

# SHEFFIELD HALLAM HARDSHIP FUND GUIDANCE NOTES

## What is it?

The Sheffield Hallam Hardship Fund is a fund provided and administered by Sheffield Hallam University to provide support for students in financial need. Students must have applied for all statutory funding that they are entitled to and be able to evidence it on application. The Fund cannot be used to meet the costs of tuition fees.

Students may apply if they:

- Need extra financial support to meet particular costs which are not already being met from statutory (or other) sources of funding - Standard Award
- Are in financial hardship or need emergency payments for unexpected crises - Exceptional Circumstances Award - please refer to [How is the application assessed?](#) for further details

To be eligible to be considered for the fund, you must have applied for all available student funding and any benefit entitlement (where applicable). All undergraduate students with UK/home status can apply for a Standard Award; but part time students will only be considered for books, and travel costs or if they are experiencing an emergency financial difficulty.

Students on PGCE and Teacher Training courses are eligible to apply for the standard award.

The following groups of students would not qualify for a Standard Award but can apply for Exceptional Circumstances:

- An undergraduate starting their first year as a new student at Sheffield Hallam University in 2017
- Postgraduate students
- If your household income has been assessed by SFE as being over £62,143
- Any student who is eligible to apply for the Student Success Scholarship

For the Standard Award we look at the funding you receive from statutory sources against the costs of being a student at Sheffield Hallam University. The University is aware that some groups of students will incur greater costs these include the following:

- Students with dependent children (especially lone parents)
- Students who are care leavers
- Students who are from Foyer, or previously homeless
- Students with caring responsibilities (not dependent children)
- Students in their final year
- Disabled students
- Students on high cost courses
- Students on NHS/teacher training placements with high travel costs
- Students who are estranged from their family
- Transgender students

## How do I apply?

Please complete the [UniHub application form](#).

Following completion of your application you will be contacted and asked to complete our Money Skills Assessment. This is a mandatory element of the application process. Your answers in this assessment have no bearing on the outcome of your application; they are handled by two separate teams.

If you are successful in your application to the Hardship Fund, before your second instalment, you will be required to engage with our Money Skills: The Cash Circus programme. Further details will be sent to you following your completion of the Money Skills Assessment.

## When can I apply?

Applications will be open from 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018 for Exceptional Circumstances Only.

**\*please note all end dates are subject to funds being available.**

## Completing the application form

### Supporting students with specific additional costs

The University is aware that certain circumstances may result in additional costs; these groups of students are listed at the beginning of the Guidance Notes and are in the application form as tick boxes. Please tick all categories that apply to you. We will use information that you have already provided to the University that is held within your electronic student record to confirm your circumstances where possible, rather than requesting additional evidence. Where additional evidence is required please see below for further information.

Student group	Does the university hold this information?
Students with dependent children (especially lone parents)	No - please see "what documents do I need to supply"
Students who are care leavers - someone who has been in care for 3+ months in the school years including and after year 10 and are aged 25 or under at the time of enrolment with the university	Yes, information is stored on your student record if you have supplied it.
Students who are from Foyer, or previously homeless	No - please see "what documents do I need to supply"
Students with caring responsibilities - someone providing unpaid support to a friend or family member due to an illness, disability, mental health or addiction problem	Yes, if you have self-disclosed at enrolment. This will then be stored in your student record. If not, please see "what documents do I need to supply"
Students in their final year, who are in financial difficulty	Yes, we have access to course information.
Disabled students	Yes, information is stored in your student record as part of the registration process with the Disabled Student Support (DSS) Team.
Students on high cost courses	Yes, we have access to course information.
Students on NHS/teacher training placements with high travel costs	Yes, we have access to course information.
Students who are estranged from their family - someone who no longer has contact with their family	Yes, if you have independent status with SFE.

and is studying without family support	
Transgender students	No - please see "what documents do I need to supply"

**Mileage:** please complete using an online route planner, for example, AA route finder or Google Maps, to calculate your mileage from Home to University and Home to Placement (if applicable). This helps us to determine your travel costs as a student.

**The Supporting Statement** is your opportunity to explain your circumstances to us and what you are currently doing to manage your financial situation. If you are experiencing unexpected financial difficulties, you should include details in this section. As this is a financial assessment, please state how this is affecting your finances, for example, if you are unable to pay your rent, cover essential living costs. We will use this information when taking in your application form to determine how to process your application. You can also use this section to explain the reason why you are unable to provide a fit note if you are unable to work. If the University doesn't hold information about how you meet the categories listed above and in the application form please provide the name of the member of staff within the University who is aware of your circumstances.

