



House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA

Ref: ZA11150

The Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP  
Secretary of State for Education  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Gavin,

**Re: Support for Students during Covid-19**

I am writing on behalf of a number of my constituents who are deeply concerned about what Coronavirus could mean for their continued university education.

Since the closure of universities across the country due to Covid-19, students of all ages have been left uncertain about the future of their further education. Primarily, students are frustrated that they are forced to pay their final loan instalment when they are not attending university for the final term. University fees are already sky high, alongside soaring interest rates, students are struggling as it is to pay their fees. Students are left with an eye-watering amount of debt which is constantly increasing due to the high interest rates. But students are still expected to pay their fees, even when they are not attending university. With many students losing jobs due to the virus, many cannot afford to be paying for services which they cannot receive.

Currently, students in England are paying up to £9,250 per year in fees. What action is the Government taking to reduce or remove the financial burden of tuition fees for students whilst they are not attending university?

In addition, students across the country have been instructed to leave university campus and move back home, yet they are still expected to pay their housing fees. Will the Government be providing any form of support to stop students being forced to pay excessively high rents when the house will now be vacant for many months?

Lastly, will there be an official guidance provided to universities about final year students and how their degree or marks may be affected this pandemic? What support will be provided to these students? Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Christian Matheson MP**

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