

Extract taken from 'A guide to financial support for higher education students 2008/9 published by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills.'

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7 Help if you are studying on a part-time course

Summary

This section details the help available to part-time students who are taking a higher education course.

Help for part-time students

If you are a part-time higher education student and studying a course that lasts at least one academic year and is 50% or more of an equivalent full-time course, you may be entitled to a grant towards your fees and a grant towards your course costs. Your college will be able to tell you if your course qualifies. Entitlement to the grants will depend on your income and that of your husband, wife or partner, and there is no age limit for this support. Your LA (or the SLC) will work out how much support you can get. You will not have to pay this help back.

Students who already have a degree cannot normally apply for this support.

Fee grant

In 2008/2009 there will be three different rates of fee grant depending on how intensive your course is.

	Maximum fee grant
Equivalent to 50% to 59% of the full-time course	£785
Equivalent to 60% to 74% of the full-time course	£945
Equivalent to 75% or more of the full-time course	£1180

Course grant

In 2008/2009 the maximum course grant is £255 and does not depend on how intensive your course is.

Maximum amounts

The total maximum amounts available to part-time students are as follows.

For students on a part-time course equivalent to 50% to 59% of the full-time course	Up to £1040 (fee grant of up to £785 and course grant of up to £255)
For students on a part-time course equivalent to 60% to 74% of the full-time course	Up to £1200 (fee grant of up to £945 and course grant of up to £255)
For students on a part-time course equivalent to 75% or more of the full-time course	Up to £1435 (fee grant of up to £1180 and course grant of up to £255)

You can get a part time application form (PTG1) from the student support information line on 0800 731 9133 (textphone 0800 328 8988) from August 2008. The form will also be available from our website at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance from that date. You should send applications to your LA or the SLC, as explained on page 4.

The Open University (OU) deals with its own students' applications for the fee grant, the course grant and DSAs. The OU has its own application form which is used instead of the PTG1. For information about applying to the OU, e-mail them at general-enquiries@open.ac.uk or phone them on 01908 653411.

7 Help if you are studying on a part-time course

Other help for part-time students

Part-time students (including distance-learning students) with disabilities, mental health conditions or specific learning difficulties and who are studying at least 50% of an equivalent full-time course, may be able to get Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). The specialist equipment allowance and travel allowance available to part-time students is the same as that available to full-time students (see page 18). Part-time students can receive a percentage of the non-medical helper's allowance and general allowance available to full-time students, depending on their rate of study.

If you need more information about the DSAs, we have produced a guide called 'Bridging the Gap'. Details of how to get a copy are given on page 36.

Disabled part-time (and full-time) postgraduate students, including distance-learning students, may also be able to get Disabled Students' Allowances. For more information about the DSAs available to postgraduate students, please go to page 32.

Part-time initial teacher-training students are eligible for the student loan for full-time students.

Important note

If you receive the grant or fee, but your tuition fees are more than the amount of support available to you, you may be eligible for extra support from your institution. Your institution will decide the amount of support you are eligible for. Please contact your institution for more details.

A booklet called 'Financial support for part-time students in higher education' sets out the help available in more detail, and will be available from June 2008.

The guide will be available to download from our website at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance. You will also be able to get a copy of this booklet by ringing the Student Finance information line on 0800 731 9133 (textphone 0800 328 8988). 'Financial support for part-time students in higher education' is also available on audio tape, in Braille and in large print.