



BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY FINANCIAL SUPPORT FUND

OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE Academic Year 2024-25

Owner: Director of Student Services

Version number: 2.0

Effective Date: 1st September 2024

Updated: 1st August 2024

Due for review: 1st July 2025

Contents

1.0	Scope and Purpose.....	3
2.0	Overview of 2024-25 Provision	3
3.0	Overview of the BU Financial Support Fund	4
3.1	Eligibility	4
3.2	Eligible Courses	5
4.0	Application Process.....	5
5.0	Evidence Requirements	6
6.0	The Assessment Process.....	7
7.0	Maximum Amounts Payable.....	12
8.0	Payment of BU Financial Support Fund Awards.....	14
9.0	Appeals.....	14
	APPENDIX A - Assessment of Income	15
A1	Treatment of income	15
A2	Maintenance Loans and Grants	18
A3	Household contribution	18
A4	Assumed income.....	19
A5	Postgraduate students and Minimum Required Provision (MRP).....	20
A6	Part-Time Students.....	20
A7	Estrangement.....	21
A8	Apprenticeships	21
	APPENDIX B – Treatment of Expenditure	22
B1	Reasonable Living Costs.....	22
B2	Composite Living Costs.....	22
B3	Variable expenditure	24
B4	Debts.....	25
	APPENDIX C - BU Financial Support Fund Application Flow Chart.....	27
	APPENDIX D - Acronyms and abbreviations.....	28
	APPENDIX E – WP Funding.....	28
	APPENDIX F – Lesley Milne Estate	29
	APPENDIX G – BU Financial Assistance and Emergency Fund.....	29

Introduction to the Bournemouth University Financial Support Fund 2024-25

1.0 Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 Bournemouth University (BU) provides financial support to students in the form of the BU Financial Support Fund. This document details how the BU Financial Support Fund (referred to hereafter as the Fund) operates and aims to promote consistency, clarity and fairness in the way the Fund is managed and allocated. Further details on the way in which assessments are made are contained in the appendices.
- 1.2 The most important consideration of the Fund is to assist with the relief of financial difficulty that may impact on a student's continued participation in their studies at BU. This includes assisting those who need extra financial help to meet particular costs (other than tuition fees) which are not already met from statutory (or other) sources of funding and providing one-off emergency payments for unexpected crises. Any award made from the Fund will be non-repayable.
- 1.3 BU reserves the right to contact all applicants to the BU Financial Support Fund to seek feedback on the outcome of an assessment and to understand further the impact that the assessment outcome has had for the student.
- 1.4 If BU award funding to students who send us any written feedback or response about this, we may use quotes from the feedback in publications (e.g. on our website) about BU's Financial Support Funds and services. These will be published in anonymous form and will not identify the student in any way. If students have any concerns about this, they can let us know when sending the feedback to us (detailed in application form).

2.0 Overview of 2024-25 Provision

- 2.1 The Fund will be reviewed on a regular basis and BU reserves the right to amend the Fund eligibility criteria or to cease the fund at any time.
- 2.2 Applications for assistance from the Fund will be administered by the Student Money Advice Team. The Fund will be monitored and percentages of assessments of awards to be made may be reduced in order to manage the fund availability throughout the

academic year, however it should be noted that if the annual allocation has been spent in full before the end of the academic year, further applications to the fund may not receive any payments if there are insufficient funds remaining.

- 2.3** BU allocates an annual budget for distribution through the Fund. The Student Money Advice Team is required to account for the way in which the funds have been administered and distributed each year.
- 2.4** Eligibility criteria and exclusions for the Fund are subject to annual review.
- 2.5** BU aims to create a consistent, transparent assessment process in considering applications, but it is not possible to provide for every eventuality and BU reserve the right to use discretion to make decisions on complex applications.
- 2.6** BU use the NASMA (National Association of Student Money Advisers) 'composite living costs' (CLC) in reaching a 'Reasonable Living Costs' (RLC) calculation which is determined to cover basic costs such as food, household bills, clothes, entertainment etc. This ensures that all applicants to the BU Financial Support Fund are treated fairly regardless of where they study and their individual lifestyle choices. These calculations take account of the different household needs for different groups of students. The CLC are fixed for each academic year and are used in **all** standard award assessments. The CLC amounts for 2024-25 are listed at Appendix B.

