



Higher education tuition fees from 2006: EU students

Higher education in the United Kingdom is generally regarded to be amongst the best in the world. This information sheet gives you full details of fees for the three levels of degree (undergraduate, Master's, doctorate) and gives you advice about financial help for which you might be eligible to apply.

1 Introduction

Publicly funded educational institutions charge two levels of tuition fee: the lower 'home' fee and the higher 'overseas' fee. The institution assesses which fee level will be charged.

Under European Union law, nationals from other EU countries and their children are entitled to pay the same fees as UK students for higher education as long as they have been resident within the European Economic Area (the 25 countries of the EU plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) or Switzerland for three years but not mainly for the purpose of receiving full-time education.

This sheet does not go into detail about eligibility requirements for government support or the criteria that institutions use for fee status assessment. For detailed information on these issues please see the UKCOSA guidance note *Fees and student support* on their website at www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm

Which countries are in the European Union?

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

If you are not a national of one of these countries please refer to the sheet in this series on *Higher education tuition fees: non-European Union students*.

New system from 2006

Higher education institutions have always been free to set their own fees for postgraduate programmes, but from 2006 (in England and Northern Ireland) they will have more control over setting the fees for their **undergraduate programmes**. This will also be the case in Wales from 2007. In Scotland fees will continue to be regulated by the Scottish Executive.

EU students are entitled to tuition fee loans, but generally are not eligible for maintenance grants or loans from UK government bodies. However, a range of bursaries and scholarships are available from other sources, mainly for postgraduate students.



For further information on your entitlements see the UKCOSA guidance note *EEA students* on their website at www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm

2 Undergraduate students

A. Fees

England and Northern Ireland

- Institutions will set their own tuition fees for degree programmes up to a **maximum of £3,000 per year** in 2006 (other than for those students who deferred their entry from 2005).
- Students if they wish may defer paying these fees, in which case the Government will pay the full fee on their behalf at the beginning of each academic year. This tuition fee loan as it will be called is repaid once students are working.
- The loan, the outstanding amount of which will be increased annually in line with inflation, will be repaid at a rate of nine pence in the pound on earnings in excess of £15,000 per annum until it is cleared. The Government is currently negotiating with all EU governments about how loan repayments will be collected in your home country. After 25 years, any outstanding amount will be written off.
- The vast majority of universities have opted to charge the maximum (£3,000) for all their programmes. They provide varying levels of financial support for students (see below). The lowest fee which has been set is £2,000.
- You should check your chosen university's website or undergraduate prospectus to confirm its fees.
- Information about how to apply for a fee loan will be available from the Department for Education and Skills (EU team) website at www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/eustudents/index.shtml

Scotland

- First-degree students from the rest of the EU will have their tuition fees paid by the Students Award Agency for Scotland.
- This is not a loan but in return graduates are required to contribute to a Graduate Endowment Fund to help fund more maintenance grants for students currently underrepresented in higher education.
- Students who entered in 2005/06 are expected to pay £2,216; the amount payable will rise with inflation in each subsequent entry year.
- Payment to the Fund is made when the graduate is in employment at a rate of nine pence in the pound on all income over £15,000 per annum, although some graduates are exempted.
- Information about how to apply will be available from the Student Awards Agency for Scotland at www.student-support-saas.gov.uk/

Wales

- EU nationals studying in Welsh institutions will pay up-front fees of £1,200 for the academic year 2006/07.
- This is means-tested so that you may have to pay less if your family's income is relatively low.
- In the following academic year, institutions in line with those in England will be able to set their own fees of up to £3,000 per annum, and students entering in 2006 will be charged these higher fees in their second year.
- It will, however, be possible to defer payment of these higher fees by taking out a tuition fee loan on the same basis as in England.
- Information about how to apply will be available from Learning Wales at www.learning.wales.gov.uk/studentfinancewales/faqs-e.shtml



B. Financial help

From government

You will not be eligible for either a student loan or a maintenance grant unless you will have lived in the United Kingdom for three years prior to entering university. The full details of eligibility criteria will be available in either the UKCOSA Guidance Notes (www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm) or from the DfES EU team (www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/eustudents/index.shtml).

