

HELP WITH CHILDCARE COSTS

A GUIDE TO SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR

STUDENT PARENTS WITH THE

CHOICE OF CHILDCARE



Gwasanaeth Gwybodaeth i Deuluoedd Wreccsam
Wrexham Family Information Service



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Sources of Help for Student Parents

The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for statutory student support to Welsh students. The following is a guideline only and does not cover all circumstances. *For more information please contact: Student Support Office on 01978 297467 or visit Contact Wrexham, 16 Lord Street, Wrexham, LL11 1LG (email student.support@wrexham.gov.uk). We also suggest you look at the following website which provides comprehensive information on student finance: www.studentfinancewales.co.uk*

- ◆ The **Assembly Learning Grant** is paid to undergraduate students resident in Wales (this is also available to students over 19 attending a further education college such as Yale). The grant will help with student's maintenance costs such as books, travel, equipment and childcare. Each application will be mean tested. The grant does not have to be paid back.
- ◆ **Student loans** are made up of two parts: the tuition fee loan and the maintenance loan which is for your living costs. You only start repaying your loan after leaving university or college and your income is above £15,000. Repayments are on a sliding scale and paid over time. The Government subsidizes the actual cost of interest on the loans so you not have to pay the same rate of interest that you would be charged if you were to take out a commercial loan from a bank or building society.
- ◆ **Welsh Bursary Scheme** is a mean tested grant available from Welsh Higher education institutions. Individual institutions will also be providing a range of other scholarships and bursaries which will vary from one institution to another. Additional help may be available if you are studying in a medical or teaching profession, or studying dance and drama at a private college. Bursaries are also available for Welsh students studying at other colleges in the UK. Details need to be requested from the individual college
- ◆ **Special Support Grant** is a non repayable grant is for students who may be eligible to receive means-tested benefits such as Income Support and Housing Benefit. This will generally be lone parents, other student parents and students with disabilities. This list is not exhaustive and students are advised to contact their local authority for advice. The amount of Special Support Grant you receive will not affect the amount of Maintenance Loan you may be entitled to receive. Nor will your entitlement to Department of Work and Pensions benefits. However, if you are eligible to receive a Special Support grant you will not be eligible to receive an Assembly Learning Grant.
- ◆ **Childcare Grant** is a non repayable grant to help towards childcare costs. You cannot get this grant if you or your spouse/partner receives the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit.
- ◆ **Parent's Learning Allowance** will help with course related costs for eligible students with dependent children.
- ◆ **Adult dependants grant** is for full time students with adult dependants (i.e. a person who depends on you financially)

- ◆ The **Education Maintenance Allowance Wales** scheme will provide a maximum allowance of £30 per week to students aged between 16 – 18. The grant is usually subject to parental income but students who have responsibility of a child of their own are not mean tested for this allowance. www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/EMA

Career Development Loans (CDLs)

A CDL can help to fund up to two years vocational (job-related) training or education, plus up to one year if the course includes practical work experience. Study can be full-time, part-time or distance learning. If you cannot get any student support through your LEA or any other funding to help pay for the course you want to do, a CDL could help towards the costs of **childcare**, books, stationery, travel costs, equipment, tools, materials, protective clothing and any costs associated with a disability. A CDL can also be used towards living expenses if you work less than 30 hours per week. There will be no repayments during the period of training and for up to one month afterwards. The loan is available to over 18s only.

For more information please contact: CDL Information Line, Freephone: 0800 585 505, www.direct.gov.uk/cdl

Financial Contingency Fund (FCF)

This fund is available for both **full-time and part-time students** aged 16-18 years old (who have been resident in the UK for the whole of the past 3 years prior to the start of their course, and whose household is in receipt of Benefits, Working Tax Credit or on a low income) and for Assembly Learning Grant (ALG) recipients who need assistance with childcare and/or transport. In certain circumstances, Further Education students over 18 years may also be eligible. It is also available for students not covered by ALGs.

Please note: this fund will not pay for, or contribute to course fees.

