

Part Time Dependants' Grants

Higher Education Student Finance in Wales 2013/14 Academic Year

TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES
(For the attention of the Student Support Officer)

May 2013

Dear Colleague

2013/14 STUDENT FINANCE: Part-time Dependants' Grants (excluding Disabled Students' Allowances).

Attached is guidance for key delivery partners in the 2013/14 student finance implementation project: **Part-time Dependants' Grants** (excluding Disabled Students' Allowances).

This guidance is not exhaustive and is not a substitute for consulting The Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2012, which come into force in January 2013.

This guidance does not cover every aspect of student support. The full details are contained in The Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2012 which are the legal basis of the student support arrangements for the academic year 2013/14. Nothing in this guidance can replace the Regulations and if there is any difference between this guidance and the Regulations, the Regulations prevail. This guidance is based on the Regulations as they stand at the time of publication and may change in future.

If you have any enquiries on this guidance, please contact:

Name	E-mail
Higher Education Division	studentfinancedivision@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Policy	4
General eligibility	4
Means-tested NHS bursaries	4
Unpaid Service	5
Students who become eligible during the course	5
Eligibility for grants for living costs where students withdraw or suspend study	6
Part-time grants for dependants	6
Definitions for part-time dependants' grants	6
Determining where financial dependence lies	8
Students aged 25 or over (or under 25 if they are married or in a civil partnership)	8
Students aged under 25 with a child and living with a partner (including a same sex partner)	8
Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant (regulation 101)	8
Student's partner is an eligible student or holds a statutory award (regulation 105(1)(c))	8
Dependant ordinarily resident outside the United Kingdom	9
Part-time Childcare Grant (regulation 102)	9
Qualifying childcare in Wales	10
Qualifying childcare in Scotland	11
Qualifying childcare in Northern Ireland	12
Qualifying childcare outside the United Kingdom	12
Audit of Childcare Grant applications	13
Amounts of Part-time Childcare Grant	14
Maximum PTCCG in the first and final week of the academic year	15
PTCCG and retainer fees paid to childcare providers	15
Assessing PTCCG where the student's partner is an eligible student	15
Periods covered by the PTCCG	16
PTCCG for final year students	16
Students who have a partner with income	16
PTCCG, early years education and free childcare	16
PTCCG, Child Tax Credit and the Childcare Element of Working Tax credits	17
Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance (Regulation 103)	18
The part-time dependants' grant income assessment	19
Assessment of dependants' income	19
Financial obligations incurred before the start of the course (Regulation 105(7))	20
Applying the dependants' income	20
Payment of part-time grants for dependants	24
The number of dependants changes in an academic year	24
Administration	25
Administering Part-time Childcare Grant (PTCCG) applications	25
Processing PTCCG applications on the single system	25
Informing students of the breakdown of dependants' grants	26
Childcare Grant leaflets and forms	26
Form 'Application for help with childcare costs'	26
Confirmation that a childcare provider is registered or approved	26
Student does not return form 'Application for help with childcare costs'	26
Students who return form 'Application for help with childcare costs'	26
Confirmation of payments made to a childcare provider	26
Monitoring returns of 'Confirmation of childcare costs' forms	27
Student does not send confirmation of registered or approved childcare	27
Student does not send confirmation of childcare payments	28
Finalising assessments in 2013/14	28
Students not in receipt of a PT Childcare Grant during their longest vacation	28
Students in receipt of a PT Childcare Grant during the longest vacation	28
Underpayments and overpayments of PT Childcare Grants	28

Annex 1 **29**
 TIMETABLE FOR LAs..... 29

Annex 2
Student letters 31

Introduction

1. This chapter explains the part-time dependants' grants for which some part-time students may be eligible. The following should be used in conjunction with and is not a replacement for the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended.
2. The part-time dependants' grants are:
 - Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant (PTADG) (regulation 101);
 - Part-time Childcare Grant (PTCCG) (regulation 102); and
 - Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance (PTPLA) (regulation 103)

Policy

General eligibility

3. The general eligibility criteria for part-time student support can be found in the 2013/14 'Fee and Course Grant for Part-time Students' guidance chapter.
4. Students who are personally eligible for student support under paragraph 9 of Schedule 1 (i.e. nationals of member states of the European Union) but not under any other paragraph of that Schedule, are not eligible for part-time dependants' grants.
5. Regulation 93(16) applies with regard to eligibility to part-time dependants' grants.

This has the effect of limiting support to a maximum of eight years.

No student who holds a degree from a UK institution will be eligible for part-time dependants' grants (unless that student is topping up an existing degree to an Honours degree.)

No more than any one course at any one time can be supported (full or part-time)

6. Part-time dependants' grants are available to eligible students regardless of age.
7. A student can only receive part-time dependants' grant support for a designated part-time course (or a designated full-time distance learning course which the student started before 1st September 2012). Any student starting a full-time distance learning course on or after 1st September 2012 is not eligible for dependants' grants. Regulation 78 and 95 cover which courses are eligible for support.
8. Students are eligible for part-time dependants' grants whilst attending an overseas institution as part of their UK course, whether obligatory or optional (but see paragraph 44 in respect of the Part-time Childcare Grant).

Means-tested NHS bursaries

9. Under regulation 93(3), students are not eligible for part-time support for any academic year during which they are eligible for NHS bursaries or similar awards bestowed under section 63 of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968, article 44 of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 or sections 73(f) and 74(1) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. The all-Wales workforce functions previously carried out by National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Healthcare (NLIAH) have been transferred to the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership, where it will fall under the remit of the newly created Workforce, Education and Development

Service (WEDS). Students who are eligible for an NHS Bursary should be directed to the WEDS website which will be available at:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/955/page/65980>

Students can also contact the NHS Student Awards Unit by phoning 01443 233 482.

ITT Courses

10. Where a student begins a part-time or flexible ITT course on or after 1st September 2010, (including 2011 and 2012 cohort) the course will attract the part-time support package. Designated part-time first degree and postgraduate ITT courses of at least one academic year in length will attract the same part-time package of fee grant, course grant (see 'Grants for Part-time Students' guidance chapter) dependants' grants and DSAs as part-time non-ITT first degree courses. Students who are continuing on ITT courses which commenced prior to 1 September 2010 should continue to apply for the full-time support packages (see the 'Grants for Dependants and Travel Grant 2013/14' guidance chapter).

Unpaid Service

11. Students on certain specified unpaid placements in the public or voluntary sectors are eligible for DSAs and other part-time dependants' grants.
 - Unpaid service in a hospital or in a public health laboratory in the UK or with a primary care trust;
 - Unpaid service with a local authority in the UK acting in the exercise of their functions relating to health, welfare or the care of children and young persons or with a voluntary organisation providing facilities or carrying out activities of a like nature in the UK;
 - Unpaid service in the prison or probation and aftercare service in the UK;
 - Unpaid research in an institution in the UK or, in the case of a student attending an overseas institution as a necessary part of his course, in an overseas institution; (In the Department's view research in an institution must involve some activity within the institution but not all of the work or activity must take place within the institution's physical bounds. Some research work might require a student to undertake some research away from his institution but as long as his base is established at the institution, such work can be regarded as part of his work in the institution.)
 - Unpaid service with a Health Authority or a Strategic Health Authority, a Health Board or a Special Health Board in Scotland, or a Health and Social Services Board in Northern Ireland.

Students who become eligible during the course

12. Under regulation 94(4), a student **may** qualify for part-time dependants' grants from, and including, the academic year during which:
 - The student's course becomes designated;
 - The student, his or her spouse, his or her civil partner or his or her parent is recognised as a refugee or becomes a person with leave to enter or remain;
 - The state of which he is a national, accedes to the European Community where the student has been ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom and Islands throughout the three-year period immediately preceding the first day of the first academic year of the course;

- The student acquires the right of permanent residence;
 - The student becomes the child of a Turkish Worker;
 - The student becomes an EEA migrant worker or a family member of an EEA migrant worker, or a person described in paragraph 6 of Schedule 1;
 - The student becomes the child of a Swiss national.
13. In these circumstances the student is eligible for Part-time Adult Dependents' Grant and Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance only for the quarters after the events in paragraph 12 above occur. For example, a course becomes designated during quarter 1. PTADG and PTPLA are awarded from the beginning of quarter 2 and continue for the remainder of the course (except the quarter in which the longest vacation falls). The student is also eligible for the Part-time Childcare Grant for the whole year of the course in which they become eligible and subsequent years of the course.
14. However, such a student is not eligible retrospectively. That is, a student is not eligible for part-time dependants' grants for academic years of the course falling **before** the academic year in which they become eligible in the circumstances mentioned above.

Eligibility for grants for living costs where students withdraw or suspend study

15. LAs will have the discretion to pay part-time dependants' grants until the end of the term in which the student has withdrawn from a course and, further, the discretion to pay part-time dependants' grants if a student is absent from their course.

