

ASYLUM SEEKER DISCRETIONARY FUND

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

The Purpose of the Discretionary Fund:

The purpose of the Discretionary Fund is to provide additional financial support to eligible students who will face additional expenses as a direct result of their studies, which might cause financial hardship and prevent engagement in studies. Additional expenses might include the cost of course materials, travel and childcare.

The fund is unable to support the general living expenses of students with a status of Asylum Seeker as this could negatively affect the support students receive from the Home Office.

The Purpose of the Childcare Element:

The purpose of the Childcare Element of the Fund is to provide help meeting the costs of study-related childcare to eligible students who are unable to meet this cost independently. If eligible, support is paid directly to your childcare provider.

The Childcare Element comes within the Discretionary Fund, meaning you don't need to apply separately and will be assessed for both elements as part of this one application.

Whether you are applying for the Discretionary Fund only, or both the Discretionary Fund and Childcare Element, this guidance will help.

Taking the time now to read this guidance carefully and prepare your application correctly will benefit you, as it means we can finalise our assessment more quickly.

How to Apply:

There are 3 parts to the application process:

1. Completing the application form
2. Collating your supporting evidence
3. Submitting your application and supporting evidence to us

Completing the Application Form:

The application form is available to download from the [Discretionary and Childcare Funding section of the UWS website](#). It is provided in Microsoft Word format. Your UWS student account gives you free access to a Microsoft 365 account, allowing you to download tools like Word, Excel and PowerPoint to your device.

You should ensure you open the document fully, and enable editing, as you will be unable to edit this if it is in preview mode. When the document has been opened fully, you will be able to provide all information required by typing directly into the document or choosing from a drop-down list of options. This should be completed digitally.

When you complete the application form, you should save this Microsoft Word document as your full name.

Collating your supporting evidence:

Alongside your application form, we require supporting evidence. This guidance will help you identify the supporting evidence we need from you.

You will need to gather together the required supporting evidence in an electronic format, and merge these into a single PDF document that makes up your entire package of supporting evidence. You should be able to access most, if not all, of the required supporting evidence in PDF format. For example, your bank statements and SAAS award notice will be in PDF format originally.

There are many different free and paid-for PDF converter tools available. You can use any search engine or app store to find them and choose the one that suits you best. The website **ilovepdf.com** is one such option and allows you to convert files from one format to another, as well as to merge several files together.

We also have a specific guidance document showing you how to convert and merge your supporting evidence into the single PDF document we need. Read this to help you create your single PDF document containing all supporting evidence.

Similar to your Microsoft Word document application, save your PDF file of supporting evidence as your full name.

Submitting your application and supporting evidence to us:

Once you have your Microsoft Word application and single PDF document with collated supporting evidence, you should attach these documents to an email and send to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk If you are a continuing student, or already enrolled, you should send this email from your student email account.

There should be no more than 2 attachments on your email – the application form and the PDF document of supporting evidence – plus the childcare provider form(s), if relevant to you.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND US LARGE NUMBERS OF ATTACHMENTS, IMAGE FILES, LINKS TO EXTERNAL STORAGE SUCH AS ONEDRIVE, SCREENSHOTS OF EVIDENCE, SCREENSHOTS FROM YOUR PHONE, ETC.

Why? It takes us twice as long to upload and review 2 documents as it does to upload and review 1. If lots of students send us lots of attachments, it significantly slows down the process and will take us much longer to assess your application. In order to keep our assessment times as short as we can, we are unable to accept applications which are not submitted in accordance with this guidance.

If you have read this guidance and have any concern about completing/submitting the application and supporting evidence as instructed, please contact us at fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk and we will be happy to help.

If we have accepted your application, you will receive confirmation that it has been received within 5 working days. If you do not receive any confirmation or other email responses (be sure to check junk/spam email folders), please contact us again as this may indicate that we did not receive your application.

What happens next:

Your application joins a queue, and we will assess it as quickly as we can. It can take around 6 weeks to get back to you, and longer at peak times or where your application is incomplete or not submitted as per the above guidance. We may email you:

- asking for further information or evidence,
- Asking you to book an appointment with us, or
- explaining our award decision.

Supporting evidence:

The supporting evidence you need to provide will depend on your individual circumstances. To be eligible for this funding, you must be able to evidence that:

- **You have the status of an Asylum Seeker awaiting the outcome of an asylum claim.**
You can evidence this with your Application Registration Card (ARC). To make an electronic copy of your ARC, you can take a clear photograph of your card, or use a computer scanner.
- **You held Asylum Seeker status *before* you applied to study a course at UWS.**
If the date of issue on your ARC is earlier than the date you applied to study at UWS then no more evidence is needed for this point. If the date of issue of your ARC is later than your date of application to study at UWS, you will need to provide separate evidence that your Asylum claim started before you applied to study at UWS. For example, a letter from the Home Office relating to your Asylum claim, with an earlier date.
- **You are receiving financial support from the Home Office.**
Depending on how you receive this support, you might have different types of evidence to provide:
 - If you have a UK bank account and the Home Office pay money into this for you, then you can send us your bank statements. The easiest way to get your bank statements is to download them using online banking. [We have separate guidance on how to](#)

[download online bank statements from lots of different banks.](#)

If you don't use internet banking and only have paper bank statements, you can make electronic copies by taking photographs of the documents, or using a computer scanner.

