

Students and Housing/Council Tax Benefit A Glossary of Terms

This document will provide you with definitions of many of the common terms in respect of Students.

Academic year

An academic year means the period of 12 months beginning on 1 January, 1 April, 1 July or 1 September, according to whether the course begins in winter, spring, summer, or autumn.

For students who begin their course in August or September and continue to attend during the autumn, the academic year is considered to start in the autumn, not the summer. This is likely to be the case for most students.

Educational authority

An Education authority includes the following

- a Government Department
- local education authorities
- the Department for Education for Northern Ireland
- the Student Awards Agency for Scotland
- the five Research Councils - Agricultural and Food, Economic and Social, Medical, Natural Environment, Science and Engineering
- any comparable Government Department, authority, board or body of a country outside Great Britain (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man)

Educational establishment

Educational establishment is not defined in the regulations but should be taken to include

- private institutions
- universities and polytechnics
- colleges of further or higher education
- other state funded establishments
- schools
- other establishments which are used for the purposes of training, education or instruction

Full-time course of study

A full-time course of study is one that

- is funded in whole or in part by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) or National Council for Education and Training in Wales (NCET), and
- involves the student in more than 16 guided learning hours per week, according to the number of guided learning hours per week for that student set out, in the case of a course funded by the
 - o LSC, in their learning agreement signed on behalf of the establishment which is funded by the LSC for the delivery of that course, or
 - o NCET, in a document signed on behalf of the establishment which is funded by the NCET for the delivery of that course, or
- is not higher education and is funded in whole or in part by the Scottish Ministers at a college of further education and involves
 - o more than 16 hours per week of classroom-based or workshop-based programmed learning under the direct guidance of teaching staff according to the number of hours set out in a document signed on behalf of the college, or
 - o 16 hours or less per week of classroom-based or workshop-based programmed learning under the direct guidance of teaching staff and it involves additional hours using structured learning packages supported by the teaching staff where the combined total of hours exceeds 21 hours per week, according to the number of hours set out in a document signed on behalf of the college,
- a full-time course of study of higher education which is funded in whole or in part by the Scottish Ministers, or
- is not funded in whole or in part by the LSC or NCET or a full-time course of study which is not funded in whole or in part by the Scottish Ministers at a college of further education. (This last definition covers university degree courses in England and Wales, privately run courses, in fact any course that is not covered in the previous definition.)

Full-time student

A full-time student is a person attending or undertaking a full-time course of study, including a sandwich course.

Whether a person is to be treated as a full-time student will be determined by the type of course they are doing.

For example, courses of

- further education funded wholly or in part by the Further Education Funding Council, the student's learning agreement will show what type of course they are doing
- higher education, if you are doubtful about the type of course, consult the educational establishment for advice about whether the course is full-time. A good indicator that the course is full-time is the receipt of a loan for full time students

Full-time to part-time study

A student may change their mode of study from full to part-time for personal reasons. This usually means abandoning the full-time course to register on a part-time one. If they have abandoned their course, they will be eligible for benefits as a part-time student.

Further education courses

Further education courses are courses up to, but not including, HND or HNC and degree level. They can be publicly or privately run or funded.

Grant

A grant means any kind of educational grant or award and includes any scholarship, studentship, exhibition, allowance or bursary. It does not include a payment derived from funds made available by the Secretary of State for the purpose of assisting students in financial difficulties under section

- 100 of the Education Act 1944
- 65 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992
- 73 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980
- 40 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992

Higher education courses

Higher education courses are courses on a higher level leading to a diploma or degree. Examples are

- course at a higher level in preparation for a higher diploma or certificate, eg HND or HNC
- first degree course
- course for the education and training of teachers
- course of postgraduate studies, including a higher degree course
- course at a higher level in preparation for a qualification from a professional body

A course is regarded as providing education at higher level if its standard is higher than the standard of courses in preparation for examinations for the

- Scottish Certificate of Education at higher grade
- Certificate of Sixth Year Studies
- General Certificate of Education of England and Wales or Northern Ireland at Advanced level (A level)
- Scottish Vocational Education Council National Certificate

Part-time students

A part-time student is eligible to claim income-related benefits as long as they satisfy the qualifying conditions. Please refer to the Department for Work and Pensions for more information on these benefits (www.dwp.gov.uk)

Period for which a person is regarded as a student

The period for which a person is regarded as a full-time student depends on the type of course they are doing. In most cases they continue to be regarded as a student until they

- complete the course
- are dismissed from or abandon the course

Qualifying course

A qualifying course means a course as defined in Regulation 17A of the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations 1996, namely

- it is an employment-related course
- it lasts no more than 12 consecutive months, and
- except where it falls within a course or programme of a standard above the following, it is a
 - o course of a description falling within Schedule 2 to the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, or
 - o programme of learning falling within section 6 of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992

Relevant education

Relevant education is education received by a child or young person

- up to A level standard, and
- for whom the parents would still be entitled to Child Benefit (ChB)