



# Student Services

## Funding & Advice



**All you need to know as you begin your university journey!**

# YOUR MONEY AT UNIVERSITY

Deciding to go to university is a big decision, one that should not be taken without a lot of thought. Once you've decided where you want to go, you've looked at all the courses available to you, you're working towards the entry qualifications...what else do you need to do?

There are many exciting things to consider when starting university, high on your list of priorities should be your money.



This magazine is designed as a handy guide to help you navigate the world of student funding and uni life. Whether you are completely new to having your own money and living away from home, or you are considering the impact that being a student will have on your family budget, we have something for you.

From working out the student support you can expect to receive, to figuring out exactly how far it will stretch, reading our magazine will make your transition into UWS smooth and turn you into a money mastermind.

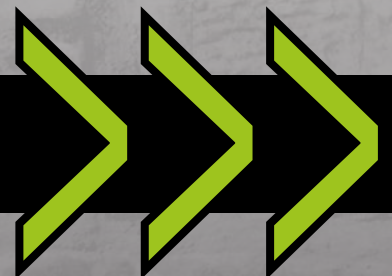
See you in September,  
The Funding and Advice Team

Follow us on  
 @UWS\_Funding

\*This guide is aimed at new undergraduate students at UWS, but some of the content will help any type of student. Figures included on page 4 are for those studying in 2017/18 but we do not anticipate significant changes in the near future, and would recommend you check the websites provided for accurate and up to date information each year.

## FIND MORE INFO @

[www.uws.ac.uk/fundingadvice](http://www.uws.ac.uk/fundingadvice)





# Uni Money Quiz

Before we fill you in on everything money related, why not get a handle on just how money minded you are with our quiz? Take this quiz now, before reading the rest of our money magazine, and then take it later, once you have read everything you need to know. You never know just how much you'll learn...

**Q. How much do Scottish students pay in Tuition Fees for a year at University?**

- A. £0
- B. £1,820
- C. £9,000

**Q. Without looking, do you know how much is in your bank account right now?**

- A. I don't have one
- B. I've got a good idea
- C. I check on the hour, every hour

**Q. What are you saving for at the moment?**

- A. Saving? What's that?
- B. The deposit for my student digs
- C. Everything! You never know when an emergency will strike

**Q. Do you think you'll pay back all of your student loan?**

- A. Don't know - what's the rules again?
- B. I plan on earning a lot, so yes
- C. I have a plan for paying it all off within 5 years of graduation. It involves a life of eating toast but I'm doing it

**Q. How much does it cost to buy a takeaway pizza every week for a year?**

- A. I don't know - but it beats cooking!
- B. Around £700
- C. Way too much - I wouldn't consider it

**Q. What do you think about credit cards?**

- A. Best way to buy my new wardrobe for Freshers' Week
- B. Best avoided but I have one for emergencies
- C. Wouldn't touch them with a barge pole!

**Q. Where will you turn if you run into money problems?**

- A. My Mum
- B. I have a small pot of savings for emergencies and I know the uni has help
- C. Money problems? I have everything planned and money problems are not a part of that plan

**Q. How often do you impulse buy?**

- A. All the time
- B. Occasionally, but I always get a good deal
- C. Once, in 2015

## How did you score?

### Mostly A's

You should probably read this magazine very carefully and take a lot of notes! You don't have to know everything, but being a little prepared will help you avoid any money problems and focus on your studies.

### Mostly B's

You are on the ball! You seem to have done your research and understand the basics of managing your money. That kind of forward planning is a real skill! Read on to find out more about staying on top of your money.

### Mostly C's

Calm down...you need to loosen your grip on your wallet! There's being prepared and then there's taking things way too seriously! You don't need to stress yourself out to afford Uni. Stick with us and we'll give you the practical advice you need.



# Step 1 - Your Student Funding

The first thing to think about before coming to uni is how you are going to get your hands on the funding you need to pay for your course, and help towards your living costs. This is called your statutory funding which means it is the funding you are entitled to receive and usually comes from government.

Not all courses or levels of study have statutory funding attached so it is important you do your research before committing to a course of study.

## From Scotland?

Funding for students from Scotland is administered by an agency of the Scottish Government known as SAAS (Student Awards Agency for Scotland). SAAS operate an online application process and their website has a lot of really useful information about how they work out your entitlement and how you apply for it.

Student funding packages are made up of support for tuition fees and support for living costs in the form of a bursary and/or a student loan. You must apply to SAAS every year for funding, even if you just want tuition fee support. Support for living costs is income assessed, which means your household income is used to work out what you get.