- Other evidence of Home Office support could be letter(s) from the Home Office describing the support you receive.
- If you are the dependant of an Asylum seeker and Home Office support is paid to your parent/guardian, please provide relevant evidence of the support they receive and how this relates to you. Again, this could be letter(s) from the Home Office.

It will speed up our assessment of your application if we receive your evidence in as few attachments as possible, ideally one single PDF attachment. [We have specific guidance which explains how to convert files – such as photographs or scanned images – to PDF, and then merge them together to create one single PDF attachment.](#)

When you have your supporting evidence as a single file, you should save this as your full name.

In order to keep our assessment times as short as we can - so that you receive an outcome as quickly as possible - we are unable to accept applications which are not completed and submitted in accordance with this guidance.

How to Complete the Application – Section by Section:

The application document is an editable Word document. Open the document and select "Enable Editing", so you can type directly into the grey text boxes in the document, or choose from the drop-down lists of options.

Follow the highlighted instructions to ensure you provide the details we need.

Section 1 – About you:

Fill in your personal details, including telephone number should we need to reach you.

Your Banner ID number is your unique UWS identification number. If you are a new student, this will be detailed on your offer, and other communications from UWS. It begins with B0 and is followed by 7 digits.

Section 2 – About your household:

A dependent child is someone who is under the age of 18 and for whom you are financially responsible. This might be your own child, a younger sibling, niece or nephew of whom the Home Office considers you to be the guardian within your Asylum claim.

If you live in your own parent/guardian's home, you do not have to tell us about any children in that household, unless they are financially dependent on you, as above.

Section 3 – About your studies:

Tell us what course you are studying, what level the course is (e.g. Undergraduate, Postgraduate etc.) and at what campus you study.

Section 4 – Tell us about your Asylum Seeker Status:

This is the section which will tell us whether or not you are eligible for this funding. It's very important that the details provided at this section are clear and accurate. You should answer every question. Please check dates carefully before completing this section. The supporting evidence you provide should match the information you give us in this section.

We **do not** need to know why you are seeking asylum. You only need to provide the specific details asked for in each question.

Section 5: Tell us more about you:

This section will help us to understand your circumstances. If we are able to make a funding award, the information you provide in this section will help us to work out the best way we can support you. Please answer all questions, and provide as much relevant detail as possible for each question.

Section 6: About your childcare:

If you do not have dependent children, select "No" and move on to Section 7.

If you do have dependent children, and you would like to apply for help with registered study-related childcare costs, then you must complete this section.

In addition to completing this section, you must also submit a separate Childcare Form with your application. You can [download the Childcare Form from the ASYLUM SEEKER section of the Discretionary and Childcare Funding webpage](#). The Childcare Form must be completed by your Childcare Provider, and not by you. We do not need and cannot accept copies of contracts, invoices etc. The Childcare Provider must complete the form and return this **to you**, ready to submit with your application.

If you have more than one Childcare Provider then each provider must complete a separate Childcare Form.

If you have more than one provider, use a new line for each provider in this section of the application. The information contained in the Childcare Provider Form(s) should match the information you give in your application, so check these details carefully before entering:

- Your Childcare Provider's name(s).
- Your Childcare Provider's registration number(s).
- The total cost of childcare for the year for each provider.
- Tick the box to indicate that you are including the completed Childcare Provider form(s).

Section 7 – Your finances:

This section helps us to understand your financial situation in the UK. We need you to tell us about all of the income your household has – received both within the UK, and from elsewhere – and also tell us about all of your household's financial commitments and expenses.

Remember that "household" includes yourself, your partner (if you have one), and any children who are considered dependent on you by the Home Office. "Household" **does not**

include your parent, guardian, siblings or other relatives (if not dependants) or anyone living outside the UK.

You should provide as much relevant detail as possible, and check that you are including all income and all outgoings.

In this section you can also tell us any extra detail you think we should know about your financial circumstances.

Section 8 – Supporting Evidence:

Supporting evidence is an essential part of the application process: you must include supporting evidence in order for us to assess your application.

Use this section to check the supporting evidence you need to include, and tick the box to show that you have it ready to send with your application.

If you do not have a UK bank account and/or cannot provide bank statements, you should use **Section 7** to explain why this is the case.

Section 9 – Declaration and Data Protection

It is **essential** that you complete this section.

Under the “Data Protection” heading there is a box marked “PLEASE TICK THIS BOX”. You must click this box to show us that we have your permission to use the information you have given us to assess your application. **If you do not check this box, we cannot assess your application.**

You **must** enter your name and the date at the end of this section.

How to Submit your Application and Supporting Evidence:

You are ready to submit your application when you have:

- The application form fully complete and saved as your full name.
- A single PDF file of all of your supporting evidence. Remember, we have [specific guidance on how to convert and merge individual files to create a single PDF](#). This should also be saved as your full name.
- Childcare Provider form(s) completed in full by your Childcare Provider(s), if applying for help with childcare costs.

You should then send a single email to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk attaching your documents.

You should send your application email from your UWS student email account.

If we have accepted your application, we will let you know that it has been received within 5 working days. If you do not receive an email from us (be sure to check junk/spam email folders) then please contact us again, in case we have not received your submission.