

**TO:**

HIGHER EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS  
IN ENGLAND

SSIN 04/26  
16 February 2026

Dear colleague:

**HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT SUPPORT IN 2026/27:**

1. Changes to student support for the 2026/27 academic year are set out in the Education (Student Fees, Awards, Support and Loan Repayments) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 (S.I. 2026 No. 130) which were laid before Parliament on **12 February 2026** and will come into force no later than 1 April **2026**. These Regulations are subject to Parliamentary scrutiny.

Changes to maximum fees for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years are set out in a separate **SSIN 03/26**.

**The Education (Student Fees, Awards and Support and Loan Repayments ) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 (“the Student Finance Regulations”)**

2. The Student Finance Regulations:
  - a. increase maximum fee loans for full-time and part-time undergraduate courses in 2026/27 by 2.71% (forecast inflation based on the RPIX inflation index).
  - b. increase maximum loans for living costs and long courses loans for new and continuing full-time students attending undergraduate courses in 2026/27 by 2.71%.
  - c. increase maximum maintenance grants and special support grants in 2026/27 for full-time students who started attending their undergraduate courses before 1 August 2016 by 2.71%.
  - d. increase maximum loans for living costs in 2026/27 for part-time students attending level 6 courses, level 5 healthcare courses and level 4 and 5 higher technical qualifications by 2.71%.

- e. increase maximum loans in 2026/27 for students starting postgraduate master's degree courses from 1 August 2026 by 2.71%.
- f. increase maximum loans in 2026/27 for students starting postgraduate doctoral degree courses from 1 August 2026 by 2.71%.

Maximum fee loans for full-time and part-time classroom-based foundation years are frozen at 2025/26 levels in 2026/27.

Maximum disabled students' allowance for new and continuing undergraduate and postgraduate students with disabilities are frozen at the 2025/26 level in 2026/27.

Maximum grants for new and continuing full-time undergraduate students with adult or child dependants (adult dependants' grant, childcare grant, parents' learning allowance) are frozen at 2025/26 levels in 2026/27.

3. The Student Finance Regulations also make the following changes for the 2026/27 academic year:
  - a. Removing the household income assessment for care leavers so that they all qualify for the maximum loan for living costs, and where applicable, the maximum long courses loan.
  - b. Introducing a 13-week time limit for retrospective claims for childcare from childcare providers for payments of Childcare Grant after the childcare claimed took place.
  - c. Removing nannies from the list of registered and approved childcare providers who qualify for payments of Childcare Grant.
  - d. Removing entitlement to ADG for dependants of an eligible student who are ordinarily resident outside the United Kingdom and are either the student's partner or a non-partner adult who is financially dependent on the student.
  - e. Amending references to the Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme to align with the latest Home Office rules.
  - f. Amending the rules on overstaying and entitlement to student support and home fee status so that for students applying for further leave in line with the Home Office Immigration Rules, their eligibility is not terminated unless a decision is made by the Home Office to refuse them further leave.

- g. Updating the Repayment Regulations so that they reflect changes made by HMRC to the Finance Act 2021 in relation to Finance Penalty Reform legislation.
4. An electronic copy of the **Student Finance Regulations** for 2026/27 and the **Explanatory Memorandum** which sets out policy changes in full for 2026/27 can be accessed on the legislation.gov.uk website at:  
  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/contents/made>  
  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/memorandum/contents>
5. An **Equality Impact Assessment** of changes to maximum fees and fee loans for the 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic years can be accessed on the legislation.gov.uk website at:  
  
[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/pdfs/uksiod\\_20260130\\_en\\_002.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/pdfs/uksiod_20260130_en_002.pdf)
6. An **Equality Impact Assessment** of increases to maximum undergraduate loans for living costs and postgraduate loans for 2026/27, the freeze in dependants' grants and disabled students' allowance at 2025/26 levels in 2026/27, and other student support changes for 2026/27 can also be accessed on the legislation.gov.uk website at:  
  
[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/pdfs/uksiod\\_20260130\\_en\\_001.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2026/130/pdfs/uksiod_20260130_en_001.pdf)
7. Changes to maximum fees for 2026/27 and 2027/28 and living costs support for 2026/27 were announced on gov.uk on 26 November 2025, alongside the Autumn budget:  
  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tuition-fees-and-student-support-2026-to-2027-academic-year>

#### **ORDERING COPIES OF REGULATIONS:**

8. If you wish to order copies of Regulations, please access the TSO Shop website and click on the 'contact us' link at the top of the webpage: [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk)

**ENQUIRIES:**

If you have any queries about the Regulations, please contact, in the first instance, the Student Finance England Practitioner Support Team: telephone 0300 100 0618; email [SSIN\\_queries@slc.co.uk](mailto:SSIN_queries@slc.co.uk)