Part-time grants for dependants

16. The part-time dependants' grants in 2013/14 under regulation 100 are:
- Part-time Adult Dependents' Grant; (PTADG)
 - Part-time Childcare Grant; (PTCCG) and
 - Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance. (PTPLA)

Definitions for part-time dependants' grants

17. For the purposes of grants for dependants under regulations 99-103, the following definitions apply (Regulation 105):
- 'Dependant' means, in relation to an eligible student, the student's partner, the student's dependent child or an adult dependant, who in each case is not an eligible student and does not hold a statutory award;
 - 'Partner' means any of the following:
 - i. the spouse or civil partner of an eligible student;
 - ii. the co-habiting opposite sex partner for a student who is aged 25 or over on the first day of the relevant year of a course that began on or after 1 September 2000 (excluding courses taken end-on to a course that started before 1 September 2000);
 - iii. the co-habiting same sex partner for a student who is aged 25 or over on the first day of the relevant year of a course that began on or after 1 September 2005 (excluding courses taken end-on to a course that started before 1 September 2005).

The definition of a partner does not include a partner of the student where the LA

considers they have separated (in the case of a married student or a student in a civil partnership). This definition also does not include a partner who is ordinarily living outside the United Kingdom and is not maintained by the student.

- 'Adult dependant' means, in relation to an eligible student, an adult person who is dependent on the student, other than the student's child, partner (including a spouse or civil partner from whom the LA considers the student is separated) or former partner;
- 'Child', in relation to an eligible student, includes any child of the student's partner who is dependent on the student and any child for whom the student has parental responsibility and is dependent on the student;
- 'Dependent' means wholly or mainly financially dependent;
- 'Dependent child' means, in relation to an eligible student, a child dependent on the student.

18. A child or adult person can be considered to be 'dependent' on an eligible student if:
- (a) he or she is wholly or mainly financially dependent on the eligible student alone;
or
 - (b) he or she is wholly or mainly financially dependent on the eligible student and their partner together (i.e. where the child or adult person is equally financially dependent on the eligible student and their partner who together are providing all or most of his financial support).
19. The definition of 'dependant' means that an eligible student aged under 25 is not eligible for a Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant in respect of a co-habiting partner. Since 2005/06, a student's same sex partner has fallen within the definition of a 'partner' rather than adult dependant. Part-time students under 25 with a dependent same sex partner are no longer eligible for a dependants' grant for that partner. This brings the treatment of same sex partners of students aged under 25 into line with opposite sex partners of students under 25 (regulation 105(1)(h)). The definition of 'dependant' also means that an eligible student will no longer be eligible for a Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant in respect of a dependent child or an adult dependant who is also an eligible student and who holds a statutory award (regulation 105(1)(c)).
20. The following table summarises when the cohabiting same sex partner or civil partner of a student is a dependant.

	Students who started their course before September 2005		Students who started their course in September 2005 or after	
	Cohabiting same sex partner (not in a civil partnership)	Civil partner	Cohabiting same sex partner (not in a civil partnership)	Civil Partner
Under 25 years old	X	✓	X	✓
Aged 25 years or over	X	✓	✓	✓

Determining where financial dependence lies

Students aged 25 or over (or under 25 if they are married or in a civil partnership)

21. We recommend that the dependants' grants means test is applied in all such cases to determine whether grants are payable.

Students aged under 25 with a child and living with a partner (including a same sex partner)

22. Where a student is under 25 and living with a partner, the partner is not a dependant of the student under regulation 105(1)(h). Therefore the partner's income should not then be used to assess the part-time dependants' grants under regulation 104. However, the income of the partner of a student under 25 should be considered for the purpose of deciding whether a child is mainly financially dependent on the student or the student and the student's partner together. This should be decided by comparing the estimated income that a student might have – maximum potential student support, the maximum applicable PTCCG, PTADG, PTPLA, plus any income from other sources – with the net income of the student's partner, except for any child tax credit. Any child tax credit received either by the student or their partner should be added to the student's estimated income.

Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant (regulation 101)

23. In 2013/14, the amount of Part-time Adult Dependants' Grant (PTADG) under regulation 101 is **£2,732** (prior to calculation under regulation 108) for one only of:
- an eligible student's partner (as defined in paragraph 20); or
 - an adult dependant of the student whose net income does not exceed **£3,923**.
24. The net income of a partner, whatever the amount, is always included in the dependants' grant income assessment because there is no maximum amount specified in regulation 101(2)(a) for a partner. A student is not eligible for a grant in respect of an adult dependant whose net income exceeds the maximum amount applicable and such dependants are not included in the dependants' grant income assessment. The income of a partner, a dependent child or an adult dependant any of whom is also a full-time eligible student or who holds a statutory award is not included in the income assessment.
25. There is no requirement for a student to apply separately for the PTADG. Provided they have indicated on the PTG1 form that they have a spouse/ dependent adult, there is no requirement for them to make any separate request to receive this grant (see also paragraph 92).

Student's partner is an eligible student or holds a statutory award (regulation 105(1)(c))

26. An eligible student may not claim the PTADG in respect of the student's partner, or for another adult dependant, if that partner or adult dependant is also a full-time eligible student or holds a statutory award. An eligible student who cannot apply for the PTADG in respect of his or her partner because the partner is also an eligible student or holds a statutory award can still apply for the PTADG in respect of an adult dependant instead.

Where an amount of PTADG is being calculated in respect of an adult dependant it is to be reduced by one half if the eligible student's partner is also an eligible student or holds a statutory award, and account is taken of the partner's dependants in calculating

the amount of support for which that partner qualifies or the payment to which that partner is entitled to under his or her statutory award.

Dependant ordinarily resident outside the United Kingdom

27. Where a student maintains a dependant who is ordinarily resident outside the United Kingdom, the LA has discretion to determine the basic amount of PTADG payable, if any, to a maximum of £2,732 (regulation 101(3)(b)).

Part-time Childcare Grant (regulation 102)

28. The Part-time Childcare Grant (PTCCG) broadly mirrors the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC) administered by HM Revenue & Customs. The PTCCG is available to students with dependent children (subject to income assessment) who incur "prescribed childcare charges". Prescribed childcare charges means childcare charges of a description prescribed for the purposes of section 12 of the Tax Credits Act 2002. In other words a charge incurred is a prescribed childcare charge if it is one that potentially attracts the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC).
29. The childcare element of WTC is payable in respect of registered or approved childcare. The types of childcare that can potentially attract the childcare element of WTC, and therefore also potentially attract the PTCCG, are set out at paragraph 36.
30. The PTCCG also broadly mirrors the childcare element of WTC in circumstances where the registered or approved childcare provider is a relative of the child or the childcare is considered to be compulsory education (see paragraphs 46 - 49).
31. Students who are potentially eligible for the PTCCG are:
- lone parents;
 - student couples with children; and
 - student parents with partners, including partners with income. (Entitlement is subject to the level income and the amount of childcare costs).
32. The PTCCG is available in respect of an academic year in which the student incurs prescribed childcare charges for:
- a dependent child who is under the age of 15 immediately before the beginning of the academic year; or
 - a dependent child who has special educational needs within the meaning of section 312 of the Education Act 1996 and is under the age of 17 immediately before the beginning of the academic year.
33. A child with special educational needs within the meaning of the Education Act 1996 is a child who has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A learning difficulty is defined in the Act as a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age or a disability that prevents or hinders a child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of their age in schools within the LA's area.
34. The definition of 'dependant' given at paragraph 17 (regulation 105) also applies to the PTCCG).
35. The PTCCG is not counted as income by Jobcentre Plus or local authority Housing Benefit sections, when assessing a student's entitlement to income related benefits.

Qualifying childcare in Wales

36. A Welsh domiciled student who incurs charges for the following types of childcare in Wales is potentially eligible for the PTCCG.
- Care provided by Registered childcare including childminders, nurseries, playgroups, children's centres and holiday play schemes for children aged under eight. Only childcare for children under eight has to be registered, but children aged eight and over who are in childcare that is also for children under eight years are also eligible for the grant because they are attending registered childcare childminders. Nurseries and play schemes registered by the National Assembly for Wales through the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW). A registration number will be supplied and the carer is required to display their registration certificate on the premises.
 - Out-of-school hours clubs provided by a school on school premises or by a local authority. Some schools provide day care for very young children and for children outside normal school hours. PTCCG may be paid for this type of childcare as long as the school is registered as a day care provider by CSSIW.
 - Childcare provided in the child's own home by a domiciliary care worker or nurse from an agency registered by CSSIW.
 - Care provided by an approved foster carer (the care must be for a child who is not being fostered by the foster carer).
 - The PTCCG may also be available for a nanny or childcarer registered under the Childcare Approval Scheme Wales providing care in the student's home or other domestic premises.

