

## **Data Protection Statement for students – Academic year 2012/13**

**This statement sets out who will use the information you have provided in connection with your application for student finance and what they will use it for.**

The information which you, your partner or relatives give ('your personal information') will be used to process your student finance application. The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills has transferred certain functions relating to student finance applications to the Student Loans Company (SLC). The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, and Skills is a joint Data Controller for all of this information as he is responsible for it by law. However, if you would like to see your information please contact SLC.

Your application for student finance will be dealt with by SLC. SLC will use the information provided in connection with your application to determine whether you are eligible for student finance, assess the maximum amount of financial support you are entitled to and to make payment of student support. SLC is the data controller for this information.

SLC will check the accuracy of any information you have provided. To do this we may get information from other organisations or individuals and may share information with other organisations and individuals. This includes in particular, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to check your National Insurance Number and personal details including if appropriate the level of benefits, the Home Office including the Identity and Passport Service to check your passport details if you have provided them and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) to check declared income levels and to check your National Insurance Number to facilitate the collection of loan repayments. In future HMRC may have shared access to your loan account information to help us collect loan repayments. Jobcentre Plus may ask us to provide confirmation of your eligibility for a loan in order to help you obtain a National Insurance Number. If you have applied for assistance with childcare, SLC will verify the level of payments made with the childcare provider and may share the information with others to verify the accuracy of all information provided.

We may also share information with other bodies including banks, building societies, General Registrars Office, the Borders and Immigration Agency, third parties with whom we have contracted to carry out ID and Income checks, utility providers, the Learning and Skills Council, HMRC, DWP, fraud prevention and law enforcement agencies such as the Police and the Serious Crime agency to check the accuracy of information and to prevent and detect fraud both in the student finance application process and more widely. If false or inaccurate information is provided and fraud is identified, details will be passed to fraud prevention and law enforcement agencies.

SLC will have access to your personal data in order to provide customer services to you and to respond to your questions and to update information on your account.

SLC will need to keep personal information about you, your partner and your relatives so that the assessment and payment of financial support can be audited.

SLC may also use your information to maintain or develop its systems and processes.

If you breach the terms of the loan contract, SLC may share information about you and your account with any person, body, company or agency, including the Government or a Government agency of another country, who may assist them in establishing your whereabouts and/or in taking action to recover outstanding loan amounts.

**Your university or college** will receive information from SLC so that SLC can pay to it any Tuition Fee Grant or loan you are entitled to, and so that it can confirm the details of your course of study. Your university or college may have shared access to your application and account information in the future for these purposes.

Your university or college may also ask for information that you provide in connection with your application for student finance such as your personal, financial and course details or information about your eligibility for student finance, for bursary administration purposes from SLC or the Secretary of State. This information will only be shared where you and (where relevant) any person named on your application that is providing financial information, have not opted out of giving consent for the information to be shared for bursary administration purposes.

In this instance, the university or college will be the data controller of the information and will use it to assess eligibility and make payment of any bursary or scholarship to which you may be entitled. If you would like to see this information please contact your university or college.

If you study a course approved by the General Social Care Council (GSCC), Care Council for Wales (CCW) or Northern Ireland Social Care Council, you may be entitled to assistance with your tuition fee or be entitled to receive a bursary from the National Health Service Business Services Authority (NHSBSA), CCW or the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) if studying in Northern Ireland. Should you apply for funding assistance from one of these organisations, SLC may share information relating to your tuition fee/personal contribution and attendance at the Further Education or Higher Education university or college. Only the information required for the assessment of eligibility for funding shall be passed to the relevant organisation.

**The Department for Business, Innovation, and Skills (BIS)** will have access to your account information to provide customer services to you and may use the information you have provided to monitor the performance of the student finance system and to develop future policies or initiatives. Any published output from this statistical work will be anonymous and will not identify individuals.

**The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)** which carries out certain functions on behalf of HEFCE may, in carrying out HEFCE's statutory functions relating to the funding of education, use the information provided for statistical analysis. HESA and HEFCE will not identify individuals in any published results.

By law, SLC and your university or college must protect the public funds they handle and may use the information you have provided to detect and prevent fraud. They may also share the information, for the same purposes, with other organisations which handle public funds.

SLC may compare the information it holds on its systems with that on systems used by other organisations, including HMRC; the Home Office (including the Identity and Passport Service, the Border and Immigration agency and the Prison Service), the Learning and Skills Council, Royal Mail and third parties with whom we have contracted to carry out ID and Income checks. This helps SLC to improve the accuracy of the information it holds and to reduce fraud.

You will be able to access your account information online securely via the Internet.