



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## Student Finance Wales Information Notice

**SFWIN 05/2020**

**Funding arrangements in the 2020/21 academic year for eligible higher education students impacted by Covid-19**

September 2020

## **Funding arrangements in the 2020/21 academic year for eligible higher education students impacted by Covid-19**

1. The Welsh Government has agreed that the following measures will be put in place from 1 August 2020 for new and continuing undergraduate and postgraduate higher education students who are prevented from attending their courses in person due to Covid-19 in the 2020/21 academic year.
2. The Welsh Government will continue to monitor the situation.

### **Students prevented from attending a course in person**

3. All designated courses which are normally attended in person, but for which learning has moved either fully or partially online due to Covid-19, will attract the usual package of tuition fee and maintenance support in 2020/21. Students on these courses will be treated as undertaking their course and eligible to apply for support provided they continue to engage with their course satisfactorily. This also applies to postgraduate Master's and doctoral courses.
4. Courses which are usually undertaken by distance learning, where students are not required to regularly attend in person, will continue to attract the package of tuition fee and maintenance support in 2020/21 as they would ordinarily. In line with existing policy, those undertaking a course by distance learning are not eligible for Grants for Dependents.

### **Students prevented from being in Wales**

5. To be eligible for support and home fee status, a student must fall into one of a number of eligibility categories. Many of these require a student to be ordinarily resident in Wales (or, in some cases, the UK) on the first day of the first academic year of the course. Where students are prevented from being in Wales whilst studying on a designated course due to Covid-19, they will be considered to be temporarily absent and their eligibility will be unaffected.
6. Students may also be required to have three years ordinary residence in the UK and Islands (or, in some cases, the EEA and Switzerland) to be eligible. A temporary absence is unlikely to affect this.
7. Eligible students who would normally be undertaking a course in Wales by distance learning (or the United Kingdom for continuing students who initially undertook the course in Wales), but who are required to temporarily study

remotely from outside Wales or the United Kingdom as a result of Covid-19, will be considered to be studying in Wales, and will qualify for the usual package of student support.

### **Students' entitlement to living cost support**

8. Undergraduate students' entitlement to maintenance support for living costs will continue to be based on where the student is living for the majority of each quarter of the academic year.
9. The student support regulations make provision for those living in different locations to receive different amounts of maintenance support. For those starting a course on or after 1 August 2018<sup>1</sup>, these locations are:
  - “living at home” – the student is living at the student's parent's home while undertaking the present course;
  - “living away from home, studying in London” – the student is living away from the student's parent's home while—
    - undertaking a course at the University of London,
    - undertaking a course at an institution requiring attendance in the academic year at a site that is wholly or partly in London where at least half of any quarter of the course is provided at such a site, or
    - undertaking a sandwich course in the academic year at an institution that requires the student to undertake work experience, or a combination of work experience and study, in London where that work experience, or combination of work experience and study, is undertaken for at least half of any quarter;
  - “living away from home, studying elsewhere” – the eligible student is living away from the student's parent's home but not studying in London, including attending an institution outside the United Kingdom as part of the student's course or undertaking an overseas work placement in an Erasmus year.
10. Students who are living at home for the majority of a term due to Covid-19 will be entitled to the appropriate rate of support, but can be reassessed if their circumstances change.
11. Covid-19 may have an impact on household income due to sickness, unemployment, furloughing or as the result of a bereavement. Students who have applied for maintenance support for 2020/21 and believe their household income

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<sup>1</sup> Different locations apply for those starting a course before 1 September 2018, but the principle remains the same.

for the current tax year (2020-21) will drop by at least 15% compared to the household income they provided when they were initially assessed, can apply for their entitlement to be reassessed, which may result in a higher maintenance grant entitlement. Where applicable, the income of both parents, or the more appropriate parent and their partner, is taken into account to determine whether such a reassessment should take place.