Qualifying childcare in England

37. A Welsh domiciled student who incurs charges for the following types of Ofsted Registered childcare in England is potentially eligible for the PTCCG.
38. From September 2008, childcare providers who care for children aged under eight in England are no longer registered under the Children Act 1989, but are instead registered under the Childcare Act 2006. Ofsted operates two registers; the Early Years Register (EYR), which is compulsory for most childcare providers who care for children up to the end of the foundation stage (31st August after the child's fifth birthday) and the General Childcare Register (GCR), which is compulsory for most childcare providers who care for children from the end of the foundation stage to seven.
39. Childcare providers who care for children aged eight and over, or who provide activity based care, or care in the child's own home for children of any age, **are not required to be registered by Ofsted**. However since April 2007 they have been able to apply to be registered on the voluntary part of General Childcare Register. Childcare offered by a provider on the voluntary part of the General Childcare Register counts as qualifying childcare for the purposes of the Childcare Grant.
40. Registered childcare providers can include registered childminders, nurseries, play groups, children's centres, holiday play schemes, sports, arts or language clubs and nannies. Registration requires providers to demonstrate that the premises, people and provision are all suitable for the delivery of childcare. All childcare providers registered by Ofsted have a registration number and are required to display their registration certificate on the premises.

Additional qualifying childcare in England

41. A Welsh domiciled student who incurs charges for the following types of childcare in England which are currently eligible for Working Tax Credit (WTC) purposes will also potentially be eligible for the PTCCG:
- Childcare that takes place on school premises or on other premises that may be inspected as part of an inspection of a school by OFSTED, or by the equivalent inspection body appointed by the Secretary of State to inspect certain independent schools:
 - o Childcare provided for children aged under **five** must be on the Ofsted Early Years Register.
 - o Childcare provided for children aged five or over must be out of school hours.
 - o If the child's school uses an external childcare provider, they must be on the Ofsted register appropriate to the child's age.
 - Childcare provided in the child's own home by a domiciliary care worker or nurse from an agency "registered" with the Care Quality Commission (under the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002).
 - Care provided by an approved foster carer (the care must be for a child who is not being fostered by the foster carer) who is also registered with Ofsted either on the EYR or the GCR. (please note 'an approved foster carer' under the Fostering Services Regulations does not replace the requirement for foster carers who look after children, who are not their foster children, to register with Ofsted as a childcare provider on either the EYR or the GCR. This is in line with the tax credits legislation which provides support for childcare costs only in circumstances where the foster carer is registered with Ofsted.

Qualifying childcare in Scotland

42. A Welsh domiciled student who incurs charges for the following type of childcare in Scotland which is currently eligible for WTC purposes, will also potentially be eligible for the PTCCG.
- Care provided by childminders, nurseries and play schemes registered by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care.
 - Out-of-school hours clubs 'registered' by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care.
 - Care provided by an approved foster carer or a kinship carer, but the childcare must be for a child who is not being fostered by the foster carer. The foster carer must be registered with the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care as a childminder or a daycare provider.
 - Childcare provided in the child's own home by (or introduced through) childcare agencies, including sitter services and nanny agencies registered by the Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care.

Qualifying childcare in Northern Ireland

43. A Welsh-domiciled student who incurs charges for the following type of childcare in Northern Ireland which is currently eligible for WTC purposes, will also potentially be eligible for the PTCCG.
- Care provided by childminders, nurseries and play schemes registered by a Health and Social Services Trust.
 - Out-of-school hours clubs provided by a school on the school premises or by an Education and Library Board or 'registered' by the Health and Social Services Trust.
 - Care provided by an approved foster carer, - but the care must be for a child who is not being fostered by the foster carer. The foster carer must be registered with the Health and Social Services Trust if the child is under the age of 12, or approved under the Approval of Home Child Care Providers (Northern Ireland) Scheme, if the care is in the child's home and the child is under the age of 16.
 - Childcare provided in the child's own home by a child carer approved under the Approval of Home Child Care Providers (Northern Ireland) 2006 Scheme.

Qualifying childcare outside the United Kingdom

44. Students attending an overseas institution as part of their course will not generally be eligible for a PTCCG to cover childcare costs incurred abroad. The only qualifying overseas childcare providers are those approved under the Ministry of Defence accreditation scheme, which is currently eligible for WTC purposes. The scheme approves providers who care for the children of personnel based overseas. Students requesting support for childcare provided abroad should be referred to their institution's Financial Contingency Fund.

Where the childcare provider becomes registered or approved

45. Some students may use a childcare provider who is not registered or approved but becomes registered or approved then at some stage during the academic year. In such instances, the PTCCG may only be paid from the point at which the provider's application for registration has been successful and their registration or approval confirmed.

Where the registered or approved childcare provider is the student's partner or a relative of the child

46. Childcare charges in respect of which an eligible student may qualify for the PTCCG will not include:
- charges incurred in respect of childcare provided by a relative of the child wholly or mainly in the child's home even if the relative is registered or approved;
 - charges incurred in respect of childcare provided by a relative of the child approved under the Childcare Approval Scheme Wales, CSSIW (or Childcare Approval Scheme in England or the Approval of Home Child Care Providers Scheme in Northern Ireland) wholly or mainly in the relative's home where the care is usually provided solely or mainly in respect of one or more children to whom the provider is a parent or relative;

- charges paid by the student to their partner in respect of childcare for the student's child or a child of the student's partner even if the partner is registered or approved.
47. A relative of the child means a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, brother or sister whether by blood, half-blood, marriage or affinity. Affinity means a person with a strong relationship to the child, for example someone in a parental position regarding their partner's children and includes step parents.
48. This broadly reflects the childcare element of WTC, that a person who is the parent or relative of a child, or who has parental responsibility for a child, is not generally acting as a child minder when looking after that child. The PTCCG is not intended to pay for care that any parent or relative of a child might be expected to provide.

Compulsory education charges

49. Childcare charges in respect of which an eligible student may qualify for the PTCCG will not include charges that are considered to be compulsory education charges. The PTCCG is not intended to pay for costs related to compulsory education (school fees, for example) which again reflects the WTC position.

Audit of Childcare Grant applications

50. There is presently no facility on the single system for LAs to identify a selection of PTCCG applications for audit. LAs should consider a sample check of applications, using a manual list of applicants, to confirm that the childcare provider is registered or approved. It would be advisable to conduct such checks after the grant has been paid to avoid delaying any payment of PTCCG. However, if there are doubts or concerns about a provider, it is recommended that such checks are carried out prior to payment. The number of applications selected for audit will depend on the number of applications received, but a sample check of 10-15% of applications would be appropriate. The checks should involve confirming that the provider is registered or approved, the student's child is being cared for by that provider, the amount of care provided and the cost of the care. The process should also include checking that childcare has been provided for the whole period for which the student has received a PTCCG and that the student has not received a PTCCG for a period when they have not paid for childcare or for a period covered by a free early learning place (refer to the form 'Application for help with childcare costs'). The Department expects LAs to pursue any application upon which there is a doubt about its veracity.
51. In carrying out the sample check, LAs will wish to confirm with the relevant body that the childcare provider detailed on the forms 'Application for childcare costs' and 'Confirmation of childcare payments' is registered or approved. Ofsted took over the registration of new providers and the regulation of existing providers from 1 September 2001. In carrying out their sample checks, LAs should contact their local Children's Information Services (CIS) in the first instance to check the registration status of a childcare provider. Ofsted supply CIS with updated information on childcare providers on a daily basis. This will enable CIS to maintain an up-to-date list of registered childcare providers and their registration status, i.e. whether their registration status is current, cancelled or suspended. In Wales the regulation of Childcare Services is the responsibility of Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).
52. When information is not easily forthcoming from CIS, or where there is concern or doubt about a provider's registration that the CIS cannot answer, LAs could contact the relevant Ofsted regional centre by calling the national help line on 0845 640 4040. The call will be automatically diverted to the closest regional centre.

Amounts of Part-time Childcare Grant

53. The amount of PTCCG payable is based on the actual childcare costs. The PTCCG pays 85% of the actual cost of registered or approved childcare on a pro-rated basis in accordance with intensity of part-time study (regulation 108). The maximum amounts of PTCCG payable are as follows.
- For one dependent child, 85% of the actual cost of registered or approved childcare, paying up to a maximum grant of **£161.50** per week (i.e. a maximum of 85% of £190 actual childcare costs) pro-rated based upon intensity of study. The maximum annual PTCCG for a student with one dependent child using childcare for the whole year is £8,398 (subject to pro rata calculations undertaken in regulation 108).
 - For two or more dependent children, 85% of the actual cost of registered or approved childcare, paying up to a maximum grant of **£274.55** per week (i.e. a maximum of 85% of £323 actual childcare costs) pro-rated based upon intensity of study. The maximum annual PTCCG for a student with two or more dependent children using childcare for the whole year is £14,276.60 (subject to pro rata calculations undertaken in regulation 108).
54. The PTCCG pays 85% of actual childcare costs, but the amount of weekly PTCCG paid should not exceed £161.50 per week for one child or £274.55 per week for two or more children.

These amounts are subject to a pro rata calculation undertaken at regulation 108. See also paragraph 89 for the part-time dependants' grant assessment.