## Tuition Fees:

While it is true that Scottish students don't pay tuition fees, it's not true that tuition is free. It currently costs £1,820 per year for Scottish students to study a degree in Scotland. The cost of tuition for eligible Scottish students is met by SAAS each year but you can usually only get this funding once at each level of study, with an extra year of funding available in case of emergencies. This support is not income assessed.

## Bursary:

There are 2 types of bursary – Young Student Bursary and Independent Student Bursary. The one you can apply for depends on your age and circumstances. Generally, students under 25 claim the Young Student Bursary and are income assessed using their parents' income. Those over 25, married or with children, will claim the Independent Student Bursary and are income assessed using their own income and that of a spouse or partner.

This is the part of your student package that you don't have to repay. You can usually only get this funding once at each level of study, with an extra year of funding available in case of emergencies. There are some

additional grants available to certain students. See the SAAS website for more information.

## Student Loan:

Student loans are available on top of bursaries and are the largest element of your student support package. You do not have to take out the student loan, or can elect to take out only a proportion of what you are offered. The student loan is repayable and does accrue interest but it is much cheaper than other types of finance such as bank loans, overdrafts or credit cards.

### YOUNG STUDENTS

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	BURSARY	+	LOAN	=	TOTAL PACKAGE
£0 to £18,999	£1,875		£5,750		£7,625
£19,000 to £23,999	£1,125		£5,750		£6,875
£24,000 to £33,999	£500		£5,750		£6,250
£34,000 and above	£0		£4,750		£4,750

### INDEPENDENT STUDENTS

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	BURSARY	+	LOAN	=	TOTAL PACKAGE
£0 to £18,999	£875		£6,750		£7,625
£19,000 to £23,999	£0		£6,750		£6,750
£24,000 to £33,999	£0		£6,250		£6,250
£34,000 and above	£0		£4,750		£4,750

[www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk)



## Studying Pre. Reg. Nursing or Midwifery?

Nursing and Midwifery students from Scotland receive funding through the Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary Scheme (NMSB) which comes from the Scottish Government Health Directorate but is administered by an agency of the Scottish Government known as SAAS (Student Awards Agency for Scotland). The Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary Scheme (NMSB) is non-repayable and consists of a bursary that is not income assessed. This is an annual award of £6,578.

There are a number of additional bursaries/grants available that are dependent on your circumstances, for example, student parents can claim more. The SAAS website details the financial support available and how you can apply. Nursing and Midwifery students do not apply for a student loan and cannot choose to apply for one on top of their statutory funding.

Find out more at [www.uws.ac.uk/fundingyourcourse](http://www.uws.ac.uk/fundingyourcourse)



### From the EU?

If you are an EU national, you may be able to apply to have your Tuition Fees paid if you are taking a course of full-time study in Scotland, plan to graduate in Scotland and don't already have a degree for which you received support from your home country, another EU member state or the European Social Fund. You should apply to an agency of the Scottish Government known as SAAS (Student Awards Agency for Scotland) and can find further details, as well as the online application, at [www.saas.gov.uk](http://www.saas.gov.uk)

If you are eligible for this support, then remember that it is for Tuition Fees only. You cannot apply for any further bursaries or loans through the Scottish Government so it is important you plan ahead and have enough funding to meet the cost of living in Scotland.

SAAS will not pay your tuition fees if you are studying in Scotland for one year as part of your course at your home institution, to which you will transfer credits, return to and graduate from.

### International student?

To find out everything you need to know about being an international student at UWS, you should visit [www.uws.ac.uk/international-students](http://www.uws.ac.uk/international-students)

### From England, Northern Ireland or Wales?

Students from elsewhere in the UK pay a different rate of Tuition Fee than Scottish student. It will cost £9,000 to study at UWS but you don't pay this up front, you claim it through your student support package. You will also apply for your statutory funding from a different funding body. The maximum we will charge you will be £27,000 for a 4 year degree course.

Student funding packages are made up of support for tuition fees in the form of a tuition fee loan/grant and support for living costs in the form of a grant (which is not repayable) and/or a student loan. You must apply every year for funding. To qualify for assistance you must be eligible under the criteria set out by your funding body. These criteria may relate to residency, previous study etc.

