

Clearing a path to higher education

Press release

Ahead of the release of A-Level results on Thursday (18th), the Student Loans Company (SLC) is sharing its top tips for prospective students going through Clearing this year.



It's predicted that this year's Clearing window will be busier than ever, due to a range of factors, including an increase in the number of 18-year-olds heading to university or college as well as a return to a more normal academic year following Covid. SLC is encouraging students not to wait to apply for student finance, even if they don't have a confirmed course place yet.

With a processing time of up to six to eight weeks, eligible students who are applying for higher rates of maintenance loans or for additional grants may not receive their full funding entitlement at the start of term. However, in these circumstances SLC will award the Tuition Fee Loan and the minimum amount of Maintenance Loan before the start of the course, while it confirms household income and any other relevant details. Students will get the remainder of their maintenance and any other funding entitlement as a top up payment as soon as possible once those details are confirmed.

Chris Larmer, Operations Director at SLC, said: "We have around 1.5 million students expected to start or return to education this autumn and my advice to students this week is not to wait for your exams results – submit an application as soon as possible as it can always be changed and updated online at a later date."

- **The easiest way to apply is online:**

Students in England can apply at:

<https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/> Students in Wales can apply at:

<https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/discover-student-finance>

For most students, it's straightforward to apply and should only take around 30 minutes.

This year SLC has improved the service to make it easier to use, which means that the majority can complete their application digitally – submitting evidence, updating personal details and checking on next steps via their online accounts. If they need any help, there is plenty of information available online. Students in England can apply at: <https://studentfinance.campaign.gov.uk/> Students in Wales can apply at: <https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/discover-student-finance>

- **Once submitted, applications take up to six to eight weeks to process and we will get in touch if we need more information.**

Students can use the application tracker in their online account to view their application's status, at a time that is convenient for them– so they don't have to worry or get in touch with us for an update on progress. Read more about the process:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-get-your-first-payment-if-youre-applying-late>

- **You won't need to do anything unless your university, college or course details change.**

If you accept a place at university or college through Clearing, you'll need to [sign in to your student finance account](#) and let us know of any changes. You must do this even if your UCAS application has changed – your student finance application is not linked to UCAS. You'll need to change the university or college on the application as well as your course. You should also tell us the correct tuition fee being charged for your new course.

- **If your exam results are different from what you expected and your course choice is different from when you initially applied for your student finance, make sure that you update your course and university details in your online account right away.**
- **To help students in England who are applying for student finance during Clearing.**

SLC has a [guide](#) containing useful information including steps they can take to ensure their application can be processed quickly.

Chris added: "Last year, we paid out £22bn in Tuition Fees and Maintenance Loans and this year we are expecting similar numbers. Our absolute priority

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is to ensure that we have as many student finance applications as possible processed and ready to pay at the start of term, including those that applied during Clearing. Our team is ready for a busy few weeks ahead and we wish students all the best on Thursday.”

SLC opened its application window in February this year and students were encouraged to apply before the deadline (20 May 2022 for new students and 24 June 2022 for returning students) to ensure they had their finance in place for the start of term. Students whose applications are currently being processed but whose course, university or college haven't changed after results day, do not need to take any action unless they are asked to [provide evidence](#). In that situation, SLC will be in touch. Students can keep track of their application status via the online tracker.

Published 15 August 2022

[MMO response to Greenpeace action in South West Deeps \(East\)](#)

News story

MMO and Greenpeace have a shared interest in protecting our precious marine environment.



Greenpeace is aware that the MMO is delivering accelerated plans to introduce appropriate management protection measures within England's offshore Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) following new powers contained in the Fisheries Act 2020.

In June this year, [the use of bottom towed gear was prohibited in four MPAs](#) which protects a total area of over 13,000 km². These first four MPAs were selected as a priority to preserve their vibrant and productive undersea ecosystems that provide an important food source for species such as

kittiwakes, puffins and porpoises.

The MMO has since completed a call for evidence for a further 13 MPAs (from 14 May to 10 July 2022), to seek views on our draft assessment of the impacts of fishing activity on the designated features of this further set of MPAs.

With plans in place to then move onto actions to consider the remaining MPAs to follow.

As part of our ongoing engagement, MMO had already met with Greenpeace and also invited Greenpeace to a stakeholder workshop this month with other environmental non-government organisations to discuss our offshore MPA work.

As such, we are surprised and disappointed by the announcement made by Greenpeace of their intention to undertake further unlawful activity within this specific MPA at South West Deeps (East).

In a [previous action against Greenpeace](#), the court's comments expected that Greenpeace will respect and comply with the marine licensing regime in line with all other marine users and stakeholders, and it was made clear that the MMO has jurisdiction to prosecute unlicensed and unlawful activity in the UK marine area.

The MMO remains open to engagement with Greenpeace to ensure we can achieve our joint goal of managed and protected seas. However, should unlicensed activity be undertaken, the MMO will, as England's Marine regulator, discharge our regulatory functions in line with our compliance and enforcement strategy.

