

# Support Grants

(UK “Home” Students only)

## Guidance and Assessment Notes

**2022/23**

Student Funding Team  
(RM050 - Student Hub)  
Tel: 023 8201 5200  
Email: [student.funding@solent.ac.uk](mailto:student.funding@solent.ac.uk)

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## What is the support grant?

The primary purpose of the Fund is to relieve financial hardship that might impact on a student's participation in higher education and is non-repayable. It is aimed at;

- Those who need extra financial support to help meet particular costs which are not already being met from statutory sources of funding.
- Those who have an unexpected financial crisis.
- Intervention where a student may be considering leaving higher education because of financial problems.

A secondary aim is also to improve financial capability amongst applicants who receive financial support.

## Who can apply?

- UK "home" full time\* and part time UG and PG students (\* Including EU students with Settled Status)
- Part time distance learners

**N.B If eligible\*, students must have received the first instalment of their maintenance loan before applying.** Students cannot apply if they choose not to take out the UG maintenance loan or PG loan.

## When can I apply?

You can apply from:

- **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022\*** to **Friday 23<sup>th</sup> June 2023** or
- Until the funds are exhausted - whichever is the sooner

*\*exceptions are the Unpaid Placement grant and Course Costs grant.*

The Fund may also be available during the summer vacation period unless the funds are exhausted. The summer fund is intended for students who are unable to work (e.g. disabled/medical, caring for dependents or doing retakes).

## **What information / documentation do I need to provide?**

A checklist of supporting documentation is contained within the application form.

- All applicants will need to submit 3 months of bank statements/online printout and proof of rent/mortgage.
- Undergraduate applicants will need to submit Student Finance documents for 2022/23.
- Postgraduate and self-funding applicants must provide Student Finance documents for 2022/23 or demonstrate they have made realistic provision to study.

If you are applying because you receive only the non-means tested loan, you will need to supply information about the level of parental contribution you receive. If your parents do not pay the parental contribution, you must give reasons why you're not receiving this and we may write to your parents for further clarification. This information will be treated in strict confidence.

## **How will my application be assessed?**

The university set down standard criteria to use when assessing applications. This is designed to ensure that students are assessed consistently. Decisions regarding awards are made each year with no guarantee of an award in future years. The criteria and procedures adopted may be modified at short notice to reflect the funds available.

Where there is evidence that a student may need assistance with money management skills, they will be referred to appropriate support services. If applying in subsequent years any money management issues that have been identified and not addressed, will be considered and may affect future awards. Students are assessed over an academic year as follows

- All undergraduates are assessed over 39 weeks.
- Undergraduates with dependents/disability are assessed over 43 weeks
- All postgraduates are assessed over 52 weeks
- Support for the summer vacation will be considered separately.

## **What are standard or non-standard awards?**

There are two basic types of award made, “standard and non-standard”. The assessment process for ‘standard’ and ‘non-standard’ awards is designed to identify students who have particular financial needs and those who have unexpected financial difficulty. This should result in most of the available funding being directed towards students who most need it. General course costs will be included. Certain groups of students will also receive priority.

### ***a) Standard***

Standard awards are those made to help with the general costs of being a student. We assess standard applications by calculating the level of expected income against accepted expenditure. If a shortfall or additional need is identified, an award is made.

### ***b) Non-standard***

If you have an unexpected situation your application may be considered under a “non-standard” award. These are payments that are granted to students to deal with an emergency situation (e.g. travel costs for family illness/bereavement, burglary, eviction, bailiffs) In addition to these examples, costs for disabled students not met by the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) can be considered i.e. dyslexia assessment.

## **What is the assumed income?**

### **a) Undergraduates**

There is an expectation that all undergraduates (except those with dependants or students with disabilities) will work part-time to supplement their income. This assumes working one day per week receiving the minimum wage (less for final years)

- **£2,384** per academic year for year 1 students
- **£1,589** per academic year for penultimate year students
- **£795** per academic year for final year students

### **b) Postgraduate student’s income**

For full time postgraduate students a minimum required provision is set at,

- £227.00 per week for single students and
- £181.00 per week for students with children or receiving PIP

## What are everyday living costs?

To treat all applicants fairly, the same set expenditure level (known as Everyday Living Costs) is applied when assessing applications rather than actual costs. These figures are set by the university and are based upon equivalent state benefit amounts. The amount per week will be set depending on your circumstances:

### *Figures set for 2022/23*

- |                                       |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| • Single Student (aged 18-24)         | £109.00 |
| • Single student (aged over 25)       | £119.00 |
| • Student with Partner                | £167.00 |
| • Lone Parent with 1 child            | £246.00 |
| • Lone Parent with 2 children         | £343.00 |
| • Student with Partner and 1 child    | £294.00 |
| • Student with Partner and 2 children | £391.00 |

*N.B for each additional child add £97.00*

There are additional premiums added if you (or your partner) are receiving any additional benefit premium from the DWP.

