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MONEY BOX LIVE

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DUGGLEBY: Good afternoon. As the row over student fees rumbles on, it's clear that the cost of going to university in 2012 rather than 2011 is going to be much greater than we first thought. Far more universities than expected are going to charge the maximum £9,000 for tuition, although they still have to satisfy the requirement by the Office of Fair Access to help those from poorer families. The final decision in each case is expected in July, but in the meantime the papers are full of scary headlines about next year's intake facing a debt of between £40,000 and £50,000 for a 3 year course compared with the present level of around £20,000. Gap years are being put on hold, intensifying competition for places this autumn. And according to UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services, one in three candidates may fail to get in. So are the unlucky ones being priced out of higher education? Don't be put off says the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. The system's designed so that students from England studying full time for their first degree will not have to pay anything while they study. It's what happens later that's worrying future students and their parents because household income is critical when it comes to assessing who qualifies for what level of help. And indeed a poll from the research company High Fliers suggests that half those currently studying would have been put off going to university by the proposed level of tuition fees. That said, you can't generalise about student finance in the UK as a whole. It's not just the fee structure that's changing, but also repayments and interest whereby those earning more will pay a higher rate. Also it's different if you live in Scotland. And for that reason, we have Miriam Craven, Communications Manager for the Students Award Agency for Scotland in

our Edinburgh studio. Elaine Robinson is Welsh Coordinator on the National Association of Student Money Advisers Board and she's in our Cardiff studio. And here in London, David Malcolm is Head of Social Policy at the National Union of Students. 03700 100 444 is the number to call. And first on the line, we have Kate in Tonbridge.

KATE: Oh hi there. I just wanted to check. My daughter has been offered a place to go to Cambridge to study veterinary science in September/October this year, and I just wanted to make sure does she qualify to be at the £3,000 level for the whole of her course or will it go up at some point, or does it go up next year?

DUGGLEBY: Right, well this is quite a common question. And Kate, let me just check. Veterinary, is that a 5 year course?

KATE: I think it's 6 years at Cambridge.

DUGGLEBY: 6 years. I think that's a pretty big bonus, David?

MALCOLM: Yes you're correct, the amount of fees that they will pay, if they start in 2011, will continue at around about £3,000 for the remainder of the course. It will go up by inflation each year, so there'll be a small increase each year, but it won't go up to the £9,000 amount when the 2012 arrangements come in for new students.

DUGGLEBY: Have you got any other children, Kate, wanting to go?

KATE: *(laughs)* I do. Unfortunately yes, I have a 14 year old, so she won't be quite so lucky. At least I've got away with one, I suppose.

DUGGLEBY: Well and in quite a big way too. I mean veterinary at Cambridge, I suspect, is certain for a £9,000 course. Just checking around the other areas - Miriam, your position there?

CRAVEN: Currently at the moment if a Scottish student was to study veterinary medicine at a Scottish institution, we would actually be paying the fees in full from academic year 11/12. However we have elections here in Scotland tomorrow, so everything is open to discussion and we'll see what happens from academic year 12/13 onwards.

DUGGLEBY: I mean my mathematics may not be quite right, but 6 years at £9,000 - that's £54,000. I mean, my goodness, I'd have thought a Scottish university student would be just - you know it's an astonishing difference in the two different parts of the UK.

CRAVEN: Yeah and long may it continue hopefully.

DUGGLEBY: Okay, right, your comment Elaine. Any difference in Wales?

ROBINSON: No, no, it's very similar in Wales as David has said the situation is in England. Except you know next year, the upgrading and the fees won't affect Welsh domicile students wherever they study in the UK because there's going to be a subsidy subject to you know the politics not changing.

DUGGLEBY: What about the repayment terms? Do they change? Because the repayment terms under the new system will be different - we'll probably get onto that later - but, David, is it the same repayment structure?

DAVID: It is exactly the same repayment structure. So in the case of Kate's daughter, it will be repaying 9% above what's currently £15,000, although we expect that amount to rise by RPI inflation in future years.

DUGGLEBY: The loans are linked to RPI, aren't they? The actual interest rate is linked to RPI?

MALCOLM: That's right, yes. It'll be the same arrangement as is current, but it will

be the new higher rate of interest.

DUGGLEBY: But it'll still be the level of income you have after you've graduated?

MALCOLM: That gives you the repayment amount that you make, yes.

