



APPLYING TO THE CHILDCARE ELEMENT OF DISCRETIONARY FUNDS – COVID-19

Our normal guidance for applying to the childcare funds follows, but we wanted to reassure you of our approach to the fund in light of the current coronavirus situation.

If you are eligible to apply to the Discretionary Fund, this will open on 1st July for applications for the 2020-21 academic session and you are encouraged to apply as soon as you can. You can then apply for the childcare element from 1st September, which gives time for you to better identify your childcare requirements for the year ahead in light of the evolving coronavirus situation.

Our assessment of your eligibility for these funds is done through your Discretionary Fund application. The childcare element is an add-on to your Discretionary Fund application. To apply for this, the only additional thing we need is a childcare form completed by your childcare provider(s). As there is no further assessment required, we can set up the childcare element of your award quickly and efficiently.

Do not wait until 1st September to apply to the Discretionary Fund. Our aim is to assess your application and ensure your award is ready to be paid as early in the term as possible. We can only do that if you apply at your earliest opportunity.

By waiting until 1st September before accepting childcare forms, we hope that the provision available through Schools and childcare providers will be better understood, and that you will have more clarity about your childcare needs for the full academic year. We will review awards as the academic year progresses and will happily readjust awards if your original estimate of childcare costs changes.

When completing the Childcare Form with your childcare provider, we appreciate that you may be providing your best estimate of the childcare costs for the academic year. We ask that you and your provider complete the form as best as you can. If your figures don't easily fit into the rows/columns we have provided, feel free to add whatever additional detail you feel will help us assess the application. Just remember that we are trying to get a sense of your costs for the full academic year.



Childcare Fund Factsheet for Students

What can I apply for?

As a UWS student you can apply for a contribution towards appropriate study related childcare costs in an academic year. Depending on our assessment criteria this contribution might only cover a small proportion of these costs or it may well cover the full amount.

What are appropriate childcare costs?

Our assessment of your application will consider your total childcare costs. We can consider childcare to cover academic commitments only, including days where you are expected to attend university or placements. Please see the following table as a guide. Not all students are required to attend in the same manner, so it is important you consider your course commitments when arranging childcare.

Course Type	Maximum days per week	Maximum weeks per year*
Undergraduate, full-time (Terms 1 and 2)	4	30
Postgraduate Diploma, full-time (Terms 1 and 2)	4	30
Masters, full-time (Terms 1, 2 and 3)	4	45
Pre-Registration Nursing/Midwifery, full-time	5	50
PGDE, full-time (Terms 1 & 2, early start & late finish)	5	36
Undergraduate Social Work, full-time (Terms 1 and 2)	5	30
PART TIME STUDENT	You can claim 1 day childcare per 20 credits, for a maximum 15 weeks per trimester.	

*This is based on attendance during a standard academic year. If your course extends beyond the standard end date, please factor this in when applying. For full-time Masters study we would expect students to undertake the PGDip during Terms 1 and 2 before advancing to the Masters in Term 3.

Planning Ahead Our fund opens on **1st July** for each new academic year. Please apply from this date to allow support to be finalised before your course start date. Payments will commence when you are enrolled and attending. We appreciate many childcare providers give students time to arrange their funding and will hold off seeking payment until any award from the University is finalised, however you are responsible for any contract and payments you have committed to.

Childcare Form As part of the application process, you should discuss your childcare needs with your childcare provider and in conjunction with them complete the **Childcare Form** with details and costs of the care to be provided. This should then be signed by them to confirm this. This information is how we calculate any award, so it's important this is accurate and reflects the full year. Please ensure they complete the form in full, including providing us with their bank details for payment purposes.

As fast as we can Due to the demand on the fund it can take up to 6 weeks to assess applications and slightly longer at peak times. Applications are means tested and require you to submit evidence. In the case where evidence is missing or if we require further information, the assessment will take longer.

Holidays University holidays tend not to be in line with school breaks, therefore you should discuss any additional care required as a result of school holidays with your childcare provider and ensure this is included on the childcare form. We expect you to apply once a year to the childcare fund as we may not be in a position to help with additional childcare costs later in the year.

Price Increases We appreciate your childcare provider may increase prices during the academic year. If this occurs please let us know, however due to limited funds we cannot guarantee this additional cost will be covered by UWS, in which case you will be responsible for this.

Change to the Plan If plans and costs change, please let us know as soon as possible as this could result in a reassessment of the application, or a refund requested from your childcare provider.

Payment arrangements

Remittance Advice We will send you and your childcare provider a remittance email as soon as a decision has been made. This details the award and payment plan. We only send this once in advance of the first payment, so it's important you keep this for your records.

Payment Plans Payments to your childcare provider are usually made on a monthly basis, in advance. If you applied before the term starts the first payment will be a double payment in late September. If you have applied later in the year, we will still assess the application for the full amount, and the initial payment may be larger to cover childcare already provided. If you apply later in the year and we no longer have the budget available to consider your full costs, we may only be able to provide a small contribution.

You are responsible for any childcare payments until you receive our remittance advice, thereafter you remain responsible for any costs not covered by this award or any additional costs incurred.

Refunds Where there has been a change to childcare requirements and there is a surplus on your childcare providers account, this should be returned to the university. Should this be the case please ask your childcare provider to contact us.

