day of her course.

More complicated would be the case of Hans. He is a German national who arrives in the UK in June 2015, having prior to that lived in Germany. He is granted Settled status in August 2020 but returns to live in Germany in October of the same year. He then returns to the UK in August 21 to start a course in September. As he does not have three years of ordinary residence in the UK and Islands prior to the first day of his course, Hans is not eligible for full support. His return to live in Germany could not be deemed as temporary, therefore he cannot be said to have three years ordinary residence in the UK and Islands. He is eligible for Tuition Fee support as an EU national with Citizens' Rights and three years of ordinary residence in the EU or EEA, prior to the first day of his course.

When students are awarded Pre-Settled status, the student funding that this status attracts does differ depending on if the study is in England, or if it is in Wales or Northern Ireland. Students with Pre-Settled status, that is, students that have lived in the UK and Islands for less than five years that are studying in England, will be able to access Tuition Fee support, Postgraduate Loans and access Advanced Learner Loans from Student Finance England.

Students with Pre-Settled status that are studying in Wales or Northern Ireland will be entitled to full undergraduate or postgraduate support from Student Finance Wales or Student Finance Northern Ireland, depending on the location of their ordinary residence.



All must be ordinarily resident in either the UK, EU or EEA for the three-year period prior to the first day of their course. Pre-Settled status permits the holder to spend up to two years in a row outside the UK without losing this status.

Antonia is an Italian national who arrives in the UK from Italy in September 2019. She applies for and is granted Pre-Settled status in October 2020 then moves to Germany to live in February 21. Finally, she returns to the UK in June 21. As a person with Pre-Settled status, Antonia can leave the UK for up to six months in every 12-month period without losing her Pre-Settled status or breaking her continuous residence. She is therefore eligible for fee support for a course starting in September 21 because she has Pre-Settled status on the first day of the course and has three years of ordinary residence in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA countries or Switzerland prior to the first day of her course.

As we have previously mentioned, EU nationals granted Pre-Settled status will be eligible to apply for full support from Student Finance Wales or Student Finance Northern Ireland. This is provided that alongside this status, they are ordinarily resident in Wales or Northern Ireland on the first day of their course and have been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for three years up to this date.

For example, take Tomas, a Portuguese national who moved to the UK in July 2018. He has been living in Wales since October 2020. He is granted Pre-Settled status in November 2020. He applies to SFW for support for a course starting in September 21 and is eligible for full support because he has Pre-Settled status and is ordinarily resident in Wales on the first day of the first year of the course. He has also been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for three years prior to this date.

As with existing policy, we need to consider those students that may be eligible for support by virtue of the fact that they are the family member of a person with an eligible status. There are two main categories that we need to look at for these instances. Firstly, the family members of EU or EEA nationals and secondly, the non-UK family members of a UK national.

In certain circumstances, family members can join an EU, EEA or Swiss national in the UK after the end of the transition period and still apply to the EU Settlement Scheme after they have arrived. In this instance, applications are not bound by the standard 30th of June deadline and can be made after that date. These family members who arrive and apply for a status through the scheme by utilising their family members Citizens' Rights will have the same rights whether they arrive before or after the end of the transition period.

General guidance for family members joining an EU or EEA national in the UK is that their relationship began before the 31st of December 2020 and they are still in the relationship when they apply to join the family member. So what is classed as a 'family member' for this category? Well, primarily this could mean a person's spouse or civil partner. It can also include their children or children of the spouse who are aged under 21 or if over the age of 21, have a dependency on a parent. It may also include ascending line relatives, i.e., parents of the person or their spouse.

Here are some further key points around the family members of EU and EEA nationals. If the family member is a child aged under 21, they are likely to be granted the same status as their parent. If the family member is a spouse or civil partner, they will be granted Pre-Settled status. Once granted a status, the family member can apply for student support from the administration where they are studying. Remember, standard residency requirement is that EU and EEA nationals and their family members require three years ordinary UK residence in order to receive full support.



This leaves open the possibility that even though some family members may be awarded Settled status, most likely to be if a child under 21 joins a parent after transition and is awarded the same status as their parent, they would qualify for fee support only. This is unless, as with existing policy, they qualify under the Migrant Worker ruling.

The second category within this section is 2020 non-UK family members of UK nationals. Full support will be available to non-UK national family members of UK nationals from Academic Year 2021/22. This is dependent on both the UK national and the family member either being: Option A, resident in the EEA or Switzerland on or before the 31st of December 2020. Or option B, resident in the UK on the 31st of December 2020 and resident in the EEA or Switzerland immediately before moving to the UK.

In this instance they must have returned to the UK within three years of the 31st of December 2020. With both option A and option B, both the UK national and their family member must have been ordinarily resident within the UK, Gibraltar, EU, EEA or Switzerland for three years prior to the first day of the course. Family members in this instance are listed the same as the family members for EU or EEA nationals.

These situations can get complicated, so we will try to contextualise the policy by looking at Lana. She is a Spanish national and her UK national mother both live in Spain. When Lana comes to the UK in June 21 to start a course in September, she will be aged under 21. She is not eligible to apply for Pre-Settled or Settled status as she did not arrive in the UK by the end of the transition period.

However, Lana is eligible for full support because she is the non-UK family member of a UK national, she and her UK national parent were living in the EEA or Switzerland on the 31st of December 2020. And she and her UK national parent were both ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA or Switzerland for three years prior to the first day of the first Academic Year of her course. So this regulation does leave open the possibility that even though some family members have not gone through the EU Settlement Scheme and have not been awarded Settled or Pre-Settled status, there is still the possibility of full support as the non-UK national family member of a UK national.

As mentioned in the previous slides, where the UK national and the family member were resident in the UK on the 31st of December 2020 immediately following a period of residence in the EEA or Switzerland, they must have returned to the UK within three years of the end of transition i.e. their return date must be on or after the 1st of January 2018. Where they do not meet this requirement but have still been living in the UK and Islands for three years prior to the start of the course, they may be eligible for fee support.

Let's put that in a real-world example. Alfonso is a Costa Rican national who is married to a UK national. They have been living in the UK since the 1st of August 2018, having prior to that lived in Costa Rica. Alfonso starts a course in England in September 21 and is eligible for fee support only. This is because he is the non-UK family member of a UK national and has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three years prior to the first day of his course.

Across all four territories, there were just over 30,000 approved applications for Migrant Worker status in Academic Year 2019. Current policy allows those people recognised as Migrant or Frontier workers and their families to access additional Maintenance support as well as Tuition Fee support, without necessarily meeting the standard ordinary residency rules. One of the requirements is that they are a national of or family members of a country in the EU, EEA or Switzerland. Therefore, the changes from 2021 onwards will impact support for these applicants. This section will focus on changes to this group.



The Migrant Worker eligibility category and home fee status will be removed for students who start a course in Academic Year 21 unless the student and the Migrant Worker, should the student be the family member of a Migrant Worker, have been granted Pre-Settled status. Where a student is eligible under this category, they will retain eligibility for the remainder of their period of study unless they are found to no longer meet the requirements of Migrant Worker status following ongoing checks carried out by SLC during their study.

This is in line with current practice. This requirement does not extend to Irish citizens who are automatically deemed to be Settled as part of the Common Travel Area, which we will discuss shortly.

Let's take a standard Migrant Worker case. Rafael is a Spanish national who arrived in the UK in April 2020. Prior to that he lived in France for five years. He is granted Pre-Settled status and starts a course in September 21. He continues to work while studying. He is eligible for full support because he has Pre-Settled status and is a Migrant Worker whose UK employment continues during his course. He is ordinary resident in the relevant home domicile on the first day of his course. And he was ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first day of his course.

We have already received a number of enquiries around the topic of Migrant Workers and some specifically around students becoming eligible as a Migrant Worker. So let's look at a slightly more complicated scenario to help explain how this would work. Anya is a Polish national who arrived in the UK in January 2018 and was granted Pre-Settled status in March 2020. She starts her course in England in September 21 and is awarded fee support as she has Pre-Settled status and has been ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA or Switzerland for three years prior to the first day of the first year of her course. Following this in September 22, she begins working at a museum and applies for support as a Migrant Worker in Academic Year 2022.

She would then become eligible for full SFE support for Academic Year 22 as she has Pre-Settled status and is considered to have met the conditions in order to be classed as a Migrant Worker. This example would apply if Anya lived and studied in England, but remember, if she was living and studying in Wales or Northern Ireland, she would be eligible for full support, as she already has Pre-Settled status and the ordinary three-year residency requirement for SFW or SFNI funding.

Under previous regulations, if the student's EU or EEA national parent or step-parent was living and working in the UK and the student had been in general education at the same time, there was the provision to be classed as eligible for support as the Child or Step-Child of a Migrant Worker in Education. Once this eligibility and evidence have been confirmed, the student would be approved for the full duration of their course without the need for ongoing evidence provision from the parent or step-parent.

This eligibility category and home fee status will be removed for students who start a course from Academic Year 21 unless the student has been granted Pre-Settled status. In this circumstance, only the student is required to have Pre-Settled status, not the parent or step-parent. The former Migrant Worker does not need to have Pre-Settled status, as in some instances they may have ceased working and left the UK altogether.

Frontier Workers are workers that live outside of the UK yet travel to work inside the UK. These workers will not be able to apply for a status through the Settlement Scheme. Instead, they will be awarded a Frontier Worker Permit as evidence of their status. This permit will only be available to those who were already working in the UK by the end of the transition period. Workers and their family members whose work continues during study will be eligible for full funding in the same way as standard Migrant Worker applicants.



Currently, the majority of Frontier Workers travel to the UK to work from Ireland. It may be worth reminding ourselves that, as they are automatically deemed Settled under the Common Travel Area, Irish Frontier Workers do not require a Frontier Worker Permit and their family members do not require Pre-Settled status. Frontier Workers from all other EU or EEA countries will.

To illustrate the difference between Migrant and Frontier workers, let's look at Marco. He is a Dutch national working in England who returns home to Belgium at weekends. He is awarded a Frontier Worker Permit under the Withdrawal Agreement as he was working in the UK prior to the 31st of December 2020. He starts a course in September 21 and is eligible for full support. This is because he is a Frontier Worker whose work continues during his course and he was ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA or Switzerland for three years prior to the first day of the first Academic Year of his course.

As mentioned at the beginning of this webinar, there are some additional eligibility categories that will be less common and therefore have a lower impact in terms of student support. Historically, application volumes from students within these categories are low. However, they are discussed in this section for completeness and for your future reference.

The children of Swiss nationals category and home fee status will be removed for children of Swiss nationals starting a course in Academic Year 21 unless the Swiss national parent has been granted Pre-Settled or Settled status. The child of the Swiss national must have Pre-Settled status, which can be gained after the end of the transition period. As with the children of other Migrant Workers, the child must have been ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA or Switzerland for the three-year period prior to the first day of the course and must be either aged under 21 or, if over 21, be dependent on the parent.

The children of Turkish workers eligibility category and home fee status will be removed for students who start a course in 2021 unless the Turkish worker was already in the UK by the end of the transition period and has been allowed by the Home Office to temporarily extend their leave to remain in the UK. The child of the Turkish worker must also have arrived in the UK by 31st of December 2020.

The definition of Right of Permanent Residence will be updated in accordance with the Withdrawal Agreement. Those starting a course from Academic Year 21 will be required to update their status through the EU Settlement Scheme and must do so by the 30th of June deadline. Previous Right of Permanent Residence became invalid after the end of the transition period, however, those that are yet to update their status will be covered by the Withdrawal Agreement until 30th of June. Once updated, these students can apply for full support for a course starting this year as a Settled person.