### From England?

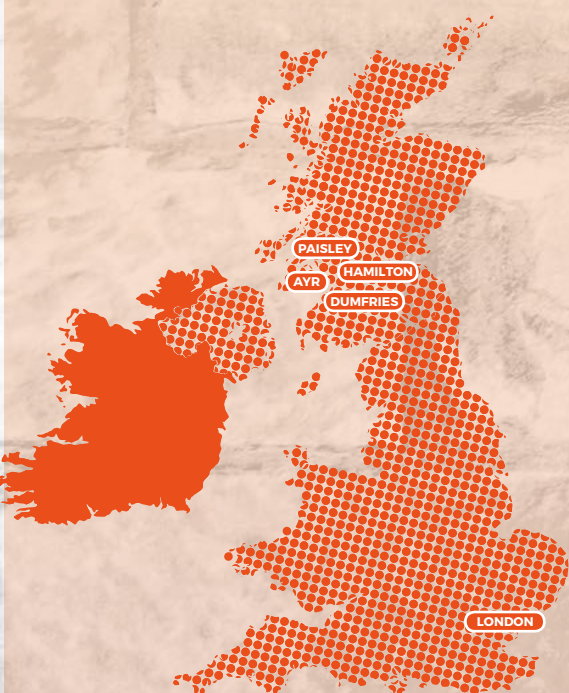
Your funding body will be Student Finance England. You can find out more about the support available to you and details of how to apply at [www.gov.uk/student-finance](http://www.gov.uk/student-finance)

### From Northern Ireland?

Your funding body will be Student Finance NI. You can find out more about the support available to you and details of how to apply at [www.studentfinancenl.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancenl.co.uk)

### From Wales?

Your funding body will be Student Finance Wales. You can find out more about the support available to you and details of how to apply at [www.studentfinancewales.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk)



# Step 2 - How Much???



So you've got a handle on the funding you can get to help you through your studies, now you need to think about what you need to spend it on and how far it will actually stretch.

**RENT** - Anything from nothing (if you are living with generous parents) to a fee that includes all utilities.

You say: £

We say: It depends how big your flat is and how many people live with you.

**FOOD/HOUSEKEEPING** - Check out page 9 to see how you can save money on food. How much it costs depends whether you cook fresh or eat out. Don't forget toiletries and cleaning products!

You say: £

We say: £150/month on average

**BILLS** - Gas, electricity, TV licence, insurance, broadband, mobile phone...check out page 9 to see how to spend less on your bills. Think about what is included in your rent.

You say: £

We say: Up to £100/month

**TRANSPORT** - As well as getting to and from your lectures, you should also consider trips home. If you own a car, you also need to think about petrol, insurance and road tax – not to mention stashing cash for emergency repairs.

You say: £

We say: It depends where you live in relation to uni and how you travel.

**STUDY COSTS** - Depending on your course, you'll need to factor in money for books, stationary, printing, photocopying & other supplies.

You say: £

We say: Budget £30/month but expect to pay more in some months and less in others. Also think about one-off costs at the start of your course.

**SPECIAL OCCASSIONS** - Birthdays and Christmas don't come cheap but they do come at the same time every year – why not save a little each month for gifts.

You say: £

We say: It depends how many people you buy gifts for!

**ENTERTAINMENT** - Gym, hobbies, socialising, cinema, music, gigs, nights out and anything else that takes your fancy.

You say: £

We say: It all depends on your lifestyle choices, but with lots of student deals and discounts, you could spend £50/month on average.

**PERSONAL COSTS** - Clothes, shoes, fancy toiletries – it all adds up. How much this costs, will depend on your lifestyle choices.

You say: £

We say: It's possible to spend £25/month on average but expect to spend more in some months and less in others. You may also wish to reduce your entertainment budget to have more to spend on clothes.

**ONE OFF COSTS** - Moving home, a deposit on a flat, kitting out your digs, new laptop, holidays...The best way to prepare is to set a small amount aside each month.

You say: £

We say: Aim to have a savings pot of £500 that you can dip into when needed. If £500 is too much, anything is better than nothing!

## Total Living Costs: £ /month

### Can you afford it?

Remember, this is just an example of what your life at university can cost. Everyone is different, and your lifestyle choices have a big impact on how much things will cost. If you make extra money with a part-time job, then you might have more to spend on entertainment than someone who doesn't.

### How does that compare to your student income?

Now you know how much you will have coming in, and how much you are going to need to spend, start completing the budget on the next page. Don't panic if things don't add up – there are lots of tips on page 9 that will help you reduce unnecessary spending and get more for your money.