Published 15 August 2022

[First bivalent COVID-19 booster vaccine approved by UK medicines regulator](#)

An updated version of the COVID-19 vaccine made by Moderna that targets two coronavirus variants (known as a "bivalent" vaccine) has today been approved for adult booster doses by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) after it was found to meet the UK regulator's standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.

The decision to grant approval for this booster vaccine in the UK was endorsed by the government's independent expert scientific advisory body, the Commission on Human Medicines, after carefully reviewing the evidence.

In each dose of the booster vaccine, 'Spikevax bivalent Original/Omicron', half of the vaccine (25 micrograms) targets the original virus strain from 2020 and the other half (25 micrograms) targets Omicron.

The MHRA's decision is based on data from a clinical trial which showed that a booster with the bivalent Moderna vaccine triggers a strong immune response against both Omicron (BA.1) and the original 2020 strain. In an exploratory analysis the bivalent vaccine was also found to generate a good immune response against the Omicron sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5.

Safety monitoring showed that the side effects observed were the same as those seen for the original Moderna booster dose and were typically mild and self-resolving, and no serious safety concerns were identified.

Dr June Raine, MHRA Chief Executive said:

"I am pleased to announce the approval of the Moderna bivalent booster vaccine, which was found in the clinical trial to provide a strong immune response against the Omicron BA.1 variant as well as the original 2020 strain.

"The first generation of COVID-19 vaccines being used in the UK continue to provide important protection against the disease and save lives. What this bivalent vaccine gives us is a sharpened tool in our armoury to help protect us against this disease as the virus continues to evolve.

"We have in place a comprehensive safety surveillance strategy for monitoring the safety of all UK-approved COVID-19 vaccines and this will include the vaccine approved today."

Professor Sir Munir Pirmohamed, Chair of the Commission on Human Medicines said:

"The Commission on Human Medicines and its COVID-19 Vaccines Expert Working Group has independently reviewed the data on safety, quality and effectiveness and agrees with the MHRA's decision."

"The virus, SARS-CoV-2, is continually evolving in order to evade the immunity provided by vaccines. This novel bivalent vaccine represents the next step in the development of vaccines to combat the virus, with its ability to lead to a broader immune response than the original vaccine."

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) will advise on how this vaccine should be offered as part of the deployment programme.

Notes to editors

- The [Commission on Human Medicines \(CHM\)](#) advises ministers on the safety, efficacy and quality of medicinal products. The CHM is an advisory non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.
- The MHRA's Conditional Marketing Authorisation for the Moderna bivalent booster vaccine is valid in Great Britain only. An emergency use

authorisation has been granted for Northern Ireland to ensure access across the whole of the United Kingdom. Both authorisations were made on the basis of the same rigorous evaluation of data.

- More information can be found in the [product information](#)
- A recent paper in a [Lancet journal](#) suggested that COVID-19 vaccines have prevented up to 20 million deaths in the first year of use

[Commission appoints interim manager to The Potanin Foundation](#)

Press release

The Charity Commission has appointed an interim manager to the Potanin Foundation (1112813) to the exclusion of its trustees.



The Potanin Foundation was registered in 2006 and is a grant-making charity which has supported its sister charity in Russia, the Vladimir Potanin Foundation, as well as other charities. It has broad charitable objects.

The Commission opened a [statutory inquiry](#) into the Potanin Foundation on 29 June 2022, after the charity's founder and member, Vladimir Potanin, was sanctioned under the UK's Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

As part of the inquiry Guy Hollander of Mazars LLP was appointed as interim manager of the charity on 12 July 2022. He has taken over the management and administration of the charity and will fulfil a number of tasks, including managing the charity's assets and assessing the future viability of the charity.

The Commission's inquiry remains ongoing. It is the Commission's policy to publish a report upon concluding an inquiry.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The charity's details can be found on the [register of charities](#).
3. Section 76(3)(g) of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission power to appoint an interim manager to a charity to act as receiver and manager in respect of the property and affairs of the charity.
4. On 30 May 2022, OFSI issued [General Licence INT/2022/1834876](#) under Regulation 64 of the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 which allows for Interim Managers and trustees appointed by the Commission to act as receiver(s) and manager(s) in respect of the property and affairs of a charity.
5. Interim managers are appointed where the Commission has identified misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of a charity, and/or where there is a need to protect a charity's property. It is a temporary and protective measure.

Published 15 August 2022

[Cheaper broadband for struggling families: 14 August 2022](#)

- New system allows customers to give permission to broadband providers to confirm their eligibility for cheaper deals
- Plans come alongside further deals secured by Cost of Living Business Tsar and former Just Eat boss, David Buttress, as part of the Government's [Help for Households](#) campaign
- Further series of cost of living deals will provide extra support to families as kids return to school

Broadband bills could be cut for millions of low-income households under Government plans to encourage '[social tariffs](#)'.

A new service, which will go live next week and be run by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), will allow internet service providers to verify – with customers' permission – whether they are in receipt of a relevant benefit and therefore eligible for extra financial support.

The Government has called on all broadband providers to offer and promote social tariffs – discounted broadband and mobile deals for people on Universal Credit and other benefits – with statistics showing only 1.2% of those eligible have taken advantage of such a package.

