



UWS Childcare Fund Procedures

Students who are unable to apply to the SAAS Discretionary and Childcare Funds may instead apply to the UWS Childcare Fund, for help meeting their study-related childcare costs.

Applications to the UWS Childcare Fund are primarily made by those studying Paramedic Science and pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery, as well as Research/Doctoral level students. If students are unsure of their eligibility for this Fund, they should get in touch with the Funding and Advice Team by emailing fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk

1. If eligible, students may apply for a contribution towards study-related childcare costs **once** in any University academic year. That application should relate to anticipated study-related childcare costs for the **whole academic year**.
2. Policy and procedures for the fund can change, but we will endeavour to avoid any changes within an academic year.
3. An application may be reassessed during the academic year if a student's circumstances change in a way that would impact the outcome of the application. It is the student's responsibility to advise us of any such change without delay. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the University Code of Conduct for Students and recovery of paid funds through the university credit control procedure.
4. Students must reapply to the fund each academic year and meet the eligibility criteria stipulated in that academic year. Students cannot rely on this being the same in each year of application.
5. Funds are limited and are not guaranteed until after an application has been fully assessed. Acceptance of an application does not constitute any guarantee of an award.
6. Funds are awarded on a first come, first served basis and we encourage all students to apply early to avoid disappointment.
7. Late applications may result in a lower-value award than detailed below. Requests for additional childcare costs not detailed in the original application may result in a much lower-value award, or refusal due to a depleted fund budget. The fund will close - often with little notice - when the budget has been exhausted.
8. Students must be enrolled on a relevant course at UWS, and fully engaged in studies in a way that would justify use of study-related childcare, i.e. not on a period of interruption.
9. Students must have applied for all other sources of funding to which they are entitled, i.e. Student Loan, NHS or other Bursary, Supplementary Grants, Childcare Allowance, Universal Credits, Tuition Fees and any relevant Benefits, Free Early Education place from Local Authority, etc.
10. Applications will only be accepted from those whose household income (partner's earnings and work replacement benefits, such as Universal Credits), is under £25k per year (net) if students have up to 2

children, or under £30k per year (net) if students have 3 or more children. Student funding and Child Benefit are not included as household income.

11. Students must provide the relevant evidence to allow us to assess any application made. It is the student's responsibility to do this in a timely manner. We will be unable to make an award without sufficient evidence, and the fund may be exhausted in the interim.
12. We will usually be able to consider the costs of registered childcare only.
13. Should there be extenuating reasons why a student is unable to use registered care, and must pay for unregistered childcare - such as relatives or friends - we may be able to contribute towards the cost of this. In these circumstances, prior to applying, the student **must** book an appointment with us to discuss their application and these extenuating circumstances. Where we feel the use of this care is justified, we will explain how we calculate any contributions, and how a student can progress an application.
14. We will not consider an application where a parent or stepparent is available to provide care.
15. When considering an application, we are interested in total annual costs of study-related childcare for the academic year. This includes on-campus teaching, placements, virtual learning, group work, independent study etc. Where a student uses more than one childcare provider, we will add together the annual costs for each provider and use the total in our assessment. It is therefore important that students **plan ahead for the full academic year** and consider childcare requirements and costs for this entire period.
16. Benefit rules prevent us from contributing to any work-related childcare costs students may have, without this directly reducing the benefit they may be eligible to receive (i.e. Childcare Element of Universal Credit).
17. Students in receipt of Universal Credit must declare their student funding so that their Universal Credit claim is calculated correctly. Where a student submits a Universal Credit statement to us which shows that their claim has not been correctly adjusted to reflect student funding, we may not be able to assess the application until this has been resolved. In some circumstances we may assess an application and (where relevant) make an award, subject to submission of updated Universal Credit evidence in a specified timeframe. If this evidence is not received, payment of the award will be delayed.
18. Students must tell us about their study-related childcare requirements **for their whole academic year**. We will query any childcare costs that appear excessive or unreasonable. Regional averages will be used to determine whether costs are excessive or within the regional norm.
19. We do not consider any childcare costs incurred outwith term-time, so students must pay particular attention to their university schedule. Based on our standard term time for full-time students, the maximum childcare we would consider is 30 weeks between September and May. Based on our term time for those students undertaking a Paramedic or pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery or PhD level course the maximum childcare we would consider is 50 weeks. Different types of courses, with different levels of commitment, may be eligible for different levels of support. Where students are unsure of the amount of childcare for which they can apply, they should contact us via email at fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk
20. The [UWS Childcare Fund Student Fact Sheet](#) includes more details on what students can apply for, and how we assess applications.
21. Childcare providers must complete a childcare provider form as part of the application process. This is in addition to the application form completed by the student. The childcare provider form(s) summarises the childcare being provided and gives us the details we require to confirm any application made.

