

POSTGRADUATE LOANS FOR MASTERS STUDENTS FAQs

The information contained in this leaflet is provided in good faith and represents the facts as understood at the time of going to print in February 2019. Please be aware that future changes to this information are possible, and that responsibility is with the individual to check the most updated information before committing to study.

Can I receive a Postgraduate loan to study?

The student must start the course in AY 2017/18 or later (i.e. on or after 1st August 2017) at an authority funded HE provider in the UK or an alternative provider with degree awarding powers in the UK.

One and two year full-time courses are eligible for support. Part-time courses are also eligible, and are subject to a minimum 50% intensity requirement. Note that where the student is studying a two year full-time course on a part-time basis, all payments will be made over the first two years of study.

Eligible courses may be taught or research based, and includes professional Master's courses such as MBAs. There are no subject restrictions.

The student can attend an eligible course anywhere in the UK or study an eligible course by distance learning in England (subject to restrictions on personal eligibility).

- **Can I receive a Postgraduate loan to study an MBA?**

Yes. MBA courses are defined as taught Masters in the current loan consultation documents. You should be able to receive a Postgraduate loan to study an MBA.

Bear in mind, however, that the full cost of an MBA programme will often be greater than the maximum £10,906 available via a Postgraduate loan.

- **Can I receive a Postgraduate loan to study a Postgraduate Certificate (PGCert) or Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip)?**

Postgraduate loans are only available for full Masters degree programmes. These courses are usually worth 180 credits and include a dissertation or equivalent individual project. Loans are not planned to be available for shorter courses such as Postgraduate Certificates and Postgraduate Diplomas.

- **Can I receive a Postgraduate loan to study a PGCE?**

Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) courses are not expected to be eligible for Postgraduate loans. However, you may be able to receive existing funding for a PGCE or other postgraduate teacher-training from the Department of Education.

- **Can I receive a Postgraduate loan to study an integrated, four year, Masters programme?**

Some Masters qualifications are offered as four year, undergraduate programmes. These are not defined as postgraduate courses in the consultation documents and will not be eligible for Postgraduate loans.

However, you *can* usually receive an undergraduate student loan to complete a four year Masters programme.

- **What if I want to study a postgraduate MPhil or PhD course?**

If you wish to study an MPhil or a PhD, you may be eligible to receive a loan of up to £25,700 under a different scheme. Apply in the summer here: www.gov.uk/student-finance-register-login

- **How do Postgraduate loans work for part-time Masters and flexible modes of study?**

The Postgraduate loans are designed to support the existing postgraduate study system. This means that they are planned to be available to students studying part-time, subject to certain conditions.

You can read more about different modes of study with a Postgraduate loan below, but the key details are as follows:

- You will be able to receive a Postgraduate loan to study part-time.
- You must study at an intensity of at least 50% of an equivalent full-time student, however there is no minimum intensity requirement in the year one.
- [Do part-time students receive the same Postgraduate loan amount?](#)

Yes, but your loan will be divided across the two years of your programme. You will receive up to £5,453 each year, paid out in three instalments per year.

- [Can I receive a Masters to study by distance-learning?](#)

Only eligible course by distance learning in England will get funding (subject to restrictions on personal eligibility).

- [Can I receive a loan to study a full-time Masters that lasts longer than a year?](#)

Yes, two-year Masters courses will be eligible for Postgraduate loans, provided they meet other criteria (they must still be taught postgraduate programmes, not classed as research degrees).

Note that the total amount you can borrow is still set at £10,906. If your course lasts longer than a year, your loan amount will be distributed accordingly. For a two year programme this would mean receiving £5,453 in your first year of study and another £5,453 in the second.

- [What are the student eligibility criteria for the Postgraduate loans?](#)

The Postgraduate loans are subject to eligibility criteria based on age, nationality and residency. You can read more about the specific criteria below, but the main requirements are as follows:

- You must be under 60 years of age at the start of the first academic year your postgraduate course
- You must be studying at a university in the UK
- You must be resident in England on the first day of the first academic year. You should also be ordinarily living in England, having resided in the UK for three years before the start date of the course. Temporary absences from the home address such as for education or travelling will not prevent an applicant being eligible.
- EU/EEA students (see below) can receive the loan, but must be in EU/EEA country for three years prior to the start of the course.
- You will not be eligible if you have loan arrears (this is different to having a loan because of your previous undergraduate course) or have been found unfit for study.
- If you already hold a Master's qualification, you will not be eligible.
- [I'm an EU student, will I be eligible for a Postgraduate loan?](#)

Yes, you can receive a Postgraduate loan to study in England as an EU student. You will need to have been resident in the EU for at least three years prior to the beginning of your course. Periods of residency that are purely for the purpose of education will not normally count towards this three year requirement. As an EU student you will be subject to the same loan offer and repayment requirement as domestic applicants.