## What documents do I need to supply?

**Please note we do not accept incomplete application forms or forms that have been submitted without all the relevant documentary evidence. Incomplete application forms will be handed back or returned to you.**

Below is a list of the different types of evidence you may have to provide depending on your course and circumstances for the Standard Award.

If you are applying for Exceptional Circumstances evidence of exceptional circumstances should be provided alongside your supporting statement.

### **FULL TIME UK OR HOME STATUS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS** (including PGCE students)

<b>SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS</b>
Supply the last 3 months <b>bank statements for ALL your bank accounts</b> up to and including 5 days prior to submitting your application form. The bank statements must show your name, sort code and account number. They should also show your student funding payments.
<b>Student Finance England<sup>1</sup> breakdown letter</b> (for all Undergraduate/PGCE students and NHS students, but <b>NOT</b> Paramedic Students)
<b>NHS breakdown letter</b> (NHS Students only)  <b>You can print this off from your online BOSS account.</b> The breakdown letter should also show any additional grants if applicable.
Paramedic Students - supply a copy of your <b>bursary award letter from the Ambulance Service Trust</b>
Social Work Bursary - supply a copy of your <b>social work bursary award letter</b> <b>You can print your award letter from your online BOSS account.</b>  If you are not entitled to a social work bursary you should receive a contribution towards your placement expenses
<b>Teacher Training Bursary</b> - highlight this on your bank statement (if applicable)

If you are unable to work due to sickness and you already have a job but are unable to claim sick pay from your employer or claim sickness benefit - enclose a **Fit note** from your doctor showing the dates you are unfit to work.

1. or relevant funding body i.e. Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

## PART TIME UK OR HOME STATUS UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

### **SUPPLY THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS**

#### **Copy of your timetable**

Supply the last 3 months **bank statements for ALL your bank accounts** up to and including 5 days prior to submitting your application form. The bank statements must show your name, sort code and account number. They should also show your student funding payments.

**Student Finance England<sup>1</sup> breakdown letter** (for students who started their course **after** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012 only) - showing your tuition fee loan

You can print this off from your online SFE account.

**Student Finance England<sup>1</sup> breakdown letter** (for students who started their course **before** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012) - showing your part time tuition fee grant and course grant

If you are a part time UK or home status undergraduate student who started their course before 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012, please phone Student Support Services on 0114 225 3813 as you may be entitled to be assessed for the Additional Fee Support Scheme.

1. or relevant funding body i.e. Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland

## ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE FOR SPECIFIC STUDENT GROUPS

As well as providing the relevant information from above, depending on your course and your circumstances, certain groups should also provide evidence where the University **does not** already hold such information:

<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Evidence Required</b>
Students with dependent children	A recent letter from HMRC re: Child Tax Credits which demonstrates responsibility for children
Students with caring responsibilities	Letter from a relevant organisation or third party e.g. social services, teacher, doctor, support worker or other relevant support organisation or network
Students who are from Foyer, or previously homeless	Contact details of a referee from Foyer or homeless organisation in your supporting statement
Students who are estranged from their family	Letter from Student Finance England confirming independent status on the grounds of estrangement <b>or</b> Letter confirming estrangement from a relevant organisation or third party e.g. social services, teacher or college tutor, support worker, doctor or other healthcare professional or other relevant support organisation or network
Transgender students	Letter from a relevant organisation or third party who are aware of your

	<p>trans status e.g. social services, teacher or college tutor, support worker, doctor or other healthcare professional or other relevant support organisation or network such as the Students' Union or LGBT+ liberation group.</p> <p>You can also get in touch with Student Funding and Access Support to have an introductory conversation with one our team and explore additional support available to you.</p>
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If you are unable to provide evidence to meet one of these categories, please contact Student Help on 0114 225 3813 or email [studenthelp@shu.ac.uk](mailto:studenthelp@shu.ac.uk) for further information.

