



## UWS Childcare Fund Procedures

Students who are unable to apply to the SAAS Discretionary and Childcare Funds may instead apply to the UWS Childcare Fund, for help meeting their study related childcare costs.

Applications to the UWS Childcare Fund are primarily made by those studying Paramedic Science and pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery, as well as International, EU and Research students. If you are unsure of your eligibility for this Fund please get in touch or visit [our website](#) for more information.

1. If eligible, you may apply for a contribution towards your study related childcare costs **once** in any University academic year.
2. Policy and procedures for the fund can change, but we will endeavour to avoid any changes within an academic year.
3. Your application may be reassessed during the academic year if your circumstances change in a way that would impact the outcome of your application. It is your responsibility to advise of any such change without delay. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary proceedings in accordance with the University Code of Discipline for Students (Section 12 of the Regulatory framework) and recovery of paid funds through the university credit control procedure.
4. You must reapply to the funds each academic year and meet the eligibility criteria stipulated in that academic year. Please do not rely on this being the same in each year of application.
5. Funds are limited and are not guaranteed until after an application has been fully assessed. Acceptance of an application does not constitute any guarantee of an award.
6. Funds are awarded on a first come, first served basis and we encourage all students to apply early to avoid disappointment.
7. We may not be able to award late applicants at the levels detailed below, and the fund will close, often with little notice, when the budget has been exhausted.
8. You must be an enrolled student on a relevant course at UWS, and fully engaged in studies in a way that would justify use of study related childcare, i.e. not on a period of interruption.
9. You must have applied for all other sources of funding to which you are entitled, i.e. Student Loan, NHS or other Bursary, Supplementary Grants, Childcare Allowance, Tax credits, Universal Credits, Tuition Fees and any relevant Benefits, Free Early Education place from Local Authority, etc.
10. Applications will only be accepted from those whose household income (partners earnings, Working Tax Credits and work replacement benefits, such as Universal Credits), before student support is included, is under £25k per year (net) if you have up to 2 children, or under £30k per year (net) if you have 3 or more children. Child Tax Credits and Child Benefit are not included.

11. You must provide the relevant evidence to allow us to assess any application you make. It is your responsibility to do this in a timely manner. We will be unable to make an award without this, and the fund may become exhausted while we are waiting for you to provide this.
12. We will usually be able to consider the costs of registered childcare only.
13. Should there be extenuating reasons why you are unable to use registered care, and you are paying for unregistered childcare, such as relatives or friends, we may be able to contribute towards the costs of this. In these circumstances, prior to applying, you **must** book an appointment with us to discuss your application and these extenuating circumstances. Where we feel the use of this care is justified, we will explain how we calculate any contributions, and how you can progress an application.
14. We will not consider an application where a parent or stepparent is available to provide care.
15. When considering your application, we are interested in your total annual costs of study related childcare for the academic year. This includes on-campus teaching, placements, virtual learning, group work, independent study etc. If you use more than one childcare provider, we will add together the annual costs for each provider and use the total in our assessment. It is therefore important that you **plan ahead for the full academic year** and consider your childcare requirements and costs for this entire period.
16. Benefit rules prevent us from contributing to any work-related childcare costs you may have, without this directly reducing the benefit you may be eligible to receive (i.e. Childcare Element of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit).
17. If you are in receipt of Universal Credits, you must declare your student funding so that your Universal Credit claim is calculated correctly. If you submit Universal Credit statements to us which show that your student funding is not being taken into account, then we may not be able to complete your UWS Childcare Fund application. If your childcare application is assessed prior to the start of the academic year then an award decision may be made, this is subject to receipt of the relevant updated Universal Credit statements prior to the first payment being made. If we do not receive this, your payment will be delayed until it is provided. If the academic year has already begun, no award decision will be made until after you have submitted the relevant updated evidence.
18. When telling us about your childcare requirements for the academic year, we will query any childcare costs that appear excessive or unreasonable.
19. We do not consider any childcare costs incurred outwith your term-time, so please pay particular attention to your university schedule. Based on our standard term-time for full-time students, the maximum childcare we would consider is 30 weeks between September and May. Based on our term time for those students undertaking a Paramedic or pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery or PhD level course the maximum childcare we would consider is 50 weeks. Different types of courses, with different levels of commitment, may be eligible for different levels of support. If you are unsure what you can apply for, please contact us at [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk)
20. The Childcare Fund Factsheet for Students, available [here](#) includes more details on what you can apply for, and how we assess your application.
21. Your childcare provider(s) must complete a childcare provider form as part of the application process. This is in addition to the application form which you complete. The childcare provider form summarises the childcare being provided and gives us the details required to confirm any application made.
22. Any award we make will be a **contribution towards your study related costs only** and will be paid directly to your provider. You will be responsible for meeting the remaining costs, so please ensure you plan for this.

23. When calculating our contribution, we will consider the amount of study related childcare you are liable to pay **after** all other study related contributions are deducted, i.e. SAAS Childcare Allowance.
24. Paramedic and pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery students using registered childcare should receive up to £2,466 from the SAAS Childcare Allowance. This allowance is not income-assessed so we will expect to see this on your SAAS Award Notice. We will not be able to progress your application without this allowance having been awarded, unless you have separate evidence showing why you are not eligible to receive it.
25. You are expected to make a personal contribution of £799 towards the remaining childcare costs for which you are liable, after relevant deductions. Awards from the UWS Childcare Fund will then be made as a contribution towards remaining costs over and above £800.
26. The table below details the contribution you may receive, based on the costs for which you are liable.