DUGGLEBY: No doubt we'll come back to that a bit later on in the programme and we'll talk now to Michael in Peterborough.

MICHAEL: Hi there. My question is my daughter, she's the first one in our family to start university, and she's being given five offers by the universities and she's procrastinating about which one to go to.

DUGGLEBY: Five offers?

MICHAEL: Yes, she's had five offers. She's being predicted good grades. Now my question is can she start applying for the funding now even though she hasn't made her final decision on which university she's going to?

DUGGLEBY: Right. Now I think the rules here are different. Ladies, there's different dates, isn't there, for different parts of the country?

ROBINSON: Er ...

CRAVEN: I ...

ROBINSON: Sorry.

DUGGLEBY: Sorry, who are we taking?

ROBINSON: Miriam in Scotland, you start us off.

CRAVEN: Okay. If you're applying to SAAS, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, you can apply now. There's no need to wait for exam results to come out because the student can apply with what they see as their number one choice and then make any changes when the exam results come out in the summer. We would say that there's a deadline of 30th June for students to apply to guarantee that their funding is ready for the start of their course.

DUGGLEBY: Elaine?

ROBINSON: In Wales the deadline is a bit earlier - it's April 15th for new applicants. But that's to guarantee that your money is there at the beginning of term. But there's no absolute deadline except for 9 months after you actually start the course. That is the absolute deadline.

DUGGLEBY: And David?

MALCOLM: And again apply now, as soon as you can, and it doesn't matter if you haven't made a final choice. And the deadline to guarantee funding at the start of the course is the end of May. But you know even if you apply after that, you will hopefully get the funding as soon as you can.

DUGGLEBY: One of the considerations, Michael, is going to be whether, would your daughter be living at home under any circumstances at all?

MALCOLM: Well she's had two local offers.

DUGGLEBY: Two local offers. Has she got an offer in London, say, for example?

MALCOLM: She has. She's been offered London Met, SOAS, some we're trying to persuade her from ...

DUGGLEBY: Right because there is going to be quite a big difference in the

maintenance loans that will be made because they're different under different circumstances, David.

MALCOLM: That's correct, and you would get a higher rate of maintenance loan if you studied in London. But it's relatively easy to figure that out even if you do change from an outside London institution to an inside one. So the key thing is just to apply where you think you want to go and, as Miriam said, it can all be sorted from there.

DUGGLEBY: Okay. Chris in Surrey, your call?

CHRIS: Hi yes, good afternoon. I have three sons, one of whom (Oliver) is 18 and has been accepted to train at the London College of Music to commence in September. I have made the various applications to the government for assistance. My question is more to do with repayment of that loan from the government. It's in relation to when does he have to start repaying it? I've heard rumours of when he starts earning £21,000 a year, but I'm not sure exactly what it's all about. And what interest rate will he be charged or will we be charged for that loan?

DUGGLEBY: Okay, well we'll start off with the English position, which I think will be covered here.

MALCOLM: Just to check, Chris, he's going in this year, so in September/October?

CHRIS: Correct.

MALCOLM: Yeah. He'll be on the old system then, so he will not start to make any repayments of his student loan until the April following his graduation at the earliest; and only then if he's earning over £15,000 of income before tax, and he'll pay that back at 9% of that income above that amount. We are expecting that £15,000 limit to be increased at some stage by inflation, so it may be a bit higher. And when that happens, then the interest he'll be paying as soon as he gets the loan and from there on will be linked to inflation, so the Retail Price Index. And currently it's only 1.5%

because of how low bank rates are. So that's the situation he'll be in, but it will change for people entering university in England in the year following.

DUGGLEBY: Elsewhere?

ROBINSON: In Wales, it's exactly the same. Yes, it's £15,000 threshold and the rate of inflation, which changes. I think we know the next one in September, what it's going to be for the following year, but currently it's 1.5%.

DUGGLEBY: Right. But of course inflation is trending upwards at the moment, so it could well increase in future. Miriam, any - subject obviously to political considerations?

CRAVEN: We're very similar, except the only difference is that the term for paying back the loan in Scotland is 35 years in comparison to in England where it's 25 years currently, the system they have at the moment. And after that 35 years, the loan is then written off.

DUGGLEBY: We've had an email from Melanie in Suffolk and she says she's applied to go to university in September. 'The only thing that's worrying me is that if I should move in with my partner after my course is finished, will he become responsible in some way for paying my debts?'

