

How do I get my Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits started?

- If you have not already done so, you need to apply for your benefits through the VA: <https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/>.
- After the VA processes your application (6-8 weeks), they will send you a Certificate of Eligibility in the mail. Please email a copy of that to me.
- Please submit the following internal-to-UK benefit request form as soon as you register for your Fall 2023 classes: <http://seeblue.com/varequest>
 - I need this form every semester
 - I always send out a group email to remind everyone to turn the form in each term, so please be sure to check your UK email account regularly. All communication from my office will go to your UK email address.

What does the benefit pay?

- Tuition directly to the school
 - UK cannot give a timeline on when to expect tuition payment from the VA
 - All Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients' accounts will have interest-locks placed on them until November 22nd to prevent late fees from accruing
- Monthly housing allowance in the amount of \$1,455 directly to the student
 - Pays a month in arrears
 - Your first payment (on or around September 1st) will be prorated for the short time in August that class is in session
 - First full payment will arrive on or around October 1st, payment for September
 - Allow a 5-day window before and after the first of the month to receive the stipend
 - Questions about your monthly stipend should be directed to the VA Regional Office, 888-442-4551
- Book stipend directly to the student
 - Pays at a rate of \$41.67 per credit hour; maxes out at \$1,000 per academic year
 - Will be the first payment to arrive, but UK cannot give a definitive timeline on when to expect the book stipend
 - If you have not received your book stipend from the VA by the time classes begin, you can charge up to \$700 at the UK Bookstore directly to your student account
 - If you choose to utilize this option, please note that you will be required to repay these charges after you receive your stipend from the VA
- **Important Note:** All dollar amounts above assume that you qualify for the Post-9/11 GI Bill at the 100% tier. If you qualify for GI Bill benefits at less than 100%, the payments cited above will be prorated to the percentage of the benefit that you qualify for.

Certification Process

- I will submit your enrolled hours to the VA first. This is what generates the book and housing stipend.
- I do not submit tuition to the VA until the end of the first week of class.
 - The reason for this is that all charges will be stable at that point, and will not change unless you drop below full time.
 - You will receive an automated email from the VA when I submit your enrolled hours, stating in part that, “Your school submitted \$0.00 in tuition and fees, so the VA is not forwarding payment.” I know this can cause panic, but the interest-lock on your account will prevent late fees from being assessed.

Other Sources of Financial Aid and the GI Bill

- I am required to deduct any tuition-specific aid from the amount of tuition I report to the VA
 - The vast majority of financial aid is **not** tuition-specific
 - Some examples of tuition-specific aid are UK's Employee Education and Family Education Programs; ROTC scholarships; National Guard tuition assistance; certain athletic scholarships; certain academic scholarships. (Please note that this list is not exhaustive, just some examples of the most common tuition-specific aid at UK.)
- The GI Bill payment is always the last payment to arrive
- Any other Financial Aid that you have (scholarships, grants, KEES money, student loans, etc.) will post to your account before your tuition payment from the VA arrives, and will pay towards the balance on your student account
- If there is an overage on your account after the VA payment posts, that will refund back out to you
 - You will need to set up direct deposit with Student Account Services so they can process any refund owed to you. Online enrollment is available at myUK->myInfo tab. Bank routing number and checking account number are required.
- If you have questions about your non-GI Bill financial aid, please contact your Financial Aid counselor: <https://www.uky.edu/financialaid/>.

Living on Campus

- The only payment that comes directly to UK from the VA is the tuition payment. You are responsible for paying your on-campus housing and dining charges.
- If you plan to use your monthly stipend from the VA to pay towards your on-campus housing and/or dining charges, you have until November 22nd to pay your full balance.
 - If the November 22nd deadline presents a problem for you, Wendy Christian in Student Account Services (wcch222@uky.edu) will work with families on a case-by-case basis to extend the deadline.
 - You do not need to sign up for the installment payment plan with Student Account Services. This plan has a \$50 fee attached, and Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients are automatically granted the extended deadline of November 22nd to pay all charges in full.
- Depending on your specific dorm and meal plan, you may very well have out-of-pocket expenses for your on-campus housing and dining charges.
 - You will receive a total of ~\$5,820 from the VA throughout the course of the semester.

Residency Status

- The University of Kentucky changes all Post-9/11 GI Bill recipients' residency status to in-state
 - I need a copy of your COE from the VA to get your status changed
- Once your residency status is changed to in-state, UK will not revisit that decision, as long as you remain continuously enrolled.
 - If you were to take a semester off and then reapply, we would look at residency status again
 - You will retain resident status **even if you exhaust your GI Bill entitlement.**
- If you have been awarded a scholarship or grant based on non-resident status, that award will be reduced to reflect the new, in-state charges

Billing Cycle

- You will continue to receive bills from UK as long as there is a balance on your account.
- As long as you have submitted a request form to me for the Fall semester (<http://seeblue.com/varequest>), you will not be charged late fees, or penalized in any way, while we wait for the tuition payment to arrive from the VA.

Verifying Attendance With the VA

- 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.
- The VA will reach out to you directly via text after I submit your initial certification.
 - The opt-in text message will be sent to the phone number that was on your original application for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.
 - It is **strongly** recommended that you reply “Yes” to the opt-in text verification system.
 - 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.
- Here is a link to a YouTube video with instructions on how to verify attendance with the VA: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKq-reD01ZA>.
- Any questions about verifying attendance should be addressed to the VA at 888-442-4551.

Online classes and GI Bill benefits:

- 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.