

# How Much does it Cost to go to University?

The [cost of a degree](#) varies depending on the university. Prices range from £1,820 to £15,950 per year. The vast majority of universities charge £9,250 per year. This, and the cost of living, mean that most students leave university with considerable debts.

University is the pinnacle of most people's education. Degrees open the doors to higher earning jobs - and we all want to have those! But most things worth having don't come cheap - and university courses are no exception. The cost of the course, together with the cost of living, mean that most students leave university with considerable debts, as well as their degrees.

Before you go to university, it's important to prepare and find out exactly how much it will cost. So, what will have to be paid for and how much will it all come to? Is there any help available? We've put together this guide which will answer your questions and help you plan how to finance a university education.

## How Expensive are Tuition Fees?

How much you'll have to pay for your studies depends on where you live and which university you decide to attend.

For Scottish students who go to a Scottish university, foundation degrees are free and undergraduate degrees cost a standard £1,820 per year. Those from other parts of the UK attending Scottish universities will pay £6,750 - £9,250 per year depending on which university they go to.

In Northern Ireland, foundation degrees cost from £2,688 to £4,030 per year. Undergraduate degrees are £1,820 per year for people from Northern Ireland but between £9,000 and £9,250 per year for those from elsewhere in the UK.

In Wales, foundation degrees are free at some universities and £9,000 per year at others, while undergraduate degrees are a standard cost of £9,000 per year.

In England, foundation degrees range from free at some institutions, to £15,950 per year at the most expensive university. Undergraduate degrees vary in price from £6,009 - £12,444 per year, however, the vast majority of universities charge £9,250 per year.

Before you decide which university you want to attend, you'll probably want to compare prices. The Complete University Guide has a list of prices so you can do just that.

## What Other Costs will I have at University?

Once the tuition fees have been taken care of, the next biggest cost for university students is accommodation. Again, this varies wildly from town to town. A survey was completed by the NUS in 2010, comparing the rent in over 300,000 student rooms across the country. Unsurprisingly, it found that the highest average was in London where rooms cost £157 per week. The cheapest rooms were in Northern Ireland where students pay an average of £83 per week. The nationwide average is about £120 per week, which adds up to more than £6,000 per year.

When choosing accommodation, as well as the rent, also take into account other practicalities, like the distance from campus, the length of the rental agreement, the quality of the room and whether utility bills are included.

There are other expenses which are often forgotten when calculating how much money you'll need. Here's a (by no means comprehensive!) list of things you should budget for:

- Utility bills
- Groceries
- Wi-Fi
- Printing costs
- Travel costs
- TV licence

Together, these extras can add up to quite a bit. You may be able to make some savings by shopping at cheaper supermarkets, by doing without a TV or by walking to campus. My advice would be to make a budget – and stick to it!

## **What Financial Help is there for Students?**

With all of these costs mounting, how can you pay them? Many students work part time to get a modest income. But there is help available – including some that doesn't have to be paid back! Let's take a look at the types of financial support you may be entitled to:

### **Bursaries and Scholarships**

Universities offer some of their students financial aid in the form of bursaries, scholarships or other awards. These are not loans and so don't have to be paid back. However, who qualifies to receive them (and how much money they get) is decided by each university and varies a great deal. To find out if you can get any help from your university, talk to your student support service about making an application.

### **Maintenance Loans**

Prior to 2015, students on low incomes were entitled to a grant of £3,387 which did not have to be paid back. However, these grants have now been replaced by maintenance loans, which do. The amount of money lent to students depends on where you are living. If you stay with your parents then you can get up to £7,097. If you are living away from your parents you can get up to £8,430 (if you are outside London) or £11,002 (if you are in London).

### **Student Loans**

Every university student studying for an undergraduate degree is entitled to a student loan to cover the cost of tuition. For a three year course (costing £9,250 per year), that's a total loan of £27,750. The good news is that you don't have to start paying it back until you're earning £21,000 or more per year. However – once you are earning enough, you have to pay 9% of your income each year. What's more, the loan has interest attached which changes with the rate of inflation.

## Other Help

In addition to bursaries and loans, there is other financial aid available. If you are on a low income you may qualify for Income Support and, if you have any dependants (children or dependant adults), you may be entitled to a Childcare Grant, a Parents' Learning Allowance, an Adult Dependants' Grant or Child Tax Credit. You can apply for these online or you could ask your student support service for advice.

As well as their academic qualifications, those who've been to university will come out of it with a knack for managing their money - and making it go further.