

Advice Direct - PG Loans & Scholarships

Introduction

Welcome to **Advice Direct...** the Advice and Representation Centre's (ARC) written information service. This leaflet is designed to provide you with **sources of postgraduate funding**.

Post Graduate Study

Unlike Undergraduate study, there is no mandatory financial support through the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for postgraduate study. The two exemptions are students undertaking a course of **Initial Teacher Training** and students eligible for **Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)** studying on recognised research and taught courses.

Post Graduate Funding

There are a range of sources available for Postgraduate funding. These include:

- Scholarships
- Studentships
- Sponsorships
- Bursaries
- Loans
- Charities/Trusts
- Own savings

It is advised that you begin your research into funding well in advance of the start of your course. A good place to start is the institution at which you wish to study to find out if there is support available.

If you intend to apply to public bodies (e.g. LEA, research councils) then you should find out if you are eligible, when you need to apply, and who you need to apply to. You should also spend time on your application, as competition for awards is often extremely fierce.

Loans

Professional and Career Development Loans

A Professional and Career Development Loan is a deferred repayment bank loan set at a competitive fixed interest rate that can be used to support learning that improves your career and salary prospects – whether it's to protect your current career in times of job insecurity, to gain a qualification to improve your longer term career prospects or re-skilling to start a new career.

You can borrow any amount between £300 and £10,000 from a participating bank (currently The Co-operative and Barclays) and use it to fund the course of your choice. Like any loan, you need to repay the money you borrow but with a Professional and Career Development Loan the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will pay the interest on the loan while you are learning and for up to one month afterwards. Even when you start to repay the loan to the bank, interest rates are set at a fixed rate that is competitive, compared with other commercial unsecured loans.

For more information, call the Professional and Career Development Loan helpline on 0800 585 505 or visit www.direct.gov.uk/pcdl

Professional loan schemes

If you're training for a professional qualification in, for example, Law or Medicine, most banks offer some sort of professional studies loan scheme. NatWest offers the Professional Trainee Loan Scheme and the College of Law Loan Scheme, and Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland also run loan schemes specifically for law students.

Loans are available to students who are studying full-time for a professional qualification to become one of the following: barrister, dentist, osteopath, solicitor, chiropodist or podiatrist, doctor, pharmacist, vet, chiropractor, optician or physiotherapist. Postgraduates studying for a diploma, MSc or PhD are eligible.

Association of MBAs Loan Scheme

Students on MBA (Masters in Business Administration) programmes accredited by the Association of MBAs (AMBA) are eligible for the Association of MBAs Loan Scheme, which is designed to help students paying their own fees or part-fees.

AMBA operates this scheme, which is financed by the NatWest Bank. Students can borrow up to two thirds of their pre-course gross annual salary plus tuition fees for each year of full-time study. Loans to part-time and distance learning students can cover tuition fees and study equipment.

Distance learners can borrow up to a maximum of £10,000. For full-time and part-time students, there is nothing to pay until three months after graduation. Since MBAs are expensive and most MBA students are self-financing, this loan scheme is very popular.

To apply for the AMBA Loan Scheme, you must:

- Be a permanent UK resident (i.e. have been resident here for a minimum of three years immediately prior to commencement of study).
- Have secured a place on an AMBA-accredited MBA programme.
- Have five years' practical work experience within industry or commerce, or if you are a recent graduate, two years' work experience.
- You're expected to make a contribution equal to 20% of the total course fees from your own funds.

You need not already bank with the NatWest to apply for an MBA loan but in order to take out a loan you must open and maintain your main current account with them.

Repayment of this loan begins three months after the course has finished. After this time, repayments can be made over a period of up to seven years or, in the case of loans of £20,000 and over, ten years. For

distance learners, repayments commence one month after the funds have been paid into your account. The maximum term is ten years.

Further details and an application form can be obtained by calling the NatWest information line free on 0800 015 1166 or the Association of MBAs on 020 7246 2686.

Scholarships/Studentships

The University offers a number of scholarships and studentships, some that are offered centrally and some that are offered directly through individual schools and departments. The majority of these scholarships offer help towards fees, however some may also contribute towards living costs. Competition for these scholarships is mainly based around academic performance, and the number of scholarships offered varies from year to year.

