

Edinburgh Napier University International Students' Hardship Fund Policy 2023/24

The University has set aside limited funds to assist EU and international students in unexpected financial difficulty.

The fund allows for the provision of short-term financial support which may enable a student to complete their studies or allow the time needed for them to regain stability in their financial arrangements and continue their studies in future sessions. Applications meriting support might include occasions where a sponsor is suddenly unable to provide support, a temporary delay in a living cost allowance or where financial support is stopped because of a sudden change in political/social situation in their home country or where a student unexpectedly and urgently needed to return home for family reasons.

The principles under which the fund will operate include:

1. Students seeking help must demonstrate that they had made adequate arrangements to support themselves and pay their tuition and accommodation fees before they came to University, and that any financial difficulties have been affected by unforeseen circumstances, or events beyond their control.
2. Funds will not be granted to replace tuition fees or living cost support (for both the student and their dependants) where the student is expected to have made adequate provision before starting the course. Funds might however be granted to assist with other costs in order to free up funds for students to pay tuition fees.
3. Employment alone as a means of funding a course of study will not be considered as adequate provision because of the volatile nature of this source of support. This is in line with immigration rules where visa nationals need to show adequate financial provision without relying on potential earnings.
4. Students will not be able to apply for support on the grounds that their national currency has depreciated, since this will affect all students from this country.
5. Students who find themselves in financial hardship due to mismanagement of their finances are also ineligible for support.
6. The fund is limited in resource and therefore caps on the level of award will be necessary as well as a cap in the overall availability of funding on a trimester or academic year basis.
7. The level of award will be judged on a case by case basis. Awards will typically be in a range of £500 to £1000 and will normally not exceed £1000 (awards in excess of this may be made in exceptional circumstances as agreed by the University) and are intended to meet immediate short-term living costs. Awards will normally always be made in the form of a grant. Students may reapply if required, however, this fund is cash-limited and applications can only be given consideration while funding is available.
8. Students who receive awards may be asked to provide some feedback on how the Fund has helped them whilst they are a student - the University will be able to use this feedback to monitor the impact of the support provided and to plan for subsequent years. Eligible students must:

a) be enrolled with Edinburgh Napier University (this includes students on programmes run by our Pathways College and Edinburgh International College)

b) be classed as an EU or international student for tuition fee purposes AND NOT eligible for the University's Discretionary Fund. Students eligible for the Global Conflict Discretionary Fund or the International Students Emergency Fund may also be considered for this fund.

c) have started their programme of study with sufficient funds to cover tuition fees and living costs

d) have exhausted all other sources of funding.

9. Students seeking assistance must apply by completing an application which will include submission of supporting paperwork/documents evidencing the circumstances of their financial difficulty, the funding they had put in place to support their studies and living costs and what unforeseen circumstances have impacted on their financial situation. The student should contact the Student Funding Team by email in the first instance, explaining their circumstances Studentfunding@napier.ac.uk. If considered to be eligible, the student will be invited to make an online application.

10. In some circumstances, eg. Tier 4 Visa students, an assessment will be made by the Head of Visa & International Support team to confirm that the student had made adequate arrangements to support themselves and pay their tuition and accommodation fees before they came to University, and that these arrangements have been affected by unforeseen circumstances, or events beyond their control. This will confirm their eligibility to be awarded support from the fund and the student will be referred to the Student Funding Team Leader.

11. Where there are safeguarding concerns, an assessment can be made by the Student

Safeguarding and Equality Manager or the Safeguarding Adviser to confirm that the student's circumstances warrant consideration of a financial assessment, and the student will be referred to the Student Funding Team Leader.

12. The Student Funding Team Leader will determine the amount of funding to be awarded and will undertake necessary administrative arrangements to process and pay an award to the student.