## Why is some of the expenditure capped?

Expenditure on housing, travel and course costs is capped to a reasonable level. This means that the amount you actually spend may not be fully taken into account when assessing your application.

- Housing in the private sector is “capped” at the local average rent for a shared house for a single student at £415pcm. Housing in private halls is also capped.
- General course costs are capped at £390 per year. Students with higher compulsory course costs are advised to apply to the course costs grant.

- Students doing unpaid work experience/placements during the year can apply to the 'Unpaid Placement Fund'
- Travel costs are capped at the cheapest reasonable method

Students living within 2 miles of the University will be expected to travel on foot/bike, therefore no travel costs will be included (except where medical/disabilities/dependents are identified). Students who live more than 2 miles away can include the cheapest reasonable method of transport. The running of a car instead of using public transport must be justified in the personal statement. Some of your income will also be disregarded when assessing your application.

### **Who is a priority case for assistance?**

We cannot financially support every application and we cannot always meet all of the recognised shortfall between income and expenditure. The University gives priority to the following groups of students:

#### **a. Full time undergraduates**

- Students with children (especially lone parents)
- Students aged over 25
- Students with existing financial commitments, including priority debts/poor credit
- Students from low income families
- Students with a disability/long term medical condition
- Students who are care leavers or who are estranged
- Students from Foyers or who are homeless
- Students receiving the final year loan rate

#### **b. Full time postgraduates**

- Students with children (especially lone parents)
- Students with a disability/long term medical condition

#### **c. Part-time undergraduate and postgraduates**

- Students without sponsorship or other funding
- Students with children (especially lone parents)
- Students with a disability/long term medical condition

N.B. Postgraduate students must make a realistic provision before

starting, to fund both their tuition fees and living costs. Eligible students will be required to take out the postgraduate loan. Failure to do so will mean an award is not payable.

**If you are not in one of the priority groups you can still apply?** Please provide as much evidence as possible to show why you have a particular need.

### **How much could I receive?**

Applications are means-tested with payments ranging from £100 to £2,000. Payments of more than £2,000 are only made in **exceptional** circumstances.

### **When will I hear the decision?**

Assessments are made on a weekly basis throughout the academic year and are dealt with in strict date order. If your application has been accurately completed and the appropriate documentary evidence supplied, an assessment and decision should be made **within 2 - 3 working weeks** of submission. You will receive written notification of the result of your application and any award made, to your university email address.

### **How are payments made?**

Support Grant payments are made by bank transfer (BACS). Any large allocations will normally be made in two/three instalments in the autumn, spring and summer terms, subject to continued enrolment. Where a student has a debt to the university, the award may be paid directly to the university.

### **What if I have suspended my studies?**

If you have suspended your studies due to non-academic reasons (i.e. illness, bereavement, family illness, caring responsibilities or pregnancy) and you intend to return after suspension, you can still apply for help from the fund.

### **What if my student loan has been delayed?**

If your first installment of loan is delayed, you can apply for a short-term loan. You will not be eligible to apply to the fund at this stage. For full details and criteria please see our leaflet on '*Emergency short-term Loans*'.

### **What if my circumstances change during the year?**

If there has been a significant change in your circumstances since your original application, you will need to complete a 'Change of Circumstances' form available from the Student Hub (RM050).

### **How does the university consider fraudulent applications?**

If any information is found to be false, the University will take immediate action to ensure any money is repaid/future payments stopped and that disciplinary action may follow.

### **What if I'm not happy with the panel's decision?**

Firstly, you may wish to contact the Student Funding Team to receive feedback as to how your application was assessed. If you are still unhappy with the decision you may appeal. Appeal requests must be made in writing, stating the reasons for contesting the award. Appeals must be made within 10 working days of you receiving your award letter. The decision of the appeals panel will be final.

Appeal letters should be sent to:

Chair of the Support Grants Panel,  
C/O Student Funding, RM050  
Solent University.  
East Park Terrace.  
SO14 ORU

Or Email: [student.funding@solent.ac.uk](mailto:student.funding@solent.ac.uk)