There are a handful of instances where a student can change status after the start of their course. Commonly, these can include people that become eligible for the first time, for example those recognised as refugees. Or it can be those students that can enhance their student finance package from fee only to full support, for example, those becoming a Migrant Worker. When this happens it is referred to as an Event.

Where an Event occurs during an Academic Year, a student will become eligible for any support in respect of the Academic Year in which the Event occurred. Acquiring Settled status will be treated as an Event for those starting a course in Academic Year 21. This will only apply where a student had previously been granted Pre-Settled status and subsequently applies for Settled status once they have reached the required five-year residency.



In this instance, applications will be reassessed for Maintenance support from the start of the academic quarter that the Event took place. For applicants in Wales, the reassessment will also factor in any remaining term days in order to award any grant funding.

To illustrate this, we will look at Claudine. She is a Dutch national who arrived in the UK in December 2016. Prior to that, she lived in Germany. She applies for and is granted Pre-Settled status in December 2020 and starts a course in England in September 21. She applies to SFE and is eligible for fee support as she has Pre-Settled status and the required three years of ordinary residence in the UK, Gibraltar, EEA or Switzerland prior to the first day of her course. In November 21, Claudine applies to have her status changed to Settled, effective as of 10th of December as by then, she has been in the UK for five years. She contacts SLC to advise of this change and as an Event she can be reassessed for full support.

Claudine's eligibility for fee support is unaffected and she will be reassessed for Maintenance and any Dependents grants that she may be entitled to starting the following Academic Year quarter, in this case from the 1st of January 2022. As a Settled person, Claudine must still satisfy existing criteria, namely that she should be ordinarily resident in England on the first day of her course and be ordinary resident in the UK and Islands throughout the three years prior to the first day of her course.

As an example of going from ineligible to eligible is Harald. He is a Norwegian national who arrived in the UK in June 2017. He is granted Pre-Settled status in October 2020 and starts a course in September 2021. Harald is ineligible for support at the start of his course. Remember, although satisfactory as an EEA country for residency purposes, Norway is not an EU member state, so Harald is not an EU national.

As an EEA national with Pre-Settled status, he does not qualify under any of the standard residency categories and he is not an EEA Migrant Worker. In June 2022 Harald applies to have his status changed to Settled, effective of June of that year, as by then he has been in the UK for five years. Harald contacts SLC to advise of this change. As acquiring Settled status is an Event in the regulations, he can be reassessed for full support from the start of the next Academic Year.

Other relevant student groups where there are nuances to the student support regulations include Irish citizens, the people of Northern Ireland and residents of Gibraltar. We have previously made reference to the Common Travel Area. This allows free movement for British and Irish citizens between the UK and Republic of Ireland. This act sits aside from and is not affected by changes brought about by the UK's exit from the European Union.

Under the Common Travel Area agreement, Irish citizens that have resided in the UK and Islands for three years prior to the start of the course are eligible for full support. This is different to the standard five-year requirement for all other EU nationals to gain Settled status. Irish citizens that have resided in the Common Travel Area, resided between the UK and Republic of Ireland, for three years prior to the start of the course are eligible for fee support.

The family members of Irish citizens will be able to apply for fee support where the family member has been granted Pre-Settled status. They will be eligible for full support if they have Settled status and meet the ordinary UK residency requirements. Family members of an Irish citizen will have Citizens' Rights as an EU national family member and are able to apply to the Settlement Scheme if the Irish citizen was resident in the UK by the end of the transition period.



The family members of Northern Irish citizens will be able to apply for fee support where the family member has been granted Pre-Settled status. The people of Northern Ireland must be British, Irish or have dual citizenship at the time of the family members Settlement Scheme application.

Elena is a Russian national who has been living with her Irish civil partner in England since August 2016 and prior to that she lived in Russia. She initially applies for and is granted Pre-Settled status. In August 2021 she applies for and is granted Settled status as she now has five years UK residency. She starts a course in England September 2021 and is eligible for full support from SFE because she: has Settled status. She's ordinarily resident in England on the first day of her course and has been ordinarily resident in the UK for three years prior to the first day of her course.

Whether from the EU or Northern Ireland, fee support will be available to nationals and family members with a right of residence in Gibraltar under the Withdrawal Agreement. This is for courses starting in Academic Year 21 and providing that students are ordinarily resident in Gibraltar, studying a course in the UK and have been resident in either the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA or Switzerland for three years prior to the start of the course. The applicant must have been awarded Gibraltar Residency under the Withdrawal Agreement in order to maintain their home fee status. It is worth pointing out that the number of applications in this category is expected to be low, as the Gibraltar government already provides fee and maintenance support to its residents.

Of course, Gibraltar is not the only Overseas Territory that we need to consider when seeing how exiting the EU will affect residents of British or indeed European Overseas Territories. Historically, UK students from British Overseas Territories have enjoyed home fee status with regards to student support and this will continue in Academic Year 21.

UK students resident in European Overseas Territories will also retain their home fee status, providing that there were resident in EEA, Switzerland or one of the European Overseas Territories at the end of the transition period, have been resident there since the transition period and have lived there for three years prior to the first day of their course.

Any EU or Northern Irish nationals and their family members that are resident in any British or European Overseas Territory will not get home fee status for courses starting in Academic Year 21. This is regardless of whether they lived there at the end of the transition period. The only exceptions to this ruling would be if there were either resident in Gibraltar or if they acquired a status prior to moving out to live in the Overseas Territories. In these very rare instances, students could retain their home fee status indefinitely.

Under previous policy, students that were deemed to be settled in the UK, including UK nationals, could not be penalised for exercising their right to free movement within the EU or EEA. Changes to this policy will impact these students. This section will look at three scenarios, which are UK nationals returning to live in the UK. UK nationals moving to the UK for the first time and any person deemed as Settled and resident in the Common Travel Area.

Persons who are settled in the UK and have exercised a right of residence elsewhere will remain eligible for support in Academic Year 2021 providing they exercised that right prior to the end of the transition period. If a Settled person moves from the UK to the EEA or Switzerland after the end of the transition period, they are not exercising that right and will not be eligible under this category. The student must remain within the EU, EEA or Switzerland. It does not extend to residents further afield, in which case standard temporary absence rules would apply.



Throughout the webinar, you may have seen reference to eligibility that can be maintained under various categories for a seven-year period, so eligible up to the 31st of December 2027. This date is seven years from the end of the transition period and protects future students, giving them enough time to undertake and complete secondary school education and then come to the UK to undertake a Further or Higher Education Course.

Bill is a UK national who lived in England until March 2008 after which he goes to live and work in Spain. He returns to the UK in July 21 and starts a course at university in September 21. He is eligible for full support from SFE because he was ordinary resident in England before exercising a right of residence. He is ordinarily resident in the UK on the first day of his course and he was ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA or Switzerland for the three-year period prior to the first day of his course.

Some UK nationals may never have previously resided in the UK. Full support will be available to UK nationals who were resident in the EEA or Switzerland before the end of the transition period and for three years prior to the first day of their course. This is a positive change, as a student in this situation starting a course before 2021 would have only qualified for fee support.

For example, let's look at Stuart. He is a UK national who has never lived in the UK. He was resident in Spain until he arrived in the UK in February 2021. He starts a university course in England in September this year. He is eligible for full support from SFE because he was resident in the EEA or Switzerland at the end of the transition period and for the three years prior to the first day of his course.

Fee support will be available to people studying in England or Wales who were ordinarily resident in the Common Travel Area, the UK and Islands and the country of Ireland, for the three years prior to the first day of their course, where at least some of that residence was spent in Ireland. If studying in Northern Ireland, this will be UK nationals who were ordinarily resident in the UK, Gibraltar, the EEA or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first day of the first year of their course. Students should apply for support from the UK territory where they are studying.

We want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to help anyone impacted by these significant changes. To help facilitate a process that incorporates this new policy, we have made some changes to our application platform and are keen to promote some key messages that will help students navigate the 2021 application process as easily as possible.

To enable us to accurately assess applications, the residency section will be updated to include and explain the EU Settlement Scheme and definitions of Pre-Settled and Settled status. The application will ask for the date that the status was granted to the student. Once the Home Office have completed the EU Settlement Scheme application, the applicant will be issued with instructions to generate an EU share code that remains valid for 30 days.

Students should be mindful that their application for student finance requires a valid EU share code. If this code expires during the application process, prior to being validated by SLC, it may be necessary to obtain a second valid code to fully assess the application. Initially, we may need the student to digitally upload a copy of their initial EUSS status letter and the EU share code that we will verify directly with the Home Office. More information about how to obtain a valid share code and the variety of reasons that it may be needed can be found on the government web link at the bottom of the slide.



There are key principal messages that we would encourage you to take from this webinar share with your colleagues and students preparing to apply or reapply for a course in the forthcoming Academic Year. Crucially, EU and EEA nationals wishing to stay in the UK after June 2021, need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme and be awarded Settled or Pre-Settled status. This is a new eligibility requirement for any new or continuing student wishing to access funding from Student Finance England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Settlement Scheme applications are done by the Home Office and students are advised to apply for their Settled or Pre-Settled status as soon as possible. As we will be verifying information with the Home Office, it is vital that students give us their name and other details exactly as they were provided as part of their Settlement Scheme application. Whilst we will attempt to confirm identity from information received back from the Home Office, there may be instances where we do need to request other supporting evidence and documentation directly from the student.

And finally, please remember that there are other student groups that are not affected by these changes and will not be subject to the new requirements outlined in this presentation. Students from outside the EU and EEA from anywhere else in the world may be able to access student support if they have an immigration status that is eligible under the student support regulations.

For Academic Year 2021 these include those with indefinite leave to remain or enter. Those with refugee status and humanitarian protection. Those with Calais Leave, Section 67 Leave and Stateless Persons. Those with Indefinite Leave to Remain as a Victim of Domestic Violence or new this year, Indefinite Leave to Remain as a Bereaved Partner. And those with Limited Discretionary or Exceptional leave that are eligible under the UK Long Residency rules.

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**LESLEY MCDOWELL:** Thank you, Kevin. My name is Lesley McDowell and I'm the Funding Information Services Manager. I hope you found the webinar informative. You will be invited to join a follow up question and answer session on the 24th of February, for any further questions you would like to ask that have not already been submitted or answered. Today's webinar and any questions and answers will be hosted on the SFE Practitioner site around the middle of March.

Remember the Funding Information Services Team can provide individual and bespoke staff briefings, updates and training sessions on the topics discussed today, or any other aspect of student finance eligibility, assessment and repayment. We will now take a short comfort break and come back to a live question and answer session, which will be hosted by Kevin, who will be joined by Ben Rutter. You can submit your questions now about the information that we have discussed today.

Please stay online and wait for the live question and answer session to start. If you are unable to join us for that, then thank you for your attendance and remember the presentation will be available in its entirety around the middle of March. Thank you.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 10 FEBRUARY

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Hello everyone and welcome to the second part of the session today, which is the live Q&A session. Thank you for your questions that have been coming in. Just before we get started, it's a good opportunity to remind everyone that there are still a few regulation pieces to be signed off, so we'll answer the questions as best we can. I'm going to be joined in answering the questions with my colleague, Mr. Ben Rutter. So I'll hand over to Ben straight away and we'll go straight into the first question, please Ben.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kevin, as I mentioned I'm also part of the Funding Information Services Team covering London and the East of England for those of you who know me already and I'm lucky enough to be joining in for this live Q&A session. Just before we get stuck into the questions we received and there have been a lot of them so thank you for your participation and the depth and range of the questions you've been asking.

