Child Benefit for young people aged 16 or over

For use from October 2012

Please keep these notes for future reference
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These notes are for guidance only and reflect the position at the time of writing. They do not affect any right of appeal.
Introduction

You can continue to be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person aged 16 or over if they are a *qualifying young person*. These notes explain what we mean by *qualifying young person* and will help you decide what to do next.

These notes also tell you about some of the changes that can affect the amount of money you are entitled to. Please read these notes carefully and keep them in a safe place. You may need to look at them again.

Other changes you must tell us about are listed in the leaflet CH1715 *Payment Advice Notes*. You must tell us straight away if any of these changes happen. If you do not and you are paid too much, we may ask you to pay this money back.

If you are getting Child Tax Credit it is important you also tell the Tax Credit Office of any changes as soon as possible. You can do this by phoning the Tax Credit Helpline on 0345 300 3900. If you have speech or hearing difficulties and use a text phone, the phone number is 0345 300 3909.

Important

If you are entitled to Child Benefit but have chosen not to get payment, you should still tell us if the young person is continuing in education or approved training.
About Child Benefit for young people

You can usually be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person up to the Monday following 31 August after their 16th birthday, if they do not intend to stay on in full-time, non-advanced education or approved training.

You can continue to be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 if they are a qualifying young person.

A qualifying young person is someone who is:

• 16, 17, 18 or 19 years old and
  — in full-time, non-advanced education. We explain what we mean by full-time, non-advanced education on page 5. See ‘About full-time, non-advanced education’ or
  — in approved training. We explain what we mean by approved training on page 5. See ‘About approved training’ or
• aged 16 or 17 and has left full-time, non-advanced education or approved training, and has registered for further education, work or training with a careers service, Connexions or similar organisation (in Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning or an Education and Library Board). We explain what we mean by this on page 7. See ‘Child Benefit extension period’.

Important

You are not entitled to Child Benefit:

• for a young person aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 who is in advanced education. We explain what we mean by advanced education, and list examples of it, on page 9. See ‘About advanced education’
• for a young person aged 19 who enrolled on, was accepted for or started a course of full-time, non-advanced education or approved training after their 19th birthday if this follows a break in full-time, non-advanced education
• after a young person has reached age 20. Child Benefit ends at age 20.
You can be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 who is in full-time, non-advanced education at a school or college (or somewhere other than a school or college if, before the child’s 16th birthday, they received education elsewhere). By full-time education we mean an average of more than 12 hours supervised study a week, during term time, not counting breaks for meals and homework. We do not mean courses or education provided by an employer or as part of a job contract. Examples of non advanced education are:

- GCSEs and qualifications up to and including A Level
- NVQ level 1, 2 or 3
- GNVQ Foundation, intermediate or advanced course
- BTEC National Diploma, National Certificate and 1st Diploma
- National Diploma
- Standard Grade (Scotland)
- SVQ level 1, 2 or 3
- Scottish Group Awards.

This is not a complete list.

You can be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 who is in approved training which is not provided by a contract of employment. Training is approved if it is provided under one of the following programmes:

**In England**

- Foundation Learning Programmes
- Access to Apprenticeships and
- unwaged Programme Led Apprenticeships.

**In Scotland**

- Get Ready for Work
- Skillseekers.

**In Wales**

- Foundation Apprenticeships or Traineeships
- Skill Build (or Skillbuild+ if started before 1 August 2011).

**In Northern Ireland**

- Training for Success: Professional and Technical Training
- Jobskills and Programme Led Apprenticeships.
Child Benefit for young people continuing in full-time, non-advanced education or approved training

You will be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person up until the age of 20 as long as:

• they stay in full-time, non-advanced education or approved training and

• none of the changes listed under ‘Changes that can affect the amount of Child Benefit you are entitled to’ happen. See page 9.

If the young person is 19, they must have been in continuous full-time, non-advanced education or approved training or must have been accepted or enrolled on the course before the age of 19.

What happens when a young person leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training

When a young person aged 16, 17, 18 or 19 leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training, your entitlement to Child Benefit will usually end a few weeks later, but see ‘Changes that can affect the amount of Child Benefit you are entitled to’ on page 9. You must tell us straight away if any of these changes happen. If none of these changes happen, you will be entitled to Child Benefit up to and including these dates:

• full-time, non-advanced education or approved training finishes in June, July or August – the last Monday in August

• full-time, non-advanced education or approved training finishes in September, October or November – the last Monday in November

• full-time, non-advanced education or approved training finishes in December, January or February – the last Monday in February

• full-time, non-advanced education or approved training finishes in March, April or May – the last Monday in May

• if the young person is in Scotland taking a ‘higher certificate’ or ‘advanced higher certificate’ and entered for exams that finish before the end of May – the last Monday in August.

If the young person reaches age 20 before one of the dates shown above, your entitlement to Child Benefit will end straight away.

