

## Funding Information: Education Maintenance Allowance 2009/10

### What is an Education Maintenance Allowance?

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a national programme to provide financial support to eligible 16 to 19 year olds at school or college. You do not have to pay back any money you receive. EMAs are managed by your local authority or college.

### Do you qualify?

You may qualify if you are between 16 and 19 years old, you are taking a recognised full time course in a school or Further Education college and you live in a low income household. As with other funding, there are residency conditions. Generally, if you have been ordinarily resident in the UK for three years, you are likely to meet these. Others such as EEA nationals and refugees may also be eligible.

When you qualify for an EMA depends on your official school leaving date.

#### Note:

- you cannot get an Education Maintenance Allowance until you have reached school leaving age
- if you reach your 20th birthday while getting an Education Maintenance Allowance, payments will stop from the week after your 20th birthday
- Education Maintenance Allowances can be paid for up to three years and up to four years for students with additional support needs

### How much is the allowance?

Education Maintenance Allowance awards are paid according to the total taxable household income.

### Weekly payments for students applying and qualifying for an EMA for the first time in 2009/10

Income	Weekly Payment
£0 - £22,403 (for families with more than one dependent child in the household)	£30 per week
£0 - £20,351 (for families with a single dependent child in household)	£30 per week

## Weekly payment taper for students who have an EMA prior to 2009/10

EMA awards will be payable according to the total taxable household income. The sum payable will taper from the full award of £30 per week to nil in the following bandings:

Income	Weekly Payment
Zero - £22,403 (for families with more than one dependent child in household)	£30 per week
Zero - £20,351 (for families with a single dependent child in household)	£30 per week

The weekly allowances are only given when you have 100% attendance for the week. You may also be able to receive two bonuses of £150 each, each year, if you stay on your course and make good progress with your learning. Bonuses are paid out in January/February and June/July.

### How do Education Maintenance Allowances work?

Your EMA is a weekly allowance paid during term time directly to your bank account.

It is only paid for full weeks in term time, up to a maximum of 42 weeks in any one academic year, and only if you have 100% attendance. Payments are not made during short term time holidays such as October week, Christmas and Easter.

If you are studying at a Further Education college, you may also qualify for a Maintenance Bursary. You can get **either** an Education Maintenance Allowance or a Maintenance Bursary, but not both. You should contact your college's bursary officer for advice on which funding is best for you.

Your bursary officer will also be able to give advice on other kinds of support, such as travel bursaries, which may be available if you decide an Education Maintenance Allowance best meets your needs.

To get an EMA, you must have a current signed learning agreement and abide by its conditions.

### What's a learning agreement?

A learning agreement is a signed agreement between you and the local authority or college/school that explains what you can expect from them and what they expect from you. This will include your study aims and course work and attendance requirements. The learning agreement shows your commitment to your course. If you are at school it will normally also be signed by your parent or responsible adult.

EMA payments may be stopped, and you may not receive your bonuses, if you do not keep to your learning agreement.

### How do I apply?

Ask your school or local authority for an application form if you are staying on at school. Ask your college student support office for an application form if you are going to study at college.

Further Information can also be found at [www.emascotland.com](http://www.emascotland.com)

## **Useful terms**

### **Local Authority**

The local authority is your local council.

### **Full-time**

For Education Maintenance Allowances, full-time usually means at least 21 guided learning hours per week. Most school study will meet this. Your college can tell you whether your course is eligible.