

**STUDENT SUPPORT INFORMATION NOTE
(SSIN)**

2021/22 FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR
UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE
STUDENTS FOLLOWING THE LIFTING OF
COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS.

To: Student Finance administrators and practitioners in institutions of higher education, further education or specialist colleges providing HE, and alternative providers; Student Finance advisors, and the Student Loans Company

**SSIN 06/21
September 2021**

Dear Colleagues,

2021/22 funding arrangements for undergraduate and postgraduate students following the lifting of covid-19 restrictions.

This SSIN provides guidance on student funding arrangements for AY21/22 following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.

Attendance and Residence

1. On 17 August, the [Government confirmed](#) that there are no longer restrictions on the approach to teaching and learning in higher education (HE) providers as a result of COVID-19. There is no requirement for social distancing or other measures within in person teaching. Providers are therefore able to shape their courses without restrictions to face-to-face provision.
2. In line with all other settings, HE providers should continue to conduct risk assessments for their particular circumstances. They should implement sensible and proportionate control measures which follow the health and safety hierarchy of controls to reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level. HE providers should have contingency plans to deal with any identified positive cases of COVID-19 or outbreaks. This guidance does not apply to further education (FE) providers who offer HE qualifications. FE providers should follow [FE guidance](#) for these students.
3. As there are no longer any restrictions on face-to-face provision, the temporary changes to rules on attendance and residence adopted to cope with the effects of COVID will no longer apply (with the exceptions of rules covering students affected by international travel restrictions). The relevant rules will be the same as those that applied at the start of the 2019/20 Academic Year.
4. The fact that certain parts of a course may be provided online and can be followed by a student without being in physical attendance, does not

necessarily mean that that course will be classified as a distance learning course. As before, the nature of the courses will be assessed taking account of the required pattern of attendance across the course as a whole. If a provider agrees a pattern of attendance for an individual student that requires only occasional attendance during the week, then that student may be classified as a distance learner for the purposes of student support.

5. Where all aspects of a full-time course are provided online, the course will be treated as a distance learning course. Students on distance learning courses qualify for tuition fee loan and, where applicable, Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) support but not loans for living costs or other grants (unless a student is unable to attend their course as a result of a disability).
6. A full-time course where a student is physically attending the provider on a regular basis for a substantial amount of time (e.g. for lectures, tutorials, learning in the workplace and studying at providers' libraries) will attract loans for living costs and, where applicable, dependants grants and/or DSA. The rate of maintenance support to which a student is entitled will, as before, be determined by where they are living for the majority of each term.

International Travel

7. Where international travel restrictions prevent students travelling to or from the UK, the following rules will apply:
 - I. UK Students prevented from travelling abroad for their overseas year of study (as part of a degree from a UK HEP) due to Covid-19 will still be considered as attending the overseas institution if that HEP is providing the learning online. If the UK HEP provides part of the learning during the year in which the student had intended to study overseas, but the period of full-time study at the UK HEP is less than 10 weeks (with the remainder provided by the overseas HEP online or on-site) the 15% fee cap (up to £1,385) will apply. In cases where at least 10 weeks of full-time study is provided by the UK HEP, eligible students can be charged up to the £9,250 maximum fee. Students will have access to a fee loan to meet the full costs of tuition.
 - II. Eligible students studying remotely with an overseas HEP, but living in the UK, will receive the rate of loan for living costs that would apply to study in the UK. If they subsequently travel overseas, their entitlement can be reassessed.
 - III. Eligible students who would normally be undertaking a distance learning course in England (or the UK for continuing students who initially undertook the course in England), but who are required

temporarily to study online from outside the UK as a result of Covid-19, will be considered to be studying in England and will qualify for a fee loan.

- IV. Eligible students having, due to Covid-19, to study remotely overseas to with a UK HEP on a course that normally requires attendance, will be considered temporarily absent from the UK and therefore as studying in England, provided that they are engaging with their UK HEP. This includes both UK nationals and EU nationals with settled status. Eligible students will qualify for both tuition fee loans and loans for living costs and, where applicable, dependants grants and/or DSA.

Further Information

8. If you are unclear about how this guidance applies to a particular course, please contact the Student Loans Company.
9. Guidance setting out [expectations in maintaining quality and standards](#) is available from the Office for Students (OfS), the HE regulator in England.

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