



## 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 International and 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](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk)

1. If eligible, students may apply for a contribution towards study-related childcare costs **once** in any University 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 Discipline for Students (Section 12 of the Regulatory framework) 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. We may not be able to award late applicants at the levels detailed below, and 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), before student support is included, 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. Child Benefit is not included.

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 costs 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 Universal Credit statement to us which show 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 childcare requirements for the 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](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk)
20. [The Childcare Fund Factsheet for Students](#) 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, i.e. 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 is unavailable to them.
25. Students are expected to make a personal contribution of £799 towards their remaining childcare costs, after relevant deductions. Awards from the UWS Childcare Fund will then be made as a contribution towards remaining costs over and above £800.
26. The table below details the contribution a student may receive, based on the costs for which they are liable:

<b>Childcare Costs</b> (for which student is liable after deductions)	£800 - £1,099	£1,100 - £1,999	£2,000 - £2,999	£3,000 - £3,999	£4,000 - £4,999	£5,000 - £5,999	£6,000 +
<b>Award Amount</b>	<b>£400</b>	<b>£750</b>	<b>£1400</b>	<b>£2100</b>	<b>£2800</b>	<b>£3500</b>	<b>£4200</b>

### Submitting the application –

27. We operate a paper free application process. Students should submit their applications and supporting evidence by email to [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto: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).
28. It is important that students read all instructions and complete the form correctly, as incomplete applications may be returned to students, and will be subject to delay.
29. 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](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk) and we will be happy to help.

### What happens next -

30. 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.
31. All correspondence is sent to students via email, so students should regularly check their Inboxes if expecting to hear from us.
32. 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.

33. 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.
34. 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 the childcare provider. 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.
35. 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 –**

36. 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](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk).
37. 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.
38. 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).
39. 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:

1. Agnes is studying pre-registration Adult Nursing and is receiving all the support she is entitled to from SAAS. She is a lone parent with no income coming into the household other than her student support and Child Benefit. She has a child in nursery, costing £6,300 for the duration of the academic year. This total less her SAAS Childcare Allowance of £2,466 means Agnes is liable to pay £3,834. Agnes is therefore eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £2,100.
2. Bryan is studying Paramedic Sciences and is receiving all the support he is entitled to from SAAS. He has a partner who earns £36,000 per year and one child. Bryan is not eligible to apply to the fund as his household income is above £25,000 per year.
3. Carol is studying towards a PhD and has one child. She receives a small stipend from the University of £14,000 for the year. Her husband works part-time earning a further £7,500 per year, bringing their total household income to £21,500 for the year. While her husband works, their daughter attends nursery, costing £2,900 for the year. Carol is therefore eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £1,400.
4. David is an international student studying an undergraduate course. He is not eligible for any student support from SAAS etc. He is a lone parent to a child in nursery and a child in school, who uses after-school care. His nursery costs £4,500 for the academic year and after-school costs £1,200, bringing his total costs to £5,700. He is eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £3,500.