3.0 Overview of the BU Financial Support Fund

3.1 Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

- Students who are classed as Home* students for fee purposes on an eligible HE course as defined at 3.2. This includes:
- Full-time and part-time students (studying at least 50 per cent of a full-time equivalent (FTE) course). Any student whose disability (including physical and mental health) prevents them from studying at least 50 per cent of a full time course is eligible to apply to the BU Financial Support Fund provided they are studying for at least 25 per cent (30 credits) FTE. Students who are repeating study on a full time course are classed as full time students
- Students on sandwich courses, including any periods of work placement
- Students who are studying abroad as part of their BU course

- Students from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who are eligible for support from the appropriate devolved administration and are able to otherwise satisfy the eligibility conditions can apply for assistance from the BU Financial Support Fund.
****Undergraduate students who are classed as Home for fee purposes but are entitled to Tuition Fee Loan only (typically those with pre-settled status) are not eligible.***

Who is not eligible to apply?

- Students who are classed as Overseas, EU, Channel Islands and Isle of Man for fee purposes
- Students who have interrupted or withdrawn from their studies at BU, are not eligible to apply to or receive funding from the BU Financial Support Fund
- Students on validated courses

3.2 Eligible Courses

Students applying for assistance from the Fund must be studying on one of the following eligible HE Courses:

- First degree such as BA, BSc or Integrated Masters
- A Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
- A Foundation Degree
- A postgraduate/doctoral degree such as MA, MBA, MSc, LPC, CPE, GDL, MRES, PGDip, PhD
- A foundation year which is an integral part of a BU first degree
- Apprenticeships

4.0 Application Process

- 4.1** The application form to apply for the BU Financial Support Fund is provided online through MyCareerHub. Students must request the link to the application form from AskBU. All applications where possible, should be accompanied with uploads of the relevant evidence required as listed on the application form. If a student is unable to upload the evidence, they can provide this by email to fsf@bournemouth.ac.uk.
- 4.2** Students can apply for the BU Financial Support Fund until the end of their academic year, as recorded on the student records system. The Student Money Adviser will check the student is enrolled for the current academic year on the Student Record System (SITS). Students who are continuing with their studies and who can evidence that they have dependent children, students who are Care Leavers, estranged from their family and students with caring responsibilities can apply for funding after their academic year has finished and before their next year starts. Consideration may also

be given to those students who can evidence they are unable to work due to ill health or who have resits during the summer period.

4.3 A decision on an application to BU Financial Support Fund will normally be provided within 20 working days from receipt of the application. Where further information or clarification is requested to inform assessment of an application this decision may take longer. The Student Money Advisers have the discretion to consider exceptional cases ahead of other applications based on a priority assessment. Decisions will normally be communicated to students by email to their student email account.

4.4 If a student experiences a change of circumstances during the year or an emergency situation arises, they may submit subsequent applications to the Fund, providing they have not already received the maximum award. Students will need to provide relevant evidence to support any further application.

5.0 Evidence Requirements

5.1 All applications must be supported by evidence of circumstances, although this should be kept to the minimum necessary to verify the information provided. Specifics may vary depending on whether the student is undergraduate or postgraduate. BU can only accept photocopies and digital documentation provided by email and is unable to return any originals submitted. Additionally, in line with GDPR policies, all evidence provided through the Fund application process, will be destroyed by the start of the next academic year.

5.2 When assessing an application for the Fund, it is expected that the student will provide evidence as listed below to enable an assessment to be undertaken. The Student Money Adviser may also request further evidence, which is not listed below, in order to complete an assessment for support.

Evidence required for every student

- Student Finance England or relevant funding body and/or NHS Award Notification
- Most recent bank statements for all accounts covering the last 3 months. This may also include any trading/cryptocurrency accounts or similar
- Tenancy/Rental/Mortgage agreement

Evidence required depending on circumstances

- Evidence showing any means tested benefits. This will include benefits such as child and working tax credits, universal credit, housing benefit. This list is not exhaustive
- Evidence of childcare costs

- Evidence of partner's income and expenditure
- Evidence of priority debts and repayment of debts
- Evidence of other expenditure listed on the application form. This may include exceptional but essential expenditure

6.0 The Assessment Process

6.1 Assessment Overview

There are two types of awards that may be made: a standard or an exceptional award. Students will usually be considered for a standard award unless exceptional circumstances have been outlined on their application form that fall outside of the criteria for a standard award.