From universities and colleges

English institutions are required by Government to make bursaries available from their additional fee income to low-income students from England. Some institutions have gone further and introduced scholarships to attract the best students irrespective of family income. A minority of institutions have included EU students in their bursary schemes and you will need to consult your chosen university's website to discover whether you are eligible to apply for a bursary or scholarship. You are legally eligible for a bursary if it takes the form of a full or partial fee waiver.

3 Taught postgraduate students

A. Fees

- Institutions are free to set their own fees for postgraduate programmes.
- The common standard fee for Master's programmes is set at £3,085 per year in 2005-06, the amount the Government pays for students which it is supporting.
- However, a significant number of popular and/or high-cost programmes, particularly in law, finance, medicine and some areas of science and technology, now cost in the region of £5,000 per annum and some exceed £10,000.
- MBA programmes are the most expensive. The average fee in 2005-06 is probably between £10,000 and £11,000, and the leading business schools charge in excess of £20,000.

B. Financial help

It is much more difficult to obtain a bursary, grant or scholarship to study for a Master's degree than a doctoral degree. It might be possible to obtain help with the fees for a Research Council supported Master's programme, and some universities offer a few scholarships which are open to EU students, particularly for self-financing students on MBAs and other more expensive programmes. Full details of how to find out more about these possibilities are given in the section on Research students below.

British Chevening Scholarships

This is the one scholarship programme mainly targeted at taught postgraduate programmes. Its aim is to bring present and future leaders, decision-makers and opinion-formers to the UK. Preference is given to candidates already established in a career. Awards can cover all or part of the costs of tuition and maintenance. More information is available from the Chevening website at www.chevening.com

4 Research students

A. Fees

- Nearly all institutions have set the home/EU student fee for PhD students in 2005-06 at £3,085, the amount the Government pays for students that it is supporting.
- Some students reading for research degrees in science and engineering subjects may be charged a 'bench fee' to cover the cost of consumables and equipment used as part of their research.
- This additional fee can be quite substantial in some subject areas and you should check with your chosen academic department whether they charge this fee and how much it will be.



B. Financial help

A research student might expect to earn a modest amount from demonstrating in practical classes or teaching a small group.

Research Councils

The UK Research Councils awards are open to students from EU countries on the same basis as UK students, with the important exception that maintenance grants are not paid to students from other EU countries. The process of application for an award varies between Research Councils: some give university departments quotas of awards for which students apply directly to the department rather than to the Research Council. Potential applicants should consult the relevant website to understand the application procedure.

University scholarships

Most universities offer scholarships to enable students to pursue research degrees, which include (for EU and UK students) both the payment of tuition fees and at least an element of support for maintenance. These are awarded on a competitive basis, sometimes across the whole university, sometimes by an individual faculty. University websites usually contain details of these scholarships in a prominent location. All university sites can be accessed from their profiles in Education UK (www.educationuk.org).

British Chevening Scholarships

These are described above under Taught postgraduate programmes because the majority are awarded for taught courses.

Sponsored studentships

UK universities have increasingly close links with industrial and business organisations which sponsor students (sometimes as part of a national scheme in association with a government department) to pursue doctoral research in commercially relevant topics. Sponsored postgraduate students are often paid a stipend which might be more generous than scholarship support, as well as having their fees met by the sponsor.

It is generally more difficult to find information about these sponsored studentships, which are open to EU students, than about research council and university scholarships. Some are advertised nationally, and *New Scientist* (www.newscientistjobs.com/graduate/cac/career.jsp?id=career16) and *Nature* (www.nature.com/naturejobs) maintain searchable databases of postgraduate studentship opportunities for scientists. However, others are posted on departmental websites without clear links from home pages. The best way to find out about these opportunities is to search a university's site using 'studentship' and the relevant subject area as key words.