# Step 3 – Work out your budget

TRY  
WORKING  
OUT YOUR  
FINANCES

<b>Monthly Income</b> Divide loan and bursary by 12 months		
Student Support	Student Loan	£
	Independent / Young Student Bursary	£
	Parental Contribution	£
	Care Leaver Grant	£
Benefits/Tax Credits If you have children	Dependents Grant	£
	Lone Parent Grant	£
	Child/Working Tax Credits	£
	Child Benefit	£
Personal	Earnings/Wages	£
	Trust Funds	£
Other (specify)		£
		£
		£
		£
		£
		£
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		£

<b>Monthly Expenditure</b>		
Housing	Rent/Mortgage	£
	Council Tax	£
	Buildings/Contents Insurance	£
	Gas Maintenance	£
	Factor Bills	£
Bills	Gas and Electricity	£
	TV Licence	£
	Home Telephone/TV/Internet Package	£
	Mobile Phone x ____ (insert no. of mobile phones for household)	£
	Debt Repayments	£
	Food/Housekeeping	£
	Childcare	£
Other (specify)	Clothing	£
	Life Insurance	£
		£
		£
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		£

**TOTAL INCOME MINUS TOTAL EXPENDITURE  
EQUALS MONTHLY EXCESS/SHORTFALL**

£



# Step 4 - Additional Funds

If you have looked at what's coming in and what's going out, but it doesn't quite add up – don't worry! There are other sources of funding that exist to help students meet the costs of living while they study. The university is given a certain amount of money each year by SAAS to give out on a discretionary basis to UK students. This can help with things like general living costs, travel and accommodation costs as well as help towards the cost of childcare.

## Discretionary Funds

This is an income-assessed, non-repayable bursary – which means you don't have to pay it back! Discretionary Funds are available to UK students who take out their maximum student support and show a need for a little extra financial help. This fund becomes available before the start of each academic year, and we would always encourage an early application. It's not guaranteed and shouldn't be relied upon as a source of income, but we do award funds to the vast majority of applicants to help ease any financial pressures. Visit [www.uws.ac.uk/funds](http://www.uws.ac.uk/funds) for more information.

## Childcare Funds

If you will use a childcare provider to take care of your children while you are studying and need help paying for this, we can help! At UWS, we are in the unique position of being able to offer some level of childcare funding to all students showing a need for this financial support. So, whether you are an international student or a nursing student, if you need help paying for childcare, we've got something for you.

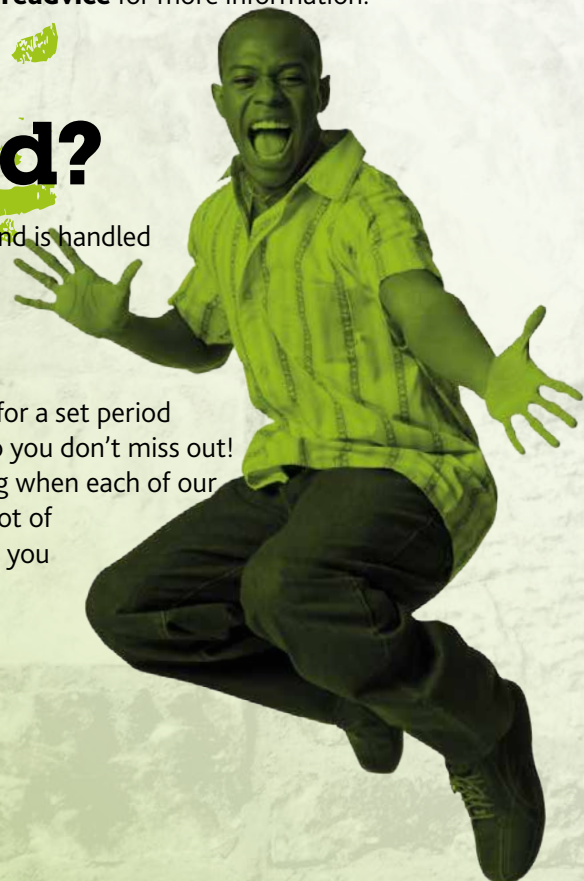
As with the above fund, this is income-assessed and non-repayable so it is certainly worth investigating further. We are also committed to helping our students plan ahead. That's why we start accepting applications to all of our childcare funds from any new or continuing student from 1st August. Applying early means we can give you an idea of the level of funding we can provide before the academic year starts. It gives you time to make the final arrangements with your childcare provider before your classes begin. Visit [www.uws.ac.uk/childcareadvice](http://www.uws.ac.uk/childcareadvice) for more information.

## What is a Trust Fund?

A Trust Fund is money that is provided by an individual, business or charity and is handled by Trustees. They can set eligibility criteria to target specific groups of students for potential available funds. At UWS, we manage a small portfolio of funds that many of our students benefit from applying to.

