

Student Support Fund (SSF)

Introduction

The Student Support Fund (SSF) is a discretionary fund designed to provide short-term financial assistance to students experiencing unexpected financial hardship that may affect their ability to continue their studies.

The fund is open to both Home and International students (including students with no recourse to public funds) who are currently registered at the University of Hertfordshire.

Awards are non-repayable grants and are assessed on a case-by-case basis. As funding is limited, meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee an award.

The fund is intended to support students with essential living costs and unexpected financial emergencies. It is not intended to support the payment of tuition fees, tuition fee deposits, or any other academic fees.

Purpose of the Fund

The Student Hardship Support Fund provides financial assistance where students are experiencing unforeseen financial hardship that cannot reasonably be managed through their normal income or available resources.

Examples of circumstances that may be considered include:

- Unexpected loss or reduction of income
- Housing difficulties or rent arrears
- Essential household bills
- Medical or disability-related expenses
- Childcare costs
- Emergency travel
- Essential travel to and from University.
- Essential course-related costs (such as equipment, textbooks or a laptop)
- Financial hardship resulting from changes in personal or family circumstances
- Other exceptional circumstances affecting a student's ability to continue their studies

Each application is assessed individually.

Eligibility

To be considered for the fund you must be:

- studying at the University of Hertfordshire (home, EU or international students);
- studying in higher education (Level 4 or above) at Hertford Regional College, North Hertfordshire College, Oaklands College, West Hertfordshire College and Barnet & Southgate College; or
- studying in higher education at other UK Partner Institutions not listed above.
- Students on online degree pathways in the UK
- Part-time students

Please note, the following **cannot** apply for SSF:

- Withdrawn, dormant or completed students
- Applicants requesting financial support solely towards tuition fees.
- Applicants who fail to provide the required supporting evidence at the time of applying.

Applications without supporting evidence will be automatically rejected.

Other Support

If you have faced unexpected financial hardship, you may also be eligible to apply to the University Financial - Assistance Fund (UFAF). All the information for these funds, as well as further information on financial assistance and managing your finances, is available on [Ask Herts](#).

Dates and Deadlines

SSF opening and closing dates are shown in the below table.

Terms	Opening date	Closing date
Autumn Term	Monday 26 th October 2026	Friday 11 th December 2026 by 4:00pm
Spring/Summer Term	Monday 11 th January 2027	Friday 14 th May 2027 by 4:00pm

Please note, SSF funds are limited. Once funds have been exhausted, SSF may be closed outside of the dates stated above, without advanced warning. Therefore, students are encouraged to apply early for SSF as funds will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis.

How to apply

If you meet the eligibility criteria listed above, you can apply for SSF by following the steps listed below.

Step 1 – Sign in or register with BlackBullion

To apply please register online via www.Blackbullion.com. Blackbullion is a financial well-being platform which can be used to learn and develop financial skills such as money management, budgeting and investing. Once you have registered using your University of Hertfordshire student email address, you will be able to apply for SSF, as well as other financial support, via the funding tab. Should you require any assistance with your application, the SFFS team offer one-to-one drop-in sessions. Further information can be found [here](#).

Step 2 – Course details

Please provide details of your course, including but not limited to:

- course title;
- level of study; and
- mode of study.

Step 3 – Current financial situation and difficulties

Please provide a statement outlining how you have been impacted by the rising cost of living, your current financial situation, what financial difficulties you are currently facing and **how you intend to use the awarded funds**.

Any student discovered copying personal statements from other SSF applications or using artificial intelligence (AI) will face automatic rejection of their application.

Please note, your current employment status will **not** be taken into consideration as part of your application.

Step 4 – Bank account details

Please provide details of **all** accounts held in your name, including but not limited to:

- Current accounts;
- Saving accounts;
- Trading accounts.

Blackbullion now supports an open banking connection which allows you to automatically pull in the bank statements you need to provide with your application. Whilst you still have the option to upload and annotate your bank statements manually, open banking allows you to submit your application quicker. Further information on Blackbullion and open banking can be found [here](#).

Step 5 – Personal details

Please provide your personal details, including but not limited to:

- name;
- date of birth;
- student I.D. number; and
- residential status.

Step 6 – Supporting documentation

Applicants are required to provide the most recent bank statement(s) for ALL accounts held in their name, covering a minimum period of one month and annotate any transactions over £99.

- Submissions consisting of only one empty bank statement will be deemed unsuccessful.
- Bank statements must be dated within one month of the application date. Failure to provide up-to-date statements for **all** accounts will result in the application being deemed unsuccessful.

You may be asked for further evidence if signs of inappropriate expenditure such as gambling, crypto-currency trading, gaming, excessive fast food or taxis, are noticed.

Please note, if the evidence you have supplied is incomplete (**i.e. not provided statements for all accounts in your name**), you will be asked to upload further evidence within 5 working days. If you fail to upload your evidence within 5 working days, your application will be declined. If you require support with this, the SFFS team offer one-to-one drop-in sessions. More information can be found on [Ask Herts](#).

Step 7 – Review and Submit

Once the above steps have been completed, please review your application as you will be unable to make changes following submission.

If you have any questions, please contact the SFFS team at financial-support@herts.ac.uk.

Any student found to have purposefully provided incorrect information or knowingly withheld supporting evidence or documentation, will face automatic rejection of their application.

How you will be assessed

An assessment of the completed application and a decision will be made within **4 working weeks**. This timescale may be longer during busy periods. Please note this timescale is for decisions on applications only and not for payment of an award.

Receiving an award

Successful applicants will be notified via Blackbullion.

Awards will normally be paid through our partner Aspire.

Within 5 working days of receiving the decision notice via BB, successful applicants will receive a separate email from our payment disbursement partner info@herts-Aspire.co.uk. This will be sent to the email address registered on your student record.

You must:

- Follow the instructions in the email using the secure link to set up your Herts Aspire account and provide your bank details.
- Students must ensure their bank details are accurate and respond promptly to Aspire's communication to avoid delays. Aspire or the University accepts no liability if your bank details are incorrect or not up to date.
- Withdraw funds into your bank account by the 14 May 2027 deadline provided. Payments will be made by BACS transfer into the nominated bank account.

If you experience issues accessing the Aspire platform to register your account, submitting your bank details or withdrawing your funds you will need to contact the team at Aspire by emailing info@herts-aspire.co.uk for further assistance.

Repeat Applications

Students can receive one award per academic year. However, if you haven't received an award, you can apply more than once.

In exceptional circumstances, where there has been a significant change in circumstances, a further application may be considered at the discretion of the Student Funding and Financial Support.

Appeals

The decision on your application for this grant are final. There is no right to appeal. However, if you are unhappy with the outcome of your application, please contact the team via the following email: financial-support@herts.ac.uk.

Other Awards

SSF can be held in conjunction with other University awards that you may be eligible for.

Note: These terms and conditions are valid for the 2026/27 academic year.