MALCOLM: No, in short. It's only the taxable income of that individual that's taken into account when looking at loan repayments.

DUGGLEBY: And she says, 'Therefore if my own wages remain under the threshold for repayment, then presumably I don't repay?'

MALCOLM: Exactly.

CRAVEN: That's correct.

ROBINSON: Yeah, yeah.

DUGGLEBY: Okay, good. And now Carol in Bristol. Carol?

CAROL: Hello. I think my question's partly been answered. I have a son who graduated in the summer of 2009. He, despite getting a first, didn't get any work for over a year, but the odd bit of freelance and some fixed contract work. He was at over £15,000 a year if he'd you know had a year's salary, so he's paid little bits back. In between times, his actual year's salary actually works out at less than the personal allowance rate, so you know ...

DUGGLEBY: Well that's very low. That's down about £6,000.

CAROL: That's what I mean. But when he does get permanent work, he will, I understand, stay on the old scheme? Is that right - so that when he's earning £15,000?

DUGGLEBY: Yeah. I think it's pretty well accepted. I mean obviously politicians can never be entirely trusted not to retrospectively change the rules, but it's pretty well accepted that you're in the system that applies on the day you start.

CAROL: Oh I see, yeah.

MALCOLM: Indeed. One thing just to note is if your son has paid back some student loan money and hasn't actually turned out to have earned over £15,000, he can get that refunded once there's the reconciliation at the end of the tax year - if he'd prefer to have that, of course. He may be happy that it's taken off the loan, but he can get that repaid if he wants.

DUGGLEBY: An email, which we always get for this programme. It's about mature students. It's from Gareth in Brecon, so I'll direct this first to Elaine. He's starting a full time course as a mature student in September. He's already had his first degree, which was a 4 year course. 'Is it worth applying for a maintenance grant or is there

any other help I can get, or what am I eligible for?’

ROBINSON: Well if his first degree was from the UK, then ...

DUGGLEBY: Which it was, yes.

ROBINSON: Yeah. Then unless he’s doing a course such as medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, architecture, social work, then I’m afraid there won’t be any statutory funding available for him. If he was doing those particular courses that I’ve just mentioned, then he would be able to get a student loan only and then he would have to find fees for himself and extra living costs. But I can’t think of , some people apply for things such as professional and career development loans for 2 years of a vocational type course, so there might be other funding. It might be worth him contacting the university that he’s thinking of applying to because there might be bursaries and scholarships that nevertheless will be available to him. It may not be enough though to cover his full living costs.

DUGGLEBY: But effectively the help, David, is directed at first degree courses?

MALCOLM: Absolutely. And only, as Elaine outlined, in limited circumstances do other courses get some help.

DUGGLEBY: Right and we move onto Maisie in Greenwich. Maisie?

MAISIE: Hi. My question is I’m from London and I’m studying at Trinity College in Dublin and I was told that I would get no financial loans or grants for studying outside the UK. But I did some research and there’s an EU ruling that says that all EU countries have to offer student loans to their students who are studying in other EU countries, but this hasn’t been implemented yet in the UK. For example, I have a Swedish friend who’s at Trinity College, but she’s got a loan from Sweden to study there. And I was wondering if you knew when the UK is going to implementing this ruling or, if they’re not, if there’s any other advice?

DUGGLEBY: Okay, who pays what for whom within the European Community?
Miriam, can you give us general guidelines on how it works?

CRAVEN: Yes, I think what is actually being referred to under the Swedish ruling there is a type of funding that's called portability, and there are a lot of European countries who have signed up to offering portability of their student funding support. As the caller said, the UK has not signed up for that. Currently at the moment there are no plans to review the portability of UK student funding to take that to a European country with you. However, any European student going to study in another European country, they are eligible to apply for the support that is offered to the student in that home country in terms of tuition fees. So, for example, going to the Republic of Ireland, then whatever the Irish government offers in terms of tuition fee support, then a UK national is entitled to apply for that support. Unfortunately what I would say is that in Ireland they don't actually have tuition fees. They have a registration fee, so the registration fee would have to be paid and I don't think they offer any support for that. This may be an Irish accent, but I can't definitely confirm what the situation is in Ireland. But the best advice is to double check with the actual institution at Trinity University.

MALCOLM: I think there was previously some help for British students coming to study in Ireland, but as a consequence of the terrible financial situation in Ireland, that's been withdrawn. So I think that's where unfortunately Maisie finds herself.