It's probably worth stating again that, while we have no intention whatsoever to dodge, duck, disregard or devalue any of your questions, there are a few or quite a few actually, that we have to defer for now but we will answer and address in the final Q&A document, which we make available at the end of these sessions. And those tending to be around the sort of questions that are detailed ones about the EUSS and how the Home Office will handle and assess the applications that have come in.

Student specific questions, obviously we can give general fears about how a student may be seen based on these new rules and policies that are coming in, but as you'll see with some of the answers that we give, there are always more areas of the student finance application than just their residency to think about previous study and bits and pieces like that, so we can not give a definitive answer about any student question. And again as probably mentioned at the start of this presentation, as Kev mentioned, a lot of the information we're giving today is new and that's new to ourselves as well as new to you guys and we're also waiting for policy sign-off and guidance chapters to be issued and everything.

So if there is anything that is a real mind-bender, then again, we'll add those to the questions that we take away. But like I said all the questions will be answered and all the answers will be given when we make available the full FAQ documents in the presentation after we finish with these. But anyway, now that's cleared up and hopefully set some tracks about how the questions we're going to answer are going to follow. And we've got the first question, which has come in from Hannah. So thanks for this one Hannah and this is one of the pre-posted questions that we had before the session.

And Hannah is asking us if we can confirm if EU students starting in September 2021 will be eligible for home fee status and student finance, if they started living in the UK before December 31st and applied for EU Settlement Scheme before the end of June 2021?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Hannah. Yeah, it looks like from the information that we've got that Hannah is doing everything right. She would have been in the UK prior to the end of transition period, so she would have those Citizens' Rights, which would allow her to go through the EU Settlement Scheme. The result of that Settlement Scheme would determine whether she would be classed as a Pre-Settled or Settled student so that would impact what package of support she could get, but certainly home fee status and student finance would be available, be it fee only for Pre-Settled or full support for Settled students.



Okay, so hopefully that clears that one. I'll take the next question for you Ben. We have an EU student who, by the time they start university have lived in the country for 3.5 years. They want to apply for a Maintenance Loan however from research it states that they need to be in the country for five years in order to get the Maintenance Loan. Can you just confirm if that's correct?

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks for that Kev. Slightly old research it seems they have there. The five years were probably either referred to the normal residence for an EU national we would look at prior to Academic Year 2021/22 by the fact they would need to live here for that five-year period prior to the first day of the first AY of the course they qualify for maintenance on that basis but may also be referring to the EUSS generally rewarding Settled status to those EU nationals that have been living here for five years. Then as I say, they'll be granted the Settled status.

What we're looking at under the new system, as was mentioned early on in the presentation, is if they have been awarded the settled status and have lived in the UK since that was granted for the three years, then again, providing that they're eligible in other ways then they should be able to access the full range of support, which would include Tuition Fee Loan and Maintenance Loan for their courses starting from AY 21/22.

Thanks for that question Melanie and the next one's come in from Hamish, who is asking us will all continuing AY 21/22 EU students remain eligible for support throughout the full duration of their current course, despite the post-Brexit residency regulation changes?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Hamish. Yeah, is the short answer. Continuing students have been guaranteed funding for the full length of their course, so we would just need to make sure that they maintain that cohort and they were classed as continuing students. If they did anything that stopped that continuing status where they became a new student, so for example, if there was a withdrawal and starting a new course, it would be new regulations and they would be subject to the new rules. But as long as continuers are continuing on the same course, they'll be eligible for the support for the full duration.

So that one there was about continuing students and staying on the theme of continuing students Ben, will they be asked to provide a valid EUSS status and share code as part of the continuing application in 21/22?

**BEN RUTTER:** No we assess these students' eligibility under the pre AY 21/22 regulations, so continuing students won't be asked for the EUSS share codes, excuse me tongue twister that one, for the remaining years of their current course and so they're also transitionally protected as Kev just mentioned there. So as long as they're not doing anything which affects their cohort, then their applications would just be rolled over. It's from Academic Year 21/22, when the new regulations will be fully coming into force and those guys will need to demonstrate if they have the Pre-Settled or Settled status providing their share codes as part of their application as we move forward.

Thanks for that one, next question is coming in from Mark, who's asking us will current EU students who have suspended studies for a year or two years be affected student finance wise when they return in any way?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Thanks Mark, I think this question continues on the theme really of whether these students will be classed as new or continuing students. So we'd look at the circumstances, suspension students just based on the example in the question, suspension and resumption in the usual way would maintain continuing student status and continuing cohort, so there wouldn't be an impact in the scenario in the particular question.



But the key thing is it's all to do with whether you're going to be classed as a continuing or new student. Anything that would class you as a new student would mean new regulations, but in the actual text of the question, I'm surmising that the suspension would be a temporary thing, in which case the student would return to complete their course and they'd be funded as a continuing cohort student. Okay thanks Mark.

A little bit now on the evidence from Alison. What evidence will applicants need to provide to prove their Settled or Pre-Settled status?

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Alison. The fundamental things we'll be looking for, is their share code. So as again was mentioned in part of the presentation there, once EU nationals have their status granted, from the Home Office, whether be it Settled status or Pre-Settled status, they can then visit the generate a status code links on GOV.UK and they can generate one of the EU share code which remain live for those 30 days.

So we will be asking for the student to provide those as part of their application. We're still working on the exact mechanics of the link with the Home Office to try and make it as smooth and seamless for applicants as possible i.e. that it will be an automated system that we have up and running in the short to mid-term hopefully but certainly in the interim we'll be asking the students to give us those share codes, which we will then be verifying via the Home Office.

So again, just to reiterate that point it is really important that when students supply those share codes, there is still plenty of that 30-day period remaining, which gives us plenty of time to check the details with the Home Office and then completely assess their application just so that share code doesn't expire in that time so then we don't have to ask them to provide another one.

Let's move on to the next question is coming from Danny, who is asking apart from if an individual is joining their family member in the UK a later date, will the Home Office accept any applications to the EUSS made after the 30th June 2021 closing date?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay so just to reiterate that the EUSS, the Settlement Scheme is run by the Home Office, it is theirs to own and operate. You're right in the question Danny that anything post 30th of June deadline the majority of those that will be going through, will need a family member link, in which case if you've got a family member with Citizens' Rights, you can still go through the EUSS scheme after that deadline.

Any other apart from that, there may be exceptional circumstances that the Home Office would look into but it's probably just worth reiterating that the Settlement Scheme is not open indefinitely to everybody, there may be you would need a reason to access the Settlement Scheme, the main one being that you are joining a family member. There may be some exceptions that the Home Office have.

There's an awful lot of guidance around the EU Settlement Scheme on the GOV.UK website and as Ben touched on right at the start, this is something that's probably a little bit bigger and broader than just student finance. This is decisions that will allow lawful residence in the UK. So it would be a Home Office decision to see what those exceptions are. So I hope that answers your question and just points you in the right direction.

A question in from Emma, thanks Emma. Do Pre-Settled status students qualify for support?



**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks, that one's quite a broad-brush question that one. A it depends on what support they're looking to apply for and B what domicile they'll be under. Obviously for student finance purposes if they have the Pre-Settled status under the EUSS and satisfy the requirement of having the three years residency in the UK, EEA, Gibraltar or Switzerland, then yes they should be able to qualify for an SFE Tuition Fee Loan, Advance Learner Lone in England and the Post graduate range of support.

If Pre-Settled status and again as mentioned during the presentations, where if they have Pre-Settled status and have the three years UK residency, an ordinary resident in Wales and Northern Ireland then again for the three years then again they may also qualify for the full range of support as well. That's quite a broad-brush question, it depends on the home domicile residency and what support it is they're looking to qualify for but thanks for the question.

The next one's coming in from Bryanne, who is asking us EUSS Pre-Settled status is valid for five years from the date granted. What will happen to a student's eligibility for support if that status expires in this time and they have not changed or cannot change to Settled status?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Bryanne. Yeah I think again, this is a little bit broader than just student finance, this is to do with the EU Settlement Scheme and the legality of being able to remain in the UK. We would expect most people, if not all people, that have been deemed Settled status that after five years that would be converted into Settled status, in which case that would bring with it the access to support for a Settled status student.

If it does expire and there is no conversion to Settled status and it's run out, then essentially there would be a problem there because you wouldn't have a legal status in order to lawfully remain in the UK. So if it did expire we wouldn't be able to give any additional funding for remaining Academic Years, but I would think that those scenarios would be few and far between because we would expect most people with Pre-Settled status upon reaching the five-year requirement to convert that to Settle status, because that becomes your legal and lawful right to remain in the UK. So thanks Bryanne.

A similar themed type of question I think Ben, from Lisa about a student's applicant to the EUSS which was rejected and there's an ongoing appeal with the Home Office. Will their status in the UK be viewed, sorry how will it be viewed and will this affect their eligibility for student support?

**BEN RUTTER:** Well again that's borderline more that they would need to be referred to the EUSS because again, it's sitting on the basis of why that application was rejected and why the appeal was in place. But from our point of view when it comes to application for full student finance, if the application to the EUSS was rejected and the ongoing appeal with the Home Office was in place, then they would be considered to maintain their Citizens' Rights until the case is concluded.

But obviously we wouldn't be able to necessarily give their application the yay or the nay until we received the clarification of that appeal or that the rejection was overturned and we would need to see evidence that that appeal had been lodged with the EUSS to even consider taking the application forward. So, again, it's not a clear black and white answer it's sort of depending on the status of the appeal and what evidence the student can provide us that that appeal is being considered by the Home Office.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay, that's great Ben. We are getting a lot of questions in, which is great please do keep them coming in. Again just to reiterate what we said right at the beginning, that any complex questions around queries or, particularly the EU Settlement Scheme, which is broader than just the Student Finance issues, will all be answered and added to our frequently asked questions document that will be hosted on the Practitioners website in March.



So I'm just conscious that the number of questions coming in, we may not get round to all of them, but we will answer them all as part of the write up in March, okay.

**BEN RUTTER:** Yeah thanks Kev, so shifting to the second round of questions and it's come in from Emma, who is asking if a student starts a course in Academic Year 2020/21 but takes a break in study and returns to a new course, does their eligibility change?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Great thanks Emma yeah, that's a good illustration of the opposite of what we looked at in the early part of the questions where students would suspend and come back and maintain their original continuing student status. In the scenario that you've written there the student takes a break and returns to a new course, new course, new rules, new eligibility criteria. So if they started in 2021 and withdrew or left a course and started a new course, then yes they would fall under the new eligibility changes. So it's good to illustrate that.

Ben if someone hits the residency criteria in, for example, year two to year three, would they then qualify for SLC support for the remainder of their studies?

**BEN RUTTER:** Not entirely sure I'm following the drift of this question so if you want to step in Kev?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** I think we had some scenarios about the Events didn't we? About becoming eligible our EEA how Harald, our Norwegian national that became eligible once you get five years and students that become eligible as Migrant Workers. So those Events that happened during the course, then you would become eligible for funding for the remainder of your course. So I think that's where we go with that question Lee. There are some pretty good examples of people that become eligible after the Event within the scenario. o yeah I think that answers the question but if not we'll do a comprehensive write-up in the questions.

Is the best thing to do for students asking about their status to direct them to the GOV.UK website or to contact the Home Office Ben?

**BEN RUTTER:** Yeah I mean if that status refers to their EUSS status, or the state of the application, what they've been awarded, then yeah absolutely. As we mentioned it's the Home Office that administer and make decisions on the EUSS application, so it's always best to direct any questions to those. There are helplines for both students and there's also an advisor helpline as well on the EUSS website, which I've certainly phoned up a couple of times when I've been asked questions about it and the guys on there obviously administering the service, who are very knowledgeable so anything that is a real humdinger of a situation that isn't clear then yeah please do direct them to the EUSS pages on GOV.UK website.