Number of children in prescribed childcare	Total weekly cost of childcare	Total amount of PTCCG per week
Student A – 1 child	£90	£76.50 (85% of childcare costs) Pro-rated under regulation 108 in accordance with intensity of study level – student receives: Intensity of study 50-59% £38.25 Intensity of study 60-74% £45.90 Intensity of study 75% or more £57.38
Student B – 1 child	£200	£161.50 (as the PTCCG pays 85% of actual costs of up to £190 per week) Pro-rated under regulation 108 in accordance with intensity of study level – student receives: Intensity of study 50-59% £80.75 Intensity of study 60-74% £96.90 Intensity of study 75% or more £121.13

Number of children in prescribed childcare	Total weekly cost of childcare	Total amount of PTCCG per week
Student C – 2 children	£220	£187.00 (85% of the actual childcare costs) Pro-rated under regulation 108 in accordance with intensity of study level – student receives: Intensity of study 50-59% £93.50 Intensity of study 60-74% £112.20 Intensity of study 75% or more £140.25

Maximum PTCCG in the first and final week of the academic year

55. The system calculates childcare costs on a weekly basis. A week begins on a Monday and ends on a Sunday. This reflects the requirements of regulation 102(6). The Regulations provide for a maximum grant of £161.50 or £274.55 to be paid for each week (subject to pro rata calculations undertaken in regulation 108) i.e. Monday to Sunday. The final period of the academic year 2013/14 for which the PTCCG may be paid is a full week (ending on Sunday 31st August 2014), so the maximum PTCCG will be paid for the week ending 31st August 2014.
56. Where the final week of an academic year is less than seven days (i.e. where it ends on a day which is not a Sunday) the system will pro-rata the appropriate maximum weekly PTCCG payable for this week only. This is done so that the maximum PTCCG is not applied to days which fall outside the academic year. LAs should note that there is no requirement to pro rata the maximum PTCCG payable in other weeks of the academic year even if a student uses childcare for part of a week (subject to pro rata calculations undertaken in regulation 108).

PTCCG and retainer fees paid to childcare providers

57. Some childcare providers request a retainer fee to be paid by the student to retain a childcare place for the following term or academic year, even if the student is not using childcare for the period. As a retainer fee is part of childcare costs, the PTCCG may be used to pay for retainer fees charged by childcare providers. Childcare providers usually include the cost of meals they provide in their overall childcare cost. If a childcare provider makes a separate charge for the meals they provide during the periods of childcare, these may be paid as part of the PTCCG.

Assessing PTCCG where the student's partner is an eligible student

58. The amount of PTCCG is reduced by one half if the eligible student's partner is an eligible part-time student (qualifies for support for a designated course) or holds a statutory award (see definition of statutory award) and account has been taken of the partner's dependants when calculating the partner's support or statutory award (regulation 104(6)).

LAs should where appropriate use their discretion in awarding PTCCG to ensure that households with two eligible students are not disadvantaged e.g.

- **Where a household contains eligible full and part-time students it would usually be more beneficial for the full-time student to claim PTCCG solely.**
- **In addition, in a household which contains eligible students of varying intensity levels it would usually be more beneficial for the student with the higher intensity of study level to claim PTCCG solely.**

Periods covered by the PTCCG

59. The grant for childcare costs can be paid from the first day of the academic year, provided that the student, whether a first year student or a continuing student, incurs childcare costs for the period from the beginning of the academic year. An illustrative example of the payments of the PTCCG over the academic year is shown in the following table. In this example the first day of term is taken to be 1st October and assumes the student pays for childcare every week during the academic year.

1 September 2013 – 6 July 2014	7 July 2014 – 31 August 2014 (long vacation)
85% of childcare costs for 43 weeks	85% of childcare costs for 9 weeks

60. The example above is based on a student claiming PTCCG for the long vacation and whose academic year begins on 1 September 2013. The PTCCG payments start on 1 September even though the first day of term one is 1 October 2013. The PTCCG in respect of the months of July and August 2014 is paid in advance with the third instalment of support. The grant for childcare costs incurred in September 2014 is paid in arrears with the first instalment of support in the following academic year.

PTCCG for final year students

61. The PTCCG is not payable to final year students for the period between the end of the course and the end of the academic year in which the course ends (regulation 102(5)). An illustrative example of the PTCCG payments to final year students over the academic year is shown in the table below. In this example the first day of term is taken to be 1 October 2013 and the final term of the course ends on 4 July 2014. The illustration assumes the student pays for childcare each week in the period given.

1 September 2013 – 6 July 2014
85% of weekly childcare costs for each week childcare is used

Students who have a partner with income

62. Some students with a partner in receipt of income may still receive a PTCCG but this depends upon the number of dependent children, the cost of the childcare, and the number of weeks that the childcare is used, as well as the level of the income of the partner (if treated as a dependant under regulation 101(2)(a)).

PTCCG, early years education and free childcare

63. Students cannot receive Part-time Childcare Grant for any childcare that is provided free of charge and should only include in their applications, childcare for which they have to pay a childcare provider.
64. Additionally, all three and four year olds have been able to access a free, part-time early learning place since April 2004. Data from the January 2007 census confirmed that around 96% of three year olds and virtually all four year olds are now benefiting

from some form of free provision. The free minimum entitlement consists of twelve and a half hours per week of early learning over 38 weeks a year. From September 2010 the free entitlement was increased to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, and access made more flexible. Parents may arrange the early learning place entitlement to suit the needs of their children depending on the ability of the provider to deliver.

65. Local Authorities will provide funding to the early learning providers to enable them to make free places available to eligible children. Therefore, our advice is that the higher education PTCCG cannot be paid for a period covered by a free early learning place. The Code of Practice on the provision of free nursery education places for three and four year olds makes clear that early learning place providers should not charge parents up-front for an early learning place to be refunded at a later date.
66. However, providers can charge for services provided outside of the free entitlement – this is a private matter between parents and providers. These services usually take place before and/or after the early learning place and is sometimes referred to as wrap around or out of school care. The PTCCG may be paid to cover the cost of childcare charged to the student as long as the provider is registered or approved. Students should only include in their applications childcare for which they have to pay a childcare provider. If they include a free early learning place in their application, providers will be unable to confirm that the student has made payments.

PTCCG, Child Tax Credit and the Childcare Element of Working Tax credits

67. Child Tax Credit (CTC) is administered by Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and provides income-related support for families with children. Students with children are entitled to make a claim. It is paid directly into the bank account of the person in the family who is mainly responsible for looking after the children. A person does not have to be in paid work to receive CTC. As long as they are 16 or over and responsible for one or more children, or a young person under age 20 in relevant education or approved training, they may be able to claim CTC. A person may qualify for a higher rate if they have a child under one or a child with a disability. If a student receives CTC, this does not affect their entitlement to the PTCCG.
68. Working Tax Credit (WTC) tops up the earnings of low paid working people whether or not they have children, and is made up of several elements, for example a disability element, a childcare element (i.e. the childcare element of Working Tax Credit) etc. A student cannot receive Childcare Grant at the same time as receiving the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. (Other elements of WTC do not preclude a student from claiming Childcare Grant.)
69. The childcare element of WTC can meet up to 70% of the cost of registered or approved childcare up to a maximum cost of £175 a week for families who pay childcare for one child and £300 a week for families who pay childcare for two children or more. The maximum amount of childcare element of WTC someone could have is £140 a week for one child or £240 a week for two or more children, although the actual amount a family receives in childcare element of WTC is subject to the family's gross income.
70. To qualify for the childcare element of WTC a lone parent must work at least 16 hours a week. If you're a couple, your joint paid working hours need to be at least 24 hours a week with one working at least 16 hours a week. So if you're a couple and only one of you is working, that person will need to work at least 24 hours a week (unless one member of the couple is disabled or incapacitated, i.e. as an in-patient in hospital or in prison then the other partner must work at least 16 hours a week. Students who satisfy the entitlement rules for the childcare element of WTC can choose either to claim the childcare element of WTC or the PTCCG. They cannot claim the childcare element of WTC childcare element if they or their partner are also receiving the PTCCG.

71. Similarly regulation 102(3) of the Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2012 provides that an eligible student shall not be eligible for a PTCCG if the eligible student or their partner has elected to receive the childcare element of WTC. This provision reflects the policy intention that an eligible student should not receive childcare support from the PTCCG and the childcare element of WTC at the same time.
72. If a student indicates that they or their spouse/ partner are in receipt of an award from the WTC and applies for a PTCCG under the Student Support Regulations, LAs may also consider using their powers under Schedule 3 to request evidence to confirm that the eligible student's or their partner's WTC award does not include the childcare element of WTC. This should involve requesting that the eligible student produces a WTC award notification that should indicate if the student or their partner is in receipt of the WTC childcare element. If the student or partner is not in receipt of the childcare element of WTC there will be no mention of it in the WTC award notice. This information should also help LAs determine the start/termination dates for PTCCG payments.
73. It is possible that a student or their partner's circumstances may change resulting in a request to receive the PTCCG instead of the WTC childcare element, or vice versa. There is no statutory bar within the Student Support Regulations or the Tax Credit Act preventing a student from changing the source of their childcare support. If they are receiving the WTC childcare element and they wish to change over to the PTCCG they should notify the Tax Credit Office and give the date when they want the WTC childcare element to cease. This should be the day before the PTCCG comes into payment. Parents will be issued with a new awards notice which can be used as evidence that the WTC award no longer includes the WTC childcare element.
74. LAs are asked to accept a declaration from the student confirming that the student or their spouse/partner is no longer in receipt of childcare support through WTC in order to prevent unnecessary delays in payment of the PTCCG. This declaration must be subsequently confirmed. Students may be assessed for a PTCCG from the first day after their last payment of the childcare element of WTC.
75. For more information on tax credits:
 - visit <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/individuals/tmatax-credits.shtml>;
 - call the Tax Credits Helpline (telephone 0845 300 3900); or
 - call the nearest HMRC Enquiry Centre (listed under 'HM Revenue & Customs' in the telephone directory).

Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance (Regulation 103)

76. A Part-time Parents' Learning Allowance (PTPLA) of up to **£1,557**, subject to income assessment and the pro-rated calculation under regulation 108, is available to students with one or more dependent children regardless of the age of the children. It can be paid whether or not student parents use registered or approved childcare.
77. The PTPLA is intended to cover some of the additional costs incurred by students with dependent children, such as higher travel costs, and books and equipment needed for the course. PTPLA is not treated as income when students are assessed for income-related benefits, including Housing Benefit.
78. There is no requirement for a student to apply separately for the PTPLA. Provided they have indicated on the PTG1 form that they have dependent children, there is no requirement for them to make any separate request to receive this grant.
79. Subject to an assessment of income, the PTPLA will be paid to:

- a) Part-time students with dependent children who are assessed to receive at least £1 of PTCCG and/or £1 of PTADG. Such students are entitled to receive the full amount of PLA (£1,557) pro-rated in accordance with regulation 108.
 - b) Part-time students with dependent children who are eligible in principle for the PTADG and/or the PTCCG but are not entitled to receive any payments of those grants because the income of their dependants is sufficiently high to offset them. After applying the dependants' net income against the PTADG and the PTCCG, any remaining income is set against the PTPLA on a £ for £ basis;
 - c) Part-time students with dependent children who have no adult dependants and are not eligible for the PTCCG because they are not using registered or approved childcare. Dependants' net income is set against the PTPLA on a £ for £ basis.
80. If the aggregate amount of PTPLA determined is between £1 and £49 then the student will be entitled to a minimum amount of PTPLA payable of £50 (regulation 104(7)).
81. Where the eligible student has a partner who is also an eligible student and a dependent child who is wholly or mainly financially dependent on him and his partner together, the student and the partner may each receive the amount of PTPLA due after the application of the dependants' grant income assessment. The PTPLA entitlement should not be divided between the eligible students.

The part-time dependants' grant income assessment

Assessment of dependants' income

82. Information provided by the student on the PTG1 form is used by the LA to determine the amount of PTCCG, PTADG and PTPLA due.
83. To determine a student's eligibility for part-time dependants' grants it is necessary to calculate the dependants' net income, including income from the Working Tax Credit. Regulation 105(6) provides that a dependant's net income is his income from all sources for the academic year after income tax and social security contributions have been deducted. The following sources of income are disregarded under regulation 105(6):
- Any pension, allowance or other benefit paid by reason of a disability or incapacity to which the dependant is subject;
 - Child benefit payable under Part IX of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992;
 - Any financial support payable to a dependant by a local authority in accordance with regulations made under sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002;
 - Any guardian's allowance to which the dependant is entitled under section 77 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992;
 - In the case of a dependant with whom a child being looked after by a local authority is boarded out, any payment made to that dependant in pursuance of section 23 of the Children Act 1989;
 - Any payment made to the dependant under section 23C(5A) of the Children Act 1989;
 - Any payments made to the dependant under section 15 of and Schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989 in respect of a person who is not the dependant's child or any assistance given by a local authority pursuant to section 24 of that Act (such payments are commonly known as a residence order allowance);
 - Any child tax credit to which the dependant is entitled under Part I of the Tax Credits Act 2002.

84. Where the student receives maintenance payments under an agreement that expressly or implicitly requires that these payments are to be applied for the benefit of the student's child, this income should be treated as the child's income and taken into account in the dependants' grant income assessment. This might include maintenance payments received by the student under a court order, through the CSA or by way of a voluntary agreement.

Financial obligations incurred before the start of the course (Regulation 105(7))

85. Regulation 105(7) allows recurrent payments made by the student or the student's partner in respect of obligations incurred by the student before the start of the course to be deducted from the partner's net income where such obligations were reasonably incurred, LAs have agreed to the following obligations:
- Mortgage Payments
 - Mortgage Protection
 - Maintenance Payments
 - Rent
 - Council Tax
 - Life Insurance
 - Home Insurance
 - Home Improvement Loans
 - Endowments
86. However, LAs have the discretion to decide which types of recurrent payment to deduct, and this list is not binding but intended purely as a guideline as to what might be regarded as permissible items. If an LA considers that a lesser obligation could reasonably have been incurred in the circumstances, a correspondingly lesser sum may be disregarded. Where a partner is making payments in respect of an obligation for which payments are shared by the partner and the student, the full obligation (i.e. the amount being incurred by the student and the amount being incurred by the partner) should be taken into account.

Applying the dependants' income

87. The dependants' aggregated net income for the academic year less one of the following applicable thresholds (regulation 104(2)):
- **£1,159** for a student with no dependent children;
 - **£3,473** for a couple with one child;
 - **£4,632** for a couple with two or more children;
 - **£4,632** for a lone parent with one child;
 - **£5,797** for a lone parent with two or more children;
- reduces the student's entitlement to dependants' grants where applicable £ for £ in the following order (regulation 104(1)):
1. Adult Dependants' Grant;
 2. Childcare Grant; and
 3. Parents' Learning Allowance.
88. The dependants' aggregated net income less the applicable threshold is first applied to the PTADG (if applicable). Any remaining income is then applied to the PTCCG (if applicable) and any remaining income is then applied to the PTPLA (if applicable). If the net income (less the relevant threshold applied) exceeds or equals the aggregate of the basic amounts of the grants for dependants, the amount payable for grants for dependants is nil (regulation 104(4)).

Calculation of Part-time Dependants' Grant

89. The total amount of dependants' grants payable under regulation 104 is subject to the main income assessment at regulation 107 and pro-rated based upon intensity of study at regulation 108 and must be calculated as follows.

Regulation 104 - Initial calculations.

Regulation 107 – Application of contribution (calculated under schedule 6)

Regulation 108 – Final calculation

N.B. Failure to apply these calculations in the correct order will result in an incorrect student assessment.

Example 1

Student A has a spouse/civil partner with net income (after deductions and/or obligations) of £3,070 and two children under 15 with net income of £1,125 each. The childcare costs are £150 per week for the whole of the academic year.

Step 1: Establish dependants' net income.

Dependants	Income
Spouse/Civil Partner	£3,070
Child 1	£1,125
Child 2	£1,125
A. Total dependants' income	£5,320

Step 2: Choose the threshold which applies to the student's circumstances (regulation 104(2)).

Student's circumstances	Applicable threshold
B. 2 parents and 2 children	£4,632

Step 3: Calculate the dependants' residual income

A. Total dependants' income	£5,320
B. Applicable threshold	£4,632
Dependants' residual income (A - B)	£688

Step 4: Add together all the dependants' grants the student may be eligible to receive.

Grant	Amount
PTADG	£2,732
PTCCG (85% of actual costs - 52 x £127.50)	£6,630
PTPLA	£1,557
Total	£10,919

Step 5: Calculate the amounts of dependants' grants to be paid

A. Total dependants' grants	£10,919
B. Dependants' residual income	£688
Amount of dependants' grant to be paid (A - B)	£10,231

Step 6: Breakdown of individual dependants' grants to be paid.

Grant	Amount
PTADG (full grant reduced by contribution of £688)	£2,044
PTCCG (85% of actual costs - 52 x £127.50)	£6,630
PTPLA	£1,557
Total part-time dependants' grant paid	£10,231

Step 7 (regulation 107)

Determine the contribution payable under **Schedule 6 Financial Assessment – Part-Time Grants for Dependants**

Assessments will be calculated as follows:

Household income **£39,778 or less:** no contribution

Household income of **more than £39,778:**
contribution of £1 for each additional £8.97 of household income

The maximum contribution is £6,208. In calculating the household income.

See table Annex 3

Any assessed contribution will be applied in order to

**PTADG
PTCCG
PTPLA**

With total household income assessed at £5,320, student A has no contribution to be applied.

Step 8 (regulation 108)

Payment of the part-time dependants' grants will be made based upon intensity of study as follows.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 50-59% will receive 50% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 60-74% will receive 60% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 75% or more will receive 75% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Student A is studying at an intensity of 50%, therefore the amounts payable for part-time dependants' grants will be:

PTADG	£1,022.00
PTCCG	£3,315
PTPLA	£778.50
Total Grant	£5,115.50

Example 2

Student has a spouse/civil partner with net income (after deductions and/or obligations) of £10,850 and one child under 15 with no net income. The childcare costs are £115 per week for the whole of the academic year.

Step 1: Establish dependants' net income.

Dependants	Income
Spouse/Civil Partner	£10,850
Child 1	£0
A. Total dependants' income	£10,850

Step 2: Choose the threshold which applies to the student's circumstances (regulation 104(2)).