- For students to be assessed they must have applied for all available funding including means tested* student loans, means tested grants, NHS bursaries, Postgraduate Loans, Doctoral Loans, Professional and Career Development Loans as appropriate, before submitting an application to the Fund.
- Students will be assessed in accordance with the mainstream funding their course is eligible for. For example, some PGDip and MSc healthcare courses attract undergraduate funding, therefore the assessment will be carried out using the undergraduate assessment criteria.
- Students have to demonstrate by submitting bank statements that they have little or no funds remaining.
- Students who have outstanding tuition fee debt and no payment plan in place may be declined support. Each scenario will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

**Students applying for the DSA support, do not need to be income assessed, just demonstrate they are unable to cover the cost.*

6.2 Standard Awards

6.2.1 Standard awards are assessed using the student's income (**see appendix A**) and their essential expenditure (**see appendix B**) as listed and evidenced as part of their application. If applicable the income of a student's partner and expenditure will also be included as detailed in Appendix B. The period of assessment is dependent on the course the student is studying as outlined below and based on the student's enrolment for 24-25:

Category	Student Group	Period and Type of Assessment
A	Students on a course with standard course dates without dependents	39 Weeks Assessment
B	Students on a course with standard course dates with dependents or who are unable to work due to ill health	43 Week Assessment (in line with DWP benefit assessments)
C	Students on sandwich placement	39 weeks Assessment
D	Students on courses studying longer than 45 weeks. Typically healthcare students.	52 weeks Assessment
E	Students on postgraduate courses	52 Weeks PG Assessment

- 6.2.2** The period of assessment for an award from the Fund remains the same regardless of the point in the year that the student applies to the Fund within the academic year. This also applies to students with dependent children who apply after their academic year has finished. Discretion will be used where it is clear a student’s financial situation has significantly changed within the academic year. It may be required to calculate the award based on the weeks remaining in the academic year since the change in the student’s financial situation. An example of this would be where a student no longer has the financial support of a partner due to separation. Students who apply after their academic year has finished due to ill health or resits, funding will be covered under the Exceptional Awards.
- 6.2.3** To be able to complete an assessment, it is required to know the student’s income and essential expenditure and this must be evidenced where required. The income and expenditure is calculated into weekly amounts to determine whether a student has a deficit or surplus per week.
- 6.2.4** All income for undergraduate study will be calculated based on the number of weeks of assessment. For example, if a student falls under category A as above, receives a student maintenance loan of £4,500, this will be divided by 39 weeks to provide a weekly figure.

- 6.2.5** In most cases it will be required to calculate expenditure over 52 weeks to determine a weekly figure, for example a mobile phone. Course costs will be calculated based on the weeks of assessment, in most cases, either 39 or 52 weeks.
- 6.2.6** Once the assessment is completed, if there is a deficit between the student's income and essential expenditure, a standard award can be made. This is calculated by multiplying the deficit by the number of weeks of assessment. If there is a weekly surplus between the student's income and essential expenditure, then no standard award can be made. The maximum awards permitted are detailed in section 7.
- 6.2.7** If a student has returned from interruption part way through the year or is studying less than the standard course length, any assessed deficit should be multiplied by how many weeks of study, as reflected on the student's enrolment record.
- 6.2.8** The Student Money Advice Team will use their discretion whether the student has adequate funds based on the current balance of the student's bank statements. It is at the discretion of the Student Money Advice Team whether an award is made or to deduct any positive bank balance from the award made.
- 6.2.9** If a student declares, or demonstrates through bank transactions, that there is regular and substantial non-essential spend, Student Money Advisers may refer students to relevant services prior to making an award. Examples of this may be a student with regular gambling activity, trading/cryptocurrency or excessive spending on entertainment, shopping or other non-essentials. Awards from the BU Financial Support Fund are to assist with essential outgoings, therefore it is important that students seek support with issues leading to excessive non-essential expenditure and evidence may be required that the student has accessed relevant support, prior to an award being made. The student Money Advice Team may deem it appropriate to either withhold or reduce any award made by the amount of non-essential spend.
- 6.2.9a** The BU Financial Support Fund cannot replace funds where students have been a victim of fraud, scams and cybercrime and money has been lost. A student may qualify for funding regardless, based on a full assessment. Students will be signposted to where they can seek support and further information on this topic.

6.3 Exceptional Awards

6.3.1 Exceptional awards can be made for students who have to meet exceptional and unexpected costs such as replacement or repairs to essential household equipment and emergency situations. These awards will be capped. **In most cases evidence will be required.** The table below outlines exceptional awards which can be considered. This list is not exhaustive.

