



University of Lincoln Financial Assistance & Other Funds

Additional Assessing Notes 2019/2020

GENERAL NOTES (ULFAF AND BLACKBURN BURSARY)

- These notes should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the application forms.
- Applications cannot be considered until the enrolment status is confirmed. For applications to the Financial Assistance Funds, the applicant must have received their first instalment of maintenance loan prior to applying.
- You will be emailed an acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt of your application. Where you have submitted an application but not received an acknowledgement after 5 working days, please email us at studentfundingteam@lincoln.ac.uk.
- The University of Lincoln Financial Assistance Fund is assessed in accordance with the guidance produced and approved by the National Union of Students and the National Association of Student Money Advisers. Capped/set figures are used in some areas of the assessment and are agreed each year in advance of the fund opening.
- The payment of **Tuition Fees** cannot be covered by these funds under any circumstances.
- The Fund assessors cannot discuss any decision over the telephone, however, applicants may email studentfundingteam@lincoln.ac.uk.
- Awards do not have to be repaid (unless they have been specified as loans).
- There is no automatic entitlement to an award for any student.
- Attendance and academic progress may be checked as part of the assessing process.
- Funds are allocated annually and awards are made on a first come first served basis. The Funds will close when depleted and this may be ahead of the official closing date. Any awards made when funds are running out will be adjusted accordingly.
- If the applicant has any outstanding debt to the Fund i.e. via a short-term loan, any subsequent award may be offset to repay the debt first.
- Any anomalies discovered during the assessment process will be investigated.
- Where evidence is still outstanding after 10 working days it will be assumed that the applicant does not wish to continue with the application and it will be filed incomplete. A re-application may be made during the funding period.
- Although we ask for photocopied evidence, we reserve the right to ask for originals where necessary.

- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any change to their bank details are notified to the Fund's assessors no later than 5 working days prior to any payment being made.
- For the Term Time Fund, assessment is made for the **whole** academic year. However, applicants may ask for a **re-assessment** during the academic year if their circumstances change. This should be made in writing (or email) by contacting the Student Funding Team to explain what has changed since their first application while providing appropriate evidence and up-to-date bank printouts.

APPEALS

An applicant may **appeal** a decision by contacting the Head of Student Support and providing in detail the reason(s) that they wish to make an appeal. The Head of Student Support will gather the evidence relating to the decision taken by the Fund Assessors and that supplied by the applicant. All evidence/information will be reviewed by three independent members of the Student Finance Support Panel. The Head of Student Support will notify the applicant of the decision regarding their appeal within 20 working days of the appeal being received. Please note that the appeal decision is final. In order to make an appeal please email studentsupport@lincoln.ac.uk in the first instance (please ensure that your student ID and application reference, if known, is entered onto your request). Appeal emails should be sent from your student email account. The Advice Service may help you with your application – to make an appointment please email adviceappointments@lincoln.ac.uk.

STUDENTS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR OR NOT TAKING OUT STUDENT FINANCE

Where an otherwise eligible student makes an application to the Funds but are not eligible for Student Finance (or have chosen not to taken out Student Finance) an assessment will be carried out using figures which assume that the applicant has made adequate provisions equivalent to Student Finance. This ensures that all applicants are treated the same.

If an applicant is not eligible for Student Finance because they have been unfitted* by their Funding Authority, they will also not be eligible for an award from any Funds administered by the Student Funding Team.

*Unfitted is a term used by the Student Loans Company where applicants are no longer eligible for any student finance. Usually this is as a result of timing out or fraud.

AWARD AMOUNT/SPENDING CHOICES/REFERRALS

- There are maximum award limits for each of the sub-funds for each academic year and also an overall maximum for the Financial Assistance Funds, if the overall maximum award is reached no more payments will be made and you will be advised accordingly.
- For the Term Time Fund, where awards are granted, they may not cover the full extent of your financial need as they are intended as a contribution only.
- In some cases, if your need is outside the scope of the Funds you will be referred to a Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service before your application can be considered. The Advice Service can provide students with Information, Advice and Guidance regarding all their possible options.
- Where excessive or non-essential expenditure is visible in the evidence provided award amounts may be reduced or applications may be rejected. In some cases a referral will be made to Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service.
- The assessment of applications will follow the NASMA/NUS guidance so any application received which falls 'outside the scope' of this guidance i.e. made outside the funds official

opening, a need which is beyond the maximum Funds, etc, the applicant will be referred to a Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service before proceeding.