The next question we received is from Adrian, who is asking, stating, can I confirm that EU continuing students will not need to apply for EUSS to qualify for UK fee levels? And if so, will they still need to apply for EUSS in order to physically carry out their studies within the UK in person as opposed to distance learning?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Adrian. Yeah this is a situation that we are keen to explain because continuing students will be funded in the usual way and they will have their existing support package carried on. But EU nationals, so not just the to EU students, but EU nationals need to go through this EU Settlement Scheme in order to maintain lawful residence in the UK.



So it's the second part of your question that's particularly pertinent is that they will still need to go through the EU Settlement Scheme to demonstrate that they are lawfully resident in the UK and that's not just for Student Finance purposes, that's for all the things that we looked at right at the start of the presentation in order to do things like access the NHS and any benefits that they might be able to go into. So although the continuing students do not need to, as Ben mentioned, supply share codes and they have existing rules apply. EU nationals will need to go through the Settlement Scheme in order to keep their residency legal and lawful in the UK. So it is something that we are keen to promote.

Thanks for the question. Next one is from Sarah. Okay Ben so if an undergraduate EU student who started study in 20/21 changes mode of study in 21/22, would this affect their eligibility for funding? These students usually have to complete a new funding application and have their residency reassessed.

**BEN RUTTER:** Yeah this goes back to some of the questions we sort of touched on before. Anything which would require a student to be reassessed as being new rather than continuing, i.e. that they were on an approved suspension etc. etc. or doing a direct end-ons rather than top-ups, then yeah they would have to be assessed under the new regulations that come in for Academic Year 21/22. So in that situation chances are, I guess we would be looking at them as a new student, so they will be assessed under the new rules.

But if they are an EU graduate student who started an Academic Year 20/21 and they were living here prior to the end of last year and they get that EU Settlement Scheme status sorted out by the end of June then again there's no reason their eligibility funding should fundamentally change because they will still be meeting the criteria in the residency that the Home Office have set out and that we will be looking at to assess their application.

So as long as all of those ends tie up, then just for the fact that they may be changing course may not mean they're not eligible for support and I say if they do have that Settled status, Pre-Settled status and Citizens' Rights then it doesn't necessarily rule them out, it's just another box that they would need to tick to make sure that they are remaining eligible under the new residency rules.

So the next question is coming in from Kim, who's asking what happens if an EU or EEA national as applied in 2020 for deferred entry? Are they still going to be supported with fees?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Right so this sort of links in, in the dim and distant past we have had cases where regulations where students have deferred their entry, they were transitionally protected and they fell into the old rules. Obviously the changes to EU regulations supersede student finance. So the EUSS and the new requirements won't be affected by the fact that a student has deferred their entry.

Ben I don't know if you want to add anything to that? But my understanding is that although the institution may have accepted you as a deferral, the rules for EU and EEA nationals are applicable as are for all the EU nationals not just EU students.

But again it's one of those things that although a student can defer their university place, they can't put Student Finance regulations on hold if a previous system would suit them better than the new system. So any new student from the Academic Year 21/22 will be assessed under the new system so they can defy their entry, but they can't defer what the Student Finance regulations they will be assessed under.

Moving onto Tina who has got a point of clarification, just to be clear, those who have Pre-Settled status and living in England can only apply for Tuition Fees and not Maintenance Loans?



I mean that would be the Pre-Settled status in its most general form will access Tuition Fee support but there are other avenues that we can explore Tina. Other possibilities where we may be able to enhance that package so your Pre-Settled students in England that are Migrant Workers is a good example where the fact that they've got Pre-Settled status they can still access full support with Maintenance Loans. So as a general rule, I think it's fair to say the Pre-Settled students with Pre-Settled status will be entitled to Tuition Fee support.

But that's for students living in the EU that's not just in England, so if EU nationals moved to the country and are awarded Pre-Settled status, they would get Tuition Fees support too but it's not a hard and fast rule. There are ways of accessing additional maintenance support, even if your status is Pre-Settled and I say the obvious one for the purposes of an example is students who have got Pre-Settled status but are classed as Migrant Workers who can access the additional support.

Thanks for that Tina. I'm going to ask, when will the new full time student application for students applying in 2021 open? So not specifically around Brexit Ben, but one that you could perhaps answer.

**BEN RUTTER:** Well we can certainly try. Currently the SFE full time student finance applications are scheduled to open in early March. The SFNI are due to open mid-March and Student Finance Wales towards the end of March maybe into April is the current dates we are working towards. Our campaign pages, a bit of marketing plugging here, but our campaign pages on GOV.UK will contain what we know so far in terms of the launch application dates and students can also sign up to receive notifications this year. So if they visit the campaign pages, put in their details, then we will send them a notification as to when it is time to apply for their student loans for Academic Year 2021.

The next question has come in from Mark, who has an EU student currently on a BA is applying for an MA for September 2021. They've been in the UK since 2018 and have Pre-Settled status. Are they eligible for Postgraduate Loans?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Mark. It looks like it based on the information yeah we have Pre-Settled status which will allow access to Postgraduate Loans. They have the required residency. It is a new course, postgrad is deemed as a new learning aim, a new course as opposed to the undergrad, but based on that information EU students with Pre-Settled status can access postgraduate support. So again, without going into the details of the specific account, it looks based on that information, that that would be fine.

We are heading towards the end of our session. We've got time for a couple of final questions Ben. So if I can just throw your final question to you, which is we will have EU citizens with Settled status who are deciding whether to start a PhD part time in September or at sometime in the future. Are their fees at risk of being increased to International fees if they start in future years, even if they already have Settled or Pre-Settled status?

On the basis of that information there, you would think not. Again it goes back to them having the Citizens' Rights and the Settled or Pre-Settled status, which rubber stamps their ability to maintain the home fee status. So as long as those boxes are ticked when it comes time to applying for their funding for their course, then no they should be under the home well we home fee status and national fees are obviously for a postgrad course, they're not necessarily regulated in the same way as undergrads.

So the UA fee cap 9250 and similar don't necessarily apply to PhD and other post grad courses but certainly they should be seen in the same way as any home fee paying student on that course, so no they shouldn't be penalised if they have those Citizens' Rights and the EUSS status by the time it rolls around for them to make that application.



So thanks for that Marie and sadly we are now moving into the final question, as time flies when you're having fun, etc. etc. which has come in from Liz, who has questions coming from EU students going into their third year. They want to know will they be eligible for the Masters Loan next year if they decide to apply?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Liz. I think that follows on nicely from the previous question, doesn't it? The fact is that we would want these EU students to go through the Settlement Scheme. They need to get a status in their own right. Might be a Pre-Settled or Settled but once they have that status, if they come to apply for the Master's Loan, Masters is a postgraduate course and you can access postgraduate funding with Pre-Settled or Settled status.

So again without going into the details of the account, it sounds fairly clear cut and we can be pretty confident that provided they go through the scheme and get a status in their own right when they come to apply for the Masters next year, they should be eligible for full funding based on that, the premise that they are lawfully and legally resident in the UK.

Right ladies and gentlemen, thank you so much for all of your questions. We did our best to answer as many as we could within the allotted time. Apologies if you didn't get your questions answered live, but they will be completed and uploaded on to our Practitioners website along with information and the slides. We're aiming to do this round about the middle of March so do keep an eye out for that. We will let you know through our bulletins when those pieces of information are live and up and running.

So thank you very much for your time today. Thank you to Ben for your support with answering the questions. That was really good. Thank you very much and goodbye.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 17 FEBRUARY 2021

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Hello and welcome to the second part of today's session, this is the live Q&A session that follows on from the recorded session that you've just watched earlier. Thank you very much to everyone that has signed up and attended today. And thanks particularly to everyone that has stayed on to ask some questions. Questions are coming in thick and fast and we will make a point of trying to get through and answer as many as we can.

It's probably worth mentioning just before we do kick off with the question session that something we mentioned in the video is that student funding is a matter for devolved authorities and we are still waiting for final regulation sign-off in some instances, so we will answer the questions as best we can with the information that we've got around the regulations but just with the slight caveat that there is still a final hoop to jump through before they get signed off and passed by the individual authorities.

I'm going to introduce my colleague Ben who is going to give me a hand with the question and answer session. So I'll hand over to Ben to say hi.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev. Good morning everybody that's a solid start to the Q&A session. As mentioned my name is Ben, I'm also part of the Funding Information team along with Kev. Those of you that know me kicking around the London and East of England regions, thanks for watching and thanks for your input to the session so far. And I'm also lucky enough to be joining in for today's Q&A session. But before we get stuck into the few things again, it's probably worth stating that while we do have, as Kev mentioned we have no intention to dodge or disregard any of your queries and questions coming in, we may have to defer some for now, but any that we do get coming in we will get back to them when we put up the final Q&A session feedback document that we make available in March.

There are also some specific areas that we may not be able to address wholly in the questions that we have coming in and they could be related to detailed questions about the EU Settlement Scheme or how the Home Office will assess those applications. Student specific queries while we'll be able to give a general steer on student eligibility entitlement from the question that you ask, without obviously seeing the whole application, we can't give a definitive yes or no about eligibility entitlement.

And as we are sharing an awful lot of information today, which is new to all of us frankly, yourselves and us, if there are any real humdinger policy points and questions that come through, then again we will need to take those away for further review, which we will address when the full Q&A document has come through.

One more thing sorry the list is growing and growing and growing but based on the feedback from our first webinar last week and also some of the questions that we have come through today, we appreciate that you are super eager to get your hands on some of this slide content, both for your own knowledge, also sharing through your wider teams, then starting to impart some of those messages to students. At a time that we're saying this none of the regulations, of course, any of the domiciles have been officially signed off yet. So unfortunately this leaves us in the position of not being able to make the slides available to you immediately prior to the mid-March date that we've said that we will make them available on the Practitioner site.



In fact, we've had quite a few interesting conversations with our policy teams and our assessment teams and some of the other internal contacts about what we could or can't share within this presentation with the regulations not having been put in place. And we think we've done pretty well with the amount of content we have put in. We're aware it is a lot of content, a lot to take in but like I said, we do appreciate your patience and we will get all the content up to you and available as soon as we can.

But anyway that's all the caveats out of the way, so we'll move on to the first questions that we've had come through and there's been quite a lot of them so those that we can address we will. And the first question that we have had come through today is coming in from Nina, who's asking us would an EU student resident in the UK on 31st December 2020 that lived in the EU for three years or more, be eligible for a Tuition Fee loan for a course starting in September.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks for the question Nina. Yeah I'll make some general assumptions around about this specific case, but some of the things that we know are that the student is here prior to transition, they will have Citizens' Rights. So working on the assumption that they have gone through the EU Settlement Scheme, if they've been here for three years, they would be awarded a Pre-Settled status, which would give them eligibility to Tuition Fees support. So provided that all of the standard eligibility criteria is met and the student has gone through the Settlement Scheme, I can't see any reason based on that information why they wouldn't be able to access a Tuition Fee loan.

Okay so thanks for that question, Nina. The first question for you Ben, I just need to read out, make sure I get everything right. A potential student would like to apply for Tuition Fee and Maintenance Loans for September 21. When they start in September 21, it'll be five years and two months since they moved to England. They have got Settled status so will they be able to access both student loans?