ROBINSON: It does happen in Wales actually, thinking about the Welsh situation, because we have the tuition fee grant and EU students that came to Wales to study took advantage of the tuition fee grant and will do so when the new one arrives. It is happening here.

DUGGLEBY: We inevitably get the odd question that says, look, how long do I have to live in wherever it is I'm going to go to university in order to qualify for help under their rules - I think probably directed specifically at Scotland. You know can I just move to Scotland next year and get no tuition fees? I think the answer to that is no, you can't.

CRAVEN: Yeah I think, Vincent, if I could just say that in terms of EU funding all of us within the UK will offer - whether it be ourselves with the tuition fee covered fully for a new student or whether it be a tuition fee loan - because under EU law we are required to offer that support to any EU student coming in. In terms of somebody coming up from England to Scotland to study, they are not automatically eligible because it depends on the part of the UK that they're living in and education is still seen as a temporary time there. So if they are just moving up for the purposes of education, then they are not going to get funding in Scotland; whereas if the whole family have moved up and settled you know in the year before the course starts, then that is slightly different. I think one other final point I would make is that if Maisie had been Scottish, we do have an exception rule with some universities in Ireland (and Trinity University is actually one of those) so a Scottish student in Maisie's situation going to study at Trinity University would get support from ourselves at SAAS. It's an exception to the rule.

MALCOLM: As indeed would a student from Northern Ireland.

CRAVEN: Yeah, it's an exception rule.

DUGGLEBY: Right, some emails on partners income. Let's start with Bev and she says, 'Why are my partner's income details from the tax year 09/2010 being taken into consideration for my son's student finance? We weren't together at that point?' Can you help us on this one, David?

MALCOLM: Yes. Well I had to do some research into that particular question and basically, although the rule does seem very odd, it is the case that if you are living with a partner in the academic year under consideration - although the finances they're looking at predate that by a couple of years in England, you still have to include them. So it doesn't seem to make logical sense, but it is in the regulations.

DUGGLEBY: Miriam, do you have a comment on it?

CRAVEN: Yes in England you will be looking at financial year 09/10; whereas for

ourselves in Scotland, anybody starting in 11/12, we would be looking at financial year ending April 2011. So it's just one, it's the previous financial year. And we would take into account the household income for the year that the student is going to study. So if the student is applying now, in May, then it's whoever's now in the household and it is that previous tax year of income that we take into account.

DUGGLEBY: Yes. And then we've got an email here from Penn in Dymock and he says, 'I don't understand why my partner's income is taken into account when assessing what financial assistance my daughters are entitled to. They are my children for whom I have responsibility'.

MALCOLM: The government decided in England about 6 years ago, and I think elsewhere around about the same time, that the rules would be changed so that the partners of parents would have their income included on the basis that they form part of the household and, therefore, they should make a contribution. I should say it was controversial at the time and I think remains so in certain places.

DUGGLEBY: I mean another point Elaine, of course, is that you don't escape this parental means testing arrangement unless you're married or have been living independently, is it, for 5 years or something like that?

ROBINSON: It's 3 years before the start of the course ...

DUGGLEBY: Three years, yeah.

ROBINSON: ... or you're 25 before the academic year in question.

MALCOLM: Or married or in a civil partnership.

ROBINSON: Or living with a partner, a civil partnership.

DUGGLEBY: And a different subject raised by Marley in Exeter about the effect on

student grants, loans, etcetera of getting a bursary or a scholarship. He actually specifically refers to a bursary of £750 and an extra £500 if you qualify for an excellence scholarship. This is at Royal Holloway apparently. He also cites another bursary system for another university, which he may or may not be going to. And he says, 'Does this extra money come as it were without any strings attached?' David?

MALCOLM: In terms of the bursaries, they may themselves have some conditions attached to them - particularly something like an excellence scholarship or something that might require the student to undertake some work in local schools or something like that. But broadly speaking it shouldn't have any impact at all on your state student support, so the grants and loans you get from Student Finance England in the case of English students.

DUGGLEBY: And another question which is slightly on the same lines, Elaine. This is from a Welsh listener. And she says that she's on a low income and her daughter has got a bursary. And also her grandparents apparently would like to help with the funding and she wants to know again whether the bursary affects the grants and loans and whether anything from the grandparents would affect the grants and loans - I mean bearing in mind she's a low income family as things stand.