If you are also getting Child Tax Credit, the amount of tax credit you get may change when your child leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training. Make sure you tell the Tax Credit Office as soon as possible by phoning their helpline on 0345 300 3900. If you have speech or hearing difficulties and use a text phone, the phone number is 0345 300 3909.
The date full-time, non-advanced education or approved training ends is the official date the school, college or training provider says it ends. The only exception to this is where a young person intends to return to full-time, non-advanced education or approved training but changes their mind between courses or terms. In these circumstances you are asked to give the date the young person changed their mind.

When a young person returns to full-time, non-advanced education or approved training

You may be entitled to Child Benefit again if the young person returns to full-time, non-advanced education or approved training. If this happens please contact us.

Child Benefit extension period

You can be entitled to Child Benefit for up to 20 weeks from the date a young person leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training if:

- they are aged 16 or 17 and
- they have not started paid work for 24 hours or more a week for which payment is expected or received and
- within 20 weeks of leaving full-time, non-advanced education or approved training they have registered for further education, work or training with a careers service, Connexions or similar organisation (in Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning or an Education and Library Board) or any corresponding body in another European Union member State, or
- they have been accepted to join the armed forces and are waiting for a placement.
If you want to apply for this extension, please contact us. You must have been entitled to Child Benefit for the young person immediately before the extension period began and apply within three months of the young person leaving full-time, non-advanced education or approved training.

We will only end your entitlement if the young person:

- reaches age 18 during this time
- starts working for 24 hours or more a week for which payment is received or expected
- starts getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or a tax credit in their own right, or
- stops being registered with a careers service, Connexions or similar organisation (in Northern Ireland, the Department for Employment and Learning or an Education and Library Board).

You may be entitled to Child Benefit for the young person again if:

- their paid work stops, or reduces to less than 24 hours a week, or
- they stop getting Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or a tax credit in their own right.

If this happens, please contact us again.

You may also be entitled to Child Benefit again if the young person returns to full-time, non-advanced education or approved training.
Changes that can affect the amount of Child Benefit you are entitled to

You must tell us straight away if a young person:

- stays on in full-time, non-advanced education or approved training after the date you told us they were going to leave
- leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training earlier than the date you told us
- reduces the time they get supervised study to an average of 12 hours a week or less
- starts training which is not approved or approved training provided by a contract of employment. For a list of approved training see ‘About approved training’ on page 5
- leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training and starts working for 24 hours or more a week for which payment is received or expected
- starts to get Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or a tax credit in their own right
- starts non-advanced education provided by an employer
- starts being educated somewhere other than a school or college, for example, at home
- marries, forms a civil partnership, or starts to live with someone as if they are married or as a civil partner.

About advanced education

You must also tell us straight away if a young person starts a course of advanced education. You are not entitled to Child Benefit for young people aged 16, 17, 18 and 19 who are in advanced education. Examples of advanced education are:

- any course in preparation for a degree
- NVQ level 4 or above
- teacher training.

This is not a complete list.
You may be entitled to Child Benefit for up to six months for a young person who cannot attend school, college or training but there must be a good reason why they cannot attend.

For example:
- they are ill
- the school, college or training establishment is temporarily closed
- they are moving from one school, college or training establishment to another
- someone close to them is ill or has died
- they are pregnant.

If they cannot attend because of illness or disability, you may be entitled to Child Benefit for longer.

You must tell us straight away if a young person aged 16 or over cannot attend full-time, non-advanced education or approved training.

You may be entitled to Child Benefit for a young person if they continue their non-advanced further education at home. However, education at home must have started before they reached age 16. Please contact us for more information.

Remember, you must also tell us straight away if any of the other changes happen that are listed in the leaflet CH1715.

If you are also getting Child Tax Credit, the amount of tax credit you get may change when your child leaves full-time, non-advanced education or approved training. Make sure you tell the Tax Credit Office as soon as possible by phoning their helpline on 0345 300 3900. If you have speech or hearing difficulties and use a text phone, the phone number is 0345 300 3909.

**Important**

If the young person does not intend to stay on in full-time, non-advanced education or approved training, you do not need to contact us unless:
- any of the changes listed under ‘Changes that can affect the amount of Child Benefit you are entitled to’ happen. See page 9, or
- you want to apply for the ‘Child Benefit extension period’. See page 7.
How to contact us for help

To contact us:

- **If you are in the United Kingdom**
  - Helpline: 0845 302 1444
  - Minicom/Textphone: 0845 302 1474
  - If your preferred language is Welsh: 0300 200 1900

- **If you are overseas**
  - Helpline: 00 44 161 210 3086
  - Minicom/Textphone: 00 44 191 225 1833

For our opening hours go to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/contactus)

- go to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/childbenefit)
- write to us at
  - Child Benefit Office
  - PO Box 1
  - NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
  - NE88 1AA

We can reply to you in a different format if you ask us to. For example, Braille, audio CD, or large print.

When you contact us, please tell us your:

- full name
- National Insurance number
- Child Benefit number and
- daytime phone number.

**Your Charter** explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. For more information go to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/charter](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charter)
These notes are for guidance only and reflect the position at the time of writing. They do not affect any right of appeal.

Customer Information Team
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