

International Summer Fund 2025/26

Student guide to the means testing process

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Introduction

The International Summer Fund is a fund provided by UWE Bristol to support International, EU and Offshore undergraduate and postgraduate students who may need extra financial support during the summer vacation period.

This guide has been produced to provide students with an overview of the assessment of International Summer Fund applications. It doesn't cover all eventualities, and UWE Bristol retains the right to use reasonable discretion for assessments.

The 2025/26 Summer Fund is open to applications from Midday on Wednesday 24 June 2026 and will close on Wednesday 22 July 2026, subject to funds not being exhausted.

Applications

Applications are made through an InfoHub form, which can be accessed via [the UWE Bristol International Summer Fund web page](#). An application will only be assessed once the following three criteria are met:

- The online application form is completed in full and submitted.
- The student has completed an appropriate module on [Blackbullion](#) and achieved a 100% pass mark on the Final Challenge, if applicable.
- Supporting evidence is provided.

No applications will be considered until all these criteria are met.

Processing applications

Applications to the International Summer Fund are processed by the Funds Team.

Applications are processed in date and time order, by date and time of receipt of evidence. Applications are assessed within 4 weeks of this date. The process consists of four stages:

- Eligibility checks
- Income assessment
- Expenditure assessment
- Decision making

The applicant will then be notified of the decision or any further information we need by email to their UWE Bristol email address (ending @uwe.ac.uk).

All four stages of the process are conducted in line with the rules of the International Summer Fund, which are decided by the Funds Team in agreement with the Funds Team Manager and informed by the guidelines produced by the National Association of Student Money Advisers (NASMA www.nasma.org.uk).

Eligibility

To be eligible, the applicant must be:

- Fully registered on an eligible course.
- An International or Offshore student, or an EU student who is not eligible for maintenance support from Student Finance. [See our webpages](#) for more information on fee status.
- On a UWE Bristol course, or a fully franchised course at a partner institution.
- Receiving all the student funding they are entitled to (if applicable).

Eligibility criteria

Not all UWE Bristol students are eligible to apply for the International Summer Fund. This section outlines the eligibility criteria.

You are eligible to apply if you are a **returning International, EU or Offshore student** and one of the following applies:

- looking after dependants (adult or child)
- unable to work due to illness
- re-sitting examinations/coursework
- completing a dissertation
- on an NHS placement outside the standard course programme
- or a non-returning final year student re-sitting examinations/coursework.

You cannot apply for the fund if you fall into any of the below categories:

- UK 'Home' students – please refer to the [Summer Fund](#).
- Students who have completed their course (even if you are starting a new one in September).
- Part-time students, unless you must attend UWE Bristol over the summer or have childcare costs incurred to maintain the place.
- Students unable to secure work over the vacation, unless you satisfy one of the other eligibility criteria.

Priority groups

The priority groups for the Summer Fund are:

- Lone parents.
- Unable to work due to illness
- On an NHS placement outside the standard course programme

Priority group students are likely to receive a higher award than other students. However, other eligible students can still apply to the fund and receive support, and being in a priority group doesn't guarantee an award.

Help for UK students

If a UK student requires help with essential living costs over the summer vacation period, they can apply to the Summer Fund. More information can be found on the [UWE Bristol Summer web page](#).

Starting the assessment

Before we assess the student's income and expenditure, we determine the assessment period and who is included in the assessment.

Assessment period

We assess applicants' income and expenditure over the assessment period, which is 13 weeks.

The assessment period is 15 June 2026 – 14 September 2026.

Who is included

We include the following people in the assessment:

- The student who has applied.
- The student's partner, if they reside with them in the UK.
- The student's dependent children, if they reside with them in the UK.

Income assessment

This section explains how we assess students' income for the International Summer Fund means test.

We include income from all sources. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Savings at the start of the assessment period.
- Income from employment.
- Financial support from family members or partners.
- Sponsorship from the government or an employer.
- Loans.
- Bursaries, scholarships and stipends.

Minimum required provision

All applicants must have sufficient income to cover their living costs for the year (after payments for tuition fees are accounted for) to be eligible to apply to the International Summer Fund.

Students will be required to meet the MRP, (once tuition fees have been accounted for) before an assessment can be made for financial support over the summer vacation. This must be at least 70% of your composite living costs (CLC) + utilities + monthly rent over the year.

For example, a student with rent liability of £500 per month will have a minimum required provision for the year of:

- CLC: $£102 \times 52 = £5,304$
- utility bills (if gas and/or electric liability): $£19 \times 52 = £988$
- rent: $£500 \times 12 = £6,000$

Total MRP is $£12,292 - 30\% = £8,604$.

Standard expenditure assessment

This section explains how we assess students' standard expenditure for the Summer Fund means test.

Composite Living Costs (CLC)

We include a standard amount for living costs, which is based on how many people are in your household and their circumstances. The weekly amounts are:

- £102 for a single student.
- £157 for a couple.
- £140 for the first child and £109 for any subsequent children.

This includes food, toiletries, household products, water, internet, phone bills, TV licence, clothes, contents insurance and entertainment.

