



Policy paper

Maintenance grant amounts and eligibility criteria

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Applies to England

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The new maintenance grants will be introduced in the 2028 to 2029 academic year.

Providing they meet eligibility criteria, new students and those in later years of study will benefit from these grants. This means students will not need to defer starting their studies until the 2028 to 2029 academic year to receive extra support.

Maintenance grants will be paid in addition to maintenance loans, providing eligible students with extra funding while studying without increasing their debt.

Maintenance grant amounts

For students in their first and second years of study, maintenance grants will:

- provide maximum extra support of £1,000 per year (cash value in 2028 to 2029) for the most disadvantaged students – those with household residual incomes at or below the minimum means-testing threshold (currently £25,000 per year)
- taper down to a minimum of £500 per year extra support for students with household residual incomes of £5,000 above the minimum means-testing threshold (currently equating to £30,000 per year)

Providing they also remain eligible for undergraduate means-tested maintenance loans, for students in their third year of study onwards, maintenance grants will:

- provide maximum extra support of £750 per year, for students with household residual incomes at or below the minimum means-testing threshold
- taper down to a minimum of £375 per year extra support, for students with household residual incomes £5,000 above the minimum means-testing threshold

Students with a household residual income of more than £5,000 above the minimum means-testing threshold (currently equating to £30,000 per year) will not receive a maintenance grant.

This approach ensures students receive the largest maintenance grants in their first and second years of study, helping them access higher education and progress through this period. It aligns with current arrangements for maximum maintenance loans, which are set at a lower rate for the final academic year of standard full-time courses, given this is shorter for the majority of undergraduates.

Students in all years of undergraduate study and at all levels of household income will also benefit from the government's commitment to increasing maintenance loans every year in line with forecast inflation.

Eligible subjects

The [Post-16 education and skills white paper](#) sets out the government's ambition to

deliver a more sustainable, more specialised and more efficient higher education sector, better aligned with the needs of our economy. Targeted maintenance grants will help deliver on this, by supporting students to study subjects that support the government's missions and the [Industrial Strategy](#).

We recognise that prospective students, employers and providers will be eager to find out which subjects will attract maintenance grants.

It is crucial that the list of subjects eligible for maintenance grants is informed by the best and most up-to-date evidence on skills needs. This list will be confirmed in advance of grants being introduced in the 2028 to 2029 academic year. We will:

- draw on further stakeholder engagement and ongoing work from Skills England to assess future employment and skills priorities
- explore alignment with the subject lists for [Lifelong learning entitlement \(LLE\)](#) modular and priority additional entitlement funding

Who will be eligible?

To be eligible for maintenance grants, students will need to:

- be studying a higher education course in an eligible subject, at levels 4, 5 or 6, including technical qualifications and degrees at university or college
- be studying 120 credits or more per course year leading to a qualification under the LLE, or full time under current student finance arrangements
- qualify for means-tested maintenance loans from [Student Finance England](#) in each year of study

Students with home status in England studying at an eligible higher education provider in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales will qualify for maintenance grants, providing they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Students with home status in other parts of the UK and in the Crown Dependencies will continue to be subject to their respective higher education financial support arrangements.

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