- Where it is suspected that an applicant is in receipt of monies to which they are not entitled e.g. welfare benefits, student finance, etc, the application will not be progressed until it is addressed. In the case of student finance, the applicant will be given the opportunity to inform their funding provider (usually Student Finance England) of their circumstances e.g. if they are paid at the elsewhere rate but live in the parental home. Once rectified their application may be reinstated. Where the issue relates to entitlement to welfare benefits the applicant will be referred to a Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service.

£200 CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS COMPUTER EQUIPMENT (PER DSA)

Disabled students applying to the Term Time/Summer Fund for help with a contribution towards the cost of a computer must have applied for and received the first instalment of their Maintenance Loan. Students will be assessed on a normal standard assessment and the £200 contribution will be included as part of their allowable expenditure. If after a standard assessment has been undertaken the student does not have any additional need they will be considered for an exceptional award on the same basis as other students. Particular considerations will be given to those from low income households.

INTERRUPTION/SUSPENSION

Applicants who have interrupted or suspended their studies may apply to the Term Time Fund. It must be demonstrated that the applicant is intending to resume their studies at the University of Lincoln. Assessments will be made on an exceptional basis only as the Fund cannot provide ongoing financial support throughout the entire duration of the interruption/suspension.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Where applicants are not in receipt of the maximum amount of maintenance loans due to means-testing it may be assumed that the parents top-up the student's income to the rates suggested by the Department of Education (DoE). Where parents are unable/unwilling to support their student evidence will need to be provided to confirm this. Where no evidence is received the assessment will include the parental contribution income figure as per the DoE. Where it is clear that parental support exceeds the DoE suggested figure, the actual amount will be included in the assessment.

NON-PRIORITY DEBTS

Expenditure on non-priority debts (e.g. credit cards, catalogues, etc) will not be included in an assessment. Referrals may be made to a Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service to advise the applicant in managing those debts.

POSTGRADUATE AND PART-TIME APPLICATIONS

- For postgraduate students whose course starts in January and therefore spans more than one academic year (Aug-Sept), applications will be assessed for each level of the course only.
- An assumption will be made that the applicant has made provisions for both their tuition fees and day-to-day living expenses before enrolling on their course. Where it is obvious that they have not done so an award may not be appropriate. Also, if the provisions were in place but something has changed, leaving a need which is too great, an award may not be appropriate and the applicant will be referred to a Specialist Money Adviser in the Advice Service.
- Where provisions are in place and the applicant can demonstrate that costs directly

associated with undertaking the course are not easily affordable, costs such as commuting and/or books & materials may be considered. Where the applicant has significant commuting costs due to their location the full cost is unlikely to be met by the Fund. A contribution to the cost may be considered.

- Where the applicant has chosen to undertake study which requires excessive course materials it is unlikely that the full cost will be met by the Fund. A contribution to the cost may be considered.
- Where an applicant to the postgraduate Term Time Fund already holds a postgraduate qualification and are ineligible for a PG Loan from the Student Loans Company, they will not be eligible to access these Funds.

TERM-TIME FUND ASSESSMENTS

- Some postgraduate courses attract undergraduate funding – where this is the case, in most cases they will be assessed as if undergraduate.
- Students undertaking a second undergraduate degree (unless fully funded by the Student Loans Company) will be assessed in the same way as postgraduate students.
- Bank printouts must show the most recent maintenance loan credits and rental payments.

FULL-TIME ASSESSMENTS

For **UNDERGRADUATE** applicants the assessment looks at income over essential expenditure. Where there is more essential expenditure than income (an 'additional need'), a standard award may be made. Where there is no 'additional need' i.e. less essential expenditure than income, an **exceptional award** may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

An '**assumed income**' is used in assessments for applicants studying on a full-time basis. This means that they do not need to declare part-time earnings. The assumed income figure is used to cover income from part-time work, overdrafts, parental help, etc. This figure is included for all students unless the applicant is unable to work due to disability, care commitments for dependents, sickness, etc.

The amount for 2019/20 has been set as:

Standard Year	£2,028.00
Penultimate Year	£1,352.00
Final Year	£676.00

Nursing/Paramedic Science Students only*	
Standard Year	£1,014.00
Penultimate Year	£676.00
Final Year	£338.00

*A 50% figure is used for those students studying Nursing and Paramedic Science to reflect the length and intensity of this course.

