

FUNDING 2009 - 2010

COURSE FEES AND FEE WAIVERS:

Full time students on NCs & SVQs:

You will have your course fees paid if you have been awarded a place on a full time course: you are awarded a fee waiver if you meet the residency requirements given in the Fee Waiver Policy. Contact the Finance section of The NHC-Thurso on 01847 889229 if you are not sure if you qualify.

If you are in receipt of an eligible means tested benefit you may study and have your fees waived, and you may be eligible for help with travel and child care.

You may also qualify for a bursary or EMA while you study with the College:

Bursaries and EMAs:

Students may apply for a bursary for courses which are:

- Full time non-advanced (e.g. National Certificate Highland Gamekeeping or SVQ Level 2 Hairdressing)
- Open Learning - Home or Flexible Study. Part time students may apply for travel and study bursaries only provided they are eligible for a fee waiver.

Flexible study students, attending only occasionally for tutorial sessions may receive help with travel costs.

Eligible students who are under 18 on the date your course starts may apply for the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

If you were born between 01/03/1994 and 30/09/94 you may apply for an EMA with effect from August 2010. If born between 01/10/94 and 28/02/95 you would NOT be eligible for an EMA until January 2011. If you start a course in August 2010 and you are not eligible for an EMA until January 2011, you will not receive assistance with travel costs until January 2011: please speak to your school if this is the case.

The amount of the bursary or EMA you will receive depends on your circumstances; whether you live at home with your parents, and the financial circumstances in the home. You must be "ordinarily" resident in Scotland from 1st August if you are applying for a bursary/EMA for a course starting in August of the same year. If you have previously had a bursary for another course of study you may not be eligible.

Those who do receive benefit may find that any bursary affects the amount of benefit paid. It is your responsibility to inform the Benefits Agency that you are undertaking a course of study.

Students who are eligible for a bursary/EMA will be provided with any protective clothing and kit which the course tutor has deemed necessary for the course. Books will also be provided by the College. These elements are also means tested for students over 18.

Eligible students who live outwith three miles of the college, but within daily travelling distance, will receive a bus pass to enable them to travel to college free of charge, or cheapest daily/weekly return paid with their bursary/EMA. Eligible students who live outwith daily travelling distance will receive the equivalent return bus/train fare between their campus and their home address at the October, Christmas and Easter holidays. This is means tested for students over 18.

An application form for a Bursary/ Education Maintenance Allowance is included in the "welcome pack" which is forwarded to you once you have been given an unconditional offer of a college place. You can also download it, and the booklet to help you complete the form, from the Resources area of our website www.northhighland.ac.uk/downloads.aspx.

You should complete and return this to the Students Awards Officer as soon as possible. Contact Students Awards Officer at The NHC- Thurso on 01847-889000, email avril.mckay@thurso.uhi.ac.uk. Further details on EMAs are available from the website www.emascotland.com.

Discretionary & Childcare Funds:

These are available to assist students for both full time and part time study at FE level. These funds are means tested. Childcare funds may be available for full and part time study. Childcare must be formal, i.e. a registered childminder or after school club.

Part time students on NCs or SVQs:

Tuition fees for most courses will be waived for students who are in receipt of certain benefits and can provide evidence.

Students studying part time may decide to study one or more individual units at the same time, with these very often leading to a named qualification such as a National Certificate. It is possible to use an Individual Learning Account to help towards the cost of this. With the ILA200 Account you will be given £200 per year to pay for the cost of your learning if you earn £22,000 or less per year and are over 16. Contact the ILAScotland helpline on 0808 100 1090 or visit www.ilascotland.org.uk to request an application pack.

Full time students on HNCs, HNDs, Degrees:

Students on a full time course, for instance a Higher National Certificate, Diploma or Degree, will not be asked to pay tuition fees as these are paid by the SAAS direct to the College, but you **must apply to SAAS to have them paid**. Contact SAAS at: Gyle View House 3 Redheughs Rigg Edinburgh EH12 9HH Telephone 0845 111 1711 or visit their website www.saas.gov.uk.

Student Grants and Loans:

To be eligible for financial support you must meet the residence conditions and be on a course supported by the Student Awards Agency of Scotland (SAAS). The majority of students who meet the residency requirements are eligible to have fees paid and can apply for a student loan. There are additional grants available from SAAS depending on your circumstances. There are also Discretionary Funds which you may be eligible to access and these are distributed by the College. It is important that your funding is in place prior to starting the course.

Further information is available on SAAS website www.saas.gov.uk or by telephoning 0845 111 1711. Should you require help completing your application form or if you have any other problems, contact the Student Advisor at The NHC-Thurso on 01847 889310 or email anna.swanson@thurso.uhi.ac.uk.

If you are considering coming to us from another country in the UK, you should contact the body which organises student finances in your area:

England: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance;

Northern Ireland: www.studentfinanceni.co.uk;

Wales: www.studentfinancewales.co.uk.

Non-UK EU students: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance-EU.

Part time and Blended/Open Learning students on HNCs, HNDs, Degrees:

Students on a part time course, for instance a Higher National Certificate, Diploma or Degree, may study for a maximum of 16 hours, plus 5 hours study time per week and have your fees waived, if you are in receipt of a means tested benefit. You may be eligible for help with travel and child care.

Support from ILA Scotland:

Support for Higher Education (HE) part time and distance learning students has been introduced. The ILA500 is a part time HE **fee grant** of up to £500 available to all new and existing students who are aged 16 or over, earn £22,000 or less and who are studying 40 SCQF credit points per year of a full time course.

