

Study-Related Costs Funding

Study Support Fund (England)
Support Funds (Northern Ireland)
Financial Contingency Fund (Wales)

Terms & Conditions 2022/23



The Open University Study-Related Costs Fund

The Study-Related Costs Fund is available to help students who need extra financial support for their study costs. This could include costs like internet access, childcare, or stationery. This fund is available to low-income students eligible for an England, Wales or Northern Ireland fee.

Terms & Conditions

These conditions contain the terms of the Study-Related Costs Fund. They set out the rights and responsibilities of each party which will apply in relation to your application for the fund and, for successful recipients of funding only, whilst you are a registered student. Please read these conditions carefully before you apply for funding and make sure you understand them.

A. Eligibility

1. To qualify for study-related costs funding, you must meet **all** the following criteria:
 - Be studying a module of at least 30 credits which starts in the 2022/23 academic year
 - Be actively participating on your module
 - Be in receipt of a qualifying benefit or have an annual household income of not more than £25,000 (or below £50,000 if applying for diagnostic assessment costs)
 - Be eligible for a UK fee (England, Wales or Northern Ireland)

B. Supporting evidence

2. You will need to provide evidence of your annual gross household income or a qualifying benefit to support your application (see [Appendix 2](#) and [Appendix 3](#) for further information). You will also need to provide evidence of the study costs you have incurred (see [Appendix 1](#) for full details of the evidence you need to provide for each study cost).

C. Study costs supported

3. You can apply for support towards the following through the Study-Related Costs Fund:
 - Study-related costs (see [Appendix 1](#) for a full list of the study costs you can apply for).
 - Diagnostic assessment costs (see [Section F: Diagnostic assessments](#)).
 - Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) PC contribution.
 - Childcare. This requires an additional application form available from Student Fees.

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D. Applications

4. Applications should be submitted by email to student-fees-src@open.ac.uk or by post to: Student Fees, The Open University, PO Box 6055, Milton Keynes, MK10 1NH.

5. The table below details when to apply, depending on the study cost you are applying for

Study cost type	Earliest you can apply
Diagnostic assessment costs	Up to 3 months before your module starts
DSA £200 PC contribution	Up to 3 months before your module starts
Medical evidence to support a DSA application	Up to 3 months before your module starts
PC/laptop/tablet (up-front funding requests only)	Up to 1 month before your module starts
All other general study costs	From your module start date

6. Applications for resits, resubmissions or postponements can be made for costs incurred during the month before the end-of-module assessment (EMA) deadline or exam date.

7. The deadline for applications is one calendar month after your final exam date or EMA submission date. No further applications or evidence will be accepted after this date. This applies to all study which begins during the 2022/23 academic year (1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023).

8. It is your responsibility to provide all supporting evidence for your application by the advertised deadline. We reserve the right to request additional evidence from you. Failure to submit all required evidence could lead to your application being declined.

9. The Open University shall use and take care of any personal information supplied to it as described in its [Privacy Notice](#), a copy of which is available on request, in accordance with data protection legislation. By submitting your application, you agree to the collection, retention, usage, and distribution of your personal information in order to process your application and contact you.

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10. The Open University will take all reasonable steps to continue the services offered as part of this scheme. There may be circumstances outside of our control where we are unable to provide those services in full or in part for reasons such as fire, flood, pandemic, terrorist acts or industrial disputes. Where those, or similar, circumstances arise we will minimise disruption so far as we are reasonably able to.
11. Promoter: The Open University, Walton Hall, Kents Hill, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.

E. Awards

12. Costs must have been incurred during the module and items requested must be essential for study. Awards are granted at the discretion of The Open University. Claims considered to be more than reasonable expenditure may be declined.
13. Requests for up-front payments will not be supported, you must provide evidence of the costs already incurred. The exception to this is if you are requesting support towards a PC, laptop or tablet, where an up-front payment will be considered if you don't have the funds available to buy the device.
14. If we are waiting for evidence from a previous claim, we may decline subsequent applications or withhold future funding until the required evidence has been received.
15. Awards for general study-related costs will be paid no earlier than 14 days after your module has started, once the University has verified that you are actively participating in study and have a valid payment method in place. Awards for diagnostic assessment costs, DSA PC contribution and medical evidence to support a DSA application may be paid up to three months prior to your module starting. Up-front PC, laptop or tablet awards may be paid up to one month prior to your module starting.
16. If approved for funding, payment will be made by BACS directly into your bank account. The account must be a UK account and in your own name. Joint accounts are acceptable.
17. Reimbursement of costs for a diagnostic assessment will be paid directly to the assessor by BACS, if this is the option you have requested in your application form. Funding will be awarded after the assessment has taken place.

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18. Any awards made by The Open University as a result of inaccurate or false information submitted by the student will be recovered from the student.
19. Payments from the Study-Related Costs Fund may affect your entitlement to claim benefits. It is your responsibility to check this with the Department for Work and Pensions.