Student's circumstances	Applicable threshold
B. 2 parents and 1 child	£3,473

Step 3: Calculate the dependants' residual income

A. Total dependants' income	£10,850
B. Applicable threshold	£3,473
Dependants' residual income (A - B)	£7,377

Step 4: Add together all the dependants' grants the student may be eligible to receive.

Grant	Amount
PTADG	£2,732
PTCCG (85% of actual costs - 52 x £97.75)	£5,083
PTPLA	£1,557
Total	£9,372

Step 5: Calculate the amounts of dependants' grants to be paid

A. Total dependants' grants	£9,372
B. Dependants' residual income	£7,377
Amount of dependants' grant to be paid (A - B)	£1,995

Step 6: Breakdown of individual dependants' grants to be paid.

Grant	Amount
PTADG (full grant reduced by contribution of £2,732)	£0
PTCCG (85% of actual costs - 52 x £127.50), reduced by contribution of £4,730	£438
PTPLA	£1,557
Total part-time dependants' grant paid	£1,995

Step 7 (regulation 107)

Determine the contribution payable under **Schedule 6 Financial Assessment – Part-Time Grants for Dependants**

Assessments will be calculated as follows:

Household income **£39,778 or less**: no contribution

Household income of **more than £39,778**:
contribution of £1 for each additional £8.97 of household income

The maximum contribution is £6,208. In calculating the household income,

See table Annex 3

Any assessed contribution will be applied in order to

PTADG
PTCCG
PTPLA

With total household income assessed at £10,850 student A has no contribution to be applied.

Step 8 (regulation 108)

Payment of the part-time dependants' grants will be made based upon intensity of study as follows.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 50-59% will receive 50% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 60-74% will receive 60% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Part-time students studying at an intensity level of 75% or more will receive 75% of the calculated part-time grants for dependants.

Student A is studying at an intensity of 75%, therefore the amounts payable for part-time dependants' grants will be:

PTADG	£0
PTCCG	£328.50
PTPLA	£1167.75
Total Grant	£1496.25

N.B. Calculations under schedule 6 will include any student income earned during the academic year – this does not follow the calculation for full-time students.

Payment of part-time grants for dependants

90. Dependants' grants are paid in three instalments, each instalment being paid in the three quarters of the academic year that do not include the longest vacation. Where the first instalment of grant is paid in the first quarter of an academic year, the grant is payable in three instalments of 33% for the first quarter, 33% for the second quarter and 34% for the third quarter. Where the first instalment of grant is paid in the second quarter, it is paid in two instalments of 66% and 34% and where the first instalment is paid in the third quarter, the whole amount of grant for the academic year is paid in one instalment.

The number of dependants changes in an academic year

91. The number of a student's dependants may change during an academic year. When this occurs, the LA is responsible for determining who the student's dependants are for

each of the three quarters for which the grant is payable (regulation 104(9)). The dependants' grants should be reassessed on a pro rata basis from the date the number of dependants changes.

92. The amount of grant for each quarter so determined is one third of the grant for the academic year, bearing in mind the 33%, 33%, 34% split described above. The amount of dependants' grant for the academic year is the aggregate of the amount of grant calculated for each of the three quarters (regulation 104(10)).

Administration

Administering Part-time Childcare Grant (PTCCG) applications

93. LAs should also refer to the guidance on 'General Eligibility and Financial Assessment Administration' and the guidance chapter 'Change of Circumstances' which provides guidance on reassessments and stopping payments.
94. LAs need to assess an applicant's eligibility and entitlement to the PTCCG. The PTCCG and the PTPLA are paid to the most vulnerable students and therefore assessments should be carried out as early as possible.

Processing PTCCG applications on the single system

95. The single system now has the facility to calculate the amount of PTCCG to which a student is entitled. Using the information on the CCG1 form, the LA enters the weekly childcare costs for term-time weeks and non term-time weeks, along with any exceptions to these standard amounts on the Childcare Estimates screen. The system will first apply a pro-rata to any amounts falling in non Monday to Sunday weeks (normally this will be for the first and last weeks of the academic year). Where amounts are entered in the 'Exceptions' section, no pro rata is applied. The system will then apply the 85% calculation. The LA still has the facility to override the automatic assessment of Childcare Grant if it is deemed appropriate. Any manual override of the automatic Childcare Grant assessment should be fully explained on the system Notes facility to assist other staff when dealing with student enquiries.
96. If the student receives a Childcare Grant the assessment should be provisional until all their childcare costs for the academic year have been evidenced and the student's entitlement checked accordingly. At that point the entitlement may be finalised. This may only be possible at the start of the next academic year if childcare is required for the long vacation.
97. LAs should also consult the guidance chapter 'Change of Circumstances'. LA assessors should indicate that the assessment is provisional in one of two ways:
- by selecting the Provisional flag on the Validate Evidence screen; or
 - in SFA or SC cases, by selecting the Childcare Grant drop-down menu at the bottom of the screen and selecting the 'provisional' option.
98. Where the LA assessor chooses to enter a manual override of the Childcare Grant they should use the system Notes facility to detail the basis of the calculation or reasons for the override. This should assist other LA staff and SLC Customer Services Officers when dealing with any student enquiries.
99. Annex 1 includes a summary timetable showing what actions LAs should take during the course of the academic year.

Informing students of the breakdown of dependants' grants

100. The financial notification letter produced under the single system details the breakdown of the various elements of the grants for dependants'. Students should be advised to show the financial notification letter to their institutions when applying for discretionary support from the Access to Learning Fund and to Job Centre Plus and/or the local authority Housing Benefit section if applying for income related benefits.

Childcare Grant leaflets and forms

101. LAs will be sent supplies of the forms 'Application for help with childcare costs for part-time students' (PTCCG1) and 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' (PTCCG2). Where a student indicates on the PTG1 form that they would like information on receiving the Childcare Grant, the LA user should raise a task 'Send Information Pack' see Annex 2. This task is to be dealt with by the LA. The information pack should be sent to the student for them to complete and return to the LA.

Form 'Application for help with childcare costs'

102. The student should apply for a Childcare Grant by completing a form 'Application for help with childcare costs for part-time students' (PTCCG1) and sending it to their LA. The applicant may provide an estimate of their likely childcare costs on their application form given that they are unlikely to be aware of their childcare requirements at the time of application. The applicant should be assessed on the basis of the estimated childcare costs provided on the PTCCG1.

Confirmation that a childcare provider is registered or approved

103. Childcare providers are asked to complete Section 2 of the PTCCG1 confirming they are either a registered or approved provider. However, if a student has not found a childcare provider at the time of their application, Section 2 of the PTCCG1 may be left blank and a Childcare Grant may still be paid. The student will need to provide confirmation they are using a registered or approved childcare provider when they provide confirmation of their payments made to a childcare provider in the middle of term 1, using the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time' (PTCCG2). On receipt of this form, the LA will need to assess whether they need to complete a reassessment of grant for the applicant.

Student does not return form 'Application for help with childcare costs'

104. If a student does not return the PTCCG1, but has a dependent child, the LA should assess the student's entitlement to the PLA grant. If the applicant subsequently sends a PTCCG1 at least three months before the end of the academic year the LA will need to carry out and send a revised assessment.

Students who return form 'Application for help with childcare costs'

105. LAs who receive a PTCCG1 should consider the student's entitlement for the PLA and Childcare Grant. The LAs should base their assessments on the amounts the applicant has stated on the childcare application form, subject to the limits set out in The Education (Student Support) (Wales) Regulations 2012.

Confirmation of payments made to a childcare provider

106. Students are requested to provide evidence of payments made to their childcare provider on a termly basis, using form PTCCG2. Students are required to complete Section 1 of the form and then arrange for their childcare provider to complete Sections 2 and 3, confirming the payments received from the student each week

during the period. Applicants must send a separate PTCCG2 to their LA by each of the following dates:

- **1 November 2013** – this form should confirm payments made each week between **1 September 2013 and 20 October 2013**.
- **31 January 2014** – this form should confirm payments made each week between **21 October 2013 and 19 January 2014**.
- **12 September 2014** - this form should confirm payments made each week between **20 January 2014 and 31 August 2014**. It is recommended that students in the final year of their courses and students not using childcare during their long vacations are requested to return their PTCCG2 by **18 July 2014**.

107. If the applicant indicates in Section 4 of the PTCCG2 that their weekly childcare costs will change during the rest of the year, the LA should reassess the applicant's entitlement, and include the estimated childcare costs for the long vacation in the third instalment of grant. The applicant will need to confirm these costs at the beginning of the following academic year. If the applicant is uncertain whether they will need childcare for the long vacation, the LA can carry out a reassessment to include the long holiday period at a later date. If the reassessment is completed after the third instalment, the SLC will make an additional payment for the extra amount to the applicant via BACS, automatically.

Monitoring returns of 'Confirmation of childcare costs' forms

108. Currently, there is no facility (other than Notes) on the system to indicate that the Childcare Grant is provisional pending receipt of a completed (PTCCG2) for Term 1, Term 2 and Term 3 and the long vacation. The system is able to provide a list of students in receipt of Childcare Grants. LAs should use the Notes facility on the single system to record when reminders are sent out. This will assist LAs and SLC Customer Service Officers when dealing with student enquiries. There is also no suite of Childcare Grant letters on the single system although LAs have worked with the Assembly Government to produce a standard suit of letters which should be produced locally, updating student support system records to show where this has been done. Agreed text is provided at Annex 2.

