

# Financial support for students in further education 2020-21 - a guide for constituents

For September 2020 entry



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**Welsh Parliament**  
**Tŷ Hywel**  
**Cardiff Bay**  
**CF99 1SN**

Tel: **0300 200 7373**

Email: **[Lucy.Morgan@senedd.wales](mailto:Lucy.Morgan@senedd.wales)**

Twitter: **[@SeneddResearch](https://twitter.com/SeneddResearch)**

Blog: **[SeneddResearch.blog](http://SeneddResearch.blog)**

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**Author:**

Lucy Morgan



# Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>1. Introduction.....</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>2. Tuition fees .....</b>  | <b>2</b> |
| <b>3. Funding for students aged 16-18 .....</b>                           | <b>3</b> |
| 3.1. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) .....                          | 3        |
| 3.2. Cheaper bus travel .....   | 3        |
| <b>4. Funding for students aged 19 or over .....</b>                      | <b>4</b> |
| 4.1. Welsh Government Learning Grant for Further Education (WGLG FE)..... | 4        |
| 4.2. Cheaper bus travel .....   | 4        |
| <b>5. Financial Contingency Funds (FCFs) .....</b>                        | <b>5</b> |
| <b>6. Thomas Wall Trust .....</b>   | <b>6</b> |
| <b>7. Contacts and resources .....</b>                                    | <b>7</b> |
| 7.1. College’s contact details.....                                       | 7        |

# 1. Introduction

This guide provides information on the different types of financial support that you might be able to get if you are planning to or are already studying a full or part-time further education course in Wales from September 2020.

Further education normally means education from the ages of 16 to 18 (although adults can also do it) and it is usually run by local colleges and sixth forms.

Some local authorities have a mix of sixth forms and local colleges, whilst some local authorities have colleges only. Further education is different from higher education but your local college might run both further and higher education courses. They will make it clear which is which when you are looking at courses.

This booklet is meant as a general guide and won't cover everyone's situation. You should speak to **Student Finance Wales** and/or your college or sixth form for advice on your own situation.

*Disclaimer: Senedd Research is regularly asked about student finance and this quick guide sets out information about some of the questions we are most frequently asked. It is not intended as a comprehensive guide and you should always seek advice from Student Finance Wales or a suitably qualified professional that is tailored to your individual situation.*

## 2. Tuition fees

**If you are aged 16 to 18, you don't normally have to pay tuition fees.**

Some local colleges do charge a small enrolment fee (around £30-£50) to cover things like your library card though. If you can't afford this fee speak to the college about it.

**If you are aged 19 and over, you might be charged a tuition fee.** You should check with the place you are studying at or thinking of studying at to see what your situation is. They might be able to offer you free or reduced fees in certain situations, for example for part-time study, if you or your family have a low-income, if you have a disability or you receive benefits.

**If you are on benefits you might still be able to carry on getting them and study.** The rules here are very complicated so you should raise it with your local Jobcentre or speak to the Department for Work and Pensions who can give you advice. This page has a [\*\*list of helpline numbers\*\*](#).

## 3. Funding for students aged 16-18

### 3.1. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA is for **full-time students in further education who are aged 16-18**, and who **live in Wales**. **To be eligible for EMA**, you need to live in Wales but don't need to study in Wales. Your college or school has to be participating in the scheme. and the course you study has to be eligible. There are lots of eligible courses including, GCSEs, AS/A Levels, BTECs, NVQs and GNVQs. Your college or sixth form will be able to tell you if your course is an eligible one.

There are also nationality requirements, but if you are a UK citizen living in Wales you should be eligible. Non-UK citizens might also be eligible, you should check with Student Finance Wales or your college or sixth form if you aren't sure.

**If you meet all the rules then you could get up to £30 a week paid every fortnight**, but this does depend on your household's income. Your household income must be below a certain level for you to get EMA.

To get EMA your **household's income must be less than £20,817** if you are the **only young person**, or **less than £23,077 if there are more young people living with you**. If your household income is above these levels then you won't normally be able to get any EMA.

**Student Finance Wales can be contacted** for information on EMAs by email ([emawales@slc.co.uk](mailto:emawales@slc.co.uk)) and by phone Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:30pm on 0300 200 4050.

### 3.2. Cheaper bus travel

You can apply for a mytravelpass which makes **bus travel cheaper for 16-21 year olds**. The travel card can save you up to a third of the cost of a ticket. You'll need to **apply for the card here**.

## 4. Funding for students aged 19 or over

### 4.1. Welsh Government Learning Grant for Further Education (WGLG FE)

**WGLG FE** is for **students aged 19 or over on 1 September 2020**. As this is a grant, it **does not have to be repaid**.

**To qualify** you must be studying an **eligible course at a participating college**. Your **course must be at least 275 hours** and leads to a **nationally recognised qualification** such as GCSEs, AS/A Levels, BTECs, NVQs and GNVQs. Your college or sixth form can tell you if your course is eligible.

However, **if you've previously received WGLG FE for studying a course the same level or higher than the course you want to study now, you won't be eligible for the grant this academic year**.

There are also nationality requirements, but if you are a UK citizen living in Wales you should be eligible. Non-UK citizens might also be eligible, you should check with Student Finance Wales or your college or sixth form if you aren't sure.

To get WGLG FE, your **household income must be £18,370 or less**. You can get a grant of **up to £1,500 for a full-time course** and **£750 for a part-time course** but the **actual amount depends on the income of you or your household**.

Further information on how much you can get and whether it's based on your income or your household income is [available here](#).

**Student Finance Wales can be contacted** for **information on WGLG FEs** by email ([wglgfe@slc.co.uk](mailto:wglgfe@slc.co.uk)) and by phone Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:30pm on 0300 200 4050.

