

This HEI Services Newsflash gives you an update on the launch of the Student Finance England (SFE) service for academic year 2012/13.

2012/13 SFE SERVICE LAUNCH

We are opening the 2012/13 Student Finance England service for new and continuing students on 14 December 2011, students can apply online at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance. The deadline for submitting applications is 31 May for new students and 29 June for continuing students.

The launch date for Wales and NI is yet to be confirmed. At the launch of the courses service, institutions were asked to have their course submission complete by the 31st December. At this point, the launch date for application cycle had not been confirmed. Therefore, please continue to complete your course submission as soon as possible. We do not tend to have high volumes of students submit applications at the very start of the launch.

New customers

We are encouraging new customers to find out what student finance is available and apply online as soon as the service is open on 14 December, so that they can be sure to get all the money they are entitled to at the start of term in autumn 2012. Students don't need to have a confirmed place at university to apply.

To find out what funding is available, customers can get a personalised quote using the student finance calculator at: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinancecalculator.

Further information for customers on what student finance is available and how to apply is available by visiting www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance.

Continuing customers

We want continuing customers who applied for student finance that **did depend on their household income** last year (means tested) to apply as early as possible once the service is open on 14 December so that they can be sure to get all the money they are entitled to at the start of term in autumn 2012.

Students should re-apply online at: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

- They will complete a short online application and SFE will send them a student finance entitlement letter which includes a declaration form. Customers need to sign the declaration form and return it to SFE to complete their application.
- If their circumstances have changed since last year, they will complete the online application and give details of these changes. SFE will send them a student finance entitlement letter which includes a declaration form to sign and return.
- The majority of continuing customers who re-apply for student finance which does depend on their household income will not need to supply financial

evidence with their application. If we do ask for financial evidence, we will only ask for copies of documents and not originals.

Continuing customers who applied for student finance that **did NOT depend on their household income** last year (non means tested) should wait to hear from Student Finance England as they may be processed automatically.

- SFE will send these customers a student finance entitlement letter by the end of February 2012, which includes a declaration form to sign and return.
- If their circumstances have changed since last year (for example their course, their university or their loan amounts), customers still need to sign the declaration form and return it to SFE and then go online to make the relevant changes to their online account. SFE will then send customers a revised student finance entitlement letter.

OUR CUSTOMER MESSAGES

Here are our key customer messages - please help us to promote these messages by using them on your website, twitter, facebook and in any of your student communications.

For latest news and updates follow Student Finance England on facebook and twitter:

facebook.com/SFEngland
twitter.com/sf_english

New students

Are you starting a full-time course at university or college in the autumn?

- Find out what student finance is available to you and apply online now at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
- Remember:
 - Most students won't have to pay anything up front. There are student loans to help with tuition fees and living costs.
 - Repayments are based on future earnings and not what you borrow and you only repay when you have left university and are earning more than £21,000.
 - Students may also qualify for a government grant, which doesn't need to be paid back.
- You don't need to have accepted a place at university or college to apply for student finance. Apply online by 31 May 2012.
- Giving Student Finance England your UK passport number and your parents' or partner's National Insurance numbers means that, as part of their assessment, SFE can automatically check your identity with the Identity and

Passport Service and household income with HM Revenue & Customs, providing your parent or partner has consented to disclosure of their income.

- If SFE do need financial evidence to support your application, they'll only ask for copies of documents – you don't need to send in originals.
- If you are disabled or have children or adult dependants, you can apply for non-repayable grants.
- Visit www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance for more information and to apply. There is also a series of 'how to' videos to help you.

Continuing students

Are you returning to a full-time course at university or college in the autumn?

If you applied for student finance that **did NOT depend on your household income** last year (non means tested) you should wait to hear from Student Finance England as you may not need to re-apply. SFE will contact you by the end of February 2012. If you are applying for student finance that **depends on your household income:**

- You should re-apply for student finance online at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
- Apply now – the sooner you do, the sooner you'll get your finance sorted.
- You must complete your student finance application, including signing the declaration form, by 29 June 2012.
- You don't need to send Student Finance England any financial evidence up front
- SFE will ask for your parents' or partner's National Insurance number and income so that as part of their assessment they can automatically check your household income details with HM Revenue & Customs.
- If SFE do need financial evidence to support your application, they will only ask for copies of documents – you don't need to send in originals.
- If you don't complete your application by 29 June 2012 you may not get all the money you are entitled to at the start of term in autumn 2012.