22. Any award we make will be a **contribution towards study-related childcare costs only** and will be paid directly to the childcare provider. Students will be responsible for meeting their remaining costs, and must plan for this accordingly.
23. When calculating our **contribution**, we will consider the amount of study-related childcare costs students are liable to pay **after** all other study-related contributions are deducted, e.g. SAAS Childcare Allowance.
24. Paramedic and pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery students using registered childcare should receive up to £2,466 from the SAAS Childcare Allowance. This allowance is not income-assessed so we will expect to see this on the SAAS Award Notice of all relevant students. We will not be able to progress an application without this allowance having been awarded, unless the student can submit separate evidence detailing why it is unavailable to them.
25. Students may receive a contribution of up to 75% of their remaining study-related childcare costs (after deductions), up to a maximum contribution of £6,000 per academic year, from the UWS Childcare Fund. The actual contribution figure will vary subject to demand, available budget, and date of submission; the later in the year an application is received, the lower the award level is likely to be.

Submitting the application –

26. We operate a paper-free application process. Students should submit their applications and supporting evidence by email to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk. We have a lot of guidance to help students complete their application electronically, collate their application and supporting evidence, and submit this to us with their childcare provider form(s).
27. It is important that students read all instructions and complete the form correctly, as incomplete applications may be returned to students, and the application process will therefore be subject to delay.
28. If students have read all the guidance and have any concerns about completing/submitting the application and supporting evidence as instructed, they should contact us at fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk and we will be happy to help.

What happens next -

29. Students can expect to receive an email receipt confirming that we have received their application, and that this has joined our processing queue. Students may receive this several working days after their submission was sent, but an application's position in our queue will be based on when the application was submitted, and not the date of receipt.
30. All correspondence is sent to students via email, so students should regularly check their Inboxes if expecting to hear from us.
31. Students will receive a response to their application as soon as it is assessed. We assess applications as quickly as we can, but this can take around 6 weeks, and longer at peak times or where an application is 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.
32. Our response may be an award notification, a request for further information if the application was incomplete, a request to attend an appointment with a Funding Adviser, or an email advising that an award is not being made and the reason for this.
33. Where applications are successful, award notifications are emailed to childcare providers stating the award amount and payment pattern in respect of childcare costs, with the student copied in for information.

Awards will be paid via BACS direct to childcare providers. Childcare providers are not contacted where applications are incomplete or unsuccessful. It is the student's responsibility to liaise with their childcare provider(s) regarding the progress of the application.

34. Initial payments will be made as soon as possible after processing the application, but not before enrolment is confirmed and classes commence.

What students need to do after an award has been made –

35. Students must notify us as soon as possible if there is any change in their circumstances. Students should send such notification to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk.

36. This includes but is not limited to:

- Changes in student status - including withdrawal from the course or the commencement of a period of interruption.
- Significant changes to childcare usage.
- Changes to a student's financial situation that would impact their eligibility for this fund.

37. We may cancel an application and award as a result of such changes. A refund of any unused portion may also be requested from a student's childcare provider(s).

38. Students and/or their childcare provider(s) must also notify us of any changes to their bank details at least 10 working days prior to the next scheduled 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.

If a student disagrees with the application outcome –

There is no formal route of appeal for this fund, but students are encouraged to discuss the outcome of their application with an Adviser if they feel the decision is incorrect. We will be more than happy to review this and/or explain the outcome, or correct any errors we may have made.

Examples:

NB These examples are for illustrative purpose only. Actual award amounts will vary depending on individual childcare costs, deductions, available budget, and the submission date of applications.

Example 1. Jessica, Year 2 Paramedic Student, one child (aged 3), single.

- This is an all-year course, so Jessica can apply for help with up to 50 weeks of study-related childcare costs.
- Jessica knows that she will have 20 weeks of placement during this study year, during which she will need all-day care, five days per week.
- She decides she will also need registered childcare three days per week for the remaining 30 weeks of the academic year, to accommodate attending lectures, group work, independent study etc.
- Jessica agrees her planned childcare usage with her Childcare Provider. She asks them to fill out the Childcare Provider form – with separate lines for the different weekly rates - and return it to her, ready for submission with her application form.
- Jessica submits her application, Childcare Provider form, and supporting evidence by email to Funding & Advice in August 2026.
- The application is successful: with total childcare costs of £6,632 (after government funded hours), less her SAAS Childcare Allowance of £2,466, Jessica's remaining relevant childcare costs are £4,166; she is awarded 75% of this amount from the UWS Childcare Fund, and receives an award of £3,124.50, paid in monthly instalments to her Childcare Provider.
- Jessica is responsible for the remaining balance of £1,041.50 childcare costs for the year.

Having applied in August and included all forms/evidence, Jessica will receive the outcome of her application early on in the academic year, allowing her to budget all of her SAAS and UWS Childcare funding for the year ahead.