- [I already have a self-funded Masters degree, will I be able to apply for a Postgraduate loan to study in a different subject area?](#)

You will not be eligible. The primary aim of the new Postgraduate loan is to broaden access to postgraduate education by those who have not yet been able to study for a Master's degree.

- [How much money are the Postgraduate loans worth and how are they paid?](#)

The maximum amount you can borrow with a Postgraduate loan is to be set at £10,906. You may be able to borrow less than this, but cannot borrow any more.

You can read more about Postgraduate loan payments below, but the key information is as follows:

- Loans are available up to a maximum value of £10,906
- Payments are intended to be made directly to individual students.
- Loans will be paid out in three equal instalments

- [Will the loans cover the full cost of studying a Masters degree?](#)

The consultation documents position the loans as 'a contribution towards the costs of pursuing postgraduate study. Prospective students are still expected to make 'informed and considered decisions' when budgeting for a postgraduate course.

In practice, the £10,906 maximum amount should be sufficient to cover tuition fees for most eligible programmes (calculated at an average of just over £8,000 by research carried out in support of the consultation). However, it will not necessarily cover all of the accommodation and living costs you may incur whilst completing a postgraduate degree. Some taught Masters courses, may also cost more than £10,906. This is particularly likely for MBA programmes.

- [Can I receive a Postgraduate loan in addition to Disabled Students' Allowance \(DSA\)?](#)

Yes. Your entitlement to Disabled Students' Allowance is distinct from any other financial support you receive. You can claim DSA in addition to a Postgraduate loan and applying for a Postgraduate loan will not affect your right to receive Disabled Students' Allowance.

- [Can I apply for a Postgraduate loan if I already have an undergraduate loan?](#)

Yes. The new system is designed to be an affordable option for graduates who want to continue to further study. Repayments will occur concurrently with your undergraduate loan and won't be due until you are earning enough to afford them.

- [What will the instalments for Postgraduate loan payments be?](#)

Your loan will be distributed in three instalments per academic year. These will be evenly spaced across your programme:

- Students on one year, full-time, Masters programmes will receive £10,906 in three instalments.
- Students on two year, part-time, Masters programmes will receive £5,453 each year, in three instalments per year.
- Students on 3 or 4 year, part-time Masters programmes will receive full payment in first two years.
- Payment 1: Course start date as advised by the HE Provider.
- Payment 2: 4 months after the course start month (last Wed of month).
- Payment 3: 7 months after the course start month (last Wed of month).

- [What will happen if I cease to study or fail to complete my Masters?](#)

Payment of your Postgraduate loan will be subject to confirmation of attendance provided by your institution. Loan instalments will normally stop if you exit your programme early or otherwise cease to study.

Note that if you exit your programme early you may still be liable to repay any amount you have borrowed up to that point.

- [Where can I apply for a Postgraduate loan](#)

Once the application service opens in June, you will be able to apply online or download an application form here: www.gov.uk/postgraduateloa

- [What are the repayment terms for the Postgraduate loans?](#)

The Postgraduate loan is designed to remove financial barriers to postgraduate study and repayment terms are therefore intended to be affordable.

- Postgraduate loans are to be repaid concurrently with undergraduate loans.
- Repayments are to be made on an income-contingent basis, at a rate of 6% on income above £21,000 per year.
- Interest rates are set at RPI+3%.
- When combined with any undergraduate borrowings being paid back at 9%, the total repayment is 15%.
- The £21,000 threshold is based on the cost of living in the UK, but if you work abroad the threshold will alter depending on the cost of living in that country.

- [Will the terms for repayments and interest rates change?](#)

The repayment threshold of £21,000 is frozen until April 2021. While the retail price index (RPI) can alter due to inflation, the additional 3% is unlikely to change for a five year period.

- [Will I have to repay the entire Postgraduate loan?](#)

Yes, the proposed Postgraduate loan scheme is designed on the principle that recipients will eventually repay their loans in full. This represents the government's confidence in the financial value of a postgraduate degree and the future earning power of postgraduates.

Your student loan debt *will* eventually be cancelled after 30 years, but the vast majority of graduates will already have repaid by this point.

- [Where can I find out more about the Postgraduate loan?](#)

Up to date information can be found at www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=22757-Postgraduate-Loans

FindAMasters will keep their guides to the postgraduate loans scheme updated at <http://www.findamasters.com/funding/guides/new-uk-postgraduate-loans-scheme.aspx>