Education Maintenance Allowance

Get up to £30 a week to help you find your feet.

Visit: www.direct.gov.uk/ema
Call: 0800 121 8989

Ask your school, college, learning provider, careers teacher, local student support services or Connexions personal adviser.

Alternatively, you can contact the school, college or provider you want to go to.

Want to order more copies of this leaflet?

Post: LSC Publications, PO BOX 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DJ.
Phone: 0845 602 2260 Fax: 0845 603 3360
Minicom: 0845 605 5560
Email: lsc@prolog.uk.com
Please quote ref: LSC-P-NAT-080002

This booklet is also available in both Braille and large print please call the LSC Helpdesk on 0845 602 2260.

Get up to £30 a week to help you find your feet.
You decide what happens next.

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For more info:
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Ask your school, college, learning provider, careers teacher, local student support services or Connexions personal adviser.
Already you’ve made a smart choice.

Because you’ve decided to find out more about EMA. Now that’s a wise decision.

Basically EMA is a cash award (which you don’t have to pay back*) to help you carry on learning. If you want to know more keep reading.

Always be in demand.

Learning now comes in all sorts of different shapes and sizes – and it’s not just in the classroom.

*But there’s a catch? No.

It’s yours to spend wisely to support your learning. Because one day ‘learning’ will directly influence your ‘earning’.

And by having skills and qualifications you’re more likely to get a better paid job.

So which direction will you take? Stay in school? Off to college? Do work based learning? Re-sit your GCSEs? You’ll find there are thousands of different courses to choose from. Whatever you decide to do EMA will help you with the cost of books, travel and equipment to continue learning. It’s worth up to £30 a week, it’s paid straight into your bank account and it’s fairly obvious what you should choose to do next. (Just ask any of the 500,000+ people across the UK who have successfully applied for EMA.)

Turn over?
It’s all money in the bank.

Great, you decided to keep reading. Now, let’s talk money; how much and how often. EMA comes in payments of £10, £20 or £30 which go directly into your bank account, but only if you attend and do well on your course. The amount you receive is calculated by looking at how much money is coming into your household.

To qualify, your household’s income must be no higher than £30,810.* This amount does not include any money you earn from part time work. And EMA does not affect any other household benefits your parents may receive.

*For the tax year 07/08

On top of your weekly amount you can also receive bonuses — but only if you continue to do well and meet targets set by your teacher, tutor or provider when you start.

If you’re starting an LSC funded Entry to Employment (e2e) course on or after 30th of June 2008 you will receive the maximum £30 weekly EMA payment, regardless of your household income. Now that’s good news.
My EMA.
My choice.

We’re not robots. We all have different dreams and aspirations for the future. That’s why continuing to learn and train is so important. It can help you work out what you enjoy, what you’re good at and how to get what you want from life. After all, reality shows fame and fortune can only shine on a few of us (though only you can decide whether this is a good or a bad thing).

Luckily there are types of courses covering lots of different subject areas – both inside and outside the classroom.

So what do you fancy? Agriculture and horticulture? Office and secretarial skills? Digital media? Science and technology? Travel, tourism and hospitality? A-Levels? Diplomas? GCSE re-sits? The list just goes on and on – which means you can be sure to find a course that’s just right for you.

You can also check course options at www.dcsf.gov.uk/prospectus

Now before we go any further...

Do you qualify?

Quick decision needed here. So let’s keep things nice and simple. Just read the list below and if all the descriptions match your life, you might be eligible for EMA.

- You’re 16, 17 or 18 and in or about to leave, or have already left education.
- You’re thinking of starting:
  - a full-time further education course at a college or school, OR
  - an LSC-funded Diploma (where available) or a course that leads to an Apprenticeship, OR
  - an LSC-funded e2e programme.
- Your annual household income is below £30,810 (for tax year 07/08).

The learning must take place in England.

You could also be eligible if you’re a young parent (under 20) who wants to start learning. Don’t forget, you might also be able to get help with your childcare costs. Check the ‘Care to Learn’ website for more information at www.direct.gov.uk/caretolearn

Still not sure? Go surfing instead.

You can check if you qualify for EMA by visiting www.direct.gov.uk/ema and filling in a few details.

This will tell you instantly if you could qualify, how much you might get, and also if you’re entitled to other funding to help you with your course.

Available from Spring 2008.
Time to apply yourself.

And that’s it. What happens next is in your hands. Here’s a list of the things you need to think about and do to apply for and receive EMA. You can tick the boxes as you do them. Not that you have to, it’s your choice after all.

☐ If I haven’t done so already, I must get myself a bank or building society account and the evidence to prove it (account statement, payment book, etc).

☐ I will get an application form online at www.direct.gov.uk/ema, or by phoning 0800 121 8989, and will fill it in with my parents or carers. I can also get a form from either my school, college, learning provider or my Connexions personal adviser. Forms will be available from Spring 2008.

☐ My parent/s or carer will send evidence of the household income for the relevant tax year. This might be their Tax Credit Award Notice (TC602), or P60.

☐ I’ll send back all the forms, bank details and income evidence at the same time.

☐ I will chill out while my application is processed. If I am eligible, a Notice of Entitlement (NOE) will arrive confirming the weekly amount I will receive. My NOE is a very important document which I will need to receive my EMA payments.

☐ When I enrol on my course or programme I will take my NOE with me on the day, or as soon as possible, as my payments cannot be made without it. I will also sign an EMA agreement with my school, college or learning provider. This sets out what’s expected of me in terms of attendance, behaviour, coursework and progress. From Spring 2008 I can also do the first stage of my EMA application online. I will then get a secure password protected ‘My Account’ where I can view updates about my application and, should I receive EMA, shows when my payments are due and for how much.