**BEN RUTTER:** Again going back to the point of my initial spiel, we can't guarantee the eligibility of any student based on that information, not having seen their full application come through as obviously, there's more than residency involved in a student finance application assessment. But based on that summary, if the student was in the UK before the end of the transition period, they've got their EUSS full Settled status, then yeah they should be able to apply for the full SFE support based on that two criteria for their course starting in Academic Year 21/22.

So thanks for that Kiran. The next question's come in from Mohammed, who's asking what happens to their funding assessment if students are going from an Access to HE course to a Degree course?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay so this is our students, of which there are many that transition from an FE course onto a HE course. Might be just worth pit-stopping just to remind our audience that anyone from colleges with Pre-Settled status could access support for an Access to HE course one of our Advance Learner Loans. When that student progresses onto a full degree course it is a new learning aim, it is a new course so that would bring about a new period of eligibility and new eligibility criteria to be met.

Again, I would think that if the student is already in the country there wouldn't be a problem provided that they've gone through the things that we've talked about, gone through the Settlement Scheme. They would be assessed under the new eligibility criteria, but hopefully they would meet either Pre-Settled or Settled status and be able to access some support at least for their degree programme.

Okay Ayesha messages if the child of an EU national has been granted Tuition Fees and Maintenance Loan for their course starting in September 20/21, will their fees and Maintenance Loan be covered by SFE for the full duration of their three-year course? So it's September 2020 so a continuing student Ben, just to make that clear.



**BEN RUTTER:** Yeah thanks for that, so as every Academic Year 20/21 start, they'll be assessed under the regulations that exist at the moment. So as a continuing student, yeah they should still be assessed under the pre Academic Year 21/22 rules. So unless anything untoward happens, which means they would need to be assessed as new for any reason, then their funding should remain unaffected for the duration of their course.

Next question has come in from Rachel, who is asking, what if a students' parents have EUSS, but the student arrives from the EU next year?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay so this would be an example where the student is arriving from the EU into the UK after transition. Parents presumably were here previously, they have been awarded a status in their own right, but the student is using the parents Citizens' Rights in order to access the EU Settlement Scheme. So these students, first of all, it's probably worth reminding that these applications do not need to be made by the 30th of June because the student is utilising their parents Citizens' Rights so they can go through the scheme at any time.

If they're under 21 the likelihood is that the student will be awarded the same status as the parent be it Pre-Settled or Settled. Also worth mentioning that regardless of that status, the student wouldn't have three years residency in the UK so the likelihood is that they would be awarded fee support only. But this particular route may be of interest to our potential Migrant Workers who have parents that are already living here.

If they move to the UK any time now, they can use their parents Citizens' Rights to go through the scheme, be awarded Pre-Settled status but some students, we think, will be able to increase their fee support to full support if they meet the requirements of the Migrant Worker rule. So there's a few things to point out in that question, but hopefully that that helps.

Okay a question from Amy. I understand that those students who prove Irish nationality or Irish students who can prove residency in the UK for three years can obtain student finance. I'm just not too sure whether it's fee loan only or whether they can obtain maintenance support as well?

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks for that Amy I think that we've covered fairly succinctly in the presentation itself, the Irish nationals will come under the Common Travel Area agreement so their entitlement to support is not impacted the same way as some of the other EU nationals that we've seen also moving through the presentation examples. So if they were an Irish national and they've been living in the UK for the three years prior to the first day of the first Academic Year of the course then and they should be able to access the full range of support from the relevant UK domicile administration which should cover both the tuition and the maintenance for those students.

Next question is coming in from Samantha. Samantha, ouch. Can SLC confirm and guarantee that they will have capacity to complete the application within 30 days? Experience suggests that is unlikely.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Right okay. I think this question from Samantha is in relation to the share code the lifespan of a share code which lasts for 30 days. What we probably need to reiterate is that we will process the applications as usual. The share code we probably won't have it for 30 days. We don't need that full 30-day window. We need that share code and we will verify that it is valid with the Home Office as long as it is valid at the point of checking with the Home Office.



If it expires subsequent to that, then then that's fine when we're checking it, it was a valid EU share code. So we don't Samantha require the share code for the full 30-day period or for the full lifespan of the application processing. Just it needs to be valid at the time that we confirm it with the Home Office. So hopefully we shall put some comfort to the query there.

**BEN RUTTER:** Yes so just to add to that I think the key message for students as Kev said there is to generate and provide their share codes as close as possible to when they actually submit their application to give us time to verify it. Again the 30 days, it may very well take us longer than 30 days to assess the application depending on the complexity of it, but that 30 days as Kev said, relates to the duration of the share code validity.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Ben. Okay can you confirm the key points for a student with Settled status from the EU Settlement Scheme leaves the UK and lives in the EU for a year before returning to take up a course? Do you want me to take that one, Ben?

**BEN RUTTER:** No it's okay feel free to pitch in if you feel the need Kev, as I so rudely interrupted your flow on the last question. But I think this one goes back to that point about again, it's maybe more of an EU Settlement Scheme than a student finance position scheme with the residency absences from the UK. But again, as was mentioned in the slides, if they do have the full Settled status, then they can potentially leave the UK for up to five years without affecting that overarching Settled status. If they have the full Settled then living in the EU for a year shouldn't massively affect how we look at it. In terms of that obviously they will need to satisfy the three years ordinary residency rules to qualify for the full support.

The problem more is for those with the Pre-Settled status. While they have the two-year break opportunity to go back to the EU or their home country in the EU, they do have that six-month period which protects their continuous UK residency. So they have to be mindful that any break they take shouldn't be over the six months unless it's for a really good reason where it can be up to 12 months, like a bereavement or illness, sickness, etc. when they are overseas for up to 12 months then that can be looked at, but again the breaks they can take is based on the EUSS status that they are awarded by the Home Office.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay that's great thanks Ben, that's brill thank you. We are getting an awful lot of questions in and we are going through as quickly as we can. We just wanted to pit-stop just to reiterate a few key things. First of all, I don't think we are going to be able to answer all of the questions that have been submitted in this session today, but we will be producing a frequently asked questions in which we will respond to every single question and that will be posted on the Practitioner website around about mid-March when the slides become available. So please, if you don't get your questions answered today, you have a couple of opportunities you can wait for that are written FAQ to be posted online. But it also gives us an opportunity to tell you about an additional session that we've got next week.

This is a session that is for anyone that's already attended session one or today's session two. What we will do between now and then is look at some of the common themes, look at some of the common questions and try to give a summary, an overview of the answers of the most commonly asked questions and the areas where people look for clarification. So we will group them all together, all the questions and we will clarify and strengthen the message on some of the key areas that people are questioning as we go through the questions.



Okay so with that in mind, I will just stick with you Ben, if that's okay, and ask if an EU student moved to the UK in 2009 with his EU parents and has lived in the UK since. They go to university in September 21. They've been through the scheme, they've got settled status. Will they receive full support?

**BEN RUTTER:** Pretty much, yeah they've been here in 2009, so that gives them plenty of time under the EUSS Settlement Scheme, which would generally look at five years to be granted a full Settled status. But as long as that box is ticked and they haven't broken any of their Citizen's Rights or anything like that, then I don't see any reason why a student in that situation wouldn't be able to apply for the full range of support. So thanks for that one Maureen.

The next question is from Nicolette. Can you please go over the bit about being able to leave the country for five years without losing Settled status and whether that affects eligibility for funding? Same with Pre-Settled two-year absence, please can you just go over that again?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay yeah, I mean it looks as if you've picked up on all of the key points there Nicolette in that people that are rewarded Pre-Settled status are entitled to leave the UK for up to a two-year period without losing that status. Those that have been settled in the UK for longer and indeed been awarded Settled status have the ability to leave the UK for up to five years without losing the status. I think this sort of ties into queries around ordinary residents and things such as that.

But the key bit in the question there is that the status, the different status that you have does give you a different time parameter in which you are allowed to leave the UK without losing that status that you've been awarded. So I hope I've understood that question correctly Nicolette.

I think staying on the theme Ben, for residency, how many days could someone leave the UK before they are no longer classed as having continuous residency? Say if they want to go with the family abroad over the summer holidays? And that's from Matt.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Matt and I think we've covered that in the previous question and the question a couple before that it's more an issue for those with the Pre-Settled and they give that six months, they get that six-month window without breaking a continuous residency. But yeah and then there is also the guidance on the EUSS website about the reasons why they could take the 12-month residency. So if you want to have a look at those, those details are all available on the GOV.UK pages under the EUSS category.

Next question has come in from Sarah, who asks if a UK national has been living in France but wants to start a course in September 2021 in the UK, are they eligible for full funding or do they have to be living in the UK/Ireland for three years?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay, thanks Sarah, again I'm going to make a little bit of an assumption here. I will make the assumption that the UK national moved to France prior to the end of transition. So the UK national's been living in France for longer than just for that six weeks. So the UK national has been resident in France prior to the 31st December. Prior to the 31st of December UK nationals couldn't be penalised for exercising their right to free movement throughout the EU.

So UK national that move to the EU as long as that move was prior to the end of transition and is moving back they can't be penalised for exercising that right to free movement, so they would be eligible for full support, even though they might not have been living in the UK for three years prior. So that's a really good example of one of the examples that we had in the session around providing that the move was before the end of transition, when UK nationals were permitted to travel around Europe and not be penalised for it that will not impact their access to full support.



Okay Ben we've got a question from Patrick. Presumably SLC will not provide loans to cover international fees. We would need to establish which EU students have Settled or Pre-Settled status in order to determine if we should charge them home fees. Is that correct?

**BEN RUTTER:** Yeah pretty much, I mean, again, it's probably more of a question for the provider to see what they're going to be charging but nothing's changed in the fact that we won't be providing fees to cover any international students. So yeah, getting the notification letter or email they receive from Home Office to prove that the status has been awarded, or again getting proof a share code's been generated, that sort of thing would be a good indicator for you to have to see that they've got a Pre-Settled status or the Settled status. If you have those checks and balances in place, then I think that will be a decision for individual institutions to decide about how are they going to pre-screen some of these students. But again from us, it's more decision for you guys than us I would say.

Next question has come in from Hannah. It's straightforward will we be sent a recording of this session please?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Hi Hannah yes, when we are able to we're going to put everything up and make everything available, that will include the slides that you've looked at previously. It will include answers to all of these questions that have been submitted and it will include answers to questions from all of the sessions. So not just today's you'll see some of the other frequently asked questions that may come in next week or some that have already been previously supplied at last week's session. So yes everything that we've got will be made available to you. As Ben says, as soon as we were able and we have regulatory sign-off, we are absolutely keen to share this information as soon as we can.

Ben definition of fee support only? Does this mean home fees, but no eligibility for loans? And that's from Alison.

**BEN RUTTER:** I think this refers to the text in the slides and when we have referred to fee support only that means they would be entitled to access Tuition Fee support for fee loan support excuse me, but not any of the range of maintenance support so home fee status would be dumped in with that same category. The assumption will be that if they're eligible for the Tuition Fee loan, then they will also be under the umbrella of the home fee status.

Thanks for that Alison the next question is coming in from Julia. Are all dual UK/EU nationals automatically included when referring to UK nationals?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay great thanks for that Julia, thanks Ben. A nice simple straightforward yes, those nationals have got dual UK and EU nationality, they are treated in the same way as any other UK national. So nice easy straightforward answer to that one.

Ralitsa asks Ben if we have follow up questions, how would we contact you?

**BEN RUTTER:** I think we're at this stage in the spirit of building regional relationships and bits and pieces like that, if you're aware of your Regional Fund Information Services Account Manager, then please do feel free to contact us directly. If you don't know which one of us it will be, then please do check out details which are available on the Practitioners website where you would be able to find our contact details. But if you want a follow-up answer, then that's probably a good source of how we can get it.