Student does not send confirmation of registered or approved childcare

109. Most students include details of their childcare provider at the time of their Childcare Grant application. However, if the student does not include details of their childcare provider on their application form and then does not provide confirmation of the registered or approved childcare being used on the PTCCG2 form confirming childcare payments for their first term, the LA should send a reminder letter to the applicant. If the LA does not receive confirmation, the LA should reassess the applicant's entitlement to support as necessary, removing the Childcare Grant (payment of the PLA should continue). If the LA cannot complete this reassessment by the middle of December then they should stop all future payments of grant. The LA should then carry out a revised financial assessment showing the amount of grant that the LA knows that the applicant is entitled to and send this to the applicant and the SLC. This reassessment should be completed as soon as possible so that the student continues to receive any other payment of grant they are entitled to. The SLC will then deduct the amount of grant the applicant has already received from the amount of grant shown on the latest assessment and pay the outstanding amount in two payments. If a student then provides confirmation of their childcare provision, LAs have the discretion to reinstate the Childcare Grant, depending on the student's reasons for failing to produce the evidence by the original deadline.

Student does not send confirmation of childcare payments

110. Students should send evidence of payments made to a childcare provider on form PTCCG2 by each of the dates in paragraph 108 above. LAs should consider sending reminder letters to the student in advance of these dates (see Annex 2). The dates for confirming childcare payments have been selected to allow LAs time to make any adjustments to the next Childcare Grant instalment if the student has under or overestimated their childcare costs at the beginning of the year. There is also a greater incentive for students to return their form by the required dates given that their next Childcare Grant instalment will not be paid unless a completed PTCCG2 has been returned to the LA.
111. If a student has not returned their form PTCCG2 by the required dates, LAs should send a reminder letter advising that if the form is not received the student will lose their Childcare Grant and arrangements will be made to recover the Childcare Grant monies already paid (see Annex 2). If the applicant fails to confirm their childcare payments, the LA should reassess their entitlement to support as necessary, removing the Childcare Grant (payment of PLA should continue) and send a revised and finalised assessment showing the amounts that the LA knows the applicant is entitled to receive. The assessment should be completed as soon as possible so that the applicant continues to receive any other payments of grant they are entitled to receive. LAs should take account of specific applicants' circumstances in deciding whether to remove the Childcare Grant entitlement if evidence is not received. If a student then provides confirmation of their childcare costs, LAs have the discretion to reinstate the Childcare Grant, depending on the student's reasons for failing to produce the evidence by the original deadline.

Finalising assessments in 2013/14

Students not in receipt of a PT Childcare Grant during their longest vacation

112. Once a student has confirmed their actual childcare costs for the final term of academic year 2013/14 and indicated they will not require a Childcare Grant for their longest vacation, the student should be reassessed and a revised support notification for 2013/14 to show that the assessment is now final.

Students in receipt of a PT Childcare Grant during the longest vacation

113. Most academic years begin on 1 September and the longest vacation is the summer vacation. Childcare Grants for the longest vacation are paid up until 31 August, the payment covering the months of July and August. Childcare Grants in respect of September are paid with the first instalment of the following academic year's Childcare Grant.
114. If a student receives a Childcare Grant for the longest vacation they need to confirm their actual childcare costs by 12 September 2014, just after the start of the 2014/15 academic year.

Underpayments and overpayments of PT Childcare Grants

115. SLC will identify any overpayments from the revised 2013/14 notifications and deduct the overpayment from the 2014/15 grants. If a student's Childcare Grant has been underpaid in 2013/14, SLC will pay the outstanding amount. If the SLC receive a reassessment after the third instalment has been paid, the balance will be made to the student as opposed to adding the outstanding balance onto the following year's grant.

Annex 1

TIMETABLE FOR LAs

From March 2013 onwards	LAs to enclose the publications 'Childcare Grant and other support for student parents in higher education 2013/14 and the forms 'Application for help with childcare costs for part-time students' (PTCCG1) and 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' (PTCCG2) to students who have indicated they will incur childcare costs.
By 18 October 2013	Send a reminder letter to students. The letter will remind them they need to return the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' by 1 November 2013 .
By 8 November 2013	Send a 2nd reminder letter to students. The letter will remind them they need to return the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' or they will lose their Childcare Grant.
By 22 November 2013	LAs will need to reassess students as appropriate.
By 17 January 2014	Send a reminder letter to students. The letter will remind them they need to return the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' by 31 January 2014 .
By 7 February 2014	Send a 2nd reminder letter to students. The letter will remind them they need to return the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' or they will lose their Childcare Grant.
By 21 February 2014	LAs will need to reassess students as appropriate including childcare costs for the summer vacation.
By 4 July 2014 (or 22 August 2014 if receiving a Childcare Grant in the long vacation)	Send a reminder letter to students. The letter will remind them that they need to return the form 'Confirmation of childcare payments for part-time students' by 18 July 2014 (or 12 September 2014 if receiving a Childcare Grant in the long vacation).
By 18 July 2014 / 12 September 2014	Obtain confirmation of childcare costs for term 3 and the summer vacation. Finalise assessments for 2013/14 if a Childcare Grant was received.

Annex 2

(PTCC1)

PART-TIME CHILDCARE 2013/14

You recently indicated on PTG1 application form that you wished to claim the extra support available for student parents who have to pay for childcare.

I am enclosing the application form PTCCG1 - 'Application for Help with Childcare Costs for part-time students 2013/2014' and 3 PTCCG2 forms - Confirmation of Childcare Payments for part-time students 2013/14.

In order for me to determine your entitlement please do the following:-

- 1) Complete section 1 of form PTCCG1 with estimates of your weekly childcare costs for the period 01/09/2013 to 31/08/2014.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT OVERESTIMATE AS THIS WILL RESULT IN YOU HAVING TO REPAY SOME OF THE CHILDCARE GRANT PAID TO YOU.

- 2) Make sure you sign the student declaration on page 5 of the form.
- 3) Take the form to your childcare provider and ask them to complete section 2. If you have not arranged a childcare provider at this stage please leave section 2 blank.
- 4) Return the form to this office and, **if you have not already done so**, you should enclose your child(ren)'s birth certificate(s) and a copy of the most recent Child Tax Credit or Working Tax Credit notification which you would have received from HM Revenue and Customs.
Failure to send these documents may result in your payments being delayed.
- 5) Complete and return form CCA. We need this form as it is an ongoing responsibility of the Local Authority to detect and prevent fraud so we may need to contact your childcare provider or HMRC to check your figures.

We will use the estimated figures on form PTCCG1 to assess your provisional childcare grant entitlement and we will send you a notification of the amounts and dates of the instalments.

Then, 3 times during the academic year, **on the dates specified on page 1 of form PTCCG2**, you should:-

- 1) Complete sections 1 and 2 of form PTCCG2.
- 2) Pass the form to your childcare provider who should complete sections 3 and 4 to confirm the amounts which they have actually received from you up to the relevant date.
- 3) If it was not provided on form PTCCG1, we will also require, on this form, confirmation that you are using a childcare provider who is registered or approved by an accredited organization.
- 4) Return form PTCCG2 to this office no later than the dates on the front of that form. **Failure to return the form will affect payment of future instalments of your childcare grant.**

If the completed PTCCG2s show differences between the estimated and actual amounts we will send you a notification of the revised amounts and make adjustments to future instalments.

Finally, you **must** notify us of any change in your circumstances or childcare costs for any reason immediately.

(PTCC2)

RE: Part-time Childcare and Dependents' Grants 2013/14

Thank you for submitting forms PTG1 and PTCCG1 which have enabled us to estimate your entitlement to following grants for the current academic year.

Please find below a breakdown of your *provisional* entitlement, including your childcare entitlement based on the details you have submitted to date:-

Adult Dependents' Grant	£
Childcare Grant	£
Parents' Learning Allowance	£
Total	£

The amounts are based upon your estimated income of £ , your estimated outgoings of £ between 01.09.13 to 31.08.14 and the intensity of study of your part-time course which is 50-59% / 60-74% / 75% or more.

You will shortly receive an updated schedule of payments confirming the amount of grants you will be paid each term.

As this assessment is based on estimates it is essential that you provide me with:

1. Certification of the actual costs incurred each term. You must therefore ask your childcare provider to complete a **form PTCCG2** three times in the academic year and return them to us no later than the dates shown below.

1 November 2013

This form should confirm payments made each week between 1 September 2013 and 20 October 2013.

31 January 2014

This form should confirm payments made each week between 21 October 2013 and 19 January 2014.

18 July 2014

If this is your final year

This form should confirm payments made each week between 20 January 2014 and the last day of your summer term

OR

12 September 2014

If this is NOT your final year and you are including the costs for the summer vacation

This form should confirm payments made each week between 20 January 2014 and 31 August 2014.