There is also an additional premium for students who indicate on their application that they pay for menstrual hygiene products.

Utility bills

For gas and electricity bills, we include a standard amount of £19 for a single student who lives with another person or other people, and £31 for a couple or a single student who lives in a single occupancy residency.

Housing costs

Rent is generally included in full. However, for single students with no children who are not in their first year at university, there is a cap of £170 per week. This cap may be waived if there is good reason for the student to be in more expensive accommodation.

For students who live with parents or other family members and contribute to the household, we include the rent element only. If the contribution includes payments towards bills, food, etc., this is discounted. The rent payment is capped at £58 per week.

We include a standard amount of £58 per week for students who are homeless or sofa surfing. This can be revised when the student moves into more permanent accommodation.

Mortgage payments are included in full. We will also include additional costs such as buildings insurance (but not contents insurance).

Travel costs

Travel costs are only included if you are an essential car user or required to attend UWE over the summer vacation.

Essential car users (ECUs) are students with children or other regular caring responsibilities, disabled students, students with regular compulsory placements as part of their course (e.g. Nursing students) or students who live more than 15 miles away from their normal campus. We include £43.00 per week for full-time ECUs, which includes tax, insurance, MOTs and fuel. If the student lives over 15 miles from their normal campus, we include an additional 23p per mile for travel over 15 miles between the student's home and their normal campus. For full-time students, this is included as a round trip up to five days a week, depending on your course timetable and the number of days you are required to attend UWE in person.

We include up to £19.10 per week for full-time students who use the bus to attend UWE and live in the [First Bus Bristol Zone](#)

We also include up to £19.74 per week for full-time students who use the bus to attend UWE and live outside of the [First Bus Bristol Zone](#) and students who use other forms of public transport (including trains and coaches). However, if the student provides evidence that their public transport costs are more than £19.74 per week and there is no reasonable alternative, we will include their actual weekly travel costs.

For full-time students who travel to the University by motorcycle and live within the [First Bus Bristol Zone](#), we include £19.10 per week.

For full-time students who travel to the University by motorcycle and live outside of the [First Bus Bristol Zone](#), or have regular compulsory placements as part of their course, we include up to £19.74 per week. plus an additional 23p per mile for travel over 15 miles between the student's home and their normal campus. For full-time students, this is included as a round trip up to five days a week, depending on the number of days you are required to attend UWE in person over the summer vacation.

Non-essential car users (NECUs) are students who use a car to travel to the University but do not fit the ECU criteria. We include up to £19.10 per week for full-time NECUs if you are required to attend UWE in person over the summer vacation.

For full-time students who travel to the University by E-Scooter, we include up to £17.33 per week.

Travel costs are not usually included if the student lives on the campus at which they are studying.

We include up to £3.85 per week for full-time students who walk or cycle to the University. This is not included if the student lives on the campus at which they are studying.

50% of the above is included for part-time students who are required to attend UWE in person over the summer vacation.

Council tax

Council tax payments will be included, but only where the student's household is liable. Single full-time undergraduate students should not be paying council tax.

Non-Standard Expenditure Assessment

This section explains how we assess students' non-standard expenditure for the Summer Fund means test.

Childcare costs

If we have evidence of the costs and they are required to allow the student to attend UWE over the summer period, we will include these as non-standard expenditure.

Vehicle costs

For ECUs, we will include the cost of essential vehicle repairs up to £600 per year, and the essential purchase of a vehicle up to £1,200 in total. The purchase of a vehicle can only be included once per student for the duration of their course. Non-essential vehicle repairs and vehicle purchases are not included.

Disability and medical costs

We do not include the cost of any treatment provided by the NHS, including optical and dental bills and prescription charges. If a student cannot pay for these, they can complete an [HC1 form for help with healthcare costs](#).

We will consider including the full costs of any additional amounts incurred by the student due to a disability or medical condition for any special dietary requirements, private prescriptions for the treatment of ADHD or alternative therapies not provided by the NHS up to £500 per year, if the student can provide evidence from a third party medical professional that this treatment is necessary and cannot be provided or prescribed by the NHS.

If the student has other medical costs which are not provided by the NHS, or the NHS wait would force the student to abandon their studies, we will consider including the actual cost up to £1,500 per year. We will require evidence from a doctor that the treatment is necessary and cannot be provided by the NHS within a reasonable timeframe, together with an invoice from the treatment provider. This includes medical costs, including surgery, for trans students.

If a student has undertaken and paid for a diagnostic test with UWE Bristol's Dyslexia and SpLD Service, we will include the £75 fee in our assessment.

We will include the £200 student contribution towards DSA assessed computer costs.

Costs incurred by a student to obtain supporting evidence for their DSA application will also be considered up to a maximum amount of £100 once for the duration of their course.

Priority debts

We define a priority debt as one which would give the creditor the right to take away the debtor's home, liberty or essential goods and services.

We include an amount for the reasonable repayment of priority debts in the assessment. We will not include arrears which have accrued during the current assessment period or have been included in assessments in previous years, as we cannot double count these expenses.

Priority debts include:

- Rent or mortgage arrears for a current property.
- Council tax arrears.
- Gas and electricity debts.

