

Discretionary Fund Guidance 17-18

Part-Time Undergraduate

This guidance covers who can apply, what you can apply for, how you apply and how the application is assessed.

Students wishing to apply for support meeting the costs of childcare should also read the childcare guidance available at www.uws.ac.uk/funds as this will explain what you can apply for. We assess applications for childcare and discretionary funds together, so you only need to apply once.

Who can apply -

1. Applicants must be UK domiciled, enrolled for the current session and attending a part-time undergraduate course/module. In addition, applicants must be funding their studies through the SAAS Part Time Fee Grant or have an annual income of less than £25k.
2. International or EU students are **not** eligible and should not apply.
3. Applicants must also meet any further eligibility conditions stipulated in the SAAS guidelines for the current academic year.

What you can apply for -

4. These funds are not a guaranteed source of income and are likely to become exhausted during the academic year. We recommend applying at the start of your studies as we cannot guarantee funding will be available if you wait until the end. You cannot apply retrospectively, for any module that has ended.
5. Part-time undergraduate students can apply for support meeting the costs of books/course materials, travel and childcare only. Any support will be a contribution only.
6. A flat rate of £30 per 20 credit module may be awarded for books and course materials for eligible modules. A module is deemed ineligible for this support if the academic staff have advised us that there will be no need for students to purchase materials or books, i.e. if materials are provided, either in digital format or hard copy.
7. Maximum instances of travel and childcare that can be applied for is 15 in each Trimester. This can be applied flexibly to suit student needs.
8. Travel costs will only be considered for required travel to the campus where the modules are running. We do not consider travel costs for distance learning unless you are attending a campus to undertake an assessment.
9. Where possible, students should use public transport, although we are aware that this is not always possible and will make exceptions. We normally do not cover the costs of taxi fares unless this is required due to disability and these costs are not met through other sources of funding.
10. Travel costs for using a personal vehicle are calculated using a mileage rate in line with figures published by HM Revenue and Customs. This rate is 16p.
11. There will be no funding available to cover the costs of parking.

12. Applicants will be awarded 100% of eligible travel costs as long as funding remains available.
13. Childcare cost awards will be considered for all taught aspects of the module and required travel time either side of attendance at the necessary campus. Reasonable registered or unregistered childcare costs will be considered, at the discretion of the Funding and Advice Team.
14. To be eligible to apply for support meeting the costs of childcare, applicants must be in receipt of Tax Credits. A copy of all pages of the current Tax Credits Awards Notice will be required to prove this. This does not affect the right to apply for help meeting the cost of travel and books/course materials.
15. Unregistered childcare costs will be considered subject to a maximum contribution of £10 per 20 credit module per week.
16. Eligible applicants will be awarded 100% of eligible childcare costs as long as funding remains.

How you apply –

17. The fund opens at the start of the new academic session each year. Applications and guidance will be available to download from www.uws.ac.uk/funds Paper applications will be available from the Student Link/Hub.
18. Applicants should complete all relevant sections of the application and enclose photocopies of all the necessary documentation to prove they are eligible to apply.
19. When applying for support with childcare costs, the additional Childcare Form should be completed and submitted with the main application. This is also available via the website (www.uws.ac.uk/funds) or from all Student Link/Hub reception points during the academic year.
20. Students choosing to enrol on a further module after an original application has been processed do not need to submit a further application. Applicants should email the Funding & Advice team at fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk, advising of the additional module(s) and attendance requirements. This email should be received at the start of your studies to avoid disappointment.
21. If a student has planned the full academic year in advance and knows what they are studying across all Trimesters, they can submit one application at the start of the year in respect of all modules.
22. Applicants should ensure that the information provided is accurate, and return the application to the Student Link/Hub on their campus. Incomplete applications may be returned and will be subject to delay. If you are unable to submit the application in person, postal addresses are provided at www.uws.ac.uk/funds

How the application is assessed –

23. A uniform method of processing is adopted across all campuses to ensure continuity and fairness of approach.
24. It takes approximately 4 weeks for an application to be assessed. We work hard to assess applications as quickly as we can but can be incredibly busy at peak times. We ask that applicants refrain from enquiring about the progress of their application until 4 weeks has passed as this will give us the time to focus on processing.
25. When assessing an award for books/course materials, we will confirm enrolment details on our student information system. We will only make awards based on the modules an applicant is enrolled on.
26. When assessing an award for travel by personal vehicle we will confirm mileage using AA route planner.

27. When assessing an award for travel by public transport we will use the evidence you have provided to calculate your award. For example, if you submit train and bus receipts totalling £10, but quote a cost of £12 on your application, we will only be able to award the £10 which is evidenced. We will be unable to refund the cost of weekly travel passes but will contribute to this based on the number of modules enrolled on.
28. When assessing an award for childcare we will limit any award for unregistered care as per point 15.
29. Applicants will receive a response from their application at around 4 weeks from submission. This response may be an award letter or a request for further information if the application was incomplete.
30. Award notifications will state the award amount and payment pattern 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 us at the point of application.
31. Award notifications will also be sent to childcare providers stating the award amount and payment pattern. Awards will be paid via BACS directly to the childcare provider.
32. Initial payments will be made as soon as possible after processing the application in each Trimester.
33. The student must notify the Funding and Advice Team in writing as soon as possible if there is any change in circumstances, including withdrawal from the course. A refund of any unused portion may be requested.
34. A percentage of random checks may be carried out on awards, for audit purposes. Any fraudulent claims will be reported to the relevant authorities and may result in disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the University Code of Discipline.

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?

We would encourage you to contact us by email if you have any questions about your award. We will happily double check our decision and make any changes if required, or explain our 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 Head of Student Services within 28 days of notification of the final decision from the Adviser. The Head of Student Services will make an initial response within 5 working days of receiving correspondence.