Exceptional Award	Capped amount
Washing Machine	Up to £200
Fridge Freezer	Up to £200
Cooker	Up to £200
Children's Bed	Up to £200
Boiler Costs	up to £500
Essential evidenced Medical/Dental costs (use caps) where not covered by HC1 Low income scheme. www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/dentists/dental-costs/how-much-will-i-pay-for-nhs-dental-treatment/	Up to £500
NHS Prescription Prepayment Certificate (PPC) Cost. https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/help-nhs-prescription-costs/nhs-prescription-prepayment-certificate-ppc	£115 Signpost students to website when making this award.
New Born Baby start-up costs (cot, bedding, essential items)	Up to £500
Assistance with eye test/glasses	Up to £100
Travel assistance/costs in the event of bereavement in the immediate family	Up to £500

Occupational Health referral from the Faculty of Health & Social Sciences	Up to £50
Help with resit/resubmission costs after academic year (travel/living)	Up to £100
Students unable to work due to ill health who apply after their academic year has finished*	Up to £484 (4 weeks composite living costs)
Laptop/computer repairs/replacement for students who are unable to access required equipment to undertake course	Up to £500 (voucher may be supplied)
Car repairs/replacement car where a car is considered essential – students with dependent children and those courses listed in 3.2	Up to £500
DSA assistance, EP assessment or equipment/software requirements**	Up to £550 (£350 assessment and £200 equipment software) This award can be provided regardless of whether students have reached their maximum FSF allowance.
Help with house/flat deposits and estate agents fees	£400 per year/£450 in London
Assistance for students at risk of withdrawing – up to 4 weeks Composite Living Costs (£121 per week for 2024-25)	£484 <i>If the student's standard award is higher than £484, then only award standard award. If the standard award is less than £484, award £484 only.</i>

*Students who apply after their academic year has finished, will need to evidence they are unable to work due to ill health. The Student Money Adviser will need to determine whether the student has essential day to day costs to cover (food, medication, bills, phone or other) whilst not working, as most students will have returned home.

**This funding can be provided either as part of an application to the main Financial Support Fund or an application to the DSA Support Fund.

6.3.2 Exceptional awards can be made for students with priority debts, where the consequence of non-payment is significant – for example, court action, removal of property.

6.3.3 The Fund is not intended to provide additional study support that is available from the Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSAs), unless the DSAs are insufficient to cover the whole cost, or the cost cannot be met from the DSAs. Therefore, the Fund can only assist with shortfall in DSA support and assistance with the DSA assessment, where evidence is provided.

7.0 Maximum Amounts Payable

7.1 To effectively manage the annual allocation of available funds, upper limits to the amounts that can be awarded to students have been set and are listed below. BU will review the threshold limits each academic year and also retains the discretion to amend the limits in-year, normally if the Fund balance is at risk from significant underspend or overspend (based on demand).

7.2 Maximum award payment for students on full time courses

The maximum awards are inclusive of both standard and exceptional awards combined. Students can qualify for the DSA support as listed in the exceptional awards on top of the maximum awards.

***Please see information at the bottom of this table for additional support available for students who are estranged and student carers.**

Student Group - Full Time	Course Length	Maximum Award Payable
Undergraduate students with dependent children (excluding Level P)	Up to 52 weeks	£4,000
Final year undergraduate (Level H/6) without dependent children	Up to 43 weeks	£1,800
Final year undergraduate (Level H/6) without dependent children	52 weeks	£2,200

Undergraduate placement (Level P) students (with or without dependent children)	Up to 43 weeks	£1,900
Second year undergraduate (Level I/5) without dependent children	Up to 43 weeks	£1,400
Second year undergraduate (Level I/5) without dependent children	52 weeks	£1,700
First year undergraduate (Level C/4) without dependent children	Up to 43 weeks	£1,100
First year undergraduate (Level C/4) without dependent children	52 weeks	£1,300
Postgraduate and PhD students (with or without dependent children)	Up to 52 weeks	£1,500

***Student carers (B3.1.4) and students who are estranged from their families (A7) can qualify for up to £500 more on top of the maximum amounts listed above. For example, if an assessment for a first year undergraduate without children had a deficit of over £1,200, an award of up to £1,700 could be made.**

The minimum payment amount will be £100 and the maximum payment amount will be £4,000 as listed above.

For students on part time courses, an award will be made pro-rata based on intensity of study. This will typically be 50% based on BU's part time courses.

