

ASK us about...

APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT – GUIDELINES



Student Services administers a number of funds to help students who are in financial difficulty. Your application will be assessed according to the guidelines for the most appropriate fund for your circumstances

An application to the funds does not guarantee an award.

Disabled students can apply using this form for additional support that is not covered by Disabled Students' Allowance.

The Funds

Access to Learning Fund

This fund is to meet additional financial needs, and is assessed using the HEFCE Access to Learning Fund Guidelines.

Discretionary Learner Support Funds

This fund is provided by the Learning and Skills Council and is to support Further Education students only.

Short term loans

A small loan may be available for students who have had their main source of funding delayed. To apply please attend a drop-in or make an appointment.

Do not complete a Student Services Finance Application Form.

Bridging Loan

If you have children and are usually in receipt of means tested benefits, you may be eligible for a bridging loan whilst you are waiting to be assessed.

Dyslexia Assessments

If you require a test for dyslexia, you must speak to a disability advisor. **Do not complete a Student Services Finance Application Form.**

Student Hardship Fund / International Fund

This fund is solely for students who are unable to apply for any other fund. This includes international students and those students who do not meet the 3 year residency requirements. As this fund is very limited, an award can only be used for students who have exceptional and unforeseen circumstances.

For detailed information, please book an appointment with a Student Finance Advisor.



How to Complete the Form

Part 1: About you

- ◆ We will write to you at your correspondence address, make sure this information is up to date. You must inform us if you move addresses, as the address provided will be used to write to you.
- ◆ Write your contact details clearly, ensuring your email address and correspondence address are printed in **CAPITALS**.

Part 2: About your course

- ◆ We will use your course information to determine if you are receiving the correct funding and advise you of any other funding opportunities.

Part 3: About your living arrangements

- ◆ Provide evidence of your living arrangement such as a copy of your tenancy agreement or mortgage documents confirming the weekly or monthly payments.
- ◆ If you live with your parents then provide a letter from them stating how much you contribute weekly or monthly to your upkeep for rent, household bills and food. We will also require evidence that the stated amount is being paid on a regular basis (e.g. bank statement)

Part 4: About your dependants

- ◆ Only include details of your dependants who are living with you and are financially dependant on you.
- ◆ Only include children over the age of 16 and under 20 if they are in full time education (ensure you include evidence of their full time education).

Part 5: About your disability/special medical needs

- ◆ If you have a disability and all your needs are not covered by other forms of funding such as Disabled Students' Allowance, then give full details, on a separate sheet if necessary.
- ◆ In this section you should include information such as whether or not your disability or medical condition affects your mobility or use of public transport, also whether or not it affects your ability to work.
- ◆ Provide evidence of your disability and your extra requirements if you have any.
- ◆ If your disability affects your ability to work or impacts on your study time which reduces the time you have available to work part-time, please provide proof from your doctor / specialist.

Part 6: About your income and savings

- ◆ You must provide evidence of **ALL** your income, including all benefits or pensions you may be receiving.
- ◆ If applicable you must include evidence of **ALL** your partner's income.
- ◆ If you are a further education student ensure your parental income is provided in this section, you must also include evidence of this.
- ◆ If you have been refused any funding provide evidence of this.
- ◆ To qualify for the funds offered by Student Services you must have taken out all the funding available to you. This includes your full entitlement of Student Loan for undergraduate students (including seconded students on NHS courses) or your NHS Bursary.
- ◆ If you are a postgraduate student then provide evidence of all your income for the year. You must demonstrate what provisions you made to cover your fees and most of your living costs before coming to university, this includes evidence of any study loan you may have taken out from a bank.
- ◆ If you are a part time student provide evidence of any fee and course grant.

Part 7: About your expenditure

- ◆ Only include details and evidence of the expenditure that is specified on the application form.
- ◆ Expenditure for food, gas, electricity, water, TV License, telephone (including mobiles), clothes, home contents insurance, entertainment, social activities or clubs and societies wont be included in the assessment, instead you will be given an allowance for these.
- ◆ If you have used a credit card to avoid a priority debt, you must include evidence of this.

Part 8: About your priority debts

- ◆ The priority debts listed on the form are the only debts we can consider in your assessment. If you include any other debts in your application, you will be referred to a Student Finance Adviser, as they may be able to negotiate with the creditors a more reasonable repayment plan for you.
- ◆ Priority debts are those where non-payment would give the creditor the right to deprive you of your home, liberty, essential goods and services

Part 9: About your bank/building society details

- ◆ Complete your account details clearly, as any award granted to you will be paid by BACS directly into this account.
- ◆ Make sure you provide evidence of this account (last three months statements) to verify your bank details are correct.
- ◆ If you do not have a bank account or Post Office account, you **MUST** give reasons in your statement (Part 11) and provide supporting evidence.

Part 10: Data Protection Act 1998

- ◆ This is a statutory statement confirming that all data held in relation to your application comes under Data Protection legislation

Part 11: About your supporting statement

- ◆ You must submit a written statement to explain why you are applying for financial assistance, ensuring you write clearly or attach a separate printed sheet.
- ◆ If you have an unexpected financial circumstance please provide full details.
- ◆ If there is some reason why you believe your expenditure is higher than for other student [e.g. you are a care leaver] or your income is lower than for other students, please give full details of the reasons for this and how it affects you.

Part 12: My Declarations

- ◆ Tick the boxes confirming your residency status and fill in any other relevant information.
- ◆ If you are not a UK citizen then provide evidence of your residency status, for example a copy of your passport.
- ◆ Also tick the relevant box confirming who you are living with, referring to part 3 and 4 of the application.
- ◆ You must sign and date the declaration otherwise Student Finance are not able to assess your application.

Part 13: Your Course details – Faculty confirmation

- ◆ Ensure that all relevant parts of this section are completed **by your faculty office** partial completion will delay your application.
- ◆ If you are a part time student, the shaded section marked “PART TIME STUDENTS ONLY” must also be completed.

Part 14: Your final checklist

- ◆ Complete your final checklist in full.
- ◆ Indicate the number of pages you have provided for each item of evidence included in your application form.
- ◆ If you do not have evidence in a particular category, write N/A in the relevant box.

The Application Process

It may take up to four weeks to process your application.

If we have to request additional information or evidence from you, your application may take up to a further 4 weeks to process from the date that we receive all the requested information.

You will get a letter from us explaining the decision we have made on your application. If you do not understand this or you want a breakdown as to how we made our decision, you can come to our 'Drop In' Sessions or make an appointment for further advice and if necessary, a review of your application.

If you are not satisfied with the decision from the review of your application, then you should appeal, in writing, to Student Services.

If you have already made one application in an academic year (1 August 2009 - 31 July 2010) then there is no need to make another one. If you have a change in circumstances during the year you should write to us requesting a reassessment of your application attaching further evidence.

You **MUST** provide evidence of all the income and expenditure you list on the application form. If you do not provide all the correct evidence, your application will be delayed. All evidence must show your name and address.

DO NOT include original documents in your application form unless requested to do so, it will be time consuming returning these to you. Submit photocopies of all your documents.

If you have a change in circumstances during the year, such as a separation from your partner, you must request a reassessment of all your funding.

Student Services will NOT accept photocopies of:

- ◆ Student Support Notifications or NHS awards that have not been **fully** financially assessed (not applicable to students in receipt of a childcare grant where it will be marked "Provisional").
- ◆ Bank Account Mini Statements printed from a cash machine.
- ◆ Summary Child or Working Tax Credit Documents (You must provide the **full** document for the **current financial year**).
- ◆ Documents that are not in your name, unless they are relating to your partner or parents.
- ◆ Documents that are not dated in the current academic year, for example, out of date tenancy agreements.

Student Services will ONLY accept photocopies of:

- ◆ Childcare documents showing your name, your child's name, childcare registration number plus the full cost of childcare for the **academic year**.
- ◆ Full rent/tenancy agreements, signed by all parties, showing your full name and address as well as the address of your landlord or housing association.
- ◆ Full bank statements showing your name, address, account number and sort code. If you use internet banking, print outs must be stamped by your bank to verify they are accurate. If there are any individual debits or credits on your bank statements amounting to £100 or more then you must highlight and explain them.

If you submit an application WITHOUT sufficient evidence, your application will not be assessed until all required documentation has been submitted.

Please note that the processing of your application may take up to four weeks. When further evidence is requested from you, your application may take up to a further four weeks to process.

You can hand in your application or further evidence to Student Services at:

City North Campus, Perry Barr, 1st Floor Baker Building.

Edgbaston Campus, 2nd Floor Seacole Building.

Gosta Green, G27.

If you wish to post your application or evidence to us then use the address below:

**Student Finance
1st Floor Baker Building
Birmingham City University
City North Campus
Perry Barr
Birmingham
B42 2SU**

If you require further information, then please contact Student Services on:

Telephone: 0121 331 5588

Email: student.finance@bcu.ac.uk

For details of our drop in sessions and appointment times, please refer to the Student Services ASK leaflets, our website (www.bcu.ac.uk/studentservices) or contact the number above.