University of Essex
Accommodation Hardship Fund 2020/21

The University is offering an Accommodation Hardship Fund of up to £1,500 for full time and part-time students who are experiencing accommodation/rent related financial difficulty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This applies to students paying for University owned accommodation and privately rented accommodation.

Terms and conditions

1. Eligibility

Below is a list of the full eligibility criteria for the Accommodation Hardship Fund, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- You are suffering unexpected financial hardship regarding your rent or are currently in rent arrears as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- You are a fully registered UK, EU or international undergraduate or postgraduate student studying at the University of Essex for academic year 2020-21;
- You are studying a full-time course or substantial part time course (at least 50% of full-time equivalent);
- You had previously made adequate provision to cover all of your fees and living costs, but are now in demonstrable need of financial support as a result of unexpected exceptional changes in financial circumstances.

Students who are intermitting due to COVID-19 related reasons can also be considered for this award.

Please be aware that funds are subject to availability and the University reserves the right to withdraw this award if funds run out.

2. Students who are not eligible

The following students are not eligible for this award regardless of meeting the above criteria:

- Students who are not paying for or do not have arrears for University owned accommodation or privately rented student accommodation;
- Students applying for funds to cover a period of intermission that is not due to COVID-19 related reasons or medical reasons;
- Students who are not in attendance and on an assessment only programme;
- Students whose course is sponsored by an employer;
- Students on a distance learning programme;
- Students on unsubstantial part-time or short courses;
- Students who are studying through a University of Essex Partner (e.g. Kaplan, University of Essex Online, Tavistock, etc.);
- Students on Higher/Degree Apprenticeship courses;
- Students applying after the closing date of the fund.

3. Evidence

You MUST provide evidence of a current rental/tenancy agreement for the accommodation that you are struggling to pay for.

This should show clearly:
- that the agreement is in your name
- the dates of tenancy
- the amount of rent, either per month or term
If you are unable to provide this evidence you should contact the Funding Team for advice
funding@essex.ac.uk

4. How to apply

1. Ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria above
2. Carefully read these guidance notes
3. Register for the Blackbullion online money management website
4. Click the ‘Funds’ tab and select ‘UoE Accommodation Hardship Fund’
5. Submit your Declaration form and a copy of your current rental/tenancy agreement.

The closing date to apply for this fund is Thursday 11 March 2021.

4. Assessment and Payment

Eligible students may receive up to £1,500, depending on applications received by the deadline and the amount of funding available. All payments will be made by the end of March 2021.

Awards will be paid via BACS to your nominated bank account as stated in your application or if you are applying to support University owned accommodation, it will be paid directly to the University. In some cases, we can/will pay directly to private landlords.

If you have already received exceptional financial support above the maximum standard Hardship Fund amount to supplement your rent or rent arrears, this will be offset against your payment for this award.

5. Can I hold this with other awards?

The Accommodation Hardship Fund can be held in conjunction with other University awards that you may be eligible for.

6. Appeals

If you are dissatisfied with the decision of your outcome of your application, you can appeal within 10 working days of your outcome email from Blackbullion. Appeals should be sent to the Funding Team. Your appeal will be considered at the discretion of the Student Services Manager or his/her nominee.

7. Resolution of disputes

Applications to the UoE Accommodation Hardship Fund constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions. Registered students should contact the Funding Team in the first instance for guidance regarding this award. In cases not covered by the above terms and conditions, or where a student claims exceptional circumstances, or disputes a decision not to make payments due under this scheme, final appeals on decisions regarding eligibility must be made via the Student Complaints process. The Academic Registrar or his/her nominee will review the case and his/her decision will be final.

NOTE: These terms and conditions apply to the UoE Accommodation Hardship Fund awarded to students for the academic year 2020-21. The University of Essex reserves the right to update these terms and conditions as necessary.