# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Financial support for higher education students in the 2025/26 academic year and tuition fee limits** |
| **DATE** | **04 December** |
| **BY** | **Vikki Howells MS, Minister for Further and Higher Education** |

The Welsh Government is committed to supporting people to invest in their future and ensure that everyone, no matter their background, can access and participate in learning throughout their lives. We know that by investing in higher education, people improve their chances of increased earnings and better health and well-being. My priority is to support more learners to stay in education post-16, with a focus on raising skills for the future of the Welsh economy.

Living costs should not be a barrier to studying higher education so today I am announcing an increase to student maintenance support for the 2025/26 academic year, to support students facing continued cost of living pressures.

The support available for eligible part-time and full-time undergraduate students from Wales will increase by 1.6%, for both new and continuing students. A range of other grants and allowances will also be increased by 1.6% for 2025/26, including the maximum support for postgraduate masters and postgraduate doctoral study. The increases are linked to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and ensure the Welsh Government continues to offer the most generous student living costs support for full-time undergraduates in the UK.

We recognise the financial pressure higher education institutions are under across the UK and we are committed to supporting a sustainable higher education sector, with strong institutions able to deliver on our ambitions for students and research, and driving economic growth.

Therefore, the tuition fee limit – the maximum that regulated providers can charge to certain students on certain full-time undergraduate courses – will increase from £9,250 to £9,535, for courses beginning on or after 1 August 2025. This is the same level that will be charged in England. This will provide additional income to Welsh institutions to reflect the increased costs of education and help safeguard provision and investment in the student experience.

The increased tuition fee cap will apply to any eligible student studying in Wales, not just Welsh students.

The maximum tuition fee loan will increase to £9,535 for students ordinarily resident in Wales who study in Wales or England, and for certain others who study in Wales. For courses specifically designated by Welsh Ministers, the maximum tuition fee loan will increase to £6,355 for students ordinarily resident in Wales. This continues our longstanding policy of no student having to pay their tuition fees upfront.

Tuition fees for part-time undergraduate study and for postgraduate study are not regulated. No changes will be made.

Decisions on the tuition fee to be charged to students are a matter for higher education providers. The Welsh Government does not set fees, only the maximum which may be charged in certain circumstances. Students should speak to their university or other provider if they have queries about their fees.

I want to be clear that this small increase in fees should not dissuade anyone from Wales considering applying for university next year. An increase in fees will not increase the upfront cost of university for students. Nor will it increase their monthly repayments until they become higher earning graduates later in life, in most cases long after they have graduated. We also provide a partial write-off of student debt of up to £1,500, when a student begins repaying their loans, which further reduces what a graduate may repay. This is unique to Welsh students, no matter where they study.

I am also announcing today an additional £20 million for Medr to support further and higher education in Wales. This in-year allocation will help to meet the financial challenges facing our colleges and universities with a specific focus on funding the increased participation we are seeing in further education, as well as additional financial support for our universities.