

## **Hallam Hardship Fund 2022/23**

1. The Hallam Hardship Fund provides support to students who are experiencing unforeseen financial difficulties. Eligible students may receive a one-off payment for essential living costs, to relieve short-term financial hardship that might impact on their participation at university.
2. It is the University's expectation that students in financial hardship make a reasonable effort to supplement their income through employment. We recognise that may not be possible for everyone.
3. We have a strictly limited amount of money available each year and awards can only be made where there are available funds. In normal circumstances awards will not exceed £500.
4. There is no automatic entitlement to an award from the fund and all applications are considered on their individual merits. The Hardship Fund cannot be used to cover long-term living costs or to subsidise a substantial shortfall in income or rise in expenses.
5. We are unable to make payments to students whose bank statements show poor or inappropriate spending habits.

### **Eligibility**

6. **Please note** we are unable to make awards purely based on an unexpected rise in bills or other costs due to inflationary pressures. This is due to the small size of the fund and to create fairness to all applicants. Cases where a student is experiencing financial difficulty due to inflation **and** has one or more other extenuating circumstances are accepted and encouraged.
7. To be eligible for consideration for an award, you must have been enrolled on a taught credit bearing course, or a research degree, at the University during the current academic year.
8. You must have also applied for all viable sources of funding and any benefits for which you are eligible to receive (where applicable) before applying to the fund.

9. International students are not eligible to apply for the Hardship Fund, however, they can apply for the International Emergency Fund.

**Think carefully about how much money you need**

10. As part of the application process, you will be asked to state how much money you need and to provide a breakdown of these costs with relevant evidence where applicable (copies of receipts or invoices for example).
11. If you are asking for essential living costs you may choose to upload a spreadsheet or another document showing your workings.
12. Without this information we cannot assess your application. Funds are strictly limited, and we can only make an award where we are satisfied the amount of money you are asking for is reasonable.

**Personal statement**

13. You will be asked to provide a statement detailing the unforeseen circumstances which has led to your current financial situation.
14. This is your opportunity to tell us what has happened and how we can help. Please do let us know what impact your situation is having on your studies and wellbeing.

**Confidentiality and the personal statement**

15. The University understands that you might not always feel comfortable in disclosing your circumstances, particularly when they are of a personal and sensitive nature. Ordinarily anything shared in a personal statement will not be shared. However, in exceptional circumstances we may choose to disclose some or all your statement to other services, so that they can provide support to you (for example an Academic Advisor or Student Support Adviser).

### **Assessment**

16. Applications are reviewed every working day and whilst we aim to provide a decision swiftly, you can expect to receive a final decision no later than six weeks after submitting your application.
17. We may need to discuss an application with you and/or clarify an aspect of your application during the assessment process. Failure to respond to a request from the University in a timely manner will delay the final decision beyond six weeks.
18. When assessing an application, the University will consider whether the situation was foreseeable, whether you have other sources of funding and savings, whether you could come to harm without financial help and the impact on your studies.
19. You may be asked to explain sources of income and expenditure on your bank statements, if you are unable to do this to our satisfaction, we will be unable to proceed with your application.
20. There is no definitive list of situations that would guarantee a payment from the fund and the university recognises that difficulties impact on people in different ways. Whilst most circumstances will be considered we have provided an indicative list of the type of situations that might be successful in [annex one](#) of this document. [Annex two](#) includes an indicative list of situations in which we are unable to help.

### **Payments**

21. If your application is successful, payments will normally be received into your nominated bank account within three weeks of your award notification email.

### **Evidence and referrals**

22. Awards are much more likely to be granted when an application is submitted with a referral from another service or other documentary evidence of your personal circumstances. Applications containing just a personal statement are unlikely to be granted.

23. During the application process you will also be asked to attach evidence of other funding you are receiving as well as bank statements covering the previous 30 days from all current and savings accounts. Applications will not be assessed without this information. In some circumstances we may ask for additional bank statements covering the last 90 days.

### **Evidence requirements**

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| <p>24. Student Funding Documents<br/>Including all supplementary bursaries/grants available to you</p> | <p>Please upload all pages of your funding documents for the current academic year. These must show the amount(s) you are eligible for and payment dates.</p>   |
| <p>25. Bank Statements</p>   | <p>Before uploading your bank statements, please refer to the guidance on <a href="#">providing bank statements</a>. It is important to read this guidance to ensure you are providing the correct statements, in the correct format and file type, failure to do so will lead to unnecessary delays in your application being processed.</p> <p>Please upload statements from all your bank accounts, including joint, savings, PayPal, or other similar accounts.</p> |
| <p>26. Benefit Documents</p>   | <p>Please upload all pages of your current HMRC Child Tax Credit/Universal credit/Housing benefit documents.</p>  |

### **How to apply**

27. You must read this guidance document and the guidance on [providing bank statements](#) before applying. A link to the application form can be found on the [financial difficulties page](#).

## **Appeals**

28. If your application is unsuccessful, you may have the right to appeal.

29. The following are valid grounds for appeal:

- There has been an error in the assessment process
- The decision has taken insufficient account of the evidence provided

30. The following are not considered valid grounds for appeal:

- Disagreement with the eligibility criteria for the fund
- Appealing the amount that has been awarded

31. Appeals are initially reviewed by Head of Student Funding or the Student Funding Manager and can be escalated to the Director of Student Support Services at their discretion. All appeals will be heard by a member of staff who has not previously handled your case.

32. Information on how to appeal can be found on the [bursary guidelines page](#).

## **Annex one**

33. Indicative list of circumstances which might qualify for an award from the fund:

- Immediate need to move properties for reasons beyond a student's control
- A close family bereavement leaving a student with unexpected financial responsibility
- Circumstances that could not have been planned for meaning a student is unable to work (for example illness or injury)
- Impact of a natural disaster
- Impact of a criminal act against a student or their property, where the student was insured but their insurance was unable to assist
- A sudden loss of financial support from a parent, sponsor, or guardian for which it was not possible to make alternative plans

**Annex two**

34. Indicative list of circumstances where we **cannot** provide support:

- Failure to purchase insurance
- Paying down debts
- Requests to pay tuition fees
- Compensation for injuries, illness, or negligence by a third party
- Medium or long-term help with bills or other costs such as rent
- Costs to repair, maintain or to insure vehicle (including contributions for business travel insurance)
- Compensating for loss of benefits or other payments
- Cases which include excessive unessential spending
- Cases where we are asked to help with unessential costs such as streaming services, the purchase of vehicles and subscriptions to unessential services
- Payment of fines levied either by the University or a third party