



Education

Guide to Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA)

Session 2019/2020

Including:

- **How do I apply**
- **Am I entitled**
- **How much will I receive**
- **Important deadlines**

What is an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)?

An EMA is an allowance of £30 per week payable to eligible young people who stay in full-time education at school after their 16th birthday. It can be paid for a maximum of 3 consecutive years, and **must be applied for each year.**

The young person has to satisfy attendance requirements. Also, they have to complete a Learning Agreement (a contract between the young person and their school).

Who can apply?

An EMA may be granted at the discretion of the Authority to any person who:

- remains in full-time education (minimum 21 hours per week) at school beyond the statutory leaving age
- if you are 16 years of age or over before 30 September 2019 you may be eligible for an EMA from the beginning of school term. If you are 16 years of age between 1 October 2019 and 29 February 2020 you may be eligible for an EMA from January 2020
- is either attending a school within the Stirling Council area, or is home educated within the Stirling Council area

Eligibility is also dependent on household income; applications are means tested.

How do I apply?

Application forms are available in schools from the beginning of June 2019. It is important to get your application form into Stirling Council as early as possible.

August 2019 Intake

All eligible applications received before **30 September 2019** can be backdated to the beginning of term. Eligible applications for August 2019 received after that date will only be paid from the first payment date after receipt of their application.

January 2020 Intake

All eligible applications received before **29 February 2020** can be backdated to the beginning of that term. Eligible applications for January 2020 received after that date will only be paid from the first payment date after receipt of their application.

The final deadline for ALL applications in the 2019/2020 academic year is **31 March 2020**. No applications will be processed after this date.

NOTE : LEARNING AGREEMENTS FOR SESSION 2019/20 SHOULD BE RETURNED BY 31 MARCH 2020. PAYMENTS FOR LEARNING AGREEMENTS RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL ONLY BE MADE FROM THE DATE OF RECEIPT OF THE LEARNING AGREEMENT.

How is an EMA calculated?

The income thresholds for the EMA Programme, Academic Year 2019/2020 are as follows:

Income	No. of dependant children in the household	Award
£0 - £24,421	1	£30
£0 - £26,884	2+	£30

Will it affect benefits?

No. EMA is currently paid over and above Child Benefit, Tax Credits and other benefits. If you can provide Tax Credit Award Notice (TCAN) for 2019/20 this may help speed up the processing of your application.

What if the application form is incomplete?

All incomplete and unsupported applications will be held back until the information is submitted.

What if I am unable to provide all the information required?

Retrospective awards will be arranged once all necessary proof has been supplied, however, you should submit your application before the cut-off date.

Can applications be made by more than one child in a family?

Yes, if they are over 16 years old they can apply.

When is the EMA Paid?

Usually fortnightly in arrears. A payment schedule is issued with Award Letters giving details of when payments will be made.

How is the EMA paid?

It will be paid by BACS transfer to the young person's Bank Account.

Will I be paid for school holidays?

No, you will only be paid for weeks in attendance at school, up to a maximum of 42 weeks in any one academic year.

Does the student's performance at school affect the EMA?

Yes. Payments can be withheld on the following bases:

- if attendance falls below 100% in any week, no payment will be made for that week unless absence has been approved by the school or covered by a medical certificate
- if Learning Agreement conditions are not met

What period does this application cover?

An award, if made, will be for **one school year only**. **A new application must be submitted each year.**

Support for Vulnerable Students

Flexibility may be extended to applicants who may need additional support such as students sharing their learning time between school and home. Additional support can be given to those who need assistance with the completion of the EMA application form and for those with additional support needs. **(PLEASE NOTE all students must satisfy the main eligibility criteria of date of birth, household income, learning over 21 hours a week and residency rules).**

College Applicants

EMAs are also available to 16 to 19 year olds attending college courses. Information and application forms will be available from the **colleges**. Stirling Council only deals with EMAs for students staying on at school. ***This information is intended as a general guide and it should not be regarded as a statement of the statutory position.***

EMA Application Forms

Available from your secondary school.

Important Deadlines

30 September 2019 Final date for applications to be in for August intake to be eligible for back payment to the beginning of term.

29 February 2020 Final date for applications to be in for January intake to be eligible for back payment to the beginning of term.

31 March 2020 Closing date for ALL applications for the academic year 2019/2020.

**Completed EMA Application forms should be returned
to:**

Stirling Council Benefits (EMA)
Teith House
Kerse Road
Stirling
FK7 7QA

Tel: 0845 277 7000 / 01786 404040

ema@stirling.gov.uk
www.stirling.gov.uk