Care Leavers and estranged students will be assessed based on their income needing to stretch over 52 weeks. However, any award will be calculated on course length of 39 weeks.

8.0 Payment of BU Financial Support Fund Awards

- 8.1 Once an award has been assessed, the student will receive confirmation by email of the amount and when the payment will be made to the student by BACS. As part of the application process, the student provides their bank account name, sort code and account number so payment can be made.

The Student Money Advice Team provide details to the BU Finance Department on a weekly basis (typically a Tuesday) of any awards from the Fund that have been approved.

- 8.2 BU Financial Support Fund Awards are normally made in one single payment. BU does however have the discretion to make the awards in more than one instalment if deemed appropriate.
- 8.3 Payments can only be made payable to a third party at the student's request or with their agreement. Making a payment to a third party may be appropriate where it will ensure the funding is used for the purpose it is being provided for, for example to cover rent, where eviction is a possibility. Where a student has received an Emergency Loan from BU that has not yet been repaid, any award from the Fund will usually be reduced by the amount of debt owing to BU, for the Emergency Loan and the debt considered as repaid, should the award cover the full amount. Where the student owes money to BU the debt and/or debt repayments will **not** be taken into account in making an assessment.

9.0 Appeals

- 9.1 Students who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their application should first discuss their case with the Student Money Advice Team Leader by replying to the outcome email. If the student believes that they have grounds to appeal, they should follow the [Financial Support Appeals Procedure](#). Students who are thinking about appealing a decision on their application for an award from the BU Financial Support Fund are strongly recommended to seek advice from [SUBU Advice](#).
- 9.2 Appeals will only be considered when there is evidence that a procedural irregularity has occurred in processing the application or new evidence becomes available that was not available at the time the assessment was completed. Appeals against the University's judgement of the merit of an applicant against the published criteria will not be accepted.

APPENDIX A - Assessment of Income

A1 Treatment of income

A1.1 BU will look at the combination of statutory, institutional, household and personal financial support available to the student. These will vary according to level and mode of study however there are some common areas which are treated similarly. The student's own income and expenditure should be assessed, along with that of their partner where applicable (where spouse/partner is used, civil partner should be assumed).

A1.2 The table below provides an overview of how certain types of income should be treated. It is important to read the individual sections on how income is treated for both part time and postgraduate students.

<i>Income</i>	<i>Count as Income</i>
Means-tested benefits which can include, tax credits, housing benefit, universal credit among others	In full
Earnings Replacements Benefits	Include as part of assumed income
Non-means-tested benefits which can include Child Benefit, PIP and DLA	No
Pension credit	In full
BU Maintenance and Care Leavers Bursary	Disregard in full
Scholarships	Disregarded in full
Maintenance Grant from Student Finance England and equivalents from other parts of the UK (Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) where relevant	In full
Student Loan	In full
Additional funding grants (Parent Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant and Adult Dependants Grant)	In full
NHS Funding – Bursary or Training Grant (including specialism funding)	In full
NHS Parental Support	Disregard in full

Partner's Income (and expenditure in full)	In full (net)
Capital	In full
Additional Parental/Family Contributions	See A3
Child Maintenance Support	In Full
Local Authority Care Leavers Bursary*	Disregard in full
Student Savings (including inheritance)	Funding will be declined where student has sufficient funds to live

The list is not exhaustive if a student is receiving other income which is considered as contributing to their living expenses.

*Care Leavers may be eligible to a non-taxable £2,000 bursary paid by Local Authorities when they enter Higher Education (for both full and part time students). This bursary should be disregarded in BU Financial Support Fund assessments for undergraduate students.

A1.3 Means tested and non means tested benefits

In assessing Fund applications it is important to know which benefits to count and which to disregard in the calculations. As a general rule any means-tested benefit (such as Housing Benefit, Tax Credits, Universal Credit or Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance) for which a student is eligible should be counted in the assessment. Means-tested benefits should be counted in full in the assessment, for both the student and their partner (if applicable). Any non-means-tested benefit the student has is generally disregarded.

A1.31 The relevant tax credit should be included in the income section of a Fund assessment. The majority of students with children should be in receipt of Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit. If they do not appear to be receiving it, they should be advised of the availability of this funding.

A1.32 Pension Credit is a means-tested allowance. There are two parts to it and it is possible to receive one part of Pension Credit or both. There is more information about Pension Credit on the Gov.uk website at <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit>.

