

FOR INFORMATION

### **Island Fees for students continuing and starting university in 2012/13**

Since 1991 there has been an agreement between representatives of the Channel Island authorities and the Home Office (and then subsequent UK Government departments) that the fees for islands students would not exceed the cost of providing for home students on similar courses. In previous years, Universities UK has agreed a methodology with the islands' authorities to calculate this equivalent cost based on UK Government (HEFCE) funding allocations.

These arrangements are currently made through Universities UK which now represents the UK universities.

Universities UK has generally invited all members to abide by the negotiated fee levels for Island fees students and with one or two very limited exceptions, this has happened. This has meant that students have been able to attend a course in a particular subject at any UK university and be charged the same fee.

Universities UK recently confirmed that it needed to reconsider its current role in the light of guidance it had received on Competition Law in the UK and the recent funding reforms, which allow universities to charge much higher fees from 2012 onwards for home students. The islands have been in detailed discussions with Universities UK on these matters.

These detailed discussions have culminated in Universities UK writing to all its members putting forward proposals from the islands on the fee rates to be charged. For 2012, the first year of the new funding regimes, it is proposed that island students be charged the same fees as a student from England, for the majority of courses except those categorised as Band A which include medicine and veterinary sciences.

For students part way through their degree in 2012/13 ( i.e. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students) UUK is supporting the view expressed by the island authorities that for reasons of equity and simplicity, these students should continue to be charged fees at the current level, up rated with UK inflation each year.

### **Conclusion**

If these proposals are accepted by universities it would result in a modest increase in the department's total fee commitment which could be managed within the current budget, with little impact on students or parents.

The parents of students who are already at university in 2012 should see very little change. Their fees would simply increase with inflation.

For new students the maximum tuition fee level from 2012/13 is likely to be £9,000(or less if the fee set by the university is below this) regardless of the subject band which would rise with inflation in subsequent years. The clinical years of medical, dentistry and veterinary courses would still attract a much higher level of tuition fees as they do now.

If a significant number of UK universities resist the new proposals and instead insist on regarding our students as overseas students, the Department would assess the likely financial impact of this and, if necessary, report to the States of Deliberation to make the strongest case possible for additional investment to ensure that there remain no financial barriers to our young people accessing opportunities in higher education.

It is likely therefore that first time students in 2012/13 should find the costs of sending a child to the University of their choice much the same as in recent years. **Students should continue therefore to choose their course based on university preference.**

However, all our assumptions above are based on the fact that the UK Government continues to treat students from the islands as home students and not as overseas students. It will be some weeks off before we have confirmation from all universities on this point.

Representatives from the Channel Islands and Isle of Man are continuing to meet with universities, beginning with those institutions that take most Islands students, in order to find out their responses to the Universities UK proposals. To date their responses have been encouraging, with all accepting the principles outlined in the UUK letter.