ROBINSON: Yeah, I think what would count for the grants and the loans would be the parents' income.

DUGGLEBY: Yeah, well that's a low income. We know that.

ROBINSON: And their taxable income. So any gift that's given by the grandparents, it's not going to be taxable, it's not going to be counted in the household income. So I can't see, unless it was earning a lot of interest, you know like unearned income. It would have to be fairly high.

DUGGLEBY: Yeah well that would be in the student's hands of course if it was a lump sum.

ROBINSON: Yeah. I doubt that it's going to affect her statutory support.

DUGGLEBY: But if it's just simply a couple of thousand a year, say, that's not a problem?

ROBINSON: No, not at all.

DUGGLEBY: Okay. Right now then, Jackie, you've got the next call in North Yorkshire.

JACKIE: Hello, hi there. My daughter's applying to universities for 2012 entry, so just missing the luck of those who are going in this year. And what I wanted to ask was if she's an English student living in England applying to a Scottish university, what the fees will be likely to be for her?

DUGGLEBY: Miriam?

CRAVEN: Unfortunately the answer is that we don't know at the moment and that's because with the elections just happening tomorrow, there has been a green paper out in Scotland which was for consultation and those responses are back. But there's been no decision taken around what the tuition fee rate will be for English, Welsh and Northern Irish students until the new government has been formed. So I'm afraid I can't give a clear answer on that one.

DUGGLEBY: Okay. Well we've got a question now again for Elaine. This is on the Welsh system. She says 'My daughter was born ...' Sorry, 'I was born in Wales and I will be based there for the duration of my course, which is a PGCE'?

ROBINSON: Yuh.

DUGGLEBY: What's that stand for?

ROBINSON: It's a Postgraduate Certificate in Education. Teaching.

DUGGLEBY: Alright, okay, at a Welsh university. She's born in Wales but doesn't apparently live there now. She lives in Bristol. But she was born there, going to a Welsh university. She was under the impression the Welsh Assembly Government offer student grants for Welsh students studying on this course in Wales, but 'I've been told by the university it's no longer the case'. Is the tuition fee grant no longer offered by the Welsh Assembly Government at all?

ROBINSON: The tuition fee grant went for new entrants that started in 2010. But she wouldn't have Welsh domicile anyway because it's not about nationality. It's about where you have your ordinary residence.

DUGGLEBY: Ah!

ROBINSON: So if she's living in Bristol, she won't have the ordinary residence to be classed as a Welsh domicile for Welsh funding. So she wouldn't have been eligible for the tuition fee grant anyway.

DUGGLEBY: Is it the same principle in Scotland - this question of domicile and residence?

CRAVEN: Yes, exactly the same. It depends on where your permanent address is at the time of your application.

MALCOLM: It should be said the student in question should get a tuition fee loan to cover any fees that she's charged for her PGCE, so she shouldn't have to find the money upfront.

CRAVEN: Yuh.

DUGGLEBY: Right, okay. And we can move onto Trish now in Cheshire.

TRISH: Hello there.

DUGGLEBY: Hi Trish. Your question?

TRISH: I've got two sons. My eldest son is 24, coming up to 25 in September when he will take up a course. Unfortunately, although being very bright, he messed about a bit at school and left before he took A levels. He's now finally decided that he wants to be a paramedic. Unfortunately obviously he's not got the qualifications to go to uni, so he has been offered an unconditional place at a local college which does an access course. They've actually offered him applied science, I think it is, as a sort of leg up for his uni place. He doesn't live with me. He hasn't lived with me since about 2005. He's had a series of low paid jobs. He's obviously no capital or anything like that. I'm just wondering if there's anything out there that could help him. His fees apparently for this year when he goes in September to do the access course will be about £1800.

DUGGLEBY: Okay, I think we've got enough information there for David to answer.

MALCOLM: Yeah, I think basically he needs to speak to the college. Things are in a bit of flux with funding for adult learners at college at the moment, which he would be counted as, and he should speak to the college about what's available. They might be able to remit some of his fees or basically give him some indications as to what he might be able to get to support him. One thing could be a professional and career development loan, the type that Elaine mentioned. You can find information on that on direct.gov.uk. But speak to the college and see if they can give him some ideas.

DUGGLEBY: Any comment from ...?

