

## **Hallam Hardship Fund 2020/21**

### **What is the Hallam Hardship Fund?**

The Hallam Hardship Fund is available to provide financial support for students who are experiencing unforeseen financial difficulties. The fund is available for small, one-off payments to students for essential living costs, to relieve short-term financial hardship that might impact on your participation at University.

The fund is strictly limited, and awards are subject to available funds. In normal circumstances awards will not exceed £300.

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.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible for consideration for an award, you must have been enrolled on a taught, credit bearing course at the University during the current academic year.

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.

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**

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 (for example copies of receipts or invoices).

If you are asking for essential living costs you might choose to upload a spreadsheet or another document showing your workings.

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**

You will also be asked to provide a personal statement detailing your unforeseen personal circumstances and to tell us what else you are doing to manage your financial situation.

This is your opportunity to tell us what has happened and how we can help. The fund is designed to relieve short-term financial pressure which might be impacting on your studies, please do let us know here what impact your situation is having on your coursework.

## **Confidentiality and the personal statement**

The University understands that you might not always feel comfortable in disclosing your circumstances, particularly when they are of a personal and sensitive nature. Anything disclosed to the University will be treated in confidence and will only be disclosed to those who need to know so that they can provide support (for example an Academic Advisor or Student Support Adviser).

## **Assessment**

Applications are reviewed every working day and you can normally expect to receive a final decision within six weeks of submitting your application.

Our assessors 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 response beyond six weeks.

When assessing an application the University will consider whether or not the situation was foreseeable, whether or not you have other sources of funding and savings, whether or not you could come to harm without financial help and the impact on your studies.

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 all circumstances will be considered we have provided an indicative list of the type of situations that might be considered in Annex 1 of this document. Annex 2 includes an indicative list of situations in which we are unable to help.

## **Payments**

Payments will normally be received into your nominated bank account within three weeks of notification of a successful application.

## **Documentary evidence and referrals**

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.

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 90 days for all current and savings accounts. Applications will not be assessed without this information.

## Evidence requirements

Student funding documents	Please upload all pages of your funding documents for the current academic year, this must show the amount you are eligible for and payment dates
Bank statements	Please upload three months bank statements showing <b>all</b> transactions, for <b>all</b> accounts held (including savings accounts, where monies are transferred in from/to etc.) These statements must show transactions that cover the last three months and be within five days of the date of your application to the hardship fund.
Benefit documents	Please upload all pages of your <b>current</b> HMRC Child Tax Credit/Universal credit/Housing benefit documents

## How to apply

You will be asked to describe and provide evidence of your personal circumstances. The application form can be found [here](#).

## Appeals

If your application is unsuccessful you have the right to appeal if you have grounds to do so. Information on how to appeal can be found [here](#).

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

The following are not considered valid grounds for appeal:

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

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.

## Annex 1

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 for which it was not possible to make alternative plans

## Annex 2

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

- Failure to get insurance
- Paying down debts
- Compensation for injuries, illness, or negligence by a 3rd party
- Medium or long-term help with bills or other costs such as rent
- Costs to repair or maintain a vehicle
- 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 and other entertainment services