

# New England Board of Higher Education Regional Student Program Tuition Break Policies

(effective April 2018)

## 1. Program Authorization

The New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) was established by the New England Higher Education Compact, a formal interstate agreement among the six states authorized by the United States Congress in 1954. NEBHE established the New England Regional Student Program (RSP) in 1957 to fulfill the purposes of the Compact.\* Through the RSP, the New England states cooperate to provide more affordable access to academic programs offered by their public higher education institutions. New England residents are charged less than regular out-of-state tuition when they are eligible through the RSP for approved programs at out-of-state public colleges and universities within the region.

## 2. Participating Institutions

All of New England's public community colleges, state colleges and universities participate in the RSP, because of their state's membership in the Compact. Each institution and/or higher education system has a designated RSP representative.

## 3. Criteria for RSP Eligibility

### 3A. Student Eligibility

An eligible student must be a permanent resident of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island or Vermont and matriculated in an RSP program. Residency policies are determined by the receiving institutions, which also make final decisions in the case of residency status student appeals.

A student may be enrolled on a full-time or part-time basis, unless the institution has a different tuition policy for part-time study.

### 3B. Program Eligibility

#### 3B1. Specialized Programs of Study

*Eligibility for Specialized Programs of Study is dependent on approval by the home-state public colleges.*

- a. Specialized programs are not offered by any of the participating institutions in an eligible student's home state, but are voluntarily offered by at least one participating institution in one or more of the other New England states. Specialized programs are distinguished by their content, courses and credits and are majors, or specialized concentrations and options that approximate majors in their requirements. NEBHE surveys participating institutions through the annual review to determine eligibility and publishes a list of approved programs by early September.
- b. Offering institutions may restrict eligibility to upperclass years for certain bachelor's programs. Restrictions are explained in the program's footnotes.
- c. Highly specialized graduate programs (in addition to those listed in the RSP catalog) are sometimes available through the RSP by student petition. If a student determines that a specialized program is not available at their home-state public institutions, the student may contact the RSP graduate representative to request RSP eligibility at the out-of-state New England state college or university that offers the program. The student needs to provide statements from the home-state public institutions demonstrating the program's unavailability. Approval of RSP status is at the discretion of the receiving institution.

#### 3B2. Flexible Programs

*Eligibility for Flexible Programs is not dependent on approval by the home-state public colleges.*

- a. Participating institutions may choose to offer any program of study through the RSP—certificate, diploma and/or degree programs. NEBHE surveys participating institutions through the annual review to determine program offerings and publishes a list of programs by early September.

- b. Proximity-Based Programs of Study

Participating institutions may choose to allow eligibility on the basis of proximity. Institutions inform NEBHE during the Annual Review which programs they will offer on this basis and if there are any restrictions.

Institutions may restrict eligibility to:

1. Commuting students only;
2. Students residing within a certain distance from the accepting institution; and/or
3. Students enrolling in certain programs (e.g. programs listed in the RSP catalog, underenrolled programs, etc.).

- 3B3.** If conflicts arise between institutions during their implementation of eligibility policies, NEBHE will act as a mediator to facilitate discussion and resolution among the parties.

\* "...to provide greater educational opportunities and services through the establishment and maintenance of a coordinated educational program for the persons residing in the several states of New England parties to this compact, with the aim of furthering higher education in the fields of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, public health and in professional, technical, scientific, literary and other fields."

#### **4. Application Procedure and Notification of Acceptance**

- a. NEBHE does not require a separate application for RSP eligibility. A student needs to complete the college's admissions application, and list an RSP program as their intended major/program of study (see Policy 3B). Some college applications may include a specific question regarding the RSP.
- b. A student eligible for RSP status is considered on the same basis as other equally qualified applicants. The institution informs the student of their RSP status when accepted to the college. An additional review process may be required for acceptance into certain programs.
- c. A student applying to a college or university that allows proximity eligibility (see Policy 3B2b) needs to confirm their eligibility with the college (by contacting the campus contact, which is posted in the RSP catalog and the online RSP database).

#### **5. Effect of RSP Status on Financial Aid Award**

Financial aid is awarded based on need and/or merit at the discretion of the institution. If a student has been accepted for admission and received a financial aid award prior to declaring an RSP program as their intended major, the institution may revise the financial aid award. There is no guarantee that a student's RSP status will provide an additional discount; however, it should not result in a net increase in out-of-pocket expenses.

#### **6. Transfer Students**

Both internal and external transfer students may be eligible for the RSP, unless an institution has policies that restrict eligibility. In both cases, a student is eligible for RSP status from the first semester of enrollment in the RSP program of study:

- a. A student may transfer into an RSP program of study from another program at the same institution. An institution may have specific requirements to change to an RSP program.
- b. A student may transfer into an RSP program of study from another institution.
- c. If a student transfers from an RSP program of study into one that is not offered through the RSP, the student will be charged the out-of-state tuition rate.

#### **7. Requirement of Progress in the RSP Program**

An eligible student enrolled in an RSP academic program must make progress in that program by taking the required courses and is monitored accordingly by the college/university.

#### **8. Withdrawal, Limitation or Elimination of RSP-Approved Programs**

- a. An institution must provide a two-year advance written notice to NEBHE, during the annual RSP review, in order to withdraw an approved program from RSP eligibility. NEBHE will include the withdrawal notice with the program's listing and delete the program from the RSP catalog, effective two years from the notice. RSP students enrolled in a program at the time of its withdrawal retain their RSP status until they complete the program.
- b. An institution/system may limit or cap the enrollment of RSP students by providing a two-year advance written notice to NEBHE, during the annual RSP review, indicating the intent to limit or cap future RSP enrollment at the present level.
- c. If an institution eliminates a program of study, the institution must notify NEBHE in a timely manner so that the program can be deleted from the next RSP catalog.
- d. If an institution is eliminating a program from the RSP because it is no longer classified as a major, but the course requirements for the program remain the same, the institution may continue to offer it as a concentration under the RSP. If the institution chooses not to continue offering the program, students currently enrolled in the program will be grandfathered if they continue to pursue the required courses.
- e. If it is determined by NEBHE during an annual review that a state's residents will lose eligibility for an RSP program because a home-state institution offers a comparable program, currently enrolled students will retain their RSP status until they complete their program.

#### **9. RSP Tuition Rate**

The New England Board of Higher Education sets the RSP tuition rate. Participating institutions and/or systems may adopt RSP rate(s) equal to or lower than the maximum RSP rate set by NEBHE. Institutions must provide written notice to NEBHE during the annual RSP review of the intent to implement new rate(s) in the following academic year.