

# Stakeholder & Partner Bulletin

JANUARY 2012



This bulletin gives you an update on the Student Finance England, Wales and Northern Ireland services for academic year 2012/13, an update on the successful delivery of the Student Finance England service for 2011/12 and information on the stakeholder working groups.

## STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND 2012/13

The AY 2012/13 Student Finance England service for new and continuing full-time students is open.

As of 22 January around 56,000 students have registered to begin their 2012/13 student finance application.

Our key message to students is to apply online now at [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance) so that they can be sure to get all the student finance they are entitled to at the start of term in autumn 2012.

**Students don't need to have a confirmed place at university to apply** – they can use their first choice of course and change it online later if necessary.

The deadline for submitting applications is 31 May 2012 for new students and 29 June 2012 for continuing students.

Continuing students who applied for student finance that **did NOT depend on their household income** last year (non means tested) should wait to hear from Student Finance England as they may not need to re-apply. SFE will contact these customers by the end of February 2012.

### Can you help?

Please help us to promote these messages by using them on your website, twitter, facebook and in any of your student communications.

Our detailed customer messages can be accessed via our [December Stakeholder & Partner bulletin](#).

## SFE RESOURCES

We've been developing and adding to our suite of resources for partners who communicate student finance options to students. Please visit [www.practitioners.slc.co.uk](http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk) to see the new materials, including:

- The student information fast tracker, or 'SIFTER' – a tool you can use and embed on your website to signpost students to tailored finance information.
- A range of student [guides and literature](#) with paper copies available to [order](#).

## SUCCESSFUL DELIVERY OF 2011/12 STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND

The Student Finance England application cycle for AY 2011/12 is now nearing completion, with approximately 98% of the 1.07 million student finance applications received now processed (as of 22 January 2012).

To date, 92% of universities and colleges have returned their student attendance confirmations which will lead to a first instalment of 2011/12 tuition fee payments at the start of February, to an estimated value of £1.4 billion.

## THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all of our stakeholders and partners for your support. Please continue to promote the 'apply now' message to new and continuing students.

## STUDENT FINANCE NORTHERN IRELAND 2012/13

The Student Finance Northern Ireland service for AY 2012/13 full-time students will open the evening of 21 March 2012, with a deadline for submitting applications from new customers of 11 May 2012 and from continuing customers of 29 June 2012.

## STUDENT FINANCE WALES 2012/13

The Student Finance Wales service for AY 2012/13 full-time students will open the evening of 21 March 2012, with a deadline for submitting applications from new customers of 4 May 2012 and from continuing customers of 1 June 2012.

## 'GET REEL' VIDEO COMPETITION

We've joined with the National Union of Students (NUS) to give students the chance to put their stamp on a series of 'How to...' films, to win £500 Apple Gift Cards.

The competition is open now and we need your help to get the message out to students. Please pass this information on to your film and media departments or anyone you feel may be interested

Further information and details on how students can enter can be found at:

[www.thestudentroom.co.uk/getreel](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/getreel)

## OUR WEBSITES

We've re-designed and given a new look to our corporate and stakeholder facing websites to consolidate and refresh our online stakeholder and partner information.

Our corporate, practitioners' and HE info websites are all now accessible via [www.slc.co.uk](http://www.slc.co.uk).

## STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE

In November 2011 senior representatives from over eighty stakeholder organisations and institutions attended our annual stakeholder conference in Birmingham.

The conference discussed the reforms in higher education in England and the policy changes in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland on student finance.

Views and perspectives were shared from BIS, DfES (Wales), HEFCE, UCAS and HEIs and delegates discussed and debated the changes and the delivery of student finance by SLC in the coming academic year.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SEMINAR

Our annual HEI Student Support Seminar will be held from 13 – 15 March 2012 in Leicestershire.

The conference is aimed at student support managers and practitioners in universities and colleges and will focus on student and institution finance changes for AY 2012/13.

For more information and to register go to [www.events-slc.co.uk](http://www.events-slc.co.uk)

## FEEDBACK

If you have any comments on, or suggestions for inclusion in this bulletin please email us at: [stakeholder\\_enquiries@slc.co.uk](mailto:stakeholder_enquiries@slc.co.uk)

## STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUPS UPDATE

### STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEETING – 7 DECEMBER & 18 JANUARY

- In January the Forum discussed aspects of the HE sector changes, including the divergence of student finance policy across the UK and the complexities for applicants.
- In December, the Forum met with Martin Donnelly, Permanent Secretary at BIS and discussed a number of key aspects of the changes in the HE sector. Martin Donnelly took the opportunity to thank SLC and HEIs for the joint effort in implementing the complex and significant changes involved in the HE reforms and the successful delivery of student finance.

### STAKEHOLDER OPERATIONS GROUP – 15 DECEMBER

- The group reviewed the latest SFE 2011/12 application processing data and commented on the strong position of the year to date, particularly regarding the processing of Disabled Students Allowances and dependants' grants applications.
- They were given an update on SLC's future plans and improvements for managing complaints.

### DISABLED STUDENT STAKEHOLDER GROUP – 8 DECEMBER

- The group were updated on progress of the work to aid the development of procurement guidance to address the current issues of quality and value for money in non-medical help provision. SLC are working with BIS to progress how these findings should be implemented.
- 2011/12 Disabled Students' Allowances application processing was discussed and the group noted the increase in early DSA applications submitted which was attributed to better student information, advice and guidance and improved DSA partner relationships.

### VULNERABLE STUDENTS STAKEHOLDER GROUP – 29 NOVEMBER

- The group discussed the processing of 2011/12 dependants' grants and the improvement in the number of customers whose applications could be finalised without the need for further information.

### HEI SERVICES & STAKEHOLDER OPERATIONS GROUPS – JOINT MEETING, 21 NOVEMBER

- The groups were presented with an overview of the 2012/13 operational service, including an update on policy driven changes to the service, HEI related changes, fee payment changes and how fee waivers would be managed.
- They input to a discussion on strategic risks for 2012/13.