

## **ELIGIBILITY CHECKS FOR EU STUDENTS – UPDATE JANUARY 2014**

We recently advised you that due to a significant increase in applications for maintenance loans and grants from students from EU countries, the Department for Business Innovations and Skills (BIS) had instructed the Student Loans Company (SLC) to suspend funding for a number of EU students at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Please be reminded that students who are only receiving EU Tuition fee loans are not affected and have not been contacted by the SLC.

We are now writing to those students who have not responded to advise that they will be made ineligible to receive this funding unless they respond. A copy of this letter is attached for your information.

We expect that this letter will cause some students to send in their evidence if they have not done so following our previous communications. It is currently taking us around 11 days to process residency evidence, so there is a slight lag between the student responding to SLC and their payments being reinstated. At this time, HEIs need to take no action and we will provide a further update as appropriate.

We appreciate that this is a busy time for HEIs as the second set of tuition fee and maintenance payments are being processed. To help answer any queries you may have, we have provided a Q & A below and we will provide a further update when available.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience throughout this process. If you have any further queries you can contact the HEI helpline on 0845 702 3316.

### **How do we know if a student who has been made ineligible has now been reassessed and their funding reinstated?**

You will be able to see eligible students on SIS, with the correct fee amount displayed and you can confirm these students in attendance as normal.

### **When should HEIs confirm the reassessments on SIS?**

As we are receiving responses on an on-going basis, and then reassessing students again based on evidence received, it is suggested the institutions **do not confirm the zero fee liability at this time.**

We would ask that you encourage affected students to submit their requested evidence to us as quickly as possible to allow us to reinstate their finance as quickly as possible.

If funding is reinstated, then the revised entitlement to fee support will again be represented on SIS for institutions to confirm

### **How long is it taking for you to process the evidence?**

We will have processed all evidence received up to 14th January by 31st January. It is of course possible that some students may submit evidence for the first time or to supplement existing material after 14th January in which case funding may be reinstated. We will confirm as soon as possible when this exercise has been completed and provide further guidance.

If a student has provided us with their evidence before, no further action is required and we will write to them to advise them of the outcome.

**Will SLC continue to process evidence even after the advised deadline?**

If a student has not yet provided us with the relevant evidence they should do so as soon as possible to allow us to assess them, even if we receive the evidence after the deadline.

**Is there a date we should wait until to make sure that SFE have processed all student information and details on SIS are correct?**

We will process residency evidence as soon as possible and will update our systems on an ongoing basis.

**What if a student has returned partial evidence before the deadline date and it is deemed to be insufficient?**

Students are advised to send in the information requested as soon as possible.

**Who can students contact if they have a question?**

Should a student have a query about their funding they should call 01325 215947, Monday to Friday 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

**Which students are affected?**

EU Students who have applied for full SFE funding and confirmed in their declaration that they have been resident in the UK for three years prior to their course start date and have been assessed for maintenance loans or grants in addition to fee support. Those students affected have received a letter which asked them to complete a short form and send in the original correct evidence which could include bank statements, council tax bills, payslips or P60s, utility bills, work permit or Accession Workers Card. Students who received a letter were advised to action it immediately.

Specifically, students who have been sent a request for further evidence are:

- Romanian and Bulgarian students who are studying at a public, or alternative institution
- EU Nationals studying at alternative institutions

**What about Migrant Workers – will their funding be affected?**

Migrant workers who have applied correctly will not be affected and so will not be contacted by SLC.

**Can you provide me with a list of students at my institution that are affected?**

We are unable to provide a list to each institution. Each student that has had their funding suspended has been initially made ineligible for support, with the subsequent reassessment being represented back in to the Student Information Service (SIS). This reassessment will show the student as withdrawn and a zero fee loan entitlement.