Next question is coming in from Sarah, who's asking if an EU student started their full-time course this September. Hang on this September 2020 and then change mode of... alright start again. If an EU student started their full-time course in September 2020 and then change their mode of study in September 2021, will the new eligibility rules apply, i.e. student needs to have Settled or Pre-Settled status?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Thanks Sarah yeah. So there are various things where we would class students as continuing and there are various things where we would class students as sort of entitled to a new package of support, a new cohort if you like. Changing mode of study I think would class you a new, sorry new part-time cohort student. You would need to have Settled or Pre-Settled status regardless, I think. The reason being is that just because our continuers are going to be funded in the usual way, they are EU nationals and they will need Settled or Pre-Settled status in their own right.

So this isn't, I'm changing the focus of the question a little bit to say that whether you are continuing or a new and whether your mode of study changes that you should still be required to have Settled or Pre-Settled status in order to prove lawful residency in the UK. So I think it's a yes, irrespective of whether you are going to be classed as a continuer or a new cohort student.

Okay we have time for a couple more questions Ben. I'm going to say we still have Erasmus funding available in Academic Year 21/22 and have been allowed to run with it for one more year. We're concerned that SFE may remove the Erasmus question from the application form. That's from Holly.

**BEN RUTTER:** From a policy standpoint, there is no change to the Erasmus funding levels and Erasmus funding will continue in Academic Year 21/22 at the current rates. If you do have any legacy programmes, so that's in respect to any funding that was approved on or before 31st December 2020 then that will come over but I can assure that everyone's aware now, it's kind of becoming more and more common knowledge that the funding for Academic Year 21/22 may be provided under the new UK equivalent scheme, which is the Turing Scheme which was announced in December. A new website was launched a couple of weeks ago on the Turing Scheme, which is [www.turing-scheme.org.uk](http://www.turing-scheme.org.uk) and they've started to upload that with some of the information that user providers will need and you can also start feeding through to potential students who will be taking up placements on the Turing programme.

In terms of our application forms, yeah we know that there might be a bit of confusion as to whether the funding is coming from Erasmus, if it's a legacy programme or if it's coming from the Turing. So we will be amending the wording to say things like have you been accepted onto the Turing Scheme or the Erasmus Exchange Programme? And obviously they will be backed up by additional guidance just to make sure the student understands the two different schemes and can easily tell us where the funding is going to be coming from.

Thanks for that one Holly. And final question unfortunately, my doesn't time fly when you're having fun. So it's come in from Alice and she is asking. Hi, I have a question concerning EU students with Pre-Settled status. If they are applying for an Initial Teacher Training course starting next year, Academic Year 21/22. Will EU students with Pre-Settled status have to pay home or international fees?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay I think the fact that its Initial Teacher Training course wouldn't change anything. We've got an EU student provided they are eligible in all the usual ways. They're starting a course in 21/22, they have a Pre-Settled settled status, which would give them access to Tuition Fee support. So again it's a little bit of an assumption, I'm afraid Alice based on that information. I don't think the fact that it's Initial Teacher Training will change anything with regards to the students underlying entitlement to Tuition Fee support and home fees to be paid.



Okay so that's great thanks we are out of time. Thanks very much to everyone that submitted your questions. They've been wide and varied and we will go through them all and answer them all robustly and we will check some of the more complex ones and make sure our wordings right, because we do appreciate this is a complex area and we want to make sure we're giving out the correct information.

Just a reminder that the FAQ's, the booklet, the slides, the session will be available on the website, but not until March. And for the regulatory reasons we mentioned, we're not able to provide them any earlier than that. So we will shout about it when they are ready for you to have a look at. If you haven't had your question answered or you want to have a look at the summary session next week, please do register for that. Myself and Ben will be here and we will be, as I say, looking at some of the more common areas and common questions and making sure that we focus in and really give robust answers where we can.

So thank you very much to Ben and thank you very much to yourselves for joining us this morning.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 24 FEBRUARY 2021

**PAUL SMITH:** Hello everyone and welcome back to our programme on student finance following the UK exit from the EU. By now you would have come to one of our two sessions where we explored in detail the implications for student finance and this is our third session and we said we would come back and do a full Q&A on the content of the questions that you had provided to us. You won't be surprised to know there were over 250 questions that were submitted during the first two sessions. So what we've decided to do is to group these questions into common themes and to run through with you the answers to these common themes as best we can covering all the questions that you've raised.

Now just a reminder that we'll be putting our Q&A document on the website around about the middle of March when all the regulations are in force and we're able to release all the information that's available. So thanks again for joining and I'm now pleased to pass you over to our Funding Information Services Team who will take you through the questions that you've submitted. Thank you.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Thank you Paul and thank you to everyone for tuning in to this final summary session on the EU Brexit webinars. Just to give you an idea about how the session is going to go. We have looked through the 250 plus questions that have been submitted over the course of webinar one and webinar two and we've tried to group them together into some kind of coherent and orderly fashion. And we're going to look at the questions that were most common when they were submitted and some of the more complex ones that were submitted within those categories.

So I'm joined today by my colleague, Ben Rutter, who will take you through the categories.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev, good to virtually see every one again, I guess you could say. So yeah it was a difficult task trying to categorise the questions that we received into relevant categories, but the order that we've chosen to put them in and we're hoping make some sort of sense when we're going through them. So the first section we'll look at are EUSS applications and new student eligibility from Academic Year 21/22 onwards. The eligibility status for continuing students.

We have an awful lot of questions and concerns coming in regarding the changes and how they're going to affect continuing students who are already in higher education. We'll then move on to look at EU nationals and Migrant Worker status and how that will be affected and how that will change given the new regulations coming into force. We'll then look at UK nationals and Irish nationals and if there were any relevant key messages that need to be taken away for that audience. And we'll finish off with some general questions about the new application system, how it's going to work, sort of evidence that the students are going to be asked for and how are we going to process the applications that we're receiving based on the regulation and policy changes.

Without any further ado though we'll move into the questions. And I say this first section is all about the EUSS application, processing and any issues affecting new students. And that first question is students with a Pre-Settled status. What funding can they get if they have a) three years of residency in the UK b) three years mixture of UK and EU residency and c) EU residency?



**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Ben. Yeah this was a common theme around students specifically with Pre-Settled status. Now I think we have covered that students with Pre-Settled status in England are entitled to access Tuition Fee support and it's slightly different with Student Finance Wales and Student Finance Northern Ireland, where that Pre-Settled status can give you access to full support. What I think we noticed from the number of questions was the students that had residency either mixed between the UK so not quite three years in the UK and some in the EU or coming directly from the EU.

We felt it was important to just emphasise and underline the fact that EU nationals with three years residency in the EEA will still be able to access fee support. Okay so the Pre-Settled status is a prerequisite and we do think that there will be students that will be joining family members and utilising the Settlement Scheme and accessing Settled status that way, who don't have three years residency in the UK. So it could be a mixture between UK or just fully in the EU, but there will still be entitled to access fee support. So hopefully that puts a little bit of clarity into that particular topic.

Just a little bit of confirmation about a slide please Ben, where a student loses Pre-Settled status. And if I understood correctly, the suggestion was that could be leaving the UK for over six months. We just want to check some understanding on that and see what the issue is with regards to students that leave the UK.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev yeah, I think the key point here is to separate the two between losing the EUSS status and losing what we're calling continuous residency, or the Home Office are confirming and calling continuous UK residency, which is probably the most important part about the student support that they can access. So it is correct in saying if they have Pre-Settled status award under the EUSS they can leave the UK without losing that overarching Pre-Settled status.

Again going back to that, continuous residency is what we're going to be looking for, but also if they want to transfer from their Pre-Settled status to Settled status, then they need to satisfy those continuous residency rules. So if they do go back to Europe or overseas for more than a six-month period, unless it was for one of the approved exceptions, which can be up to 12 months or longer, then they will lose that continuous residency towards their full Settled status. Some of those reasons that could be classed as the longer breaks of residency are things like childbirth, serious illness, study, vocational training or overseas work posting or even compulsory military service and those sorts of things. The full list is available on the EUSS website, but they're the key factors that may break up into those wider absences longer than the approved six months.

Slightly different for those with Settled status, when they are permitted to leave the UK five years without losing that overarching status. But again as mentioned, these are Home Office guidelines. So although some of it is feeding into the Student Finance and how we will assess students from AY 21/22, these are Home Office rules. So all the important information is available on the website and so we are abiding by the decisions that the Home Office make on the student's applications for their EUSS status.

The next question has come in and it's if a student is granted Settled or Pre-Settled status this year and gets SFE support for a course will they retain that support if they change to a different course and/or institution while studying?



**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay, so any EU student will be advised that they need to go through the EU Settlement Scheme, whether you are new or continuing, you should be going through that scheme in order to lawfully remain in the UK. So that's sort of a key thing that's above and beyond just the regulations for student support. So if we're looking for any students that are continuing from a course that starts before 21/22, we would do what we currently do and look at some of the reasons why you might be classed as a new or a continuing student.

If you are going to transfer course there are instances where you would maintain your original cohort and you'd simply be classed as a continuing student. And I think that's the example that is raised in the question. There will be issues and instances where students leave their course and want to start again or have a change of mode of study where we would usually class that student as a new student. If they're going from full-time to part-time, they'd be a new part-timer or a part-time or full-time they'd be a new full-timer and then they would be subject to a new assessment.

What I think it's key to mention on this is that in either case, whether you are being classed as a continuer or a new based on one of the change of circumstances provided that you're Pre-Settled or Settled status is in place, funding should follow. We obviously need to look at general things like years of standard entitlement, but certainly regardless of whether you're classed as a new or continuous student from 21/22, provided you've got that EU settlement status then some funding should follow. So hopefully that confirms that.

Next question for you Ben if I may. We're getting questions from EU students going into their third year, they want to know if they'll be eligible for the Masters Loan next year? So this is new PGE students that we're talking about.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev, there seems to be a consistent message here and some of it's that underlying message that's come out from the Home Office that anyone that wishes to stay here after June needs to get their status sorted out and get application in via the EUSS and get either their Pre-Settled or Settled status sorted out. But providing that they've done those two things and they're a continuing student currently being assessed for Tuition Fee loan as EU student and they pass the normal eligibility checks when they move onto their postgrad course then there's no reason why they shouldn't be eligible for the Postgrad Loans.

As long as we're satisfied that they're all in residency in the UK, EEA or Gibraltar etc. in the three years prior to that first course was for reasons other than solely receiving education then again, we should be able to apply the similar residency categories in assessment when we do it. So again just to reiterate those points, if we assess them for their undergrad support based on that three-year residency in the EU or EEA, unless they've done anything to change that eligibility status then they should or they have at least their EUSS status in place to be able to access their Postgraduate Loans for continuing on their education.

So the next question, if an EU national has Pre-Settled status but less than three years residency in the UK, prior to their UK residence they lived in the EU, are they eligible for UK fee status?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay a very common trend that came through the questions was to do with UK fee status. Now, we wanted to put some clarity and certainty into that particular issue. EU, EEA and Swiss nationals and their family members who are covered by the Withdrawal Agreement, so it's the Withdrawal Agreement that covers students that will have access to home fee status and subsequent student support broadly on the same basis as now.



So according to the Withdrawal Agreement, generally this covers people that are living in the UK by the end of transition and have exercised a right to reside under EU law, people that continue to live in the UK that have been through and accessed Pre-Settled and Settled status under the Settlement Scheme, the exception being Irish citizens who are not required to go through that status because of the Common Travel Area. Now I've stuck fairly close to script on that because it is wording from the actual Withdrawal Agreement.