F. Diagnostic assessments for a specific learning difficulty

20. You can apply for support towards the cost of a diagnostic assessment for a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD), such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, or visual stress.
21. You can apply for support once only, towards the cost of one diagnostic assessment. You are responsible for finding a suitable assessor and should always check with the assessor if they can assess for a range of specific learning difficulties. Information about finding an assessor is available on the [Help Centre](#).
22. You can claim for travel costs to and from your assessment, either by public transport (standard class travel only) or car. Mileage costs can be claimed at a rate of 39.5p per mile. Taxi costs are not supported.
23. Funding is not available for resits, resubmissions or postponements.

Appendix 1: Study costs supported

General study costs

Funding of **up to £200 per academic year** is available for general study items such as stationery, paper, ink, a printer, headphones etc.

Supporting evidence needed: copy of receipt(s) detailing the item(s) purchased, costs incurred and the date of purchase.

Internet access

Funding is available for line rental, broadband, mobile data, and dongles of **up to £20 per month** for the module duration. Funding is not available for the cost of calls, set up fees or payments for account arrears.

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Supporting evidence needed: copy of your most recent bill from your internet provider, including your name, address and the monthly cost.

PC/laptop/tablet

Funding is available of **up to £250 towards one item**. The item should be new. Refurbished laptops must come with a minimum one-year warranty. Support is not available for second-hand items, repairs, or parts to upgrade an existing computer.

One award per student is available with subsequent applications considered on a case-by-case basis.

You must check the technical specifications for your module(s) before you purchase a device, to ensure it meets any computing requirements.

Supporting evidence needed: copy of receipt showing the item purchased, the cost incurred and the date of purchase.

If you need funding before you can purchase the item, an up-front payment will be considered. You will be required to submit a receipt retrospectively as proof of purchase.

DSA PC contribution

Funding of **£200 is available** for students in England required to pay a contribution towards a PC on which to run their DSA-funded assistive software.

Supporting evidence needed: copy of your Student Finance England DSA award letter.

Medical evidence

Funding of **up to £50 per academic year** is available to support an application, e.g., for DSA or a discretionary postponement.

Supporting evidence needed: copy of a dated receipt detailing the cost of the medical evidence.

Compulsory module materials

Funding is available for reasonable expenditure for study materials you are required to buy for your module. The item(s) must be listed in the module description.

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Supporting evidence needed: copy of receipt(s) detailing the item(s) purchased, costs incurred and the date of purchase.

Travel

Funding is available for reasonable expenditure for travel to OU organised events, such as tutorials or exams. Support is available for travel by public transport (standard class travel), or car (not taxi). There is a mileage rate of 39.5p per mile.

Supporting evidence needed: for public transport, a copy of dated receipts or tickets for transport used; for travel by car, details of journeys undertaken; email confirmation from your tutor of your attendance.

Residential school accommodation and meals fee

The full cost is covered for students who have been charged the accommodation and meals element of their residential school separately to their tuition fee. If booking is through the OU, no evidence is required. This is paid directly to the residential school unless you have already paid, in which case you will be reimbursed once attendance is confirmed. If you arrange your own food and accommodation, you will be reimbursed up to £50 per night.

Supporting evidence needed: a copy of receipt(s) and hotel booking confirmation.

Childcare

Full details of support available can be found on the childcare costs application form.

Appendix 2 – Household income

Types of income and evidence

Types of income and supporting evidence required for you and/or your spouse, partner, or civil partner.

Employment income

One of:

- Copy of P60 or P45.
- Copy of pay slip from tax month 12 or tax week 52 showing 'total paid to date'.

Self-employment income

(estimate for 2021/22 if you are not sure, you must provide evidence of 2020/21 income)

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One of:

- Copy of letter from accountant confirming income from self-employment.
- Copy of HMRC tax calculation.
- Copy of your P60, P11D or confirmation of earnings from chartered or certified accountant.

Retirement or disability pension

Copy of proof of amount and how often it is paid.

Benefits income

Copy of letter from Jobcentre Plus confirming amount and type of benefit (see the sections below on [benefits to include/not to include as income](#)).

Unearned investment income

(e.g. interest from bank or building society accounts, ISAs, shares)

Copy of letter or statement from bank, building society or investment company.

Unearned income from property rental or lodgers

- Rental income: Copy of tax calculation showing total property rental income.
- Lodger income: Copy of signed letter from lodger confirming total amount of rent paid.

Other income

(E.g. loans, bursaries, maintenance payments, redundancy payments).

Copy of proof of other income including amount and date received.

Benefits to include as part of household income

- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Incapacity Benefit
- Maternity Allowance
- Statutory Sick Pay
- Carer's Allowance
- Retirement Pension.

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Benefits NOT to include as part of household income

- Disability Living Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Benefit
- Child Benefit
- Guardian's Allowance
- Working or Child Tax Credits
- Higher Education Bursary paid to care leavers
- Personal Independence Payments
- Armed Forces Independence Payments.

Appendix 3 – Qualifying benefits

Qualifying benefits

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit (including Local Housing Allowance)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)
- Universal Credit
- A reduction under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (students in Wales only).