For more information on University Scholarships, please follow the website addresses below for more detailed information. Applications and nominations are primarily dealt with through the schools; if you have a specific query regarding a University scholarship, we would recommend that it be directed to your prospective school.

- **Scholarships in Education, Social Sciences, Government and Politics**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/education.shtml>
- **Scholarships Arts, Languages, Literature and History**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/arts.shtml>
- **Scholarships in Law**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/law.shtml>
- **Scholarships in Engineering**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/engineering.shtml>
- **Scholarships in Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/medicine.shtml>
- **Scholarships in the Sciences**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/science.shtml>

The College of Engineering and Physical Sciences have recently introduced a number of fully funded **'Postgraduate Elite Scholarships'**

http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/elite_scholarships.shtml available to international (non-EU) applicants intending to undertake PhD research at the University.

For more information on postgraduate grants and bursaries from research councils, trusts, charities and other sources, please visit: <http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/finance/pgstudents/grants.shtml>

There are also a number of other Post Graduate scholarships available across a number of subjects, which are awarded by the University. These can be found at the University website:

- **University Scholarships**
<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/prospective/scholarships/unischolarships.shtml>

Research Councils

Postgraduates pursuing research programmes (and a small number on taught programmes) can also apply to research councils for support. It should be noted that EU students are eligible for assistance with fees only. For more information, please visit. <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/default.htm> . Alternatively, you can visit the individual research council that is relevant to your studies:

- **Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)**
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)**
<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk>
- **Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)**
<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/index.aspx>
- **Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)**
<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/default.htm>
- **Medical Research Council (MRC)**
<http://www.mrc.ac.uk/index.htm>
- **Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**
<http://www.nerc.ac.uk>
- **Science and Technology Facilities Council**
<http://www.scitech.ac.uk>

Statutory Funding

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

Both full-time and part-time students who have a disability are now eligible for Disabled Students Allowance to assist with Postgraduate study (dependant on certain factors). The DSA is there to assist with costs which arise due to a student's disability, such as special equipment, human support and, in some cases, travel costs. You should apply for DSA through your Local Education Authority (LEA). Further information and useful contacts are available on the following websites:

<http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/studentlife/disability>

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EducationAndTraining/HigherEducation/DG_10034898

Initial Teacher Training

Postgraduate student undertaking a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) or School Centred Initial Training (SCITT) (through the Graduate Teacher Programme) can receive financial support for their study if eligible. Further information can be found using the following website address:
http://www.tda.gov.uk/Recruit/thetrainingprocess/fundinginengland/postgrad_funding.aspx

Other Sources of Funding

There are numerous other sources of funding available, such as foundations, trusts and charities. However, it should be noted that the amounts awarded are unlikely to be large enough to provide a considerable contribution towards the total cost of Postgraduate study.

Trusts and charities

Some charities and trusts offer awards to postgraduates, though these are normally quite modest amounts. There are various publications and reference books we recommend that you consult, including the *Grants Register*, the *Charities Digest*, the *Directory of Grant Making Trusts* and the *Education Grants Directory*. These publications can normally be found in any good library. Alternatively, you can search for support from trust or charity organisations online at www.studentmoney.org.uk or www.funderfinder.org.uk.

Scholarship Search

This site provides details of Postgraduate scholarships, awards and sponsorship. www.scholarship-search.org.uk

Access To Learning Fund

The Government provides funds to universities to address the needs of students who face financial difficulties during their course. For further information see '**Advice Direct...Access To Learning Fund**'

Educational Grants Advisory Services (EGAS)

EGAS is an organisation which assists people in getting financial assistance, specifically individuals who are not eligible for statutory funding. Application forms are available in the ARC. www.egas-online.org.uk

Study in Europe

Scholarships and grants for students on Erasmus courses or exchange programmes with other universities in other countries. www.study-in-europe.org/

Database on Educational Exchange Programmes (DEEP)

An initiative of the Asia-Europe Foundation contains information on courses and scholarships from thousands of universities in 38 European and Asian countries. <http://www.aca-secretariat.be/07database/database.htm>

Other bursaries

Canon Foundation

The Canon Foundation in Europe grants up to 15 research fellowships annually to students who have completed an MA or PhD within the last 10 years. The fellowship funds range from 22,500 Euros to 27,500 Euros. The annual closing date for applications is 15 September and they are considered over several months.