## How is the application assessed?

For a **Standard** assessment we look at the amount of funding you have coming in and the amount of money you have going out. We use set amounts for rent, bills and other course related costs for example; travel and books. A single student with children will have higher costs than a single student without children. If you have more money going out than you have coming in based on our calculations (**not on your actual circumstances**) then you will be made an award if there are funds remaining. We use these figures as it ensures all students are assessed in a fair and transparent manner.

For **Exceptional Circumstances** we will look at individual circumstances of unforeseen financial emergency. We look for an immediate need for funding and what is reasonable based on previous cases. Below is a list of what might qualify as an Exceptional Circumstance:

- An immediate need to move properties for reasons beyond your control
- Court summons for priority debts which were unforeseen and unavoidable
- A close family bereavement which has left you with unexpected financial responsibility
- Unexpected illness which has left you unable to work where you were working previously
- A sudden loss of financial support for which it was not possible to make alternative plans
- Any other unexpected financial emergency which is unavoidable and for which mitigating steps would make no difference

For the Standard award the minimum award is £50 and the maximum award £3000 if you are a full-time student, £1500 if you are a part-time student.

For Exceptional Circumstances the minimum award is £50 and the maximum £1000.

The sorts of things we might pay a contribution towards for the above listed Exceptional Circumstances include:

- Deposit for another property
- Assistance towards clearing priority debts
- Assistance with costs of funeral where the student is financially liable and the state will not meet the costs
- Supplementing inability to work due to unexpected illness
- Short term financial support whilst mitigating steps are taken to limit impact of a sudden loss of financial support
- Any other reasonable costs which are deemed to fit within the remit of the scheme.

The maximums for the Standard award are inclusive of Exceptional Circumstances awards; therefore no individual student would receive more than £3000 in a single Academic Year.

From receiving a **complete** application form it can take between 6-8 weeks\* to assess and process. During the assessment process one of our team may contact you to ask you further questions about

your application; they may also require you to provide further evidence at this point as well.

\*this would be in extremely busy periods. We will endeavour to assess and process **complete** application within 2-4 weeks.

**Please note: there are no guarantees that your circumstances will qualify for an award in subsequent years.**

## How will I find out if I've been successful?

You will be sent an email to your University email account usually within 4 weeks, informing you of the outcome of the assessment. We will contact you if you have been successful or unsuccessful. This may take longer at the start of term or at other busy periods.

## How is a payment made?

If you qualify for an award, the payment will be paid into your bank account in two instalments. The first instalment will normally arrive within 8 working weeks of receiving your complete application (including all documents) the second payment will be made in March. If you apply after March, you will receive one payment for the full amount.

For exceptional circumstances we may make payment to a third party where avoiding action is needed e.g. where eviction proceedings have commenced.

## Contact us

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact us at Student Support Services.

In person: Level 5 Owen Building, City Campus, and Heart of the Campus, Collegiate Campus  
Email: [studenthelp@shu.ac.uk](mailto:studenthelp@shu.ac.uk)  
Phone: 0114 225 3813

## If you're unhappy with the decision;

Please note that disagreement with the criteria of the fund determined by the Student Financial Support Panel will not constitute grounds for an appeal.

If you have already applied to the fund and your circumstances change during the year, you can apply to have your application re-assessed. You will need to write a letter detailing the change in your circumstances from your initial application and provide documentary evidence.

If you are unhappy with the decision or want further feedback please contact us via email at [transitions@shu.ac.uk](mailto:transitions@shu.ac.uk) .

If an error has been made in the assessment this will be passed back to the team for re-assessment. If no error has been made then this will be explained to you.

You can then appeal against the decision on your application on the following grounds:

- That there has been an administrative error or other procedural irregularity during consideration of your application.

If you have received feedback and still wish to appeal please send full details of your case including the grounds for appeal for the attention of Student Funding Manager by email to [transitions@shu.ac.uk](mailto:transitions@shu.ac.uk)

This will be taken to the next available Student Financial Support Panel for a decision and you will then be informed of the outcome.

