York St John Student Support Fund Guidance 2026-27

The York St John Student Support Fund provides financial assistance for students to enable them to access and succeed in higher education, particularly those students who need financial help to meet extra costs that cannot be met from other sources of support.

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PLEASE NOTE:

An application will not be considered until it is fully completed, and all the necessary documentary evidence has been received.

The Student Funding Advice team will email the student if:

- They have not completed all relevant sections
- They have not submitted all necessary evidence

The York St John Student Support Fund follows national guidelines for fund allocation.

While we aim to make the application process as straightforward and non-intrusive as possible, the submission of certain documents is a necessary part of our evidence-based approach. We understand that gathering these documents can seem burdensome, but they are essential for us to accurately assess and support an application.

Awards are discretionary and not guaranteed. Please do not assume an application will be successful, nor anticipate any amount that may be received. Amounts awarded are not guaranteed and are subject to change at any time in the academic year.

Part 1: General notes

What is the York St John Student Support Fund intended for

The fund is designed to help alleviate unexpected financial difficulties. Students who are facing financial challenges and are therefore considering leaving higher education are especially encouraged to apply. Typically, any assistance provided from the fund does not need to be repaid. Applications can be submitted throughout the academic year, as long as the fund has not been depleted.

Tuition Fees

The fund cannot be used to cover tuition fees for undergraduate or postgraduate students. UK Home students studying for their first degree can seek financial support from their funding body.

Part 2: Who can apply

The York St John Student Support Fund is for students, as assessed by YSJU for tuition fee purposes, registered on a course in one of the following categories:

- Full-time and part-time UK Home students (including distance learners) following any of the eligible higher education courses
- UK Home students on sandwich courses, including during any periods of work placement, and students who are studying abroad as part of their course
- Full-time and part-time UK Home students on a postgraduate course (including distance learners) following a course that is a minimum of 1 year and studying at least 25% per each academic year of a full-time equivalent course.

Suspension of Studies

UK Home students may be eligible for help from the fund, if they are unable to attend their course for health/medical reasons, pregnancy or caring responsibilities. Providing they do not permanently withdraw from their studies and intend to return after their time out. For further information on this, please contact the Student Funding Advice team via the Student Hub.

Priorities for Assistance

The fund is available to help eligible students who have a financial need.

When allocating funding, we prioritise the following groups of students:

Undergraduate

- Students with children who are fully or partially resident with them (especially lone parents)
- Disabled students (especially where the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are unable to meet particular costs, and the institution has no legal responsibility to do so)
- Care Leavers under the age of 25
- Students from Foyers or who are homeless
- Mature students with existing financial commitments, including priority debts
- Students who are assessed as estranged from their parents by their relevant funding body

- Student carer

Postgraduate

- Students with children who are fully or partially resident with them (especially lone parents)
- Disabled students (especially where the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are unable to meet particular costs, and the institution has no legal responsibility to do so)

Students who are not in one of the priority groups can still apply, but they must provide as much evidence as possible to show why they have a need.

Priority is given to students undertaking their first higher education qualification, before considering supporting students undertaking a subsequent course or Equivalent Lower Qualification (ELQ), who are not eligible for student finance. Students' ineligible for student support due to previous study rules are not a priority for funding.

Students may apply for assistance from the York St John Student Support Fund more than once during an academic year, but only if their financial circumstances have changed significantly and they have not already been awarded the maximum amount of £2,000. Applicants will need to provide documentary evidence to support the change since their original application. If students would like further information on this and to request a form, please contact the Student Funding Advice team via the Student Hub.

Part 3: How your application is assessed

Your application will be assessed using the Student Support Fund's financial assessment criteria. The assessment considers your income, essential expenditure, and individual circumstances to determine whether financial assistance may be appropriate.

The assessment process differs for undergraduate and postgraduate students. This guidance explains how standard and non-standard awards are considered, including the factors that may be taken into account.

Undergraduate

Standard awards - undergraduate

Standard awards are intended to help eligible students experiencing financial difficulty with general living costs and eligible course-related expenses.

Examples include:

- Rent and household bills
- Food and essential living costs
- Eligible childcare, travel and books

Assumed income

For full-time undergraduate students applying, an assumed income amount is included in the financial assessment. This represents an expected contribution towards your living costs from sources such as summer work, part-time employment during term time, and bank overdrafts etc.

The assumed income amount depends on your year of study:

- First-year students: £2,433
- Penultimate-year students: £1,624
- Final-year students: £815

These amounts are included in the assessment regardless of whether you receive this income in practice.

Postgraduate

Minimum Required Provision (MRP)

For postgraduate students, a Minimum Required Provision (MRP) is calculated as part of the financial assessment. This is based on essential expenditure and represents the minimum level of financial provision expected to be available at the start of your studies.