For more information, and to download an application form visit; www.canonfoundation.org.

Whitworth Scholarship Awards

Whitworth Scholarship Awards are for prospective or current undergraduates or postgraduates of any engineering discipline who have completed a two year engineering apprenticeship. The scholarships are valued up to £18,000 (for full time study up to £4,500 per annum is available over four years, for part time study up to £3,000 per annum). The closing date for applications is 30 June each year.

For further information and to apply, visit: www.whitworthscholarships.org.uk.

Fulbright Awards

The UK Fulbright Awards Programme offers a wide range of exchange opportunities to UK citizens in three major categories:

- Postgraduate Student Awards for students wishing to pursue a postgraduate degree in the US in any subject;
- Distinguished Scholars and Fellows Awards for academics and professionals to lecture, study and/or conduct research in the US;
- Special Programmes for short stays or for younger scholars.

The competition for the 2010/11 award cycle has now closed; with details of the 2011/12 awards cycle yet to be released. Full details on eligibility and selection, making an application and award benefits can be obtained by visiting www.fulbright.co.uk.

Charles Brotherton Trust

Awards from the Charles Brotherton Trust are non repayable, and they typically range between £200 and £1,000. The trust fund was set up in order to assist British undergraduate and postgraduate students experiencing financial hardship and who are studying scientific subjects in particular, with priority going to students studying Chemistry and other related subjects. The committee will also consider applications from students studying other subjects.

NHS Social Work Bursary

If you are interested in pursuing a postgraduate course in social work, you may be eligible for a non-repayable bursary. This bursary is currently administered by the NHS. For full details on this means of funding, please visit <http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students/825.aspx>

Ramsay Postgraduate Research Bursary

This bursary is open to students pursuing a PhD in the School of Computer Science. For details of this award as well as other opportunities for funding through the school, Please visit <http://www.cs.bham.ac.uk/admissions/postgraduate-research/scholarships.php>

Dinshaw Bursary

Offered by the Department of Theology, this bursary is open to students pursuing a postgraduate research degree, in fields relating to inter-religious relations, who are in financial need. For further details please visit http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/finance/Awards_News_Page.shtml

Wellcome Trust Awards

The Wellcome Trust is the largest charity in the UK, and provides a range of fellowships, studentships and personal awards to postgraduate students undertaking research in the field of biomedicine. For further details please visit <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/index.htm>

Funds for Women Graduates

The Funds for Women Graduates are various different grants which are available to female postgraduate students. Awards take the form of non-renewable grants worth up to £4,000 and are awarded by the FFWG. For further information including conditions, eligibility and how to apply please visit www.ffwg.org.uk. The deadline for these grants is June for foundation grants and October for emergency grants.

Sources of Help

Advice and Representation Centre (ARC)

For an appointment with an advisor call: 0121 251 2400 or Email thearc@guild.bham.ac.uk
Visit website at: http://www.guildofstudents.com/content/188405/your_support/arc/

Student Funding Office – Aston Webb Building, University of Birmingham. Tel: 0121 414 7391,
Email: financialsupport@bham.ac.uk or visit website at: www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/finance

Student Support and Counselling Service

3 Elms Road, University of Birmingham. Tel: 0121 414 5130 or
Email: www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/counsell/

Skill: The National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

This organisation can provide information on funding available for students with disabilities.
Tel: 020 7450 0620 , Email: skill@skill.org.uk or visit website at: www.skill.org.uk

UNIAID: Student Calculator

The UNIAID Student Calculator will help you plan your budget for university.
Visit Website at: www.studentcalculator.org.uk/original

UNIAID: International Student Calculator

The International Student Calculator will help you plan and use your money effectively for study in the UK.
Visit website at: www.studentcalculator.org.uk/international

Disclaimer: The information on this leaflet only provides general guidance on academic support and University policy. The leaflet should not be regarded or relied upon as a complete or authoritative statement of University policy or procedures. The ARC will not accept any liability for any claims or inconvenience as a result of the use of information on this leaflet.

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