

Richard Burden MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON, SW1A 0AA

### **EDUCATIONAL MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE**

I would like to thank everyone who has contacted me about restoring the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Before it was abolished in England under the Conservative – Lib Dem coalition Government in 2011, the EMA allowed disadvantaged students to receive up to £30 a week to help support their education. The bursary scheme which replaced it receives less than one-third of the funding that was allocated to the EMA. The current bursary is also discretionary, meaning that most disadvantaged students are not guaranteed financial support from their school or college.

Ultimately, this makes education difficult to access for low-income young people, closing off opportunities to them. Retention rates for disadvantaged students in higher education are significantly lower than the corresponding figures for their non-disadvantaged peers.

In our Manifesto at the last Election Labour committed to reinstate the EMA as part of a new National Education Service, ensuring that access to further education is available to all. Since then, Labour's Education team has continued to push the Conservative Government on the issue.

Thanks again to everyone who has contacted me on this issue.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Burden'.

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Birmingham Northfield

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