

PART-TIME DISCRETIONARY FUND

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

The Purpose of the Part-time Discretionary Fund:

The purpose of the Part-time Discretionary Fund is to provide additional financial support to eligible students who will face expenses as a direct result of their studies that might cause financial hardship and prevent engagement in studies. Relevant expenses include books/course materials, travel, and childcare. The fund is unable to support the general living expenses of students.

Taking the time now to read this guidance carefully and prepare your application correctly will mean we can finalise our assessment more quickly for you.

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 complete the form 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. The application form should be completed digitally, using these drop-down fields.

When you complete the Microsoft Word application form you should save the file 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 the required supporting evidence in an electronic format, and merge this into a single PDF file that makes up your entire package of supporting evidence.

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 www.ilovepdf.com is one option, allowing you to convert files from one format to another, and 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 file we need](#): read this to help you create your single PDF file containing all supporting evidence.

Similar to your Microsoft Word document application form, 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 it to fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk. You should send this email from your UWS 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 concerns 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.

How to Complete the Application – Section by Section:

The application document is an editable Word document. Fully open the document, make sure you have enabled editing, then click in the grey areas to type, or to make a selection from a drop-down menu. Follow the highlighted instructions to ensure you provide the details we need.

Remember, where an award is possible this is a flat-rate amount based on your enrolled credits, so we don't need a lot of information from you.

Section 1 – About you and your household:

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 studies:

Select the eligibility criteria that applies to you by ticking the relevant check box.

- a. If your annual personal income is below £30k and you are not claiming Universal credit, then you should select option a.
- b. If you are claiming Universal Credit then - regardless of your annual income - select option b.

If neither option applies to you then it is unlikely you are eligible; please review the eligibility criteria.

Select your level of study.

We need to know how many modules you are enrolled on in each term, and how many credits this equates to. It is important you accurately align your modules and credits to the correct Term. Term 1 runs from September to December, Term 2 from January to May, and Term 3 from May until August.

Ideally, you should apply to this fund just once for all your planned studies for this academic year. If you think you might add further modules at a later date we can always revisit your application, but we cannot award funding for modules on which you are not currently enrolled.

If your course has a January start date then you will only be able to apply for funding which relates to modules occurring in Term 2 (January to May) and Term 3 (May to August). Any modules you have planned for September to December fall into Term 1 of the following academic year, for which you will be able to apply when the following year's Fund opens.

Section 3 – About your study-related childcare:

Tick the option to best describe your plans for the year ahead regarding the childcare element of the fund.

To be considered for this element of the fund you must provide evidence of the children for whom you are applying for a childcare contribution. You must provide at least one of the following:

- Most recent Universal Credit statement (if receiving).
- Evidence of Child Benefit.
- Birth certificate(s).

[Full details of the childcare costs we can consider can be found in the Childcare Fact Sheet for Students.](#)

You should provide details of your childcare provider(s), including their registration number(s) if they are registered, and your total costs with each provider for your academic year. This should match the detail provided in your Childcare Form(s), which we will expect you to submit along with the application.

The Childcare Form:

You **must** submit a completed Childcare Form(s) reflecting the childcare costs for which you want to apply through this fund. We do not require and cannot accept copies of contracts, invoices etc.

This Childcare Form should be completed by your childcare provider and not you. This applies to both registered and unregistered childcare providers. You should discuss your childcare requirements with your provider and ensure that the form reflects the childcare requirements you have agreed.

The Childcare Form is provided in Microsoft Word format. When the document has been opened fully (i.e. not in preview mode), your provider will be able to enter all information required by typing directly into the document or choosing from a drop-down list of options.

Once complete, your provider should return the form to you. You should save this as your full name then submit this to us along with your own application and your supporting evidence.

Section 4 – Declaration and Data Protection:

You must review the declaration and data protection details. Add your name and the date to the declaration. We will accept your typed name and date. We cannot assess your application if you do not indicate agreement with these details by adding your name and the date.

Wondering how we'll pay any award?

You may have noticed that we haven't asked you to provide your bank details, so how exactly do we pay any award? New for 26-27, any awards made to students from the Discretionary Funds will be paid through a new platform, called UWS Aspire Payments. This allows us to get the funds to you much more quickly, and gives you ownership over which of your bank accounts is the best place for your award.

If we make an award to you, you will get an email from Funding and Advice giving you details of the total award being made for the academic year. We'll then share your details (name, Banner ID, student email address, and course details) to set up an account within the UWS Aspire Payments platform.

You will receive an email from the UWS Aspire Payments platform with details of how to log in and access your funds. You'll also get an email from the UWS Aspire Payments platform each time a payment is ready, and you can use your normal UWS single sign on to log in and access your funds.

When you log in you will be able to draw down your funds to whichever bank account works best for you, and that can be a different bank account every time. You can also choose to draw down only a portion of your available funds if you prefer. Please bear in mind that you will lose access to any fund balance that might be left in your UWS Aspire Payments account if we need to cancel your award, for example, if you withdraw from your course.

The introduction of the UWS Aspire Payments platform means UWS no longer need to ask you for bank details, or hold those bank details in our systems. Instead, we simply share your relevant details (above) with the UWS Aspire Payments platform, and you can access your award much more quickly than if paid via BACS.

Awards to childcare providers will still be paid through UWS via BACS.

GUIDANCE ON SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	
To prove you are eligible to apply to the fund: Annual income under £30k, or Universal Credit.	Include SAAS Part-time Fee Grant award notice if you receive this support. This proves income under £25k, but only applies if you are an undergraduate student. Alternatively, provide either : - Most recent Universal Credit statement (if claiming) or - Your 2025/26 P60 or - Your payslips for the last three months.
To meet criteria if <u>applying for the Childcare Element of the fund</u>: Universal Credit Child Benefit Birth Certificate(s)	To access your Universal Credit statement, go to the home page of your online Universal Credit account. From there you can access your latest monthly statement (if calculated) as well as all your previous monthly statements. The statement shows both how much you will be paid and the calculations relating to this payment. You can find out more about downloading Universal Credit statements on the CPAG website . If not receiving UC, submit your most recent bank statement showing Child Benefit being paid. Read our specific guidance note on how to download online bank statements . If you prefer to send Birth Certificate(s) these should be clearly scanned/photographed in full and in focus.