A1.4 Similarly, as a general rule, BU will include any income from statutory support for which students are eligible, even if they have not included this in their application. BU (with assistance from SUBU Advice if appropriate) will advise students to apply for any statutory support they may be entitled to, in the response to such applications. The Fund is intended to be an additional assistance rather than an alternative.

A1.5 It is expected that a student's full (less any disregards as per A1.2) student support entitlement will be taken into account together with any additional support, irrespective of whether the student has applied for or received the full entitlement.

ALL undergraduate students must be means tested by their relevant authority before their BU Financial Support Fund application can be assessed.

** The only exception to undergraduate students being means tested is students who are on a placement year as part of their sandwich degree, as typically these students are non-means tested.*

A1.6 Earnings Replacement Benefits

Some benefits from both means-tested and non-means-tested groups are known as earnings replacements. These Earnings Replacement Benefits (ERBs) are paid to claimants who do not or cannot earn a full wage. For example, a person who is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) receives this benefit whilst they are trying to find work.

A1.7 These are benefits that may be available to those who are unable to work:

- Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Incapacity Benefit (after 28 weeks) and contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Statutory Maternity Pay
- Maternity Allowance
- Statutory Sick Pay
- Carers Allowance
- Retirement Pensions
- Bereavement Benefits

A1.8 For full-time students, income from these non means-tested ERBs should not be counted separately (it can form part of the 'assumed income' figure for full-time undergraduates and part of the 'Minimum Required Provision' for full-time postgraduates. Income from ERBs should be included in full where it is the income of a full-time student's partner or the income of a part-time student or their partner.

A1.9 Other non means-tested benefits

Entitlement to these benefits usually depends upon the individual's personal circumstances rather than income levels. For example, if you have an eligible dependent child you will receive Child Benefit.

- Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- PIP
- Attendance Allowance (AA)
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Child Benefit (CB)
- Guardians Allowance
- Adoption Allowance

These non means-tested benefits should be fully disregarded in the BU Financial Support Fund assessment but can be a useful indication of the person's particular circumstances i.e. a person in receipt of DLA clearly may have extra needs relating to their disability.

A2 Maintenance Loans and Grants

A2.1 Where eligible, all students must have applied for their full entitlement of student maintenance loan and grant (where applicable) and must have received their first instalment before receiving any payment from the Fund. This can be determined from the payment schedule letter issued by Student Finance England (SFE) and bank statements.

A2.2 Where a student is not eligible for student funding because they have a previous HE qualification, are unable to receive the loan on religious grounds, or are on a Distance Learning/Online course the student may still apply for help from the BU Financial Support Fund if they satisfy all other eligibility requirements. However, the 'missing or declined' support will be taken into account as assumed income, as the BU Financial Support Fund cannot replace a 'non-award' from Student Finance.

The full support to include would be based on the full loan of £10,887 (36 week course) £12,647 (52 week course) for 2024-25.

A2.3 *Where a student has been overpaid in a previous academic year, meaning their loan is reduced as a result of the overpayment, use the actual loan the student is receiving. An overpayment will usually be unexpected and the student is impacted without prior knowledge moving into the new academic year. There is no capacity for the student to make up the loss of income which we are recognising as part of their assessment.*

A2.4 It is expected that most students will apply for a tuition fee loan. However, there might be students who have paid their fees and then fallen into financial difficulty, though these cases should be rare. Such students will be advised to apply for a tuition fee loan as soon as they are able to do so.

A3 Household contribution

A3.1 For undergraduate students the assessed contribution (family contribution) to a student's income will need to be determined in line with the Student Support Regulations (link below). For example – for a 2016 cohort student whose household income is £50,000, the assessed contribution from the family would be £1,041. This figure would then be divided by the weeks of assessment.

Assessed contribution amounts are provided in the following document:

<https://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/media/2037/20231215-financial-memorandum-for-202425-22524.pdf> (Page 19 for 2016 cohorts and Page 27 for 2012 cohorts)

A3.2 Where parents are contributing more than the assessed contribution follow this calculation (parent’s contribution should be calculated based on assessment period):

Parent’s contribution - Assessed Contribution = A

If A is higher than the assumed income then

A - assumed income = B

Create new entry 'Additional contribution from parents' and include B

Do not remove assessed or assumed income when creating new entry

A4 Assumed income

A4.1 It is expected that students will be able to supplement their income from a variety of routes, for example, part-time work, vacation work, bank overdrafts, savings or additional parental/family support where appropriate.

A4.2 