The bestowing of a UK fee status isn't something that we decide on, it's something that students are protected with underneath the banner of the EU Withdrawal Agreement itself. So just to confirm that and to confirm that under that agreement, students will continue to have access to home fee status and subsequent support from ourselves broadly on the same basis as they have it now.

The final question in this section Ben could I ask, can you confirm the key points for an EU student with Settled status from the EU Settlement Scheme that wants to leave the UK and live in the EU for a year before returning to take up a course?

**BEN RUTTER:** Again it kind of crosses over the question earlier in this section about absences from the UK. As we have already established now that those with Pre-Settled status have the two years but need to keep it within the six months to maintain their continuous residency. But those with a full Settled status they have the right to leave the UK, for up to a five-year period without losing that overarching Home Office Settled status under the EUSS. But in terms of accessing student support, as well as having the EUSS status sorted out regulations as per normal, state that the students do need to maintain that ordinary UK residency for three years for the first AY of their course.

So looking at this question, this instance where it says that they return to live in the EU, that kind of implies that their break from their UK residency couldn't be seen as temporary. So on their return to the UK to study, that might mean they're not able to access full support, even though they do have the Settled status under the EUSS. But they do have, as we've established, the three years EU, EEA residency prior to the start of the course so on that basis, yes they should be able to apply for Tuition Fee loan support only, but as they've broken their UK residency and they don't satisfy the three-year rule for residency here, then it might not be full support that they are able to access.

And this example was illustrated in the slides, which if memory serves was slide 17 with the example of Hans who return to the EU to live for a period before returning to the UK and where we weren't able to view his break in residency from the UK as being temporary.

Okay so now we're moving into Section two, which is looking at the eligibility entitlement for continuing students. And the first question what if they have already intermitted during the current Academic Year or plan to suspend their studies in Academic Year 21/22? How would the intermittence affect their eligibility?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Ben. This is broadly the same question and response to the previous question that we asked about new students. There are some instances, suspension being one of them, where a student would usually in most cases, they would suspend their studies, take a break and then pick up when they come back and there would be no definitive break it would be classed as a continuing student, in which case it wouldn't really affect their eligibility. But as I mentioned previously, there will be instances where the break is permanent and students do need to go back and start a new course.



The key thing is that they should have been through the EU Settlement Scheme. So provided they've been awarded a Pre-Settled or Settled status, that shouldn't really make any difference to their support. The only things that we would check, we would do the usual eligibility checks around how many years of standard entitlement and funding have students got left. But with regards to specifically the EU Settlement Scheme, students new and continuers even prior to 21/22, EU students are advised to go through the Settlement Scheme in order to get their legal residency approved. So in that case the EU status wouldn't really impact whether they have a break or not.

Okay the next question Ben can you just confirm, do continuing students need to go through the EU Settlement Scheme in order to access student support for the remainder of their course?

Again it's sort of a follow on from the previous question in terms of that sort of underlying key message about any EU national wants to remain living here after the end of June then they need to get themselves their EUSS sorted out. But in terms of student finance applications for continuing students, the short answer is no we won't be asking for the EUSS evidence checks or their share codes for continuing students. It's only going to be new students from Academic Year 21/22 who will be asked for and need to provide both of those things.

So continuing students, no they won't need to provide the EUSS share code as part of their eligibility and assessment checks for their continuing student finance applications. We've assessed under the current rules and regulations that are in place and using the current evidence requirements for EU students, be it their passport, be it their biometric residency cards, etc. etc. so for the served two years of their course, they'll still be under the same thing. So we won't be going back and asking those guys to provide evidence under the new system given that post-Brexit policy changes.

So the next question is do EU students currently studying in the UK having started their course prior to AY 21/22 count as being resident in the UK for the period during which they have been studying?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks Ben. Another very common question was to do with this issue of ordinary residence and it is a long standing need that students need to demonstrate ordinary residents in the UK in order to access support. So to directly answer the question for EU students any year spent on a current course, cannot be counted towards ordinary UK residence. So for our continuers if you're going Year two or Year three, you wouldn't be able to count the previous years spent on the existing course.

There is the provision for any students who, if they were to withdraw or abandon their current course and begin a new course, new course, new learning aim, new set of rules and regulations then under the Bidar ruling, years spent on the cost could be counted as ordinary UK residency so just important to make a distinction there. Generally speaking no, you cannot if you're continuing on your same course. But if you do withdraw and begin a new course, there is the provision that we could count those years towards your ordinary residence.

I'll move on to the next question, which is to do with students progressing Ben. The progression is in one instance it's from an FE course onto a HE full degree programme or students progressing from a preliminary course and topping-up to a full degree programme. So can you just explain how that may impact our continuing students for the purposes of EUSS and accessing student support?



I'll move on to the next question, which is to do with students progressing Ben. The progression is in one instance it's from an FE course onto a HE full degree programme or students progressing from a preliminary course and topping-up to a full degree programme. So can you just explain how that may impact our continuing students for the purposes of EUSS and accessing student support?

**BEN RUTTER:** Quite a wide ranging question there and quite a broad brush answer as well, because again, until we see the actual individual student's application, it is quite hard to see how we will actually be assessing them so I can't give you 100% answer on how every single student will be assessed but then again following on from what Kev was saying in the previous answer, if a student is starting a new learning aim, i.e. they're moving from the access course to their first higher education qualification, etc., then they will be seen as new, which is in line with the regulations as they've been since day dot. So if they're doing that, then they will have to undergo the new eligibility and assessment checks and meet the guidelines that come in for Academic Year 21/22.

In some instances, if the student is doing what we defined end-on course, i.e. they're moving on from an eligible preliminary course directly on to top-up to their Honours degree with nothing more than the intermitting summer vacation in place, then again under some of the end-on rules, they may be able to maintain their current cohort, which would potentially mean they don't need to fall under the reassessment rules for the new rules are coming for Academic Year 21/22.

But some of the other top-ups where we can't be seen as end-on or if they go over the intermittent five-month period, then yes in that instance we then would see them as being new. So we have to do the reassessment under the new rules as well, when they're shifting between the first course and the top-up year. I think the message that we're trying to get across with all these continuing students are that even if they would now from Academic Year 21/22 need to be assessed on the new regulations, that doesn't necessarily mean they won't be eligible for support.

If they've submitted their application to the EUSS in time and they've got their Citizens' Rights and everything else sorted out, then that doesn't mean they won't be eligible. If they are a continuing student and then moving on to a different course they're moving from the first course to post grad or they're topping-up or they're ending-on, as long as they still meet the criteria when we look at their previous study and those sorts of things, just because they're shifting from the old set of regulations to the new, it's not drawing a red line in the sand for continuing EU or EEA students as long as they tick all of the boxes and are still fundamentally eligible then again, this new EUSS system is just another check and balance they need to go through to make sure that they are eligible for their support.

Let's move onto the next question. Will there ever be a time when Tuition Fee loan only support is phased out, as everyone who would've been eligible for it becomes eligible for full support instead? For example anyone who had Pre-Settled status passes the five-year residency mark and is now eligible for full support.

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay yeah there will always be a place for Tuition Fee only support, so the question there is absolutely right we do envisage a number of students that are progressing from Pre-Settled status onto Settled status once they've reached the five-year continuous residency and they've gained Settled status, providing everything else is eligible and there's no issues. Under the Event section of the presentation we know that that is something where students can enhance their package of support from fee only to full support.



However, there will be a number of instances and there will always be a place for fee only support. Some of the other categories that we looked at towards the latter half of the presentation. Some of the ones that spring to mind are our EU nationals joining their family members after transition having moved from the EU, they will be automatically deemed Pre-Settled and if they're studying a three-year course, for example, they will have Pre-Settled and fee funding for the full duration of their course.

Irish nationals who have had the majority of their residency in the Common Travel Area or wholly in Ireland, they will be eligible for fee only. Family members of people of Northern Ireland or people with eligibility categories from Gibraltar with Gibraltar residency, so there will be instances where accessing Tuition Fee support with Pre-Settled status is the maximum amount of support that students are able to access. So it will always have a place but you are right, there will be instances where students will be able to upgrade from Pre-Settled to Settled, but it won't apply to all students in all instances.

Okay the last question in this section Ben, is looking for a bit of advice. Should I be encouraging my existing EU students who have been in the UK for five years now, but they were not resident in the UK for five years prior to the start of their existing course, to apply for Settled status and then apply for an Event to unlock maintenance support for the upcoming Academic Year? I thought that Maintenance Loan eligibility was set in stone by the circumstances on the first day of the first year of the course and couldn't be altered mid-course.

**BEN RUTTER:** And generally yeah that is absolutely usually the case and just because we're moving into the new set of regulations, that's not going to be changing, unless the student does qualify under an Event, then we will not be able to reassess them based on time spent on the current course, even if they do satisfy the three years or five years rules as we move into them. Now again as we've mentioned in the previous question in this section it's under the Bidar rulings, if they were to withdraw, abandon or start a new course then yeah potentially we can of look at years spent on the current course towards their student finance eligibility.

But generally, even if they were to move from Pre-Settled to Settled status, we would still need to go back and have a look at the three-year residency rule prior the start of that course before we can make a rule about whether they could shift from Tuition Fee loan only to Maintenance support. The exception to that rule again has been in the regulations for a few years now is the Event rule, some of those normal ones won't be in place for EU nationals any more, such as a country acceding to the EU because obviously we're out of the EU, so that's not going to be one that's applicable to us.

Probably the big one that would happen to them would be if they were to become a Migrant Worker. So under those circumstances, if they did have a Pre-Settled status in place or shifted from Pre-Settled to Settled status and could apply for support under the Migrant Worker rules, then yes we may be able to say in that instance, then move them from fee loan support only over to the full package of SFE funding.

Okay so the next section we're going to look at is going to be about the eligibility in time for the EU nationals and Migrant Workers. And the first question is, can students apply for Migrant Worker status with either Settled or Pre-Settled status?



**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay the short answer to this is yes, absolutely you can. Migrant Worker provision is a way of enhancing a fee-only package to a full support package so it is more likely that students with Pre-Settled status will be utilising the Migrant Worker route, because if you've been recognised as Pre-Settled that means you've got less than five years. So Migrant Workers is one of the options in accessing additional maintenance support as opposed to just the basic package.

Those students with Settled status, they are more likely in most cases, they probably will have been living here for more than five years and will be entitled to the full package anyway. But just to directly answer the question, Migrant Worker provision can be applied for regardless if you are Settled or Pre-Settled for the EU Settlement Scheme.

And with our Migrant Workers what evidence will Migrant Workers or the children of Migrant Workers need to send in? This is question two.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev, it would probably be no huge surprise that there's not going to be a massive shift in the sort of evidence they're going to be asking for from Migrant Workers. So a lot of the evidence requirements will be those you've been familiar with advising students on for again, X amount of years. So it's going to be evidence of the eligible UK based employment, the residency information we need in the first instance. If they're a family member of a child of a Migrant Worker, then of course, we'll be looking for the normal evidence to prove that link between the student and the family member and the family members employment, if they are being assessed as the child of or family member of a Migrant Worker.

But again, under the new regulations, we'll need to see the EUSS settled evidence the Pre-Settled status for both the student and if applicable, the parent or family member of the student. So a fairly straightforward one there, apart from the addition of the EUSS evidence things staying pretty much as it is in terms of the evidence we'll be asking for from Migrant Workers and their eligible family members.