For **POSTGRADUATE** applicants a Notional Income figure is used to ascertain that adequate provision has been made to fund living costs. This figure is used for all applicants. The 2019/20 rates are:

Single student	£193.00 per week
Student with dependants (who are financially reliant on them or students who are unable to work due to disability)	£154.00 per week

Composite Living Costs are used to cover basic living expenditure such as food, household bills, mobile phone, clothes, socialising, etc. The weekly figures, shown below, are set and cannot be altered. This ensures that all applicants are treated equally regardless of lifestyle choices:

Single student pays own food and utilities	£85.00
Single student living in parental home who does not contribute to utilities	£80.00
Single student living in parental home who does not contribute to food or utilities	£59.00
Lone Parent	£85.00
Student with Partner	£132.00

The **period of assessment** (**UNDERGRADUATE** applicants) used is 39 weeks for all final year students and single students with no dependants/disability and 43 weeks for continuing students with dependants and/or disability. For **POSTGRADUATE** applicants the assessment is for the actual number of weeks studied within the funding year.

Travel costs (**UNDERGRADUATE** and **POSTGRADUATE** applications) are calculated on the cheapest basis e.g. public transport, where possible (even if the applicant chooses to use their own vehicle). Where the applicant has no choice but to use their own vehicle (e.g. if they have young children, a disability which requires the use of a vehicle, or live in a rural location where public transport is not an option) a mileage rate of 36p per mile is used to calculate travel costs associated with attending University.

Where the applicant has significant commuting costs due to their location the full cost is unlikely to be met by the Fund. A contribution to the cost may be considered.

For **Course books & materials** (**UNDERGRADUATE** and **POSTGRADUATE** applications) £300.00pa is included in the assessment for essential books & materials. If the applicant believes that they will spend more than £300.00 in an academic year, and can evidence it, we may be able to include a higher figure. However, where the applicant has chosen to undertake study which requires excessive course materials it is unlikely that the full cost will be considered by the Fund. A contribution to the cost may be considered.

Where applicants are made an award in **instalments** they must complete a No Change in Circumstances form before a term 2 or term 3 instalment can be paid. Where these forms are still outstanding at the end of the applicant's academic year or 31st July the award will be reduced and no payment will be made. Term 3 instalments are only for continuing undergraduate students, students studying courses which are classed as long courses or postgraduate students.

PART-TIME ASSESSMENTS

The assumption is made that those applicants wishing to study on a part-time basis already have adequate provision for their living costs and tuition fees. Therefore the assessment looks at those costs specifically associated with undertaking study e.g. travel* and/or course books & materials**.

*Where an applicant has significant commuting costs due to their location the full cost is unlikely to be met by the Fund, rather a contribution to the cost may be considered.

**Where the applicant has chosen to undertake study which requires excessive course materials it is unlikely that the full cost will be met by the Fund. A contribution to the cost may be considered.

SUMMER FUND ASSESSMENTS

Summer Funds are intended to support eligible continuing full-time undergraduates who are **unable** to work over the summer vacation period.

For applicants who are in receipt of Welfare Benefits a full benefits check will be required before an assessment can be made. If appropriate a referral will be made to a Specialist Adviser.

COMMUTING TRAVEL GRANT

- Awards are intended to support those students who commute from within greater Lincolnshire. Awards made are intended as a contribution to those travel costs only. Amounts are set and cannot be increased – the applicant can apply to the Term Time Fund should they feel they require further assistance.
- Attendance will be checked before any term 2 or term 3 (if applicable) instalment will be made. Awards will be reduced where attendance is less than 75%.
- The rate of maintenance loan will be checked to ensure it agrees with the applicant's living situation e.g. if an applicant lives in the parental home, they should be in receipt of the 'at home' rate of maintenance loan. Where it is determined that the rate is incorrect the applicant will be given the opportunity to correct this before the application may be considered.