These funds will open at certain points within an academic year and usually for a set period of time, therefore it is important to know as much about them as possible so you don't miss out! We have everything you need to know at [www.uws.ac.uk/trusts](http://www.uws.ac.uk/trusts) including when each of our funds will be open in the academic year and who can apply. We also have a lot of information on other trusts and scholarships that we don't manage, but that you may find useful nonetheless.

Check out  
[www.uws.ac.uk/trusts](http://www.uws.ac.uk/trusts)





# Step 5 – Make your money stretch

Your lifestyle choices will determine just how much money you need to get by every month. If your budget doesn't add up, you need to start thinking about what you can do to fix that before it becomes an issue. There are 2 ways that you can do that – by adding to your student support income so you have more to spend, and by becoming a savvy spender so the money you do have to spend goes further and lasts longer. Here are our top tips for making your money stretch...

## FOOD AND DRINK

Buy supermarket own-brand items – they can be significantly cheaper and almost identical to premium brands.

Consider shopping in budget supermarkets like Aldi or Lidl – you can compare supermarket prices at [mysupermarket.co.uk](http://mysupermarket.co.uk)

Plan ahead – planning your menu for the next week or so and writing a shopping list will help you buy only what you need. Supermarkets are designed to make you add things to your trolley without thinking - be careful not to fall into this trap.

Cook/buy in bulk – items normally get cheaper when you buy more so think about cooking as a group or even cooking for yourself and filling your freezer with leftovers. Use websites like [greatlittleideas.com](http://greatlittleideas.com) or budget recipes from BBC Food and 4Food.

Bring your own lunch/tea/coffee – invest in a lunchbox or reusable travel mug instead of buying a premium coffee and sandwich every day.

## Operation Yellow Label!

You don't need the stealth of a ninja to grab a bargain. Supermarkets often reduce perishables later in the evenings – using yellow labels to show the new price. Figure out when your local supermarket does this, find the staff member with the pricing gun, and follow them around the store until you find the bargains you want. If something goes out of date before you can eat it, fill your freezer.

## TRAVEL

Do you need a car? Think about how much you spend in fuel, Road Tax and Insurance, parking, not to mention unexpected repairs or MOT costs.

Car share – if your car is essential, why not take your friends to uni for a small fee? They could save money on their own travel costs and you could get help paying for the cost of running a car.

Take advantage of railcards or student tickets on the bus. You may also be better off buying weekly or monthly tickets, but do your sums ahead of time so you aren't paying for your bus fare when you are on a break from uni.

## ENERGY

Don't leave appliances on standby and don't leave mobiles or laptops on charge unnecessarily.

Turn off lights when you leave a room.

Fill up your washing machine or dishwasher and take advantage of any energy saving features such as a quick wash cycle.

Arrange furniture in way that it doesn't block heat from your radiators and stop it getting out.

Don't have radiators on in rooms that you don't use or need the heat.

Visit [energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://energysavingtrust.org.uk)

## LIFESTYLE

Take advantage of student discounts in shops, at the cinema, takeaways and even at hairdressers.

Walking or cycling will keep you fit and save you money. Just remember to be safe.

Have fun with friends doing things that don't cost money – feed the ducks, visit a free museum, go for a walk or play board games.

Challenge yourself to spend free days. If you master that, try a spend free weekend!

Save up for bigger purchases and shop around before buying.

Set up a DVD club with your friends and have movie nights at home. Make your own popcorn and it will be just as fun as a night in the cinema.

Buy second hand textbooks and sell your own when you are done with them.

Have a change jar – you'd be surprised how quickly it adds up and many supermarkets have machines that count it for a small fee and convert it to vouchers for money off your shopping.

Only carry as much cash as you can afford to spend each week. Use one section of your wallet to store cash for essentials like travel and food, and another for luxuries – when it's gone, it's gone.

# Banking Basics

(not just for beginners)



If you are coming to university having just left school, then managing your money and having a bank account might be a new thing for you. But, even if you are a mature student, the world of student banking can be a bit different to what you may have been used to in the past. Our Banking Basics will help you understand the world of banking and get the most out of it while you study.

## GET THE RIGHT ACCOUNT

If you are coming to university this year, then you are going to need a bank account. Most banks offer current accounts (for everyday banking) to anyone, but what you can do with them and what they can do for you can change once you become a student.