So next question an EEA national who has Pre-Settled status lives in England and applies to SFE for funding for a course starting in September 2021. Has remained in the UK throughout, so don't have to consider temporary absence, but not yet eligible for full Settled status. If they've been in the UK for over three years as of first of September 2021 will not be eligible for home student funding but can take out a Tuition Fee loan only?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay another common thread that came out, so first and foremost, it's probably worth mentioning that EEA national that are not EU nationals so students from Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein are not EU nationals. Those countries are not in the EU, they are in the EEA, but they're not in the EU. So current guidelines state that students from those countries usually need to meet Migrant Worker residency criteria and Migrant Worker status in order to access any support. They can't just get fee support on their own right, because they're not EU nationals.

So the new guidance is that individuals can access full support once they've been awarded Settled status. So we're looking for these students to be in the UK for five years and be awarded full Settled status and of those five years they would need to, for the purposes of student support, be in the UK for three years prior to the start of the course. So remember, as they are not EU nationals, unless they are eligible under any of the other provisions, they will not be able to access fee support with just Pre-Settled status.



They will need Pre-Settled status if they want to go down the EEA Migrant Worker route but it's just worth emphasising that nationals of Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, although they are EEA nationals, they are not EU nationals. So unless they are recognised as Migrant Workers, they will only be eligible for any support once they have got full Settled status and five years residency, in which case they can access full support.

And staying on the theme of different nationals Ben. Could you expand on Swiss nationals living in Switzerland I saw a government trade agreement that seemed to suggest that Swiss nationals are entitled to fee support even without any UK residency or passport links.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks Kev again similar to kind of what you were saying about the EEA nationals, the assessment for Swiss nationals has been different. Again Switzerland not officially part of the EU, but previously under the current regulations, the children of Swiss nationals were permitted to access full support, provided that they were aged under 21 and had the three-year residency in the UK, EU, EEA or Switzerland prior to the first AY of the course.

Then again as we mentioned through the presentation as well, that regulation is being removed from Academic Year 21/22 unless the Swiss national parent has been granted Pre-Settled or Settled status and was resident in the UK prior to the end of the transition period on 31st of December 2020. The children of Swiss nationals again must have Pre-Settled status, but they can gain that after the end of the transition period, if they are coming to the UK to join the eligible Swiss national parent who is already here in the UK.

Okay moving on to the next section, which is section four and thanks for your patience while we rattle through some of your questions, we hope you are finding the answers useful and informative. And this next question is about Irish nationals and students that mix residency across the Common Travel Area agreement. So the first question and maybe the foremost issue here, do Irish nationals need to go through the EU Settlement Scheme?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay nice simple straightforward, no they do not. Under the Common Travel Area agreement that agreement sits outside of the EU Brexit agreement and that agreement allows free travel between Irish and British nationals to travel between the UK and Islands and the country of Ireland. So no you're not legally required to go through the EU Settlement Scheme to maintain lawful residency in the UK if you are an Irish national.

Following on from that students with Pre-Settled status, what funding could they get Ben, if they had less than three years residency in the UK, a mixture of three years residency in the UK and Ireland and three years Irish residency?

**BEN RUTTER:** So the rules of the Common Travel Area agreement, as Kev touched on in previous answer state that an Irish national is free to move between the UK and Ireland. So if they are Irish national with three years residency in the UK prior to the first day of the first AY of the course, then they will be eligible for full support, that's fees and maintenance funding from the relevant home funding administration. If they're an Irish national and they've spent the three years of their previous residency mixed between Ireland and the UK or spend the full three years prior to the start of the course in Ireland, then it will be Tuition Fee Loan support only that they're entitled to apply for.

Now the next question, can I ask whether Irish nationals will be able to get Migrant Worker status and therefore full funding?



**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay yeah Irish nationals are entitled to apply for Migrant Worker status in the same way as any other Migrant Worker applicant. We do tend to see fewer of these because the Irish nationals do just need to demonstrate three years residency prior to the start of the course in the UK and they'll automatically access the full support. So this is instead of the usual five years that will be needed for EU nationals to gain Settled status. So we do tend to see less of them but the direct answer to the question is there's nothing to stop Irish nationals applying for and gaining Migrant Worker status.

Okay, what is the difference to Irish nationals that want to study in England, Wales or Northern Ireland?

**BEN RUTTER:** One of the more long-winded answer there's no real difference, which makes Irish nationals somewhat unique compared against how we would look at the eligibility emergency criteria for a student from elsewhere in the EU. So providing they have those three years of UK based residency, they'll be entitled to full support irrespective if they intend to study in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

And the final section in this question is, can you let us know about those with dual nationality or dual citizenship? So if someone has a French and UK passport, would they be covered under the UK nationals in the EU category? So would be eligible for home fee status and full finance support?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay, so ultimately there is no difference and those with dual nationality will not be treated any differently to any other standard UK national. Where we are likely to see this occurring more frequently the two scenarios that we looked at in the presentation is where we have a UK national exercise their right to free movement around the EU prior to the end of transition. If you remember from the presentation, you cannot be penalised for exercising your right to movement throughout the EU so long as it was before the 31st of December.

So it is feasible that UK nationals will move to the EU, get dual nationality and then return to the UK to study so you can use the UK part of that dual nationality in order to access full support. Similarly the UK nationals that have never lived in the UK, they will be able to access full support provided they move from the EU or EEA back to the UK prior to the end of transition. So both of those regulations the UK national part of the dual nationality, will allow access to full support. It's worth mentioning that those are time bound and those regulations are only covering students that return in those circumstances for up to seven years after the end of transition.

Okay the final section of the Q&A is all around the application process and best practise for advice to students. So question one Ben, you referenced the EU share code will need to be provided by the student, verified with the Home Office and the application completely assessed within 30 days. How realistic do you think this is? And what will happen if the share code expires during the application process?

**BEN RUTTER:** Yes there seems to be a little bit of people picking up the wrong end of the stick from the message that we're giving there. We're not in any way saying that we will complete the end-to-end assessment within 30 days. The 30 days we mentioned in the presentation relates to the validity period of the share code that the students generate from the Home Office, which it won't take us the full 30 days to check those. But what we need them to be is valid when they arrive with us. So it's a completely different message there.



We'll still be operating the student finance application turnaround times in line with our normal subsequent checks and service level agreements. The current estimates we're working towards is being able to validate a share code within 10 days of it being provided by the student. So that gives a rough idea of the time that the student needs to have left on that share code before they send it in to us. So there's no point in them generating one 20-25 days prior to them submitting in their student finance application. That is the key message that we're trying to get across here.

If they can generate it within a few days of submitting their student finance application or just before they do it then again, that that gives us that window of opportunity to get them verified with the Home Office, but it's in no way saying that we will be turning around every single student finance application within that 30-day period.

Next question in this section, are students best to wait until they receive the status from the EUSS before applying for their student funding?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay well I think in most instances, probably yes. A valid EU share code and proof of their status is a fundamental part of the application process. UK nationals and EU nationals have all had to demonstrate an underlying entitlement to access any public funds and any student support. With our EU nationals part of their fundamental underlying eligibility for that is the EU Settlement Scheme result. So it's only those whose EUSS application is still with the Home Office or those that perhaps have an ongoing appeal with the Home Office that may want to apply without it but even in those instances, we would still need to see proof that an application for a status has been made in order to move the application forward.

Okay so is it the same application process for students who are Pre-Settled and Settled EU nationals?

**BEN RUTTER:** And just to let you know this is going to be a quite a long answer, so again, please do bear with me, but I hope what I'm going to say is going to make sense. The general principles are saying if they are an EU national and eligible for full support, i.e. they have Settled status and they're applying to SFE or Settled or Pre-Settled and have three years residency in the UK and are under the Student Finance Wales or Student Finance Northern Ireland umbrella, then they should be able to complete the end to an application process online. Those with Pre-Settled status who are eligible for fee support only, Migrant Workers, children of Migrant Workers, Swiss nationals, etc. will be directed to the relevant paper form if they do attempt to apply online.

And just to let you know this is going to be a quite a long answer, so again, please do bear with me, but I hope what I'm going to say is going to make sense. The general principles are saying if they are an EU national and eligible for full support, i.e. they have Settled status and they're applying to SFE or Settled or Pre-Settled and have three years residency in the UK and are under the Student Finance Wales or Student Finance Northern Ireland umbrella, then they should be able to complete the end to an application process online. Those with Pre-Settled status who are eligible for fee support only, Migrant Workers, children of Migrant Workers, Swiss nationals, etc. will be directed to the relevant paper form if they do attempt to apply online.

So for those with Settled status when progressing through the application form, they will first see the residency section and if they indicate that they are Settled on there, then it will take them through to the next stages of the application. So they'll be asked to validate their three year UK address history prior to the start of their course, ID evidence and then when they submit their application, they will then be contacted about the interim process of supplying the EUSS share code, be it uploading digitally where they'll give us the share code and their initial award letter from the Home Office, or post them in, again, we'll try and stay within the same processing time frame, that 10 day period to upload them when we get the detail through.



So it's just that key message about making sure they are submitting their application with plenty of time left on the EUSS share code. If they are Pre-Settled under the EUSS again, if they do choose to try to apply online, they'll select Pre-Settled from the same residency section on the online application, but then they'll be directed off to the relevant paper application form. For SFE for these students it will be switching over to paper.

So if they're a Migrant Worker or the child of Swiss national, they'll be directed up to the PN1 forms, or if they just EUSS Pre-Settled entitled to fee support only then they'll be directed off to the fees only paper application form and those will be available when the regulations have been signed off across all domiciles. So there might be a little bit of a delay when those that have the full Settled status can apply as to when those with the Pre-Settled status can apply for their Student Finance England support.

Slightly different process for those under the Student Finance Wales and Student Finance Northern Ireland. So if those guys are under those applicants, where they're EU nationals and they have their Pre-Settled status, as we cleared up in the presentation and also today, if those students have their Pre-Settled status under the EUSS, the three years UK residency and are already resident in Wales or Northern Ireland prior to the start of the course, then they are also entitled to the full range of support from Student Finance Wales or Student Finance Northern Ireland. So they will also be able to complete the end-to-end application process online with the Pre-Settled status. It's only if those students have less than the required three years residency, that they will also be directed off to the relevant application form on paper.

So our final question in this section, again thank you for your patience while we have been rattling through some of these, we hope you find it useful. Are students with Pre-Settled status entitled to additional support such as DSA or childcare grants?

**KEVIN MCMULLAN:** Okay thanks this was a really good question. And students with Pre-Settled status generally speaking, are only able to access fee support. So we know and we've seen through the presentation that there are some exceptions to the rule but generally speaking, Pre-Settled status will allow you to access fee support only. Disabled student allowance and the other dependents grants come under the umbrella term of maintenance assistance, so students will need to have full Settled status in order to access those additional grants.

The exception would be those with Pre-Settled status that are recognised as Migrant Worker, whereas we know that will allow you to access the full package of support, including DSA and Dependents Grants. So generally speaking, you would need to have full Settled status in order to access those additional support products.

Thank you so much for attending one of the two original webinars and thanks for your attendance today. A final reminder that the slides to the presentation and the FAQ document with all 250 plus questions that have been submitted will be put up on the Practitioner website around about the middle of March. In the meantime, do look out for the upcoming Funding Information Team Bulletin, which we will send out to you that will include information about the launch and updates on when the information will be housed on the Practitioner website.

Thank you for joining us.

**BEN RUTTER:** Thanks everybody, Take care.

**END OF TRANSCRIPT**





**For more information:**

[events@slc.co.uk](mailto:events@slc.co.uk)

[www.events-slc.co.uk](http://www.events-slc.co.uk)