OUTWARD FUNDING FOR MOBILE STUDENTS

This is part of a suite of resources aiming to help international offices to develop, plan and deliver work, study and volunteer abroad programmes. This document provides an overview of how the Student Loan Company allocates finance to UK students who are mobile.

How is student funding administered?
The Student Loans Company (SLC) administers government funded loans and, in some Administrations, grants to higher education and further education learners, on behalf of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales in line with the policy aims of the relevant Administrations. Student Finance England (SFE) oversees the products available to students who normally live in England, including funding while mobile. The “Study Abroad Template” spreadsheet mentioned below is for universities to use to enable students to receive early payments and to access travel grants. This can be used for students in England and Wales. The SLC does not have a remit to support this area for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Please contact the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) and Student Finance Northern Ireland for more information on funding for mobile students.

Funding available to mobile students
Students from England and Wales who go abroad during their degree are entitled to funding through i) student loans for tuition fees and maintenance and ii) a Travel Grant.

1. Student loan entitlement
Students who are mobile are able to access their student loan entitlement, and students who are studying abroad may be entitled to extra funding in the way of a long course loan. The table shows the maximum Maintenance Loan available if a student is studying abroad. The actual amount a student will get depends on their household income.

Students that go abroad may require a different payment schedule, for which the Study Abroad team at SFE will administer manually. When a student is abroad in their first term, as standard, they will receive payment earlier than those studying in the UK. Students will receive their
first instalment 25 working days before the start date of their course. Students studying abroad can request their full entitlement to be paid in two instalments rather than three when studying in countries for which the university year runs across two semesters rather than the standard three semesters in the UK. Mobile students can also request for their full entitlement to be paid in one instalment if they are in countries which require proof of finances for the entire year, for example China and the United States.

To request any of the above manual payments, the student’s host institution study or placement abroad must be confirmed by their home higher education provider in one of the following ways:

- A completed “Study Abroad Template” spreadsheet sent to the designated SFE Study Abroad inbox (study_abroad@slc.co.uk). This is the recommended method for fastest resolution.

- A letter sent to the SLC that states where the student is on placement, the dates of the placement and the tuition fees charged. This letter should also state which manual payment is being requested.

- A Course Abroad (CAB) Form sent to the SLC postal address. If the student wishes to request a manual payment then there must be a separate letter with the CAB form that states the manual payment being requested.

For more information please download the SFE guidance.

2. Travel Grant

What is the Travel Grant?

Students who are studying abroad through any scheme, or who are working abroad under The Erasmus+ programme, can apply for a travel Grant. The Travel Grant covers the cost of all necessary qualifying travel, however, the student must fund the first £303 of travel themselves. The grant also covers other incidental costs such as visas, vaccinations and medical insurance.

Who is eligible to receive it?

To qualify students must be attending an overseas university or college for at least 50% of an academic term. This period of study can be compulsory or optional. The Travel Grant isn’t available to students on an international work placement unless the student is on the Erasmus+ scheme and is undertaking study, work, or combined work and study periods as part of their course.

What does it cover?

The amount included in a Travel Grant depends on the students’ household income and where they live and study. It covers reasonable travel expenses during an academic year, which means that the student must buy the most cost-effective tickets using the most economical and
practical form of transport. For example, taking the train instead of flying and buying standard-class instead of first-class tickets.

Students can claim for:

Up to three return journeys between the UK and the overseas institution during a full academic year abroad. If there are only two semesters SFE would expect to see two return travel tickets, not three. If the student were travelling further afield, such as Japan or Australia, then it would be reasonable to only request one return trip.

The cost of a child/children’s fare between the UK and the overseas institution if it’s necessary for a single parent student to take the children abroad.

Mandatory medical insurance, visas and medical expenses.

*How to apply?*

Students must complete the Travel Abroad Expenses Form and get their university or college to complete the Course Abroad Form. They can apply for the Travel Grant at any time during the academic year and there’s no limit to how many forms students can submit. Students must provide evidence to support their claims for travel expenses, which must be photocopies of proof of payment.

The Travel Grant is paid directly into the student’s bank account on an ad-hoc basis so students won’t have to wait until their next instalment of student finance to get their travel grant.

For more information see the Travel Grant factsheet, available at [www.practitioners.slc.co.uk](http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk).

More information

Student Finance England run training sessions at universities on financing options for outwardly mobile students. SFE has produced a presentation that outward mobility practitioners can deliver directly to students on how to access funding during mobility.