### What is a student account?

Student accounts are bank accounts made for those in higher education. They let you pay money in and out, and offer additional benefits such as an interest-free overdraft. You'll get a debit card, which allows you to pay for things in shops and online without the need to withdraw cash.

### Beware of freebies

Banks want you and will offer any number of freebies and perks to get you to open your account with them. These range from free railcards to gig tickets, but try not to be enticed. Banks are clever – they know that you are likely to stick with them for the rest of your life so they'll do anything to secure your custom.

### What is an overdraft?

An overdraft allows you to spend more money than you have in your account, up to a certain limit. Many student accounts provide a set level of overdraft interest-free for the duration of your course, which is the main perk for getting a student account in the first place. Remember - the bank is just lending you this money. It will need to be paid back, so don't get too comfortable.

## 5 TOP TIPS FOR PICKING YOUR BANK ACCOUNT

- 1.** Get the biggest 0% overdraft. Most students need an overdraft and it's usually the cheapest way to get access to money after your student funding. Having an overdraft doesn't mean you have to use it, but it does offer a little help if you are struggling.
- 2.** Never go over your overdraft limit. This rule applies to everybody, not just students. If you go beyond your overdraft limit you will get charged. Always know what you have available in your account to avoid going over your limit, and always ask for help should you anticipate a problem.
- 3.** You will be credit-checked when you apply to borrow money – overdraft, credit or store card – the bank will run a credit check to see if you meet their criteria. A credit check looks at your past financial habits. If you don't meet their criteria, you may be turned down.
- 4.** Don't pick a bank because it's got a branch close to you. You can withdraw cash free of charge from any bank's ATM and almost every bank gives online access so it doesn't matter what bank has the closest branch to you.
- 5.** After uni, switch to a new account. Most accounts allow you to access interest free overdrafts for a year after graduating. You can then pay this off gradually. Just remember to try and not build your overdraft to a level that you will struggle to repay.

## BANKING JARGON BUSTER

**Debit Card** is the handy bit of plastic that you use instead of cash. The money comes straight out of your bank account.

**Credit Card** is a very different bit of plastic that uses money that you have borrowed to pay for items. You get charged interest each month and will need to remember to pay the bill.

**Direct Debit** is a way to pay for a regular bill without you having to think about it. Companies take the money you owe them on an agreed date. The amount can vary though, so you will still need to keep track of your account balance to ensure you have enough available to pay the bill.

**Standing Order** is similar to a direct debit but the amount does not vary.

## BE A SAVVY SAVER

The best way to avoid being caught out with no money is to always have a small emergency fund that you can dip into when you need it. You can do this with a piggybank, proudly displayed on the mantelpiece, or you can be a bit more high tech and open a savings account in your bank. If you do internet banking, it becomes really easy to transfer money between your current account and savings account. Consider Save the change schemes - debit card purchases are rounded to the nearest pound and the difference automatically gets paid into a nominated savings account (participating banks only).

# Crash Course in Credit

**Borrowing money may be unavoidable at times but here is everything you need to know about credit before making any hasty decisions.**

Many of us will borrow money at some point in our lives – just think about mortgages. Unless you have a stash of cash under the bed; you will need to borrow to buy a home. So, rather than thinking of credit as good or bad, it's more helpful to think about whether it is manageable. This means considering whether you will be able to pay it back before the cost of credit outweighs the benefits of what you actually bought.

Before you think about borrowing money, follow Steps 1 to 5 to make sure you have everything you are entitled to and are spending it wisely.

Remember, anytime you apply for credit (exc. Student loan) you will be credit checked.

## KNOW THE LINGO

**Creditor:** The company you borrow money from.

**Interest:** The fee you are charged by the company lending you the money. It is often represented as a %. You can compare the % offered by different lenders to get the cheapest deal.

**Debt:** The money you owe. You are often said to 'be in debt' when you have borrowed money.

**Credit Check:** When the company you want to borrow from looks at your financial history to assess if you meet their criteria.

**Credit Rating or Credit Scoring:** This is the financial history the company looks at when undertaking a credit check. There is no such thing as a universal system as every lender has their own system. You can take actions to improve this.

## STUDENT BORROWING

Most students borrow money to get through University in the form of the Student Loan. While it is a form of credit, it is very different to a loan from a bank. If you can get through uni without having to borrow any money (inc. the student loan), that's great. But many need to, and the golden rule about student borrowing is simple –

### Borrow in this order:

**1. Student Loan:** Cheaper and more protected than other credit (see page 12 for details)

**2. Interest-free Overdraft:** No charges while you are studying but think about how you'll repay before you start getting charged.