The scheme is already supported by Virgin Media O2 who, following discussions with Government, has announced today that they will use the system to verify eligible customers signing up to their Essential Broadband tariff. The company will also waive early termination fees for those moving from existing tariffs.

Customers on social tariffs could in some cases save over a hundred pounds a year. The new system will also simplify the process by removing the need for customers to prove their entitlement to broadband providers as regularly as every month. Social tariffs are available to eligible customers in 99% of the country following Government-led negotiations with broadband companies.

The Government's Cost of Living Business Tsar, David Buttress, has welcomed the new scheme and committed to continue working with industry to scale up and promote existing social tariffs, as well as encourage all providers to offer a discounted tariff.

Cost of Living Business Tsar, David Buttress, said:

Times are tough and families across the country are feeling the pinch, so we're making it easier for companies to reduce phone and broadband bills for struggling families.

Some of the biggest network operators have already committed to take advantage of this new scheme and we want to see other providers follow their lead so that everyone eligible for a social tariff can access one.

This is just one of the ways that we're working with businesses to offer help through our Help for Households campaign, building on the comprehensive £37 billion package of support already being provided by Government.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey, said:

It's more important than ever that people get the financial support available to them, including cheaper broadband for benefit claimants, and this change makes these social tariffs even easier to access.

I'd like to thank those providers leading the way in moving customers over to discount rates, and I encourage others to follow suit to help millions of households to cut bills.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries, said:

Social tariffs are vital for families struggling with bills, keeping them connected even in tough times.

Our discussion with broadband companies led to the range of social tariffs on the market today and we've secured a raft of new cost-of-living commitments from them to ensure help is available for anyone that needs it.

I urge anyone concerned about falling behind on payments to contact their supplier to see what support is available.

Internet service providers will be required to gain customers' consent before speaking to DWP about their eligibility. DWP will minimise the information provided, sharing nothing other than confirmation that the person is entitled to a qualifying benefit at the time of contact. This ensures that claimants' data remains as safe as possible.

Alongside the launch of today's scheme, the Government's Cost of Living Tsar, David Buttress, has also announced a further series of cost-of-living deals and discounts as part of the Government's [Help for Households](#) campaign.

The deals have been negotiated with some of the UK's largest businesses and follow those already [announced last month](#) to access the full range deals.

The new deals include:

- A bespoke new deal with the publishing firm Scholastic, who are offering 20% off children's books. Scholastic will also donate an additional 20% of all order values over £10 in Rewards to local schools for them to spend on books and resources to help stock libraries and classrooms.
- A curated set of Back to School deals from Amazon, with discounts ranging from backpacks and school uniforms, including up to 30% off Clarks School Shoes, to deals on stationary essentials from BIC, Staedtler and Papermate. Amazon Fresh is also offering savings, from lunchbox essentials to laundry detergent.

A number of other Help for Households partners, including Marks & Spencer, Primark, Shoezone, ZSL and Go-ahead have also agreed to promote their existing support schemes under the Help for Households campaign to raise awareness. For example, ZSL are offering new £3 tickets for London Zoo and Whipsnade.

Lutz Schüler, Chief Executive Officer of Virgin Media O2, said:

Connectivity is a lifeline people can't go without, and as one of the first providers to have introduced a social broadband tariff in 2020, we are committed to making it as easy as possible for customers to get support with the cost-of-living crisis. We're working to implement the API as soon as possible making it faster and easier to sign up for our social tariff as part of a

comprehensive plan to boost the awareness, availability and attractiveness of Essential Broadband.

Catherine Bell, Co-group Managing Director, Scholastic UK said:

We're delighted to be part of the Government's Help for Households campaign. We recognise the pressures that the current cost of living crisis is bringing and understand that back to school can be a very expensive time for parents. We firmly believe that reading for pleasure for children is more important now than ever and through our school Book Clubs we are pleased to offer a huge range of books with a special Help for Households discount for September that parents can access via their school organiser or by visiting our Book Clubs website. Every Book Club purchase comes with the added benefit that Scholastic will donate an additional 20% of all order values over £10 in Rewards to your local school for them to spend on books and resources to help stock libraries and classrooms.

Kathryn England, Chief Operating Officer of ZSL London Zoo said:

The thrill and awe of a visit to ZSL London or Whipsnade Zoo is something that we want as many people as possible to experience. Our Community Access Scheme ensures that cost isn't a barrier to that. In partnership with the UK Government's Help for Households scheme, every day for the rest of the school summer holidays (until Sunday 4 September) we are providing additional tickets to either London or Whipsnade Zoo, from as little as £3 per person – helping us to introduce even more people to the wonders of the animal kingdom. Our zoos help to inspire a life-long love of wildlife. Home to endangered species from all over the world, we aim to empower every person who visits our zoos to help us protect these animals. Now, more than ever, it's so important that everyone has a better understanding of nature and the role we can all play in helping to protect our precious planet. Just visit www.zsl.org/CAS to find out more.

The government's Cost of Living Business Tsar is working to secure further deals under the Help for Households campaign which will be announced over the coming weeks and months.