Example 2 – Alex, Year 1 Nursing Student, two children (aged 7 and 9), partner earns £16k.

- This is an all-year course, so Alex can apply for help with up to 50 weeks of study-related childcare costs.
- Alex knows they will have 14 weeks of placement during this study year. Some of those weeks are during school holidays, so Alex will need breakfast club and after-school childcare for 10 school term weeks, and all-day care for 4 holiday weeks.
- Alex expects to be able to manage their non-placement studies around the children's school hours, and doesn't want to commit to any other childcare costs.
- Alex agrees their planned childcare usage with their Childcare Provider. Alex asks them to fill out the Childcare Provider form, with separate lines for the different weekly costs.
- Alex submits their application, Childcare Provider form, and supporting evidence in September 2026.
- The application is successful: with total childcare costs of £3,200, less the SAAS Childcare Allowance of £2,466, Alex's relevant childcare costs are £734 for the year. Alex is awarded 75% of this amount from the UWS Childcare Fund, and receives an award of £550.50, paid in monthly instalments to the Childcare Provider throughout the year.
- Alex is responsible for the remaining balance of £183.50 childcare costs.
- In May 2027 Alex contacts the Funding & Advice Team to say that they have been making ad hoc use of registered childcare since September and are now in debt to the Childcare Provider. Their placement block is about to begin, but most of the SAAS Childcare Allowance and original UWS Childcare award has already been absorbed by the unplanned use.
- Unfortunately, the UWS Childcare Fund budget is almost exhausted. An additional contribution of £250 is the maximum additional award available. Alex is responsible for the remaining cost of their childcare during placement.

Alex's situation illustrates how important it is to be realistic about the demands of your course, and to seek guidance immediately if things aren't going to plan.

Example 3 – Charlie, Year 3 PhD, 3 children (aged 4, 8, and 12), single.

- Charlie's PhD has its own course structure, specific to his research and work within the academic School. In June 2026 Charlie makes an appointment with Funding & Advice to discuss what level of childcare funding might be possible for his coming academic year.
- Based on Charlie's study plans, Charlie is advised he will be able to apply for help with childcare costs for his younger two children, for 3 days per week during Term 1 and Term 2. Charlie is encouraged to apply as soon as the fund opens in July 2026.
- In October Charlie submits an application, but does not include any supporting evidence. Charlie is referred back to the guidance and asked to provide all relevant documents so that his application can be assessed.
- In February 2027, Charlie sends his missing evidence.
- Due to the lateness of Charlie's submission, the fund budget is a lot lower. His application is successful, but the available award represents only 50% of his overall costs for the year. Charlie's total costs are £5,350: with no other student funding available for childcare there are no deductions to make; Charlie is awarded 50% of the total amount, and receives an award of £2,675, paid in monthly instalments to his Childcare Provider for the remainder of term.
- Charlie is responsible for the remaining balance of £2,675 childcare costs for the year.

Charlie is another example of why applying early and continuing to engage with your ongoing application is so important. Had he replied immediately with his evidence, Charlie would have received a higher contribution to his costs.

Example 4 – Jonathan, Year 2 Nursing, 2 children (aged 5 and 6), partner earns £28k.

- This is an all-year course so Jonathan can apply for help with up to 50 weeks of study-related childcare costs.
- Jonathan's total childcare costs for the year are £7,100. After the SAAS Childcare Allowance, Jonathan's remaining childcare costs are £4,634 for the year.
- Jonathan's partner has annual earnings of £28,000. This puts Jonathan's household income above the £25k threshold for eligibility for the UWS Childcare Fund.
- Jonathan's application is unsuccessful and no award is made. Jonathan remains responsible for the remaining £4,634 of childcare costs for the year.

Jonathan was simply not eligible for the Fund. If you're unsure about your eligibility, please get in touch about your circumstances – fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk.

Example 5 – Samantha, Year 3 Midwifery, 1 child (aged 2), single.

- This is an all-year course so Samantha can apply for help with up to 50 weeks of study-related childcare costs.
- Samantha has previously been funded by SAAS for a Nursing course, so is not eligible for any SAAS Childcare Allowance for this year of study.
- Samantha agrees her planned childcare usage with her Childcare Provider. She asks them to fill out the Childcare Provider form with the costs for 5 days per week, for 50 weeks.
- Samantha submits her application, Childcare Provider form, and supporting evidence in July 2026.
- Samantha's application is successful: with total childcare costs of £8,900 (after government funded hours) and no SAAS Childcare, Samantha is awarded £6,000 from the UWS Childcare Fund, paid in monthly instalments to her Childcare Provider. This is less than 75% of her actual costs, but represents the maximum available from the Fund.
- Samantha is responsible for the remaining balance of £2,900 childcare costs for the year.

Samantha has applied as early as possible, giving her the greatest opportunity to budget and plan for the year ahead.