ROBINSON: Just to say in Wales for an access course if you're age ... Oh actually, how old did you say? 25?

DUGGLEBY: 24, 25 years.

ROBINSON: There might be an assembly learning grant. If a similar situation happened in Wales, then you'd get your fees paid I think is the case.

DUGGLEBY: We've an email from Isabel in Cambridge and she says, 'I'm studying architecture' - I don't know whether that's in Cambridge or not - 'in a final year. RIBA expect students to take up to 2 years out to work in industry. What happens to the fees? Do they stay at the same rate as when we began?'

MALCOLM: Yes because they'll still be on the same course, so they'll remain on the system they started on.

DUGGLEBY: Okay. A very gloomy email in here saying what happens when these new fees, these new high fees come in and you just find you can't cope with all the costs and you leave halfway through the course?

MALCOLM: Well I mean hopefully no student should be deterred purely on the basis of having to find any money for those fees because you can get the loan out upfront. But if you do drop out in the middle of the course, then you'll still have to pay back the student loan debt that you've accumulated up to that point. What I would suggest is that if you feel that you need to, speak to an adviser in the student union or university about your situation and get some advice as to what's best for you.

DUGGLEBY: Yes. I mean that's a general point, isn't it ladies - you know go and find somebody in the financial set up to talk you through your problems?

CRAVEN: Definitely.

ROBINSON: Yeah most universities will have a student support set up, and I think as part of your decision making process go and speak to somebody that you know has all the facts and can advise you.

DUGGLEBY: There again, I'd say don't believe everything you read in the

newspapers.

ROBINSON: No.

CRAVEN: I would also say the other key important thing to do is to make sure that you keep your funding bodies up to date with what you're deciding to do. So if you are withdrawing from courses, leaving, it's better to let the funding body know, so that we can put a suspension or stop payments because we do have a case where some students leave their university course and they haven't even let the university know or let ourselves at SAAS know, and that means then the student has been getting this money paid into their account and they're then running up more debt. So it's better to make a decision and let your funding bodies know as well.

DUGGLEBY: Just time for one more call. Marjorie in Southend, I see you've got three children all coming up to university age.

MARJORIE: No, they're my grandchildren.

DUGGLEBY: Your grandchildren? Sorry, grandchildren, right.

MARJORIE: Yes, yes.

DUGGLEBY: Okay, so 16, 17 and 18 they are?

MARJORIE: That's right.

DUGGLEBY: So what are your thoughts?

MARJORIE: Well I just wondered if there is going to be any help available for such families who have several children going through university at the same time?

DUGGLEBY: Well this is a very interesting question because we were discussing

before the programme of course people are going to be caught up perhaps in three different systems, David?

MALCOLM: Absolutely, yes. There's still the old, old system before 2006 going as well as the current one and the new one coming in. Marjorie, unfortunately it's not a very easy answer to give to you. Yes to some extent, I suppose is the best I can say, it will be taken into account when assessing the income of the parents in that situation, but it won't be across all the different types of support.

DUGGLEBY: And a final word from you, Miriam?

CRAVEN: Yes, we would be the same.

DUGGLEBY: Okay.

ROBINSON: Yeah, same in Wales. (*laughs*) Any contribution is split.

DUGGLEBY: It is, but I do feel for those people who you know are facing these very difficult decisions about the amount of money. I mean it really is almost impossible to calculate how much it's going to cost - or maybe you've done it, David - how much it's going to cost to put somebody through university in terms of the amount of debt they're going to accumulate.

MALCOLM: Well in terms of debt, as you said, you know at the moment we're about £20,000 at the very least, and another £10,000 onto that. And in terms of how much it costs, we think about £10,000 per person on average per year at the moment, but costs will increase in England with the fees going up.

DUGGLEBY: Indeed. Well thank you very much indeed to Miriam Craven, Communications Manager for the Student Awards Agency in Scotland; Elaine Robinson, Welsh Coordinator on the National Association of Student Money Advisers; and David Malcolm (with the Scots accent) who's Head of Social Policy at

the National Union of Students. Now all three bodies have websites, I think, and you can find them among the links on our own website: bbc.co.uk/moneybox. And of course you can listen again, download a podcast, and give us your thoughts on the issues we've raised. Paul Lewis will keep you up to date on the latest personal finance news in Money Box at noon on Saturday and I'll be back same time next Wednesday afternoon to take your calls on holiday finance and the rising cost of going abroad.