**3. Think carefully before borrowing anything else:** Talking it over with a Funding Adviser will help you work out if borrowing is necessary and if it is going to be manageable.

Borrowing money is not the solution to having a low income and can quickly spiral out of control. Get some guidance from the Funding and Advice Team to keep things on track.

## DIFFERENT WAYS TO BORROW A BUCK

**Credit Cards** allow you to spend money you don't have and apply an interest rate. Best avoided for everyday spending or withdrawing cash (really expensive!) and best paid in full each month to avoid interest.

**Store Cards** are like credit cards that tie you to one store. They usually offer great deals (25% off your purchase) but can have high

interest rates.

**Hire purchase** is like a rental agreement. You pay weekly or monthly amounts but don't own the product until you have paid in full. Weekly amounts may seem manageable but interest rates can be massive.

**Bank loans** are hard for students to come by and involve you receiving a lump sum and paying a regular amount back each month.

**Payday Loans** are short term loans designed to cover the shortfall before payday. They are not designed for students and are best avoided.

## How much?

- You get a credit card with an interest rate of 25% and use it to buy a new laptop that costs £500.

- Each month, you receive your bill. It tells you the outstanding balance, how much interest will be added if you do not pay in full, the minimum payment you need to make that month and the date by which it needs to be made.

- If you only ever pay the minimum amount, it will take you **48 years and 4 months** to pay the balance, costing **£3,413 in interest**.

- If you make a fixed payment of £10 each month, it will take **12 years and 6 months** and cost **£999 in interest**.

**Is the laptop really worth it when you think of the true cost?**

# Myth busting

# The Student Loan

**Once you've read pages 4 and 5, you'll have a good idea what your student support package will look like, and will see that the majority of your support is made up of a student loan. While the idea of a loan may seem scary, it's important to understand how the student loan differs from other types of loans, and what makes it special.**

## Don't need it?

### Don't take it!

You don't have to take the student loan, or you can elect to take less than the full amount available to you. It does make up the majority of your support package though, so you should think carefully about how you are going to get by without it.

## Where does it come from?

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is a UK public sector organisation, administering student funding schemes on behalf of the government.

## How much does it cost?

Unlike other forms of credit, the student loan does not have an interest rate that is designed to make the Student Loans Company money. Instead, the rate of interest is linked to inflation, making it much cheaper than commercial alternatives (like bank loans, credits cards etc.).

## How much do you pay back?

With interest rates linked to inflation, the amount you pay back will be about the same in real terms as the value of the amount you borrowed. For example, if you borrowed a penny to buy a sweetie from your local sweetie shop in the 1970's, but that sweetie, because of inflation, now costs 5p, you would pay back 5p.

## When do you start paying it back?

You do not have to start paying back your loan until the April after you graduate or leave the course. At that point, you become liable, but you do not repay anything until your income is over a set threshold. Currently, that threshold is £21K (England/Wales) or £17,495 (Scotland and NI).

## How do you pay it back?

Unlike commercial credit, you won't have to repay your loan over a fixed period. When you are earning above the threshold, your repayment amount will be based on your earnings. Someone earning £20K a year will pay back much less each month than someone earning £50K a year. The SLC works with HMRC to collect your payments from your salary, in the same way that you pay tax and national insurance.

If you are self-employed, HMRC will collect payments through the self-assessment system.

## Can you pay it back quicker?

You can make extra payments direct to the SLC if you want, but remember to think carefully before doing so. If you have others forms of credit, e.g. a mortgage or car loan, you are always best to pay off the most expensive debt first, which is almost never your student loan.

## What if you don't earn above the threshold?

It's quite simple really – if you don't earn above the threshold, you are not expected to make repayments. This is the case even if you have been making repayments but your income falls.

## Does it affect your credit rating?

The student loan, unlike other forms of credit, will not affect your credit rating. It won't show up on any credit check.

## Will you be paying it back forever?

Probably not. There is a period of liability that starts the April after you graduate or leave the course. This ends after 25 years for students from England/Wales/NI or 35 years for those from Scotland.

If you never earn above the threshold, or don't pay it all back within the period of liability, any outstanding amount is written-off

Check out our website for more info

[www.uws.ac.uk/fundingadvice](http://www.uws.ac.uk/fundingadvice)

# What advice do we give?

The Funding and Advice Team at UWS offers advice on...you guessed it...funding! But we do a lot more than that and are here for you throughout your time at University. It's important to understand that it's okay to ask for help, that is why we are here. It's also important to remember that we can offer the best help when you come to us early. No question is ever silly and we pride ourselves on providing a service that is free from judgement and all about helping you to build the skills to help yourself in the future.