### 4.2. Cheaper bus travel

You can apply for a mytravelpass which makes **bus travel cheaper for 16-21 year olds**. The travel card can save you up to a third of the cost of a ticket. You'll need to [apply for the card here](#).



## 5. Financial Contingency Funds (FCFs)

The **Welsh Government gives money to colleges in Wales** so they can help students who might be facing financial difficulties. This money is known as Financial Contingency Funds (FCFs). Some colleges may call them Student Support Funds or Student Hardship Funds.

The money is given to colleges and they are free to set their own detailed rules as long as they stay within Welsh Government rules. Colleges will usually help students by offering emergency payments, or if money problems are making you think about leaving your course.

Welsh Government likes colleges to prioritise people in certain groups. In the past these groups have included students with children, especially single parents; students living in poorer areas; care leavers and students on a low income.

Colleges might offer grants (no need to pay back) or loans (which need to be paid back). Help is available for full-time and part-time students. The money can help with things like the cost of childcare, transport and essential course equipment.

## 6. Thomas Wall Trust

The **Thomas Wall Trust** offers grants to support people who are experiencing financial and other challenges. **Individuals can apply for grants up to £1,500** to put towards **course fees** and/or **costs associated with studying**, such as childcare, travel and study materials.

There are a number of requirements to be eligible for the scheme which are different from other forms of student funding. The main requirements are below and more details can be **found here**.

- Aged 18 and over;
- Experiencing financial and other challenges e.g. disability, major trauma or life event, mental health issues, carer responsibilities, care leaver, estranged from family, English language learners, childcare responsibilities;
- Unemployed for at least 6 months within the last 2 years;
- Have the right to work and study in the UK and have lived in the UK for at least 3 years;
- From a low income household.

You can **contact the Thomas Wall Trust here**.

## 7. Contacts and resources

**Careers Wales** can give you further information on funding for students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

**National Union of Students** offers information on money and funding.

### 7.1. College's contact details

The contact details below were taken from the individual college websites in August 2020.

#### **Coleg Gwent:**

- Telephone number: 01495 333 777
- **Contact form**

#### **St David's Catholic Sixth Form College**

- Telephone number: 0292 049 8555
- **Contact form**
- Email: [enquiries@stdavidscollege.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@stdavidscollege.ac.uk)

#### **Cardiff and Vale College**

- Telephone number: 0292 025 0250
- email: [info@cavc.ac.uk](mailto:info@cavc.ac.uk)

#### **Coleg y Cymoedd**

- **Aberdare campus** telephone number: 0168 588 7500
- **Nantgarw campus** telephone number: 0144 366 2800
- **Rhondda campus** telephone number: 0144 366 3202
- **Ystrad Mynach campus** telephone number: 0144 381 3888
- Email: [enquiries@cymoedd.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@cymoedd.ac.uk)

#### **Coleg Merthyr Tydfil**

- Telephone number: 0168 572 6000
- **Contact form**

## **Bridgend College**

- Telephone number: 0165 630 2302
- [Contact form](#)

## **NPTC Group**

- **Neath College** telephone number: 0163 964 8000
- **Afan College** telephone number: 0163 964 8200
- **Brecon Beacons College** telephone number: 0168 641 4400
- **Newtown College** telephone number: 0168 661 4200
- **Pontardawe College** telephone number: 0163 964 8100
- **Swansea Construction Centre** telephone number: 0163 964 8120
- **Llandarcy Academy of Sport** telephone number: 0163 964 8720
- **Maesteg Construction Centre** telephone number: 0163 964 8000
- **Llandrindod Campus** telephone number: 0168 661 4300
- [Contact form](#)

## **Gower College**

- **Tycoch campus** telephone number: 0179 228 4000
- **Gorseinon campus** telephone number: 0179 289 0700
- **Llwyn y Bryn campus** telephone number: 0179 228 4021
- **Jubilee Court campus** telephone number: 0179 228 4400
- **Kingsway campus** telephone number: 0179 228 4450
- Email: [enquiries@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@gowercollegeswansea.ac.uk)

## **Coleg Sir Gâr**

- Telephone number: 0155 470 1643
- [Contact form](#)

## **Pembrokeshire College**

- Telephone number: 0143 775 3000
- [Contact form](#)

- Email: [admissions@pembrokeshire.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@pembrokeshire.ac.uk)

### **Coleg Ceredigion**

- **Cardigan campus** telephone number: 0123 961 2032
- **Cardigan campus [contact form](#)**
- **Aberystwyth campus** telephone number: 0197 063 9700
- **Aberystwyth campus [contact form](#)**

### **Llandrillo Menai Group**

- **Abergele campus** telephone number: 0174 582 8100
- **Bangor campus** telephone number: 0124 837 0125
- **Caernarfon campus** telephone number: 0128 667 3450
- **Dolgellau campus** telephone number: 0134 142 2827
- **Glynllifon campus** telephone number: 0128 683 0261
- **Holyhead campus** telephone number: 0124 872 5515
- **Llangefni campus** telephone number: 0124 838 3348
- **Parc Menai campus** telephone number: 0124 867 4341
- **Penrallt Centre campus** telephone number: 0124 872 5514
- **Pwllheli campus** telephone number: 0175 870 1385
- **Rhos-on-Sea campus** telephone number: 0149 254 6666
- **Rhyl campus** telephone number: 0174 535 4797
- **[Contact form](#)**

### **Coleg Cambria**

- Telephone number: 0300 303 0007
- **[Contact form](#)**
- Email: [enquiries@cambria.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@cambria.ac.uk)

### **Adult Learning Wales**

- Telephone number: 0330 058 0845
- **[Contact form](#)**
- Email: [info@adultlearning.wales](mailto:info@adultlearning.wales)