



March 2026

Dear Year 13 Parents/Carers

The application window for **University Student Finance England** will open on 23rd March for students planning to go to university this Autumn.

We want to support students in making well-informed decisions about their finances as they approach their university study. Contemplating a student loan can be daunting. We encourage students to consider it as an investment in their future, rather than seeing finance as a barrier to higher education. However, there are significant sums of money involved, so it is important that students know how it works. The University of Leicester delivered an informative assembly to students at the end of Year 12 which covered the tuition fee loan, the maintenance loan, repayment and interest, as well as other financial support available such as scholarships and bursaries. I reminded students of the key principles in an assembly presentation this week.

The loan application process should take about 30 minutes and the deadline is in early May. It can take up to six weeks to process an application, so it is worth making a start as soon as the applications open. Students do not need to have a confirmed university place to begin the application. Students can apply using their first-choice course and change the details later if necessary. Students will need their passport, bank account details and national insurance number. For more information, to create an account and begin the application, use this link: <https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/> Student Finance England can be contacted by telephone on 0300 100 0607 with any specific questions.

To be well-informed, we also recommend resources from Martin Lewis at MoneySavingExpert.com: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/funding-uni/>

In addition to the student loan, there are other sources of financial support available for university students. Information about bursaries and scholarships can be found here: <https://www.thescholarshipshub.org.uk/>. It is definitely worth applying for these as a significant amount of funding goes unclaimed every year.

[If a student is deferring their university place until 2027, they will need to apply for Student Finance next year as you cannot defer the finance application. Following recent government changes, please note that loans will work differently from 2027 and will be called 'Lifelong Learning Entitlements', with more information found here: https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-on-or-after-1-january-2027](#)

We hope that this is helpful for you as you begin the Student Finance application process. If students have any questions about the process, they are welcome to come to see me at school.

We continue to promote alternatives to university in school as we know not all students wish to attend, and some students want to keep their options open. There are plenty of degree and higher apprenticeships advertised at the moment, as well as employment and gap year opportunities which we are promoting in assembly and on ClassCharts. There is a Gap Year workshop this week in assembly time and an apprenticeship workshop next week, as well as support available with CVs, cover letters and LinkedIn Profiles.

If a student would like to make a careers appointment which you are welcome to attend too, students should see Miss Bridges, our Careers Advisor, in her office in the Sixth Form Building.

Yours sincerely

Ms McIver
Head of Sixth Form