We will not repay the debt in full. The student must have negotiated an affordable repayment plan with the creditor. We will then include repayments which are due within the assessment period.

Credit cards, overdrafts, unsecured loans and other such debts are non-priority debts and are therefore not included in the assessment.

Family emergencies

If a student has a family member with a serious illness or experiences bereavement, they can apply to the [EU/International Emergency Fund](#).

Moving costs

If a student is forced to move at short notice (e.g. due to eviction), we can include up to £500 towards their removal costs.

If a student moves into an unfurnished rented property at short notice, there is no other reasonable option, and the student does not have furniture, we include £750 towards furnishing the property.

We do not include the costs of deposits, agency fees or upfront rent for securing accommodation.

Household items, personal effects & documents

For priority students (if not already received during the academic year), we will include the reasonable costs of repairing or replacing essential household items, such as white goods, cookers, and beds.

If a student is a homeowner and has essential repairs such as replacing a boiler or repairing the roof, we will include the costs up to £1,000.

If a student has uninsured personal items damaged by a fire or flood, etc., or stolen, we can include up to £500 and will consider support towards replacing or repairing a laptop or desktop computer. We require evidence of the event that damaged the student's property or the crime reference report/number.

If evidence of pregnancy is provided, we will include £500 for pregnant students for costs of preparing for the baby's arrival.

We will consider certain additional costs for trans students, including fees for changing names on ID such as passports and driving licences, and buying new clothes. We will only include reasonable costs, and costs can only be claimed once per student for the duration of their course. All costs will be capped at £500 for personal items, such as buying new clothes and £250 for fees incurred in changing documentation.

Decision making and awards

We add up the total of all income, and the total of all expenditure. If the income is greater than the expenditure, we believe the student has sufficient income to cover their essential costs, and we do not give an award.

If the expenditure is greater than the income, we believe the student does not have sufficient income to cover their essential costs, and we will offer an award. The difference between their expenditure and income is called the shortfall.

Non-standard award

If the student has non-standard costs, we will make an award towards these first. We award 100% of non-standard costs, or the total shortfall if this is lower.

Standard award

Standard awards are made to full-time students only.

If the student has non-standard costs, and the total shortfall is higher than the non-standard costs, the difference between the total shortfall and the non-standard costs is called the standard shortfall.

If the student doesn't have non-standard costs, the total shortfall is the standard shortfall.

We award 100% of the standard shortfall to priority students listed below

- looking after dependants (adult or child)
- unable to work due to illness
- on an NHS placement outside the standard course programme

We award 50% of the standard shortfall to students only resitting examinations and/or coursework or completing a dissertation.

Part-time course-related costs award

Part-time course-related costs awards are made to part-time students if they are required to attend UWE over the summer or have childcare costs incurred to maintain the place.

We award 100% of course-related costs or 100% of the standard shortfall, as defined under 'Standard award' above, whichever is lower.

Course-related costs include travel costs and childcare costs, as defined in the 'Standard expenditure' section above.

Minimum and maximum awards

All awards are rounded up to the nearest £10, or the nearest £10 below the total shortfall, whichever is lower.

The minimum award is £10, and the maximum award is £2,000, or up to £5,000 for the whole year (52 weeks) from the International Student Support Fund and International Summer Fund combined. For example, if you have already received a maximum award of £4,000 from the International Student Support Fund, your International Summer Fund award would be capped at £1,000.

If an application is submitted by a student couple, the total award would be shared equally between both applicants (e.g., if the total award is £2,000, each applicant will receive £1,000).

Informing the student

We will inform the student of the decision, including how the decision was made, by email to their UWE email address (ending @uwe.ac.uk).

Payment of awards

Most payments will be made directly to the student's chosen bank account by BACS transfer. BACS payments are processed on Mondays and Wednesdays and it can then take up to three working days for the payment to reach the student's bank account.

If the student has a debt to the University and has given permission for this to be paid from their award, this payment will be made internally in the University. If the student has a debt to a third party and has given permission to pay this from their award, this will be paid to the third party. The amount paid to the student will be reduced accordingly.

Debts to the University

If the student has a debt to the University and has not agreed that their award can be used to repay the debt, the Funds Team will contact the student to discuss repayment of the debt before the award is made. We may withhold the fund award until contact has been established relating to the debt.

Change of circumstances

If there is a significant change in a student's circumstances, they can have their International Summer Fund application reassessed, if funds haven't been exhausted and the International Summer Fund is still open. The student doesn't have to submit another application – they can just contact the Funds Team and provide evidence of the change by emailing sms@uwe.ac.uk.

Appeals

If the student feels the decision has been made incorrectly, they can submit a formal appeal by email to sms@uwe.ac.uk. This will be considered by an appropriate third party. Appeals can only be made if the student believes the decision hasn't been made correctly within the rules of the International Summer Fund scheme as outlined here. A student can't appeal because they don't agree with the rules of the scheme.

If the student isn't satisfied with the outcome of the first appeal, they will have the chance to make a second appeal, which will be considered by representatives from the Student Life Services and the Students' Union.