

How Higher Education is Delivered.

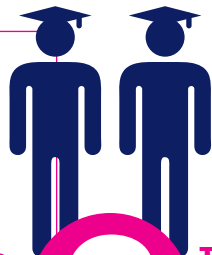
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54,000

students enrolled per year

There are eleven providers of higher education in Northern Ireland. Three of the eleven providers are universities: Queen's University Belfast; Ulster University; and the Open University. Together they enrol over 54,000 students per year.

There are also two teacher training colleges: Stranmillis University College; and St Mary's University College, enrolling close to 3,000 students per year.



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Teacher training colleges

The six further education colleges also offer higher education courses, and deliver about a fifth of all higher education in Northern Ireland with over 11,500 enrolments.

11,500 enrolments.

Higher education can take many forms: full-time study, the most 'traditional' mode of provision; part-time study, which allows individuals to balance work or other responsibilities; distance learning where it is now entirely possible for students to undertake entire qualifications without ever actually setting foot in their university or college; and employer-led learning such as Earn as you Learn and Apprenticeships.



In 2013/14, Northern Ireland's higher education institutions' received income of about £523million. About 67% of this income came from grants from Northern Ireland government Departments and tuition fees from students.

£523million

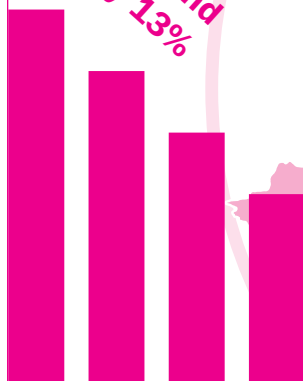


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SKILLS
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Decrease in teaching and research funding by 13%

Government funding is provided in the main for teaching and research totalling close to £200 million per year. From 2009/10 to 2014/15, the grant funding provided by the Department for Employment and Learning reduced by over 13%.



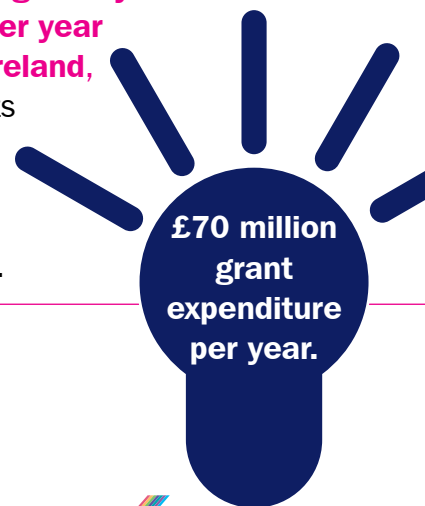
The biggest source of private investment for higher education in Northern Ireland is tuition fees, paid by students.

Full-time undergraduate students from Northern Ireland commencing a higher education course in Northern Ireland will only pay a maximum tuition fee of £3,805 in 2015/16.

Most full-time undergraduate students can access financial support through the Student Loans Company to cover the cost of their tuition fees through student loans. In 2013/14 over one half of tuition fee income was paid through student loans, and it is currently forecasted that about 40% of that will not be repaid.

Loans, which are covered up-front by Her Majesty's Treasury, do not need to be repaid until students have graduated and are earning over £17,335, at which point they repay at a rate of 9% of their income above that amount. A student owing £3,000 will repay the same amount per month as a student owing three times as much provided they both earn the same amount.

Significant levels of public funding are used to support students financially while they study through the student support system. In 2013/14, over £364 million was provided to students from Northern Ireland to help them with the costs of studying. Support is provided in grants which do not need to be repaid and loans which do. The grant expenditure is now totalling nearly £70 million per year in Northern Ireland, which accounts for about one tenth of the Department's overall budget.



All loans are covered up-front by Her Majesty's Treasury