<b>Childcare Costs</b> (for which you are liable, after deductions)	£800 - £1,099	£1,100 - £1,999	£2,000 - £2,999	£3,000 - £3,999	£4,000 - £4,999	£5,000 - £5,999	£6,000 +
<b>Award Amount</b>	<b>£400</b>	<b>£750</b>	<b>£1400</b>	<b>£2100</b>	<b>£2800</b>	<b>£3500</b>	<b>£4200</b>

### Submitting your application –

27. We operate a paper free application process. You should submit your application and supporting evidence by email to [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk). We have a lot of [guidance](#) to help you complete your application electronically, collate your application and supporting evidence and submit this to us with your childcare provider form(s).
28. It is important you read all instructions and complete the form correctly as incomplete applications may be returned and will be subject to delay.
29. If you have read all the guidance and have any concerns about completing/submitting the application and supporting evidence as instructed, please do contact us at [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk) and we will be happy to help.

### What happens next -

30. Applicants can expect to receive an email receipt confirming that we have received the application, and that this has joined our processing queue. You may receive this up to several working days after you submitted your application, but rest assured that your place in our queue will be based on when you submitted your application and not the date of your receipt.
31. All correspondence is sent to your student email address, so you should ensure you check this regularly if you are expecting to hear from us.
32. You will receive a response from your application as soon as it is assessed. We assess applications as quickly as we can, but it can take around 6 weeks to get back to you, and longer at peak times or where your application was incomplete. We ask that applicants refrain from enquiring about the progress of their application until 6 weeks has passed, allowing us time to focus on processing.

33. Our response may be an award notification, a request for further information if the application was incomplete, a request to attend an appointment with an adviser, or an email advising that an award is not being made and the reason for this.
34. Where applications are successful, award notifications are emailed to childcare providers stating the award amount and payment pattern in respect of childcare costs, with the student copied in for information. Awards will be paid via BACS direct to the childcare provider. Childcare providers are not contacted where applications are incomplete or unsuccessful. It is the student's responsibility to liaise with the childcare provider(s) regarding the progress of the application.
35. Initial payments will be made as soon as possible after processing the application, but not before enrolment is confirmed and classes commence.

### **What you need to do after an award has been made –**

36. You must notify us as soon as possible if there is any change in circumstances. You should send such notification to [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk)
37. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in your student status, including withdrawal from the course or the commencement of a period of interruption, significant changes to your childcare usage, and changes to your financial situation that would impact your eligibility for this fund.
38. We may cancel your application and award as a result of such changes. A refund of any unused portion may also be requested from your childcare provider(s).
39. You and/or your childcare provider must also notify us of any changes to their bank details at least 10 working days prior to the next scheduled payment.

### **Contacting Us:**

We are here to help, so please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the fund, how it works, how to apply or the decision that has been made.

If you have a quick question about any aspect of the fund procedures, the best way to contact us is via [fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk](mailto:fundingadvice@uws.ac.uk) where we can respond quickly.

If you would rather discuss an application with an Adviser, or any aspect of the fund in more detail, please book an appointment through The Hub. You can find more details [here](#).

### **Confidentiality**

The University retains all documents pertaining to the financial award as audit checks are performed annually to ensure awards are made appropriately. Digital records are stored in a secure system.

The privacy and confidentiality of students will be respected at all stages of the process. Anonymous statistical information is collected about expenditure of University and Student Awards Agency Funds for reporting purposes and budgetary management. Application forms and related confidential documents are destroyed as per Data Protection guidelines and will be retained for 7 years after the current academic year.

### **What if I disagree with the decision about my application?**

There is no formal route of appeal for this fund, but you are encouraged to discuss the outcome of your application with an Adviser if you feel the decision is incorrect. We will be more than happy to review this and/or explain the outcome, or correct any errors we may have made.

### Examples:

1. Agnes is studying pre-registration Adult Nursing and is receiving all the support she is entitled to from SAAS. She is a lone parent with no income coming into the household other than her student support and Child Benefit. She has a child in nursery, costing £6,300 for the duration of the academic year. This total less her SAAS Childcare Allowance of £2,466 means Agnes is liable to pay £3,834. Agnes is therefore eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £2,100.
2. Bryan is studying Paramedic Sciences and is receiving all the support he is entitled to from SAAS. He has a partner who earns £36,000 per year and one child. Bryan is not eligible to apply to the fund as his household income is above £25,000 per year.
3. Carol is studying towards a PhD and has one child. She receives a small stipend from the University of £14,000 for the year. Her husband works part-time earning a further £7,500 per year, bringing their total household income to £21,500 for the year. While her husband works, their daughter attends nursery, costing £2,900 for the year. Carol is therefore eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £1,400.
4. David is an international student studying an undergraduate course. He is not eligible for any student support from SAAS etc. He is a lone parent to a child in nursery and a child in school, who uses after-school care. His nursery costs £4,500 for the academic year and after-school costs £1,200, bringing his total costs to £5,700. He is eligible to apply to the fund and would receive £3,500.