Assistance is available for:

- ◆ Childcare for both ALG and FCF recipients.
- ◆ College organised trips (which must be applied for separately by the FCF recipient).
- ◆ Books and equipment.
- ◆ Transport, where appropriate, for both ALG and FCF recipients.
- ◆ Disability assistance, where appropriate.
- ◆ Travelling expenses to interviews (e.g. for HE, auditions, work placements etc which must be applied for separately by the FCF recipient).

The FCF will be paid termly from the College by cheque, on receipt of good attendance and standard of work.

For more information please contact your College's Student Welfare department.

Open University

The OU is a distance learning university founded to bring higher education to people who are unable to study at a conventional university. People can choose when and where they study. It's perfect for people with jobs, children, disabilities, or commitments that make it hard to go to a fixed place. For most courses you don't need any previous qualifications. Financial help is also available for people on low income to pay for course fees, childcare costs etc. More information can be found at www.open.ac.uk. Telephone 0845 300 60 90.

Jobseekers' Allowance

If you're out of work and studying part-time you may still qualify for Jobseekers' Allowance, as long as your course is less than 16 hours a week and you can show you're still available for work.

For more information please contact: Jobcentre Plus, Ty Maelor, 15-17 Grosvenor Road, Wrexham LL11 1LH. Tel: 0845 604 3719. www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits

Income Support

If you are a lone parent receiving income support or Employment and Support Allowance (formerly incapacity benefit) and would like to improve your education or skills then you can contact your local Jobcentre Plus Advisor who will be able to give you advice on any financial support you may be entitled to. For more information contact Jobcentre Plus, Ty Maelor, 15-17 Grosvenor Road, Wrexham LL11 1LH. Tel: 0845 604 3719

Scholarships

Scholarships funded by employers, banks or other philanthropic bodies may be available for certain courses or colleges. Please see <http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk>. Also look at the finance section of the university you wish to apply for as there are often specific bursaries and scholarships they offer. www.turn2us.org have a database of small charitable trusts that may be able to offer small amounts of one off grants to students who are experiencing financial or other difficulties.

Help available for NHS Students

The NHS Wales Student Award Unit implements the NHS Wales Bursary Schemes, which provides funding for healthcare students on NHS funded courses in Wales and Welsh domiciled medical and dental students within the UK. For more information please contact NHS Wales Students Awards Unit for information on bursaries and to receive the booklet Financial Help for Health Care Students in Wales. Telephone 029 20196167 www.wales.nhs.uk

Help for Specific Courses

Extra help may be available for specific courses such as Teacher Training, Social Work, Welsh Medium Incentive Supplement and designated dance and drama courses of higher education. Contact your college for more information. Or, for teacher trainer support contact 0845 600 0991, or the Welsh Language Teaching Information Line on 0845 600 0992 or visit www.teach.gov.uk

WREXHAM FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE

We provide FREE information, support and guidance on all aspects of childcare, children and young people's services in Wrexham County Borough. Wrexham Library & Arts Centre, Rhosddu Road, Wrexham LL11 1AU. Tel: 01978 292 094, email fis@wrexham.gov.uk.

Childcare Funding Support Officer

If you require any help or advice regarding childcare funding issues please contact Lynne Mort, Childcare Funding Support Officer on 01978 298343 or Wrexham Family Information Service on 01978 292094 (email: fis@wrexham.gov.uk). You can also find further information on www.wrexham.gov.uk/fis.

Genesis Cymru Wales 2 Project

This is a European funded Project which helps unemployed parents overcome many of the barriers they face when wanting to learn new skills, enter training or return to work. The Project focuses on mainly lone parents. The Project can provide free advice and guidance, confidence building and free or subsidised childcare for those that are eligible. For more information please contact the Genesis Wrexham Team, Wrexham Family Information Service on 01978 298341 / 292094, www.projectgenesis@wrexham.gov.uk

Opening Doors

Opening Doors can help parents who are unemployed or on a low income to take steps towards a better future. Opening Doors can help parents into training by helping to find and pay for training, free or subsidised childcare, help with travel and equipment costs. Opening Doors can help parents into work with support to find a job, subsidised childcare for one month, travel costs for one month. Opening Doors can also help parents whose children have long term health problems or disabilities to find suitable specially trained childcare to enable them to train or find employment. For more information please telephone 01978 298342/292094.

Please note that there is free public access to the internet at libraries throughout the Wrexham area.