Your actual income is compared with this amount. If your income is lower than the MRP, the MRP will still be used in full when assessing your application.

This means that the assessment will take account of the minimum financial provision expected at the start of your course, rather than solely the income you currently have available.

However, this does not automatically mean that your application will be unsuccessful. Your overall financial circumstances, including any unexpected events that have contributed to your financial difficulties, will be considered when determining whether an award is appropriate.

Composite Living Costs (CLC) – undergraduate & postgraduate

As part of the financial assessment, a standard allowance known as Composite Living Costs (CLC) is applied to recognise general living and household expenses, such as food and utility bills.

The amount applied depends on your circumstances, including your household composition. For example, students with dependent children will have a higher CLC to reflect their additional living costs.

CLC is an allowance used in calculating your financial assessment; it is not a separate payment made to you.

Examples include:

- Essential household equipment repairs.
- Significant medication costs.
- Priority debts.
- Emergency travel relating to family illness or bereavement.
- Unexpected financial difficulties following events such as burglary or fire.

Each application is considered in its individual circumstances, and supporting evidence may be required.

Consideration of complex and non-standard applications – undergraduate & postgraduate

Some applications require additional consideration because of the nature of the costs involved or the student's individual circumstances.

All complex and non-standard award applications are considered by the Student Financial Assistance Group. The Group reviews the relevant information to help ensure that applications are assessed consistently and that individual circumstances are considered.

The Group includes representatives from:

- Student Funding Advice team
- Finance team
- Students' Union
- Programme Administration and Support Service

Where appropriate, specialist colleagues from Visa and Compliance, Specialist Support, London Student Support and the Wellbeing team may also be consulted.

Part 4: Timetable for making a decision

Once your online application has been completed accurately and all required supporting evidence has been received, an assessment and decision will normally be made within 21 working days. If your application is successful, you will also be advised of the anticipated payment date within this timeframe.

Part 5: How to apply

Step 1: Complete the online application

Access the Student Support Fund application form through the York St John University website and complete the required information.

Step 2: Register with Blackbullion

Once you have started your application, register with Blackbullion using your York St John University email address.

Step 3: Submit your supporting evidence

Provide all required supporting evidence to enable your application to be assessed.

Part 6: Payments

Payment of awards

Awards of more than £500 will normally be paid in two instalments. Depending on when the award is made, the instalments will be paid either between Term 1 and Term 2 or between Term 2 and Term 3.

If an award is made after the start of Term 3, it will normally be paid in full as a single instalment.

Where an award includes payment towards a priority debt, York St John University will make the payment directly to the creditor, with the student's agreement.

Impact on benefits

Payments from the York St John University Student Support Fund may affect your entitlement to means-tested state benefits. If you receive an award from the Fund, you can request a letter confirming the payment to provide when making a benefits claim or reporting a change in circumstances.

You are responsible for checking whether receiving an award will affect your benefits. You may wish to seek advice from an appropriate benefits adviser if you are unsure.

Money education

After receiving your first instalment, you will be required to complete two money education pathways delivered through Blackbullion.

Completion of these pathways is a condition of receiving subsequent instalments. If the pathways have not been completed, payment of a subsequent instalment may be delayed until they have been completed.

Part 7: How to appeal/submit a change of circumstance

Appeals

If your application is unsuccessful, you may appeal the decision if you believe there has been an error in the assessment. Appeals cannot be made simply because you disagree with the amount awarded.

An appeal must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving your 'no award' outcome.

To start the appeals process, contact the Student Funding Advice team. They will provide you with a Financial Assistance Appeals Form to complete.

Once completed, the form and any additional evidence requested must be returned to the Student Funding Advice team. The team will review the information provided and, where appropriate, arrange for the appeal to be considered by an Appeals Panel.

You can expect to receive the outcome of your appeal within 14 working days of submitting your completed appeal form and any required supporting evidence.

Changes in circumstances

If your financial or personal circumstances have changed since you submitted your original application, you should contact the Student Funding Advice team to discuss whether you should submit a Change of Circumstance Form.

The form should explain what has changed and provide any relevant supporting evidence. The Student Financial Assistance Group will review the information provided alongside the information from your original Student Support Fund application.

Once the review has been completed, you will be informed of the outcome by email.

Part 8: Further assistance

Not all students experiencing financial difficulty who apply to the York St John University Student Support Fund will receive an award.

Where an award cannot be made, the Student Funding Advice team will provide information about other sources of support that may be available. Depending on your circumstances, this may include referrals to specialist teams within the University, such as the Careers and Wellbeing teams.

Part 9: YSJ food assistance

If students find themselves in an unexpected situation without food, the University can offer support and will need to contact the Student Funding Advice team through the Student Hub. This support is designed to help relieve immediate pressure during this difficult time.