

Guidance notes – Please retain for your information

You should read the following information before completing an application form

What is the University Hardship Fund?

The University Hardship Fund (UHF) is discretionary funding to help relieve financial hardship that might impact on a student's participation in higher education. The Fund is not expected to fully resolve a student's situation and cannot provide large sums for those who have not made realistic provision for their studies.

Can I apply?

You should meet the following:-

- satisfy the residency criteria to receive student support funding for living costs from Student Finance Gov.UK
- are a current registered full-time student of the University of Sunderland (UoS), University of Sunderland in London (UoSIL), or studying a UoS franchised course at a Partnership College
- have applied for all Student Finance available to you
- are not deemed unfitted or under investigation to receive funding from Student Finance Gov.UK
- have applied for all other statutory funding available to you.

Where do I send the completed form?

Completed forms and all supporting photocopied documentary evidence should be submitted to: **Student Support Fund Team, University of Sunderland, Student Support Services, 1st Floor Edinburgh Building, Chester Road, Sunderland, SR1 3SD. Alternatively, email the form and supporting evidence to studentsupportfund@sunderland.ac.uk.**

How long does an assessment take and how will I be notified of the outcome?

Applications can take **up to 6 weeks** maximum. If you do not complete the application form fully and/or provide the correct supporting photocopied evidence this may cause delay. We email your University student email address with the outcome.

How are awards paid?

Awards will be paid by direct credit to the registered bank account on the student's University's e: Vision system. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is your responsibility to ensure that your correct bank details are registered, we cannot be held responsible for late payment if bank details are either not registered or incorrectly registered. **How to register/change your bank account details:** Log in to e: Vision via link <https://evision.sunderland.ac.uk>. Go to the 'My Finance' section. Go to 'set up bank details to receive payments'. Follow the steps to register/change your bank details right to the end. A confirmation email will be sent to you as evidence that this has been completed.

How can the Student Support Fund Team be contacted?

If you are unsure how to answer any of the questions on the application form and need to seek advice, please contact us:

- by email at studentsupportfund@sunderland.ac.uk
- by telephone: 0191 5152090/2946/2933
- in person by calling into Student Support Services, 1st Floor Edinburgh Building
- visit www.sunderland.ac.uk/studentsupportfund

How is my application assessed?

Applications are means tested to ensure a fair and transparent common calculation process which looks at the difference between expected income and reasonable expenditure (please see over page for rates applied). If the latter is higher this would mean an '**additional need**' had been identified and a successful outcome. Individual circumstances are considered and awards made at the discretion of the University. **IMPORTANT: One** application per academic year. Students are assessed for the number of weeks of their academic year i.e. (39/43/52). Students are expected to financially support themselves during the weeks where no student funding is received using a variety of sources; i.e. budgeting their student funding and/or from employment/savings etc. An exception to this rule will be for those students who **study less than 52 weeks** and have either dependant children, an illness/disability that prevents them from working or they are required to re-sit elements of their course during the weeks no student funding is received. In those circumstances, a discretionary capped Hardship Payment will be awarded to financially assist eligible students during that period. The fund cannot be expected to meet all financial costs during that period. Please contact our Student Financial Guidance Team on tel: 0191 5152933 or alternatively email them at studentfinancialguidance@sunderland.ac.uk should your situation change and you suddenly fall into one of the above categories following submission of an application form.

As part of the common calculation process, an assumed income (AI) for Undergraduate (UG) students is used as follows:

Undergraduate students assumed income (AI) table- per academic year (AY)

	AY 2018/19	AY 2019/20
Standard year	£1906	£1944
Final Year	£635	£648
Students with dependant children and/or disability/illness unable to work regardless of year of study	£0	£0

The UG AI table above assumes income from a number of sources including: part-time work, additional support from parents, partner, bank overdraft, savings etc. actual amounts are not included as income only the applicable AI. All student funding is included as income and the applicable AI rate is disregarded from any Maintenance Loan/Grant. Any Bursaries/Scholarships will also be included in full with the exception of those paid on a low-income basis i.e. £500 will be disregarded. For UG students with a partner and/or dependant children all household income will be included with the exception of non-means tested benefits. For UG student applicants receiving Earnings Replacement Benefits (ERB's) these will not be counted separately as income but will form part of the AI figure for students in either a standard year or final year as per table above.

As part of the common calculation process, an assumed income (AI) for

Postgraduate students assumed income (AI) table- per week

	AY 2018/19	AY 2019/20
Students living outside of London	£181	£185
Students living in London	£218	£222
Students with dependants* or unable to work due to disability (outside London)	£145	£148
Students with dependants* or unable to work due to disability (living in London)	£182	£186

The PG AI table above assumes income from a variety of sources including work. Should the household income be greater than the AI the actual household income will be used as opposed to the AI in the calculation. For PG student applicants receiving Earnings Replacement Benefits (ERB's) these will not be counted separately as income but will form part of the AI figure used in the above table for that particular student cohort.

Basic and Variable expenditure Living Costs – per week

For all students there are both basic and variable expenditure included in the assessment process.

BASIC LIVING COSTS: A capped amount is included in the assessment process for basic living costs i.e. food, toiletries, household bills, entertainment etc. (see table below)

	AY 2018/19	AY 2019/20
Single student (outside London)	£80	£82
Student with partner (outside London)	£124	£126
Single Student London	£123	£125
Student with partner London	£168	£171
*One dependant child (London and elsewhere)	£94	£96
*Each additional child (London and elsewhere)	£73	£74

VARIABLE EXPENDITURE: is separate from basic living costs and includes: rent/mortgage, travel; course-related costs; registered UG childcare etc. The actual or capped costs whichever is lower will be included in the assessment process.

**If in full time further education will be counted as dependants up until their 20th birthday.*