

SAAS Discretionary Fund Procedures

- 1 Applicants must meet the following criteria:
 - i. Enrolled for the current session **and**
 - ii. Attending a full-time undergraduate or postgraduate course **and**
 - iii. Have taken out their full entitlement of all available student support including student loans **and**
 - iv. Meet any further eligibility conditions stipulated in the SAAS guidelines for the current academic year.
- 2 Part-time students should refer to the SAAS Part-time Discretionary Funds procedures.
- 3 Students wishing to apply to the Childcare Funds should refer to the SAAS Childcare Funds or UWS Childcare Funds procedures.
- 4 Applicants should, where possible, apply at the beginning of their academic year; however, applications will be accepted at any point in the academic year. These funds are not a guaranteed source of income and are likely to become exhausted during the academic year.
- 5 Applicants must have applied for all other sources of funding to which they are entitled, i.e. Student Loan, Bursary, Supplementary Grants, Childcare Grant, Tax credits, any relevant Benefits, Free Early Education place from Local Authority, etc. Advisers will assist students who are unsure if they are in receipt of all funding they are entitled to.
- 6 Application forms for the forthcoming academic year will be made available from 1st August, immediately before the beginning of term in September. They can be obtained via the website (www.uws.ac.uk/funds) or from all Student Services reception points during the academic year.
- 7 Students can apply for a provisional assessment to the fund prior to their enrolment. In order to meet the criteria for a provisional assessment, the student must have already applied for student support through SAAS (or equivalent) and have as much of their student funding in place and ready for enrolment as possible. The provisional assessment will be based on the information provided and is subject to change if the students financial situation changes. However, funds will only be released after enrolment takes place.
- 8 Applicants should complete all relevant sections of the application and enclose photocopies of all the necessary documentation. Guidance notes for completing the application can be obtained via the website (www.uws.ac.uk/funds) or Funding Advisers can provide assistance completing the form if needed. Applicants should note that the same application is used for both full-time Discretionary Funds and full-time Childcare Funds so as to avoid the need to complete 2 application forms.
- 9 Applicants should ensure that the information provided is accurate, and return the application to their Campus Student Services Reception points. Incomplete applications may be returned and will be subject to delay.
- 10 Applicants will receive a response from their application within 4 weeks of submission.
- 11 Applications will be processed at the Campus the student is based with Advisers across all campuses using the same procedures to make a decision on an application.
- 12 An initial screening of all applications will be conducted to ensure applicants meet the following criteria:
 - i. Has all other funding in place **and**
 - ii. Has completed the application form accurately and correctly **and**
 - iii. Has provided appropriate evidence and information to substantiate any claim made in the application **and**

- iv. Has shown appropriate management of money and included reasonable figures for expenditure.
- 13 Where an adviser identifies the student to have problems with money management or debt, the student will be invited to attend an appointment prior to any award being made. The appointment will offer an opportunity to discuss healthy money management. The final stage of processing the application will take place after this appointment.
- 14 Reasonable household income and expenditure assessments will be used to calculate any monthly excess or shortfall. Unreasonable expenditure amounts will be queried or changed by the Advisers when calculating awards. All students showing a monthly excess will be ineligible to receive support as they do not show a financial need for the funding.
- 15 Any award is based on a monthly shortfall. Due to fund constraints, we will only consider students circumstances within the academic year.
- 16 Students are expected to supplement their income through various means, e.g. part time work. We will assume a level of income. No assumed income is included for students with dependents and those unable to work due to ill health or disability.
- 17 If an applicant is applying to both the Childcare Funds and Discretionary Funds, the Childcare Funds take priority. If, after receiving an award from the Childcare Fund, the applicant still shows a shortfall, the student will be assessed for support from the Discretionary Fund.
- 18 Award notifications will state the award amount and payment pattern which will usually be 4 weekly and will be sent to the students University email address. Awards will usually be paid via BACS. If students have difficulty with this method of payment they should contact an Adviser on their campus at the point of application.
- 19 The student must notify the Student Funding Adviser in writing as soon as possible if there is any change in circumstances.
- 20 A refund of any unused portion may be requested.
- 21 A percentage of random checks may be carried out on awards, for audit purposes. Any fraudulent claims will be reported to the relevant authorities.

Confidentiality

The University retains all documents pertaining to the financial award. These will be kept in a locked, secure location as audit checks are performed annually to ensure awards are made appropriately.

The privacy and confidentiality of students will be respected at all stages of the process. Anonymous Statistical information is collected about expenditure of University and Student Awards Agency Funds for reporting purposes and budgetary management. Application forms and related confidential documents are destroyed as per Data Protection guidelines and will be retained for **7 years** after the current academic year.

What if I disagree with the decision about my application?

Applicants are encouraged to discuss the outcome of their application with an Adviser before making any formal request for reconsideration of the decision.

If, after speaking with an Adviser, an applicant still wishes to formally query their award, their reasons for disagreeing with the decision should be submitted in writing to the Director of Student Services within 28 days of notification of the decision. The Director of Student Services will make an initial response within 5 working days of receiving correspondence.