

Post-9/11 GI Bill FAQs

Q: How do I apply for my GI Bill benefits?

A: You will need to apply for your benefits through the VA. You can do so online here: <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/>. After the VA processes your application (4-6 weeks), they will send you a Certificate of Eligibility in the mail. Please forward a copy of the COE to Amy Southwood at amy.southwood@uky.edu.

Q: How do I get my benefits started at UK?

A: Fill out an online Benefits Request form, located here: <http://seeblue.com/varequest>. You will need to fill this form out every semester you wish to use the benefit.

Q: Do I have to pay my tuition up-front?

A: No. Student Account Services is kept up-to-date on all students attending UK using this benefit, and students will not be penalized while we wait for payment from the VA.

Important note: If you qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill at less than 100% you are responsible for the amount remaining after VA submits their portion of the payment.

Q: I got an email from the VA stating that UK did not submit tuition and fees, so they are not forwarding payment. What's going on?

A: I wait until after add/drop is over to submit tuition to the VA. The reason for this is that all charges will be stable at this point and will not change unless you drop below full time.

Q: I got an email from the VA confirming my certification, but the hours certified to the VA don't match my actual enrolled hours. Why?

A: There could be several reasons for this.

- 1) You are waitlisted for a class.
- 2) Your schedule has changed since you submitted your original request for benefit form.
- 3) One or more of the classes you are enrolled in is not fulfilling degree requirements. If this is the case, I will contact you directly to let you know which classes are not meeting degree requirements.

Please note that while I am required to report any change in enrollment to the VA, as long as you are certified at full-time status (12 credit hours or more for undergraduate students; 9 credit hours or more for graduate students) you will receive your full benefit.

Q: I keep getting bills from UK. How long will it take for the VA to submit tuition payment?

A: Unfortunately, I am not able to provide a concrete answer to this question. In the past, we have experienced **significant** delays in tuition payment for the Fall semester. Recent semesters have seen a big improvement on the timeliness of tuition payments from the VA Regional Office. UK is aware that the payment from the VA is forthcoming, and although you will continue to receive bills from UK until we receive the tuition payment, you will not be penalized in any way while we wait for the VA payment to arrive.

Q: How will I know when the VA has paid tuition?

A: Students can log into their MyUK accounts and check their balance on the financial screen. The VA payment will show up as "Chapter 33"

Q: I have other scholarships/grants/financial aid sources. What will happen to these funds?

A: As long as your other sources of funding are not designated specifically for tuition, and tuition only, an overpayment will be created on your account when the GI Bill funds hit, and a refund will be issued directly to you. Most financial aid is **not** tuition-specific. Some examples of tuition-specific funding are ROTC scholarships; tuition assistance from the National Guard; certain athletic scholarships; certain academic scholarships; UK's Employee Education Program and Family Education Program. (Please note that this list is not exhaustive—just a few examples.)

Important note: The VA tuition payment is always the last payment to arrive.

Other forms of financial aid will hit your account before the VA payment does and these funds will be applied to your balance. When the VA payment does arrive, any refund owed to you will be sent.

Q: I see a payment from the VA on my account but it didn't cover my whole bill. Why not?

A: The only payment that comes directly to UK from the VA is the tuition payment. If you have on-campus housing and dining charges, those fees are **not** covered by direct payment to the school.

Q: Can I use my Post-9/11 GI Bill monthly stipend to pay my on-campus housing and dining charges?

A: The only funds that come directly to UK from the VA are the tuition payments. The book stipend and Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) will direct-deposit into the bank routing number you provided the VA when you filled out your application for Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. You can use your monthly stipend from the VA to pay towards your on-campus Housing and Dining charges, but we do ask that you have your balance paid in full by November 22nd. If this deadline presents a problem, Wendy Christian in Student Account Services can work with students and families on a case-by-case basis to extend the deadline. You will continue to receive bills from UK until all of your charges are paid, but if the balance is paid off by November 22nd, you will not incur late fees.

Q: Do I qualify for the Yellow Ribbon program?

A: The Yellow Ribbon Program is an agreement between the VA and participating schools to split the difference between in- and out-of-state tuition charges for qualified Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients. Kentucky state law allows public universities to charge Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients in-state tuition. Since the VA will cover in-state charges for all programs, the Yellow Ribbon program is no longer needed at the University of Kentucky. I will need a copy of your Certificate of Eligibility from the VA to get your residency status changed to in-state.

Q: When will the VA send payment to me?

A: BAH pays out on the first of each month, payment for the previous month. The BAH payments will direct deposit to the bank routing number you provided to the VA when you applied for your Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. The **earliest** you will see your first BAH payment for the Fall semester is around September 1st. The September payment will be a small one since school is only in session for about a week in August. The first full BAH will arrive around October 1st, payment for the month of September. The VA asks that students allow a 5-day window on either side of the first for payment to arrive.

Important Note: I do not have access to VA payment records to check the status of your monthly stipend. If you have questions about your stipend, you will need to contact the VA directly at 888-442-4551.

Q: How much does the monthly stipend pay?

A: The current rate of payment is \$1,455 per month. Payment is prorated for August and December, when class is not in session for the full month.

Important Note: You must be enrolled in at least one in-person class to receive the full housing stipend. If you are enrolled solely in online courses, the housing stipend pays at half the national average, just over \$900 per month.

Q: I got a text from the VA, asking me to opt in to text verification so I can confirm my attendance. Is this legitimate?

A: Yes. You **must** verify attendance with the VA at the end of each month that class is in session to receive your monthly GI Bill stipend. If you do not opt-in to text message verification within 14 days of the original opt-in text from the VA, they will automatically default to email verification. The email will be sent to the address that you included on your original application for GI Bill benefits. Failure to verify attendance with the VA for two months in a row will result in suspension of your monthly stipend.

Q: How much money will I receive from the VA for books?

A: The book stipend pays a flat rate of \$41.67 per credit hour, and maxes out at \$1,000 per academic year. If you were to take 15 credit hours in the Fall semester, you would receive roughly \$625 from the VA for books, leaving you with roughly \$375 for the Spring term. The book stipend is usually the first payment to process, but I can't give you an exact timeline on when the payment will arrive from the VA.

Q: I haven't received my book stipend from the VA yet, and I really need to get my books. What should I do?

A: If you need to get your books, and you have not received your stipend from the VA yet, you can take your UKID to the Bookstore, and they will allow you to charge up to \$700 in textbooks to your UK student account. **If you choose to take advantage of this option, please note that you are responsible for repaying the amount charged to your student account when you receive your funds from the VA.**

Information About Transfer of Entitlement

Please note that if you are transferring your Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits to a dependent, **getting the transfer approved by the Department of Defense is just the first step**. After DoD approval, you must go to the VA web site (<https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/>) and apply to activate the benefit, using your son or daughter's information (e.g. their name, Social Security number, date-of-birth, etc.). After the VA processes this application, they will send your son or daughter a Certificate of Eligibility in the mail. Please forward a copy of the COE to me at amy.southwood@uky.edu.

Here is a link to information about transferring benefits to a dependent:

<https://www.va.gov/education/transfer-post-9-11-gi-bill-benefits/>