





Frequently asked questions by parents

When to apply 

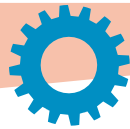
Evidence 

Payment 



Frequently asked questions by parents

Question



When should my child apply and how long will it take to process their application?

Does my child have to make separate applications for the different loans and grants?

Answer



▶ It takes at least six weeks to process applications so it's important they apply as soon as possible once the application service opens.

They can apply for student finance even if they don't have a confirmed place at university or college. There will be a deadline for your child to get their money for the start of their course so make sure your child applies before this date.

For up to date information about the application launch and deadline dates bookmark SFE's student finance zone on The Student Room. You should also follow us on Twitter and like us on Facebook for news alerts.

▶ They only need to make one application for us to assess what Tuition Fee Loan, Maintenance Loan, Parents' Learning Allowance or Adult Dependants' Grant they can get.

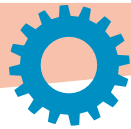
If they're applying for other support, such as Disabled Students' Allowances, or help with childcare costs, they tell us on their main application and we'll send them the additional forms they need. These forms will also be available to download from **www.gov.uk/studentfinance** once the application service opens.

If their course is funded by the NHS, they need to complete the NHS Bursary application form. Go to **www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students** to find out more.

Universities and colleges may offer extra support such as bursaries and scholarships - your child should speak to them about what's available and how to apply.

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Question



I'm concerned about submitting evidence, what do I have to do?

Answer



Evidence of household income

Usually you won't have to send us any evidence. If your child is applying for student finance that depends on your household income we'll ask you to give us details of your income and your National Insurance number. We'll use this information to automatically check your income which will speed up the application process.

In some cases, we'll contact you directly to ask for specific evidence of your household income; this could include photocopies of your P60 or tax return. Don't worry if this happens – it's part of our checks to make sure your child gets the funding they're entitled to. You should send any evidence we ask for to us right away so we can finish the assessment and make their first payment on time.

Identity evidence

Your child will be asked to give us evidence of their identity; they can give us their valid UK passport details. We'll use this to confirm their identity – they don't need to send their original passport.

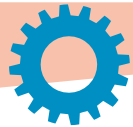
If they don't have a valid UK passport they need to send their UK birth or adoption certificate or valid non-UK passport. This must be the original document. If they're sending a UK birth or adoption certificate, they must also send a completed 'Birth or Adoption Certificate form' that can be downloaded at www.gov.uk/studentfinance

In some other circumstances we might need additional evidence, but we'll tell them, or you, exactly what we need.

Any financial documents you send should be photocopies, we'll destroy these securely once we've checked them. Any identity documents, like passports or birth certificates must be original documents, we'll return these as quickly as possible.

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I have other children – is this taken into account?

How's my household income assessed if I'm separated or divorced?

When will my child be told how much they'll get?

When will my child get their first payments?

Can I pay some, or all, of my child's tuition fees?

Answer



▶ Yes – we'll ask about your family as part of the application. We'll also ask you about your other children who'll be at university or college at the same time, depending on your circumstances they could get more funding.

▶ We assess the household income of the parent that the student is financially dependent on, this is usually the parent that the student lives with. Household income includes the income of that parent's cohabiting partner, if they have one.

▶ Once we've assessed their application we'll send them a Student Finance Entitlement letter to confirm what they can get. They can also track their application by logging into their account at www.gov.uk/studentfinance

▶ There are two things they must do before we can make the first payment:

- sign and return their declaration; and
- enrol on their course so their university or college can tell us they've registered.

We'll then release the first payment into their bank account. This payment is usually made three to four days after we're told they've registered.

We'll pay the Tuition Fee Loan directly to their university or college.

▶ Yes, but you'll need to make your own arrangements with their university or college to pay any tuition fees.

Even if you choose to pay part of the tuition fees, your child can still apply for a Tuition Fee Loan to cover the remaining costs.

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**What happens if my
income drops?**

**What happens if my
child changes course or
university?**

**Does my child have to
apply again next year?**

**When does my child
need to start repaying
their loan?**

Answer



Our assessment for the Maintenance Loan is based on your household income for the 2014-15 tax year.

If your income in tax year 2016-17 is likely to be at least 15% lower than in tax year 2014-15, we can assess your household income on what you estimate your income will be. You'll need to complete and return a 'Current Year Income Assessment form' – these will be available from April 2016 at **www.gov.uk/studentfinance**

We'll contact you at the end of the year to confirm your actual income.

Before the start of their course your child can update their details in their account at **www.gov.uk/studentfinance** Once they've started their course, they should contact their university or college about any changes. The university or college will then notify us.

Yes. We'll contact them each year when it's time to re-apply.

Students going to university or college in 2016/17 won't make any repayments until the April after they finish or leave their course. Even then they won't make any repayments until their income is over the repayment threshold, which is currently £21,000.

Once the student enters repayment, the amount they repay is based on their income, not what they borrowed. When they're earning over £21,000 they'll pay 9% of their income over this threshold.

Repayments will normally be deducted automatically by their employer along with their tax and National Insurance.

For more information about repayment, including how to repay from abroad go to **www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk**

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Is there interest applied to student loans?



Answer



Yes, interest is added to the loans as soon as the first payment is made to your child or their university or college.

Interest is charged at the rate of inflation (Retail Price Index [RPI]) plus 3% while they're studying. From the April after they leave or finish, they'll enter repayment and the interest charged can vary as shown below.

When in repayment, the student will pay interest based on their gross income:

£21,000 or less	RPI
Between £21,000 and £41,000	RPI plus up to 3% depending on income
£41,000 and over	RPI plus 3%

For more information about interest go to www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk

Can I, or my child, pay off some or all of the loans early?



Yes. You or your child can make arrangements with the Student Loans Company to pay off some or all of the loans early.

For more information go to www.studentloanrepayment.co.uk

www.practitioners.slc.co.uk

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