Our team of advisers work across our campuses in Ayr, Dumfries, Hamilton and Paisley, and work to ensure that you get advice through our website, email guidance, drop ins and/or appointments. As every student is different, there is no right or wrong way to interact with the Funding and Advice Team. We understand that some people prefer to ask their questions via email, while others may be more comfortable meeting an adviser in person. We also create a lot of self-help materials (just like this magazine) to encourage you to take control of your money as early as possible.

## Some of the things we do...

### STUDENT FUNDING:

- Advising you of the support available to meet the cost of tuition fees
- Guidance on the availability of statutory student support, such as loans or bursaries
- Helping you make sure that you have the correct funding, and your full entitlement
- Helping you understand the differences in funding depending on what type of student you are, and working out the best route for you

### EXTRA FUNDING:

- Advising of availability of additional funding
- Helping you understand the support available to help meet the costs of childcare
- Information on trusts and scholarships that may provide additional support

### BENEFITS:

- Guidance on how being a student and student support can affect benefit entitlements
- Helping you ensure you access the benefits you are entitled to

### MANAGING YOUR MONEY:

- Giving you hints and tips on how to budget your student support
- Helping you create a realistic budget
- Helping you develop the skills to forward plan and make good financial decisions
- Guidance on the different types of credit available and the impact these can have
- Providing non-judgemental support to work out areas that you can make savings
- Support you in setting achievable targets that will help you reduce your debt
- Help you negotiate with your creditors if you can't make payments

### OTHER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE:

- Helping you understand the University's mitigation and appeals process
- Supporting you in your journey through University even when things have not gone according to plan and you may not have passed all your assessments
- Providing a place for you to come and discuss any issues that you feel are affecting your studies



# What happens if it goes wrong?

Things can go wrong at any point in your life, not just at University. The important thing to remember is that it is never the end of the world. The transition into education can be a struggle for some people but services exist to make that transition as smooth as possible.

Ask for help! That is why we are here. The only thing we ask is that you ask for help sooner, rather than later. It's never too late for us to help you find a solution, but it's often easier for us to help before the problem gets out of control.

Check out page 13 to see the areas that we can help you with, but also visit [www.uws.ac.uk/student-services](http://www.uws.ac.uk/student-services) to see what other support exists at UWS.

[www.uws.ac.uk/student-services](http://www.uws.ac.uk/student-services)

# What to do, and when to do it....

## APRIL

Apply for your statutory student funding, see pages 4 and 5 – make sure you read the instructions carefully and send any required evidence

Follow your funding body on Twitter or like them on Facebook – you'll get updates on how quickly they are processing applications

Cut back on your spending and set some money aside for the start of term – it'll help with any one-off purchases

## MAY

Think about where you plan to study – will you be travelling there or moving closer to the campus?

Investigate your travel costs – are there any student deals you could be using?

Investigate your accommodation options - apply for a place in university accommodation or get advice on how to find suitable private rentals. Remember to think about the cost of utilities bills

Write a list of the one-off things you are going to need for university – it might be a big list if you ARE studying away from home! Start buying a little each month so you aren't spending a lot of money at one time

## JUNE

Study hard for your exams

Is your mobile phone contract, car insurance etc. going to be up for renewal soon? If so, shop around and think about how you can reduce the cost, or cut it out completely



## JULY

You'll now have a better idea of how much things will cost so sit down and draft a budget

Have you heard the outcome of your student funding application? If not, chase it up.

Will you have more money going out than coming in? If so, investigate additional funds you can apply for, see page 8

Think about part-time work – start looking online to see what types of jobs are available

## AUGUST

Exam results time – Have these changed which university you will go to? If so, you may need to tell SAAS or Student Finance to ensure your funding isn't delayed

Make arrangements for getting you and your stuff to your new digs for the start of term

Apply for Childcare Funds – see page 8

Apply for Discretionary Funds – see page 8

## SEPTEMBER

Time to get started!

Get your welcome pack and induction schedule – know where you have to be and when and work out how you are going to get there

Get your hands on a campus map

Look at what Freshers' events the Students' Union has on – cheap entertainment and an opportunity to meet new people

Find the Student Link/The Hub – it's where we are based!

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Student  
Services



Advise | Support | Inspire



**Funding & Advice**



**Counselling**



**Disability Support**



**International  
Student Support**



**Multi-faith Chaplaincy**

[uws.ac.uk/student-services](https://uws.ac.uk/student-services)