Failure to submit a fully completed form PTCCG2 by the deadlines could lead to the reduction of any outstanding childcare instalments or possibly the loss of childcare provision altogether. We have already sent you 3 PTCCG2s for this purpose but if you require another please let me know.

2. Confirmation of income and outgoings – we will write to you later in the year to request this information.

IMPORTANT NOTICE - FINANCIAL RE-ASSESSMENT

It is possible that your actual costs may vary significantly from your initial estimates and as a result it may be necessary to revise your childcare entitlement. This may result in either an underpayment or an overpayment of grant. Should you have been underpaid then your subsequent childcare grant instalments will be increased accordingly with the possibility of you receiving additional termly payments if the original payment has already been made.

If you have been overpaid then this may have a more significant effect. An overpayment of childcare grant can be reclaimed from any subsequent grant entitlement you may have, including additional dependants' grants such as Parents' Learning Allowance and Adult Dependants' Grant.

In the first instance we will attempt to reduce your subsequent child care grant payments by the required amount. If for whatever reason you do not have an entitlement to childcare grant the overpayment will then be offset against any other grant entitlement. If you have already received all your original termly grant payments or if it is not possible to adjust your current annual grant entitlement it might be necessary for the outstanding overpayment to be offset against your following year's grant entitlement. If, however you have completed your studies and have no further grant entitlement then you will be contacted directly by the Student Loans Company to negotiate a means of repayment.

NB: please note that in accordance with your signed agreement made on form CCA details of your childcare grant may be forwarded to your childcare provider.

(PTCC3)

Part-time Childcare Grant – 2013/14 Academic Year

RE:

Miss/Mrs/Mr , parent of the above child/children is currently a part-time higher education student who has applied for a grant in respect of childcare costs.

Student Finance Wales can provide parents with an income assessed grant to cover all or some of the cost of childcare and in 2013/14 the weekly maximum that we can pay to a part-time student is £121.13 for 1 child and £205.91 for 2 or more children.

The grant is paid directly to the student in termly instalments.

In order to ensure that both parent and childcare provider receive the correct amount, the student (*or put name*) has agreed that I can provide you with details of the amount of grant paid to them.

You should note that the child care grant for Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr (*insert name*) for the whole of 2013/14 is £ (*amount*) and is based on the estimate of the weekly charges which were supplied previously.

During each term Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr (*insert name*) should provide you with a form PTCCG2 which you need to complete to confirm the actual amounts paid to you for a period specified on the front of that form.

Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr (*insert name*) will return the form to this office where we will compare the actual costs to the estimated costs and revise their entitlement if necessary.

We will advise you of any revision to their entitlement

(PTCC4)

PTCCG2 FORM CONFIRMATION OF CHILDCARE COSTS

You have not returned the form PTCCG2 -'Confirmation of Childcare Payments for part-time students' which we originally sent to you on *(INSERT DATE)* so I am sending you another copy in case you have mislaid it

You need to complete section 1 and also section 2 of the form if the weekly childcare costs provided in your application form PTCCG1 -'Application for Help with Childcare Costs' will, or are likely to, change in the remainder of your academic year.

You should then ask your childcare provider to complete section 3 to show actual childcare payments received from you each week between *(INSERT DATES)* and also to complete section 4.

If the amounts you actually paid are different to the estimated amounts provided on your original application form your next payment of childcare grant will be adjusted.

You need to return the form PTCCG2 – 'Confirmation of Childcare Payments for part-time students' to this office.

Your next Childcare grant payment will not be made unless you have returned the completed form by *(INSERT DATE)*.

If your form is returned after this date, your next childcare grant payment may be delayed or, if you do not return your form at all, you will lose your childcare grant and any uncertified monies already paid to you for childcare will be recovered.

(PTCC5)

Part-time Confirmation of Childcare Payments 2013/14

You may recall that I wrote to you on (INSERT DATE) asking you to contact your childcare provider for them to confirm the actual payments received from you for the period (INSERT DATE) to .

I sent you a form PTCCG2 'Confirmation of Childcare Payments for part-time students for this purpose and you should have asked your childcare provider to complete sections 3 and 4 of the form and then you should have returned it to me by.....

My records show that we have not received a reply to date.

Therefore if you have not returned this form by (INSERT DATE) I will have to reassess your entitlement to childcare grant.

This means that you will not be paid any further grant and any monies already paid to you for childcare will be recovered.

(PTCC6)

Re: Part-time Childcare Grant 2013/14

Thank you for submitting form PTCCG2 –'Confirmation of Childcare Costs' for the period ***insert relevant period.***

I have reassessed your entitlement and provide below a breakdown of your revised grant entitlements based on the details contained in that form.

Adult Dependants' Grant	£
Childcare Grant	£
Parents' Learning Allowance -	£
Total	£

This amount is based upon the intensity of study of your part-time course which is 50-59% / 60-74% / 75% or more.

EITHER

Please note that your childcare grant has decreased because your actual costs for the first period were lower than estimated *and/or* you have revised the estimates for the rest of the year.

OR

Please note that your childcare grant has increased because your actual costs for the first period were higher than estimated *and/or* you have revised the estimates for the rest of the year.

OR

The intensity of study level of your part-time course has increased/decreased to 50-59% / 60-74% / 75% or more.

(PTCC7)

Dear (*Childcare Provider*)

HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORT for -*student's name*- ACTUAL CHILDCARE PAYMENTS 2013/14 -

The above named student has applied and been granted childcare costs in respect of the child/children named below.

Please can you confirm, on the enclosed form that you have received a payment of £ from Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss (*INSERT NAME*) for the period from (*INSERT DATE*) for the following child/children:

«Child_Name_1» «DOB_1»
«Child_Name_2» «DOB_2»
«Child_Name_3» «DOB_3»
«Child_Name_4» «DOB_4»

Kindly return the completed form in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible.

If you have any queries in connection with this matter please contact me on the telephone number or email address above.

(PTCC8)

Part-time Childcare Grant – 2013/14 Academic Year
RE:

You may recall me writing to you on (*INSERT DATE*) about Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr (*INSERT NAME*), parent of the above child/children who is receiving a grant in respect of childcare costs.

In that letter I told you the amount that the student would receive towards their childcare costs and this amount was based on estimates supplied at the beginning of the year.

Since then you kindly completed form PTCCG2 which certified actual costs and the student has returned it to us to enable us to reassess their entitlement.

You should note that the childcare grant for Miss/ Mrs/Ms/Mr (*INSERT NAME*) for the whole of 2013/14 has been revised to £

Please continue to complete the CCG2 forms when requested by the student so that we can ensure that all parties are paid the correct amounts in a timely manner.

(PTCC9)

PART-TIME GRANTS FOR DEPENDANTS 2013/14

I regret to inform you that, as you have failed to return the first, second and third of the PTCCG2 forms required to confirm your childcare costs for the period I have no alternative other than to revise your entitlement to Childcare Grant/Parents' Learning Allowance for the first, second and third term(s) whole year.

The new amounts you are entitled to are as follows:

Adult Dependants' Grant	£
Childcare Grant	£
Parents' Learning Allowance	£

The Student Loan Company will shortly be in touch to arrange for the recovery of any overpayments you may have received.

(PTCC10)

RE: Part-time childcare and dependants' grants academic year 2013/14

As you are aware your entitlement to financial support for 2013/14 was assessed on a provisional basis as it was based on your husband's / wife's / partner's estimated income for the period 01/09/2013 to 31/08/2014.

We have now received certification of his / her actual income for that period and reassessed your entitlement to supplementary grants as below:-

Adult Dependants' Grant	£
Childcare Grant	£
Parents' Learning Allowance	£

Total	£
--------------	----------

This means that there is no change to your entitlement / you have been overpaid / underpaid ADG/CCG/PLA.

An official notification will follow shortly from SFW with details of how the overpayment will be recovered / the amount due to you will be paid.

Annex 3

ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION FOR ILLUSTRATIVE LEVELS OF INCOME

39,793	0	59,000	2,071	79,000	4,229
40,000	22	60,000	2,179	80,000	4,337
41,000	130	61,000	2,287	81,000	4,445
42,000	238	62,000	2,395	82,000	4,553
43,000	345	63,000	2,503	83,000	4,660
44,000	453	64,000	2,611	84,000	4,768
45,000	561	65,000	2,719	85,000	4,876
46,000	669	66,000	2,827	86,000	4,984
47,000	777	67,000	2,934	87,000	5,092
48,000	885	68,000	3,042	88,000	5,200
49,000	993	69,000	3,150	89,000	5,308
50,000	1,101	70,000	3,258	90,000	5,416
51,000	1,208	71,000	3,366	91,000	5,523
52,000	1,316	72,000	3,474	92,000	5,631
53,000	1,424	73,000	3,582	93,000	5,739
54,000	1,532	74,000	3,690	94,000	5,847
55,000	1,640	75,000	3,797	95,000	5,955
56,000	1,748	76,000	3,905	96,000	6,063
57,000	1,856	77,000	4,013	97,000	6,171
58,000	1,964	78,000	4,121	97,350	6,208

For residual incomes below **£39,793**, no contribution is assessed.

For residual incomes above **£97,350** the assessed contribution is **£6,208**