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Guide to Educational Maintenance Allowance

2009/2010



THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGE COLCHESTER

GUIDE TO EDUCATIONAL MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES

2009/10

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The Sixth Form College Colchester - Guide to Educational Maintenance Allowances

Introduction

If you are eligible for an Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), this guide explains what you need to do in order to receive your weekly and bonus payments. If there is anything you do not understand, you should speak to your Personal Tutor.

To receive your weekly (term-time) payments

Each week, the College will inform the APB as to whether or not you should receive your payment for the previous week. We will authorise payment provided you have had no unauthorised absences. This means that just one unauthorised absence from a lesson, an examination, or Tutor Period will mean that you will not receive your EMA for that week.

To understand what we mean by an unauthorised absence, you should read the Absence Guidelines (at the end of this Guide), which applies to all students.

It is very important that you understand what you need to do if you are absent from College. If you have any questions talk to your Personal Tutor.

When notifying the College of an unexpected absence it should be reported before 10 am.

Any deliberately falsified information leading to a wrongful payment will be regarded as fraud and the relevant payment reclaimed. The matter will be dealt with in accordance with the College's disciplinary procedures.

If we will not be authorising your payment we will write to your home address to advise you.

If you wish to appeal against the decision, you should speak to your Personal Tutor.

Bonus payments

In addition to your weekly payments, you are also eligible for Bonus payments of £100. These are payable in January and July of each year.

To receive these bonuses you must fulfil the requirements of your EMA Contract, Part 2 - Learning Agreement. This states you must achieve satisfactory completion of learning goals.

You must also attend all public examinations for which you are entered. The following table explains the requirements for each Bonus payment.

Criteria for payment of EMA Bonus

Date	Bonus	Criterion
January	£100	A bonus will be paid unless a student: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ has received a Cause for Concern Final decision to be validated by Senior Tutor
July	£100	A bonus will be paid unless a student: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ has received a Cause for Concern and or▪ has failed to attend one or more of their January or Summer examinations in that academic year without good reason Final decision to be validated by Senior Tutor

If a student stays for a 3rd year further Bonuses could be paid as above, provided the student is aged 18 or under at the start of the third year of their course.

If we will not be authorising your bonus payment, we will write to your home address to advise you.

If you wish to appeal against the decision, you should speak to your Personal Tutor.

Payments

Payments will be made by the EMA payment body in to your bank account.

Useful Contacts

- Unexpected absences should be reported before 10 a.m. each day of absence by telephoning the College on 01206 500700 and leaving a message for your Tutor.
- Any general enquiries can be made at Students Enquiries in the main reception.
- Free national EMA helpline for young people 0800 121 8989
- Website: www.direct.gov.uk/ema

Student Attendance Policy

Introduction

For students to progress and achieve to their full potential, full and punctual attendance is required. Attendance is closely monitored. Disciplinary action will be taken where the College considers a student's attendance and punctuality to be unacceptable.

Notification of absence

Any absence will cause disruption to your learning and should therefore be avoided wherever possible.

If you are unable to attend College for any reason, you **must** advise your Personal Tutor in advance if the absence is expected, or if unexpected, on the day of the absence by a telephone message. If you do not, the absence will automatically be considered unauthorised and will jeopardise your EMA payment for that week.

ABSENCE GUIDELINES

ACCEPTABLE ABSENCES (NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE)

- Medical appointment which cannot be arranged outside College hours.
- Occasional care for a person if student has definite caring responsibilities.
- A religious holiday.
- Visit to University to attend an open day/interview; a career related interview or audition.
- Appointment with Connexions Advisor (should avoid disruption to studies).
- Unwaged work experience placement relative to course.
- Occasional extra-curricular activity giving significant personal achievement, including field trips and visits related to areas of study; sports fixtures and expeditions.
- Attendance at a funeral.
- Severe disruption to transport.
- A driving test.
- A College representatives' meeting.
- Study Leave.

ACCEPTABLE UNFORSEEN ABSENCES (NOTIFIED ON THE DAY)

- An emergency family situation.
- Transport problems with no alternative solution.
- Isolated short periods of genuine sickness [Up to 3 days with details furnished by student or parent, between 3 and 7 days with parental or medical practitioner support]*.

ABSENCES NOT GENERALLY ACCEPTABLE

- Holidays.
- Part or Full time work which is not part of the student's programme of study.
- Leisure activities.
- Birthdays or similar celebrations.
- Babysitting younger siblings.
- Shopping.
- Driving Lessons.

***Long Term Sickness and EMA payments**

Where a student is absent from College for an extended period of time, due to long term sickness an EMA will not, normally be paid. However, each case of long term sickness is considered individually, and it may be that where a student is able to study at home for a minimum of 12 hours per week and be in regular contact with College staff, the EMA may be payable. A Doctors Certificate/Letter is required.

If you are unsure about what is regarded as an authorised absence, you must talk to your Personal Tutor, in advance of the absence.

To account for any absence not covered by a medical certificate, you should complete an Absence Self Certification Form when returning to College after an absence of up to 7 days. This form can be obtained from your Senior Tutor.

The above cannot include every unacceptable reason for absence. The College reserves the right to decide what is and is not acceptable.



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USEFUL CONTACTS

College main telephone number to report an absence: 01206 500700

Free national EMA helpline for young people: 0800 121 8989

Website: www.direct.gov.uk/ema