COURSE-RELATED TRAVELLING GRANT

- Awards are intended to support those eligible students who are undertaking course-related activity. The application must be supported by a relevant member of academic staff. Course-related activity must not have occurred prior to the application being made – these funds are intended to offer support in accessing course-related activity which is not normally affordable. It is not intended to refund money already spent.
- Only one application is allowed per student per academic year, however, a second application may be considered in exceptional circumstances but only if the maximum award has not been reached.
- Successful applicants must agree to provide a short report of their activity and receipts for money spent.
- Applications from students from the EU and overseas can be considered though the available funds are far more limited. Students with an overseas status may be considered, however this would be on the recommendation of a Specialist Adviser. For students holding a Tier 4 visa it must be demonstrated that the activity relates to an opportunity which has arisen after they have demonstrated to the Home Office that they have adequate funds to support their studies.
- The successful applicant will be given 10 working days to return their agreement form, where it is not returned in time, the award will be withdrawn.

INDEPENDENT STUDENTS SUMMER ACCOMMODATION GRANT

- This is a targeted Fund and applications are only expected from those who have already been identified as being in the catchment group i.e. continuing undergraduate students aged less than 25 with no sponsors on their student finance assessment.
- Applicants must demonstrate that they have an obligation to pay commercial rent for the entire duration of the summer vacation period.

EMERGENCY CASH

- The Student Funding Team holds a small amount of emergency cash. This will only be issued after the applicant has been interviewed and it is agreed that an emergency cash award is required.
- The applicant is encouraged to complete the full Term Time Fund application form.
- Emergency Cash awards are not usually repayable, though there are exceptions to this. For most students who require funds for food, they will be given a food voucher and/or referred to the SU food bank.

SHORT-TERM LOAN

- Short-term loans are only considered where it is ascertained that the applicant is eligible for student finance but is facing significant delays to the receipt of these Funds.
- The applicant must set up a Consent to Share arrangement between the University and their funding provider before any loan can be considered. This will enable us to ascertain timescales and support the student in the receipt of the maintenance funding.
- The amount loaned is to support basic living costs only and is a maximum of £300 in the first instance.
- There are no loans to support accommodation costs unless there are highly exceptional circumstances which can be evidenced. Short-term loans must be repaid and a repayment method set up with the Finance Department before any loan is transmitted.
- Where there is an outstanding short-term loan no further funds will be issued from any University of Lincoln Financial Assistance or other Fund administered by the Student Funding Team until the loan is repaid.

FOYER/SUPPORTED HOUSING BURSARY

- Applicants must provide evidence of their Foyer or Support Housing status. This only has to be provided with their first application. For eligible undergraduate applicants awards can be considered for each level of their degree plus one year (to allow for retake year, course transfer, etc). Further years may be considered on a case by case basis but evidence will have to be provided of exceptional circumstances.
- Applicants may apply for this bursary if eligible and studying on a postgraduate degree programme.
- Enrolment and attendance will be checked ahead of each term's disbursement to ensure continued eligibility.

BLACKBURN BURSARY (NOT ULFAF)

- Applicants must provide evidence of their Care Leaver status – this must explicitly confirm that the applicant is defined as a care leaver as per the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. This only has to be provided in their first application.
- Awards will be paid for each level of their undergraduate degree (only students accessing higher education for the first time may be considered). Students studying at a postgraduate level are not eligible.
- After an applicant has been deemed as eligible, the applicant will be paid £500 to their nominated bank account. The balance of £1,000 will only be paid once the applicant has successfully passed the academic year – transcripts will be checked to determine this.
- If the applicant has to retake the year, their £1,000 will be held over until they pass.

DR E JACKSON/REPATRIATION FUNDS

These Funds are specifically targeted to assist EU or overseas students who have encountered highly exceptional circumstances which are outside their control. Applications may only be considered if there is a referral from a Specialist Adviser.

BRIDGING LOANS

- The Student Funding Team administer bridging loans on behalf of the School of Health & Social Care. The assessment looks at the costs associated with undertaking eligible practice placements. Where it is determined they may be reclaimable from the NHS, a loan of up to the value of the reclaimable amount may be considered.
- Where the request is of an exceptional nature or the costs are excessive a referral will first be made to the School for approval.
- All loans are repayable and the University's Finance Department takes ownership of the application after the Student Funding Team agree eligibility.

STUDENT FUNDING TEAM CONTACT DETAILS

Address:

Student Funding Team, Student Support Centre, Minerva Building, University of Lincoln, Brayford Pool, Lincoln LN6 7TS.

Email: studentfundingteam@lincoln.ac.uk

Webpages: <https://studentservices.lincoln.ac.uk>

