

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE STUDENT FEES (INFLATION INDEX) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN
IRELAND) 2023

S.R. No. 136

1. Introduction

- 1.1** This Explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Department for the Economy (“the Department”) to accompany S.R. 2023 No. XX, which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2** The Statutory Rule is made under Article 4(12) of the Higher Education (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.
- 1.3** The rule will come into operation in accordance with regulation 1 of these Regulations.

2. Purpose

This rule will specify the index used in applying inflationary increases to the basic and higher amounts of tuition fee rates for students on higher education courses under the 2005 Order.

3. Background

These regulations prescribe that these increases are based on the All Items Retail Prices Index Excluding Mortgage Interest Repayments published by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

4. Consultation

There is no statutory requirement to consult on these Regulations which do not give effect to policy changes.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

A Section 75 Equality of Opportunity Screening exercise has been carried out and it is our view that the proposals will not have an adverse impact on any of the Section 75 categories.

6. Rural Needs Impact Assessment

A Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been prepared.

7. Regulatory Impact Assessment

A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this rule as it has no adverse impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

8. Financial Implications

These regulations will be formalising the Department's policy position.

9. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

The making of this rule complies with Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act.

10. EU Implications

This rule does not relate to withdrawal from the European Union / trigger the statement requirements under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act.

11. Parity or Replicatory Measures

The basis of the inflationary increase to the maximum basic and higher tuition fee rates aligns with the policy position and supporting regulatory provision in England. The Department for Education in England has confirmed that they currently prescribe the inflation index and use of RPI-X under their Student Fees (Inflation Index) Regulations 2006.

12. Additional information

If you require any further details regarding this rule you can send an e-mail to studentsupport@economy-ni.gov.uk