



International Students' Emergency Fund

Procedures 22-23

Purpose of the Fund:

The purpose of the International Students' Emergency Fund is to provide financial support to support International Students who experience financial hardship as a result of a significant change of circumstances and are at risk of not being able to continue with their studies due to that hardship. Full eligibility details follow.

Support is in the form of a non-repayable bursary and is designed to help meet basic living costs* in the short term and assist a student in being able to engage in their studies, while identifying a longer-term solution.

*We are unable to provide funding to help meet basic living costs to anyone with a status of 'Asylum Seeker' due to Home Office restrictions. Instead, we can provide support for study related expenses, and will communicate this in more detail with individuals during the application process.

Scottish Government provides the funding for the International Students' Emergency Fund and stipulate how the funds must be used. UWS has followed this Scottish Government guidance to create these procedures.

This document details full eligibility criteria, including who can apply, what you can apply for, how you apply and how the application is assessed.

Who can apply –

1. Applicants must be enrolled for the current session and attending a course on one of our Scottish campuses.
2. Applicants must be non-UK domiciled on an international fee place OR be UK domiciled but not eligible to receive living cost support from a UK funding body. If you are unsure whether this applies, please contact us for advice before applying.
3. Applicants may be enrolled at any level of study at the University, and there are no restrictions in relation to subject area.
4. Applicants must have experienced a significant change in personal circumstances AFTER beginning their studies at UWS, and this change has led to financial hardship.
5. This significant change in personal circumstances must have resulted in an application to the Home Office for a form of leave or extension of right to stay in the UK.

Examples of this include:

- Asylum Seekers
- Limited leave to remain
- Leave outside of the rules
- Students who have applied to the Ukraine Extension Scheme who are NOT eligible for living cost support from SAAS (Student Awards Agency Scotland)

If you are unsure whether this applies, please contact us for advice before applying.

6. Applicants must also meet any further eligibility conditions stipulated in the SAAS guidelines for the current academic year.

What you can apply for –

7. The International Student Emergency Fund is a short-term hardship fund. It may provide support meeting basic living costs such as rent, food etc. that students may struggle to meet as a result of any significant change in personal circumstances, as described in the section above.

We are unable to provide funding to help meet basic living costs to anyone with a status of 'Asylum Seeker' due to Home Office restrictions. Instead, we can provide support for study related expenses, and will communicate this in more detail with individuals during the application process.

8. The fund cannot extend to provide support meeting the cost of tuition, or longer-term living expenses. It is designed to assist in the short-term, allowing students time to identify appropriate longer-term solutions.
9. Funds are limited and are not guaranteed until after an application has been fully assessed.
10. Award amounts will be based on an individual assessment of applicants' circumstances and will often be determined by the demand placed on the fund by eligible students.
11. All eligible students are encouraged to apply as quickly as possible once they meet the fund criteria. It may not be possible for us to consider applications where the change in circumstances and application to the Home Office occurred some time ago.
12. The fund will close when the budget becomes exhausted, often with little or no notice.
13. Any award is typically paid into a UK bank account, via BACS. Exceptions apply to anyone with a status of 'Asylum Seeker', and we will endeavour to make awards through alternative means.
14. Any award is in the form of a non-repayable bursary, meaning you do not have to pay this back.

How you apply –

15. Applications will be available to download from [our website](#).
16. Applicants should complete all relevant sections of the application and enclose the required supporting evidence. Guidance notes for completing the application can be obtained via [the website](#). It is the responsibility of applicants to provide the required supporting evidence.
17. If applicants have a quick question about any aspect of the fund procedures or the application, the best way to contact us is via fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk where we can respond quickly.
18. If applicants would rather discuss an application with an Adviser, or any aspect of the fund in more detail, please book an appointment through The Hub. You can find more details [here](#).
19. Applicants should ensure that the information provided is accurate.

20. 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.

Submitting your application –

21. We operate a paper free application process. You should submit your application and supporting evidence by email to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk We have a lot of guidance to help you complete your application electronically, collate your application and supporting evidence and submit this to us.
22. It is important you read all instructions and complete the form correctly as incomplete applications may be returned and will be subject to delay.
23. If you have read all the guidance and have any concern about completing/submitting the application and supporting evidence as instructed, please do contact us at fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk and we will be happy to help.

How the application is assessed –

24. Applications join a queue based on the date they were received. We work through this queue in order, ensuring those who have applied first are assessed first.
25. We assess applications as quickly as we can, but it can take around 6 weeks to get back to you, and longer at peak times or where your application was incomplete. We ask that applicants refrain from enquiring about the progress of their application until 6 weeks has passed, allowing us time to focus on processing.
26. A uniform method of processing is adopted to ensure continuity and fairness of approach.
27. We will first ensure that applicants are eligible to apply, have completed the application accurately and correctly, and have provided evidence and information to substantiate any claim made on the application.
28. An applicant may be invited to attend an appointment with an Adviser prior to any award being made. The appointment will offer an opportunity to discuss any areas of concern and agree any actions that could take place.
29. We may consider alternative methods of award payments, such as to third-parties, and may consider your award to be subject to regular review in order to monitor progress.
30. The application provides an opportunity to tell us about your financial situation, including any income and essential living costs.
31. In order to ensure consistency and a fair and equitable approach, the assessment will adopt a set of standard expenditure rates, where needed.
32. As this fund is for students facing financial hardship, we will expect the application and supporting evidence to demonstrate this before considering any award.

What happens next -

33. Applicants can expect to receive an email receipt confirming that we have received the application, and that this has joined our processing queue. You may receive this up to several working days after you submitted your application but rest assured that your place in our queue will be based on when you submitted your application and not the date of your receipt.
34. All correspondence is sent to your University email address, so you should ensure you check this regularly if you are expecting to hear from us. The only exception to this is for new students who do not yet have access to University email accounts.
35. You will receive a response from your application as soon as it is assessed. Please see point 25 for more information on timescales.
36. Our response may be an award notification, a request for further information if the application was incomplete, a request to attend an appointment with an adviser, or an email advising that an award is not being made and the reason for this.
37. Award notifications will state the award amount. Awards will usually be paid via BACS into a UK bank account. If students have difficulty with this method of payment, they should tell us about this at the point of application.
38. We reserve the right to cancel or review an award should new information come to light.

What you need to do after an award has been made -

39. You must notify us as soon as possible if there is any change in circumstances. You should send such notification to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk
40. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in your student status, including withdrawal from the course or the commencement of a period of interruption, and changes to your financial situation.
41. We may cancel your application and award as a result of such changes. A refund of any unused portion may also be requested.
42. You must also update us of any change in your bank details at least 10 working days before we are due to make a payment.

Confidentiality

The University retains all documents pertaining to the financial award as audit checks are performed annually to ensure awards are made appropriately. Digital records are stored in a secure system.

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. In most cases a conversation like this will allow applicants to present information that was not included in the original application and which could make a difference.

You can appeal against our decision if you feel we have not adhered to the rules of the fund. You cannot appeal against our decision if you do not meet the criteria for the fund and have not followed the guidance.

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 Development within 28 days of notification of the final decision from the Adviser. The Head of Student Development will make an initial response within 5 working days of receiving correspondence. Such correspondence can be submitted via fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk where it will be forwarded appropriately.