5 What else do I need to know?

You should bear in mind immigration requirements when considering whether to study in the UK. Requirements vary according to your nationality or citizenship and the length of time you want to study. You will not be allowed to extend your permission to stay in the UK for more than two years on courses that are below degree level and are of less than one year's duration. The UKCOSA website will give you further information on this topic – www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm

Note in particular that you will not be given permission to enter the UK as a student if the school, college or university that you want to study at does not appear on the UK Department for Education and Skills Register of Education and Training Providers. You can check the register by clicking on 'Browse the Register' at www.dfes.gov.uk/providersregister/

For practical advice on living in the UK download *Studying and living in the UK* from www.educationuk.org/bc_img/body/articles/pdfs/stud_live_uk.pdf



6 Where can I find more information?

Full details on eligibility requirements for EU students are available from:

UKCOSA – www.ukcosa.org.uk/images/fees.pdf

DfES – www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/eustudents/index.shtml

At the time of writing full details of application procedures for tuition fees loans or payments for undergraduates were not available. The information will be accessible from:

England – www.dfes.gov.uk/studentssupport/eustudents/index.shtml

Scotland – www.student-support-saas.gov.uk/

Wales – www.learning.wales.gov.uk/studentfinancewales/faqs-e.shtml

British Council Education information

Websites www.educationuk.org www.educationuk.org/scotland

For further information, you can find details of your nearest office at www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm which includes links to all our country web pages and a worldwide address book giving contact details for all offices.

Research Councils UK

Website www.rcuk.ac.uk

Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)

Polaris House

North Star Avenue

Swindon SN2 1UH

Telephone +44 (0)1793 413 200

Fax +44 (0)1793 413 201

Website www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/training/Welcome.html

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Polaris House

North Star Avenue

Swindon SN2 1UJ

Telephone +44 (0)1793 413 000

Fax +44 (0)1793 413 001

Website www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/postgraduate/fundingopportunities/

National Environment Research Council (NERC) Polaris House

North Star Avenue

Swindon SN2 1EU

Telephone +44 (0)1793 411 500

Fax +44 (0)1793 411 504

Website www.nerc.ac.uk/funding/students/

Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC)

Polaris House

North Star Avenue

Swindon SN2 1SZ

Telephone +44 (0)1793 442 000

Fax +44 (0)1793 442 125

Website www.pparc.ac.uk/Pg/Stu/studentships.asp

British Chevening Scholarships

Website www.chevening.com

Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP)

KTP Programme Office

Momenta

Harwell

Didcot OX11 0QJ

Telephone +44 (0)870 190 2829

Email graduates@ktponline.org.uk

Website www.ktponline.org.uk

Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)

Polaris House



North Star Avenue
Swindon SN2 1ET
Telephone +44 (0)1793 444 000
Website www.epsrc.ac.uk/ResearchFunding

Medical Research Council (MRC)

20 Park Crescent
London W1N 4AL
Telephone +44 (0)20 7636 5422
Fax +44 (0)20 7636 6179
Website www.mrc.ac.uk/index/funding/funding-personal_awards/funding-studentship.htm

Wellcome Trust

Gibbs Building
215 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE
Telephone +44 (0)20 7611 8888
Fax +44 (0)20 7611 8545
Email contact@wellcome.ac.uk
Website www.wellcome.ac.uk

Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC)

61 Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8TL
Telephone +44 (0)20 7269 8820
Fax +44 (0)20 7269 8821
Website www.amrc.org.uk

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

Whitefriars
Lewins Mead
Bristol BS1 2AE
Telephone: +44 (0)117 987 6500
Fax: +44 (0)117 987 6544
Website: www.ahrc.ac.uk/ahrb/website/about/programmesoverview1

UKCOSA: The Council for International Education

9-17 St. Albans Place
London N1 0NX
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7288 4330
Fax: +44 (0)20 7288 4360
Website: www.ukcosa.org.uk

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October 2005

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