

Student Finance England: Information, Advice & Guidance Partner Services Bulletin (2) - October 2011

[Key messages for student entering HE 2011/2012 Academic Year](#)
[Update on 2012/13 service launch](#)
[Future Plans IAG events](#)
[Forthcoming Student Ambassador visits](#)
[How can your SFC help you?](#)
[Links to twitter and Facebook](#)

This bulletin gives you an update on the Student Finance England service for partners for academic year 2011/2012 – how we are doing and what’s new.

AY 2011 / 2012 service

Hot Topics:

I have been contacted by several Care Leaving Teams over the last couple of months regarding care leavers and the problems they have faced at this late stage in the application cycle for 2011/2012 AY, I would like to highlight the importance of ensuring all students but more so for the vulnerable students to start their application as early as possible.

Student Finance England will require a letter from the Care Leaving Team clarifying that the applicant is a care leaver, this will enable the assessing team to ensure the student receives their full entitlement without requesting unnecessary information, SFE have a dedicated team for Care Leavers which helps to expedite the students applications.

Key Message

When sponsors are submitting evidence to support their application and indicate that they are a single parent but are not in receipt of Single Occupancy Discount on their Council Tax, SFE will initial ask for the following documents:

Standard evidence of a sponsor’s marital status:

- Decree absolute
- Decree nisi
- Letter from a solicitor
- Council tax bill showing single occupancy discount

There will be genuine instances where a sponsor simply cannot provide any of these pieces of evidence and it is important that SFE do not disadvantage students as a result of this.

If the sponsor advises that they are unable to supply this evidence, SFE will advise them to send evidence which they feel supports their claim, evidence can include (but is not limited to):

Rental agreement in sole name
Mortgage schedule in sole name
Utility bills
Bank statements

Forthcoming Student Ambassador visits

Schools and FE College should have been contacted by the Events Management Team recruited by BIS who have also recently recruited an additional 22 Student Graduate Ambassadors (SGA) to compliment the previous 19 (SGA) who will be visiting your School and or College as part of the Student Finance Tour. Should you wish to contact them to discuss changes to the original dates and or time please contact:

Student Finance Team on Tel: 0151 350 1532

Email: student.finance@eventms.com

The Ambassadors will visit your school or college to provide students with key information about student finance and the benefits of higher education. The presentation will point students to where to go for more in-depth information, while aiming to answer their most pressing questions.

Your Student Finance Consultant will continue to support your staffs training needs within Student Finance and where possible help to support your student facing events i.e. Student Finance Day/week November 2011. With the increased responsibility for Schools and FE Colleges to provide IAG to Yrs 12 & 13 I will also be able to provide you with contacts to help support your Student/Parent/Open Days to heighten awareness of students considering HE.

Working with colleagues to provide Student Finance Information, Advice and guidance

Disabled Students:- The DSA Bulletin October 2011 highlights the need to raise awareness of IAG and the type of support available for prospective students with disabilities within schools and FE Colleges, our latest bulletin can be accessed via the Practitioners website, also available six step guide which can be added to your websites as an accessible tool for students. Having worked in this field for many years I can provide schools and FE Colleges with contact details of varied speakers on disabilities and the benefits of HE, what support is available, how students access that support and life after HE.

September/October 2011 IAG events:

Student Finance England - Academic Year 12/13 Information, Advice and Guidance Partners Seminars

I hope for those colleagues who managed to attend the events felt they were beneficial. The intention of the events were to offer colleagues an overview of the key features of the 2012/2013 Academic Year service - including the enhancements to the Student Loans Company systems and processes. We also shared our customer messaging and communications plans with colleagues to ensure you have the information required by your students and their sponsors to enable them to make informed choices about higher education and the resources they may need in place i.e student finance.

For those colleagues that were unable to attend the IAG events the SLC have developed a range of online resources to help our partners explain the changes to the student support package from September 2012. For 2012/13 we have included the popular quick start guide and bespoke Power Point presentations, but have added a range of new resources, including a video and fact sheets aimed particularly at parents.

Visit our Practitioners' website now to look at what's available:

<http://practitioners.studentfinanceengland.co.uk>

The resources will be added to over the coming weeks as we approach the launch of the application process for 2012/13. Should you need any assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tuition Fees and Attendance Processing (Full time Students) Academic Year (AY) 2012/2013

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) wish to introduce changes to the current process involving attendance confirmations and payments of tuition fee loans and grants to HEIs. The Student Loans Company (SLC) will be required to make changes to the current systems and processes to support this change. The key changes are detailed below and will come into affect in AY 12/13.

Summary of the change

Tuition fee loans and grants will be paid to HEIs in 3 instalments. The first payment will be made early in the AY with the remaining 2 in line with current dates. Currently, students become liable for the full tuition fee loan 3 months after the start of the AY. This will now change to 3 points of liability. The students' liability for the fee loan

extends at each liability period – becoming liable for the full amount if in attendance at the last liability period. This means that HEIs will have to confirm attendance to SLC at each of the 3 liability points to receive payment of each instalment. For more information log into the HEI information website:

<http://www.heinfo.slc.co.uk/media/134359/fee%20waivers%20&%20bursaries%20guidance.doc>

IAG/Best Practice Forum

I would like to thank those colleagues who have contacted me to show an interest in joining the IAG/Best Practice Forums. I have received many offers of venues from colleagues to enable us to hold the events. My intention is to send out a hold the date invitation in the New Year to enable as many colleagues as possible to attend.

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



Need to contact our teams?

Help us respond to your enquiry as quickly as possible by using the correct email address – enquiries sent to the wrong mailbox will be subject to delay.

Here are our contact details for partners and practitioners:

- For practitioners with queries relating to policy and regulations email - ssin_Queries@slc.co.uk
Tel - 0845 602 0583 (this number is not for students)
- For Practitioners with DSA enquiries: Tel: 01325 215194 (this number is not for students)
- For students to receive alternative formats and or guides in Braille, Audio and Large Font they should email: brailleandlargefonts@slc.co.uk or phone 0141 243 3686.
- For Staff Training, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) resources, UCAS Student Facing (IAG) talks on student finance **“All sessions are FREE”**
email – michelle_wickenden@slc.co.uk or call me on: 07810 658422

How can you help your Student Finance Consultant:

In order for me to email the relevant colleagues within your organisation/teams it helps if I have the right contact details could I ask to provide me with a list of the appropriate persons who I should be contact regarding:

For Staff Training, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) resources, UCAS Student Facing (IAG) talks on student finance, IAG Bulletin, Best Practice Forum

How can your Student Finance Consultant help you – Your Feedback is important to me:

I would like your feedback on this bulletin - what has been most useful to you and your organisation/team, what would be of interest and value to you to include in future bulletins.

Please email any feedback to - michelle_wickenden@slc.co.uk

More information for practitioners is on our Student Finance England practitioners' website – www.practitioners.studentfinanceenglandpractitioners.co.uk

For students/parents/sponsors - www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance