



SEPTEMBER 1, 2020

International Support Fund Guidance 2020-2021

Student-Facing Guidance
MONEY ADVICE & FUNDS SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF SALFORD

International Support Fund Guidance 2020-2021

What is the Support Fund?

The purpose of the Fund is to help international students who are experiencing a financial emergency that has arisen as a result of a significant and unexpected event that could not have been predicted in their financial planning. It is expected that students will have made reasonable provision to support themselves throughout their programme of study before they arrive at the University. This includes having enough funds to cover tuition fees, accommodation, food, household bills, cloths and entertainment costs. The fund cannot be used to cover a financial shortfall where reasonable efforts have not been made by the student to manage their money effectively.

Each application is assessed individually against set criteria and is based on the evidence provided by the student. There is no guarantee that an application will receive funding and there is no automatic entitlement to financial assistance from the fund. The International Support Fund is a cash limited fund which is subject to early closure in the event of funding coming to an end.

Who can apply?

All international (including European not eligible for a maintenance loan from Student Loans Company) undergraduate and postgraduate students who are registered and in attendance on a course at Salford University are eligible to apply if the following criteria are met:

Who is eligible to apply?

When applying to the Support Fund you must be able to show that:

- You registered for your current academic year with sufficient funds to support yourself and pay your tuition fees;
- You or your sponsor have suffered an unprecedented event which could not have been predicted and is causing you severe financial hardship;
- The 'emergency or unprecedented event' took place after you registered for your current academic year and paid any deposit required;
- You have a package of funding in place to which the Support Fund may contribute.

In addition, if you are applying to the Support Fund to help with tuition fees you must be able to show that:

- At least 70% of your total tuition fee has **already** been paid (this 70% can be made up of your sponsor's payments, your own payments, and any Scholarship you have been awarded for fees). We will not be able to accept Support Fund applications for fee support from students who still have more than 30% of fees outstanding.

How much help is available?

- Grants may be awarded for any amount up to a maximum of £2,000 per academic year, for a maximum of 3 years.

- If the Support Fund award is for tuition fees and the outstanding balance of fees is greater than £2,000, the award will be **conditional** on the outstanding fee balance being reduced to £2,000 or less by a specific date or a payment plan has been agreed with the University. If the applicant is unable to reduce the balance to £2,000 or less by this date, the award will be cancelled.

What evidence is required?

During the application process evidence of your financial emergency and the unprecedented event that has occurred is required. The application must always include **third party evidence** to support your claim.

If financial hardship has been caused by the withdrawal of sponsorship, you must submit evidence that your sponsor has suffered an unprecedented event that is preventing them from supporting you. For example:

- Medical evidence from a doctor or a hospital
- Evidence from an accountant that your sponsor's business has been affected by an unprecedented event, such as political upheaval, natural disaster or economic crisis.
- Evidence from police, local government officials or an insurance company that your sponsor's business premises / stock have been severely damaged or destroyed

You must also submit evidence to show that your sponsor was supporting you with tuition fees and living costs up to the point of the event. This could be evidence of:

- Direct transfer of money for fees from your sponsor's bank to the University of Salford or,
- transfer of money for fees / living costs from your sponsor's bank account to your bank account and evidence of some of that money being used for fees.

Additional evidence:

- A personal statement
- Letter confirming sponsorship (if applicable)
- 6 months most recent bank statements for all accounts in your name (including Savings, ISAs and non-UK bank accounts)
- An explanation of any incoming / outgoing funds into your bank accounts, including money borrowed from or lent to friends and family (annotated bank statements are acceptable). Please note all transactions over £100 must be clearly annotated and explanations must be factual with further evidence provided if requested for all UK and International Accounts in your name. It is important students are aware of Money Laundering in the UK, further information can be found here:
<https://beta.salford.ac.uk/askus/admin-essentials/money-scams-tricks-and-frauds>
- A copy of your tenancy agreement for your current registered UK address, which

states your monthly rent

- Evidence of your monthly rent as an outgoing amount from one of your bank accounts
- Evidence of your regular essential monthly outgoings (such as water, gas, electricity, and food)
- Evidence of your current income – 3 months most recent payslips (if applicable)
- Evidence of your partner's income – 3 months most recent payslips and bank statements (if applicable)

NB: A letter from your sponsor promising financial support is not sufficient – you must be able to show that your sponsor has made payments to you or the University in the same academic year for which you are applying to the Support Fund.

Is there a deadline for applications?

Applications can be made from **Monday 28th September 2020**. The Fund will close from 31st August 2021 for end of financial year processing.

Applications may not be accepted if the student has less than 8 weeks of their course remaining or 6 weeks if they are in their final year.

How long will it take for a decision?

As part of the application process, you must attend an interview to discuss your application. You will need to bring to your appointment any outstanding evidence that we may request by email after we review your application. Failure to provide all outstanding evidence within a set time period will result in closure of your application.

Once you have attended your appointment, we will aim to give you a decision in writing within two working weeks.

How will the award be paid?

If the award is for tuition fees it will be paid direct to the University's Finance Department and credited to your account. If the award is for living costs or other exceptional costs, it will be paid by bank transfer to a nominated bank account in your name.

Can I reapply to the fund?

If your application is closed due to insufficient evidence, you may reapply if you are able to provide further evidence. We would recommend that you discuss your evidence with an adviser from the Money Advices and Funds Service in University House before submitting a reapplication – phone 0161 295 0023 (Option 2 – Option 3) or email: salfordsupportfund@salford.ac.uk

Can I appeal against the decision?

If you wish to appeal it must be on the grounds of a change in your circumstances, you

must submit your appeal within 10 working days from the date of your decision email. Please note the eligibility criteria 'Who is eligible for support?' as set out in our guidance cannot be changed and is not grounds for an appeal.

You must write an email of appeal explaining why you are appealing and how your circumstances have changed to salfordsupportfund@salford.ac.uk and mark for the attention of a Team Leader.

Appeals are considered by a Student Support Fund Team Leader (or nominated colleague) and their decision is final.