**APPENDIX 1 - NHS AWARD LETTER FROM YOUR ONLINE BOSS ACCOUNT**



**Student Bursaries**

Ridgway House  
Northgate Close  
Middlebrook  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 6PQ

Telephone: 0300 330 1345

Email: [nhsbsa.sbaccount@nhs.net](mailto:nhsbsa.sbaccount@nhs.net)

Website: [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students)

Private and Confidential



Your Reference Number :

Date: 20 August 2014

Dear

Notification of Award - Academic Year : 2014/2015

Thank you for completing your Bursary application form for the Academic Year 2014/2015

Subject to confirmation of your attendance on an NHS funded training place at SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY studying Child Nursing - Degree and being in attendance for 315 days we can confirm you are eligible to receive the following award:

Award Type	(Income Assessed)
Basic Award	£2,617.00
Non-means tested Grant	£1,000.00
Extra Weeks Allowance	£1,826.00
Net Payable Award	£5,443.00

The 'Net Payable Award' shown above has taken into consideration the following contributions to your award:

Parental / Spouse Contribution:	£0.00
Student Contribution:	£0.00



Supporting the NHS, supplying the NHS, protecting the NHS  
NHS Student Bursaries is a service provided by the NHS Business Services Authority



## APPENDIX 2 - STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND AWARD LETTER FROM SFE ACCOUNT

### STUDENT FINANCE ENGLAND FUNDING - you get this from your online SFE account:

Dear Customer

### Your 2015/16 student finance application has been approved

Your application for student finance was successful, and we can now confirm how much you'll get for this academic year.

**Total student finance we'll pay to your university or college: £9000**  
**Total student finance we'll pay to you: £2906**

These student finance amounts relate to the following course details:

#### Your current course details:

University or College: SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

Campus name: SHU Course: SCIENCE Course year: 1

#### Important information

- A full breakdown of your student finance amounts and payment dates is available on your online account. Log into your account at [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance) to view this.
- Your university or college may ask to see the payment information we've provided. You need to keep this letter safe, and may need to take it with you when you register. Your first payment will **only** be made after your attendance has been confirmed to us by your university or college.

#### Actions you need to take

- Log into your account and check your to-do list for any outstanding actions you need to take

2015/16

### University or College Payment Advice

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Student Support Number:

5 October 2015

Name: Joseph Bloggs

Customer Reference Number: 01234567890

#### Your current course details:

University or College: SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

Campus name: SHU Course: SCIENCE

#### Tuition Fees

#### Payment Timetable for Tuition Fee Loan

This will be paid directly to the university or college.

Expected payment date	Amount	Course year	University or college to be paid	Course
01/11/2015	£2250.00	1	Sheffield Hallam University	Science
01/01/2016	£2250.00	1	Sheffield Hallam University	Science
01/04/2016	£4500.00	1	Sheffield Hallam University	Science
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9000.00</b>			

#### Student Finance Summary

Joseph Bloggs will also receive the following student finance for academic year 2015/16:

Maintenance Grants £1000.00

Maintenance Loan £1906.00

**Parent Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant and Adult Dependents Grant should also show on this document for students with dependents**

## APPENDIX 3 - EXAMPLE OF HMRC TAX CREDIT LETTER

  
[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
36200  
[Redacted]

Helpline 0345 300 3900  
Textphone 0345 300 3909  
For our opening hours go to [www.hmrc.gov.uk/contactus](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/contactus) or phone us.

T00 Liverpool 3  
T00  
GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS  
PRESTON  
LANCASHIRE  
PR1 0YP

Date 16 March 2015

### Amended tax credits award for 12/12/2014 to 05/04/2015

[Redacted] National Insurance number [Redacted]  
National Insurance number [Redacted]

#### Summary

**Tax credit for the period - see Part 2**  
Working Tax Credit £190.59

**Amounts still to be paid to you for the period shown above - see Part 3**  
Working Tax Credit to [Redacted] £39.77

Tax credits are based on your personal circumstances and income for the whole tax year. After the end of the tax year, when all the information is known, we make a final decision about how much you are entitled to receive.

**Part 1** shows your circumstances, including your income. Please check this part and tell us immediately if anything is wrong, missing or has changed.

**Part 2** is for information. It shows how we calculate your tax credits.

**Part 3** gives details about any payments we will make for the period shown above.

#### Your rights and obligations

Your Charter explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you. For more information go to [www.gov.uk/hmrc/your-charter](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc/your-charter)

#### Why we are writing to you

Thank you for telling us that your circumstances have changed.  
Your income or benefits have changed.

#### What to do now

Please check the details on this award notice and tell us if anything is wrong, missing or incomplete.

This example shows working tax credit, but child tax credit letters look similar - if you have to provide a tax credit award letter, you will need to provide all 8 pages.