Apply by contacting the ILAScotland helpline on 0808 100 1090 or from the website www.ilascotland.org.uk.

Students studying **individual HE units** counting towards a qualification by part time attendance or distance learning, may be able to use the ILA200 to help towards the cost of each unit as you come to study it. Contact ILAScotland (see above for details) for an application pack.

Discretionary & Childcare Funds:

These are available to assist students for both full time and part time study. However, childcare funds are only available for those who are studying full time at HE level. The childcare must be formal, for instance a registered childminder or after school club. For part-time study the discretionary fund may be able to assist with childcare.

Fees for short courses normally do not qualify under the Fee Waiver scheme but it may be possible to use an ILA to help towards the cost.

OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

TRUSTS & LOANS

There are a number of different schemes available which can give limited assistance:

- Duncraig Educational Trust Scheme
- Highland Children's Trust
- Career Development Loans
- Directory of Grant Making Trusts

To find out how to access and apply for these schemes, contact the Student Advisor at The NHC-Thurso on 01847 889310 or email anna.swanson@thurso.uhi.ac.uk

SKILLSEEKERS

School leavers aged between 16 and 18 may be allocated a Skillseekers number by their Careers Officer. This then enables you to become an employed-status employee with the company you join. Contact your local Careers Scotland Office for more details: Caithness and Sutherland Careers Centre, Tollemache House, High Street, Thurso. Telephone 01847 896115.
Email info@careers-scotland.org.uk or visit the website www.careers-scotland.com

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING ACCOUNTS

ILA Scotland is a Scottish Government scheme that helps you pay for learning that you can do at a time, place, pace and in a way to suit you.

If you are over 16 and living in Scotland, earning £22,000 per year or less you could get up to £200 towards the cost of learning new skills with an ILA200 Individual Learning Account from ILA Scotland.

With an ILA500 learner account you can get £500 towards your part-time higher education course, eg an HNC, HND or Degree, if you are studying 40 SCQF credits per year counting towards the qualification.

Although standard full-time courses in universities and colleges are not eligible for ILA funding, you'll find that there is a wide range of part-time courses to choose from. Many of our courses and units, and many of our short courses, have been approved so that it is possible to use an ILA to help cover the cost.

Your ILA must be in place before you enrol on a course: as it may take time to set it up, make sure you apply for an ILA well before the start date of the course. Contact ILAScotland on 0800 100 1090 or visit www.ilascotland.org.uk.

FEE WAIVER POLICY 2009 – 2010*

****This is the latest available policy.***

Documentary evidence must be produced to obtain fee waivers.

Note there are a number of changes in the policy this year, compared to previous years':

1. Registered Job Seekers are no longer eligible for Fee Waiver
2. Over 60s are no longer a college fee waiver and must either satisfy, National Fee Waiver Policy, obtain ILA funding or pay fees.
3. Under 18s must pay for non-vocational courses.
4. Under 18s are not automatically eligible for a College Fee Waiver for vocational courses, they must satisfy the National Fee Waiver or eligible for ILA funding, if neither then they must complete a Fee Exemption Form.

This policy sets out the College's policy with regard to the waiving of tuition fees. The policy mirrors that of the National Fee Waiver policy, which was updated in May 2009 by the Scottish Funding Council and should be read in conjunction with the SFC's policy.

For the purpose of determining fee exemptions the College's courses will normally be defined into the two categories listed. However in certain circumstances some students may receive exemption, either complete or partial, from fees at the discretion of the Principal.

VOCATIONAL & NON-VOCATIONAL COURSES

In the case of Vocational & Non-Vocational courses the following categories of students will have complete exemption from course fees:

- Further education students for whom SUMS can be claimed following full-time non-advanced courses;
- Further education students for whom SUMS can be claimed with learning difficulties and disabilities on courses classified in programme Group 18;
- Students for whom SUMS can be claimed who are studying either a part-time further education programme or a part-time programme of study that is credit bearing at HE level up to and including a first degree if:-

The student or student's family are in receipt of -

- Income Support, or
- Working Tax Credit, or
- Pension Credit, or
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance, or
- Housing Benefit

Or where the student is in receipt of -

- Severe Disablement Allowance, or
- Disability Living Allowance, or
- Incapacity Benefit
- Carer's Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Employment & Support Allowance

Or where the student's family taxable income for 2008/9 is equivalent to or lower than the threshold

below e.g. households with only one person: £8,282

households consisting of a couple without children: £12,395

households with dependent children: £18,977

(the burden of proof is on the student to satisfy the college with evidence of their family's income).

Where there has been a material reduction in income from the previous financial tax year, the taxable income of the student's family in the current financial tax year can be assessed.

Or where the State school pupils undertaking college activities that form part of their school-based curriculum.

Or where the student is a person, spouse or child of a person who is an asylum seeker living in Scotland (as defined in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002)

Or the student is in the care of a local authority and is living in a foster home or children's home, regardless of the age of that student.

Or where the student is under 18 years of age at the date they start a part-time vocational further education or higher education course and do not satisfy the National Fee Waiver and are unable to obtain ILA Funding will be exempt from course fees except those where they are in attendance at the behest of, and at the expense of, the employer.

2 **COMMERCIAL COURSES**

The fee waiver policy on commercial courses operates at the discretion of the Assistant Principal. Commercial courses operate on a full cost recovery basis. Therefore a fee waiver will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

Note: *This policy only applies if students meet the eligibility as per the Fee Waiver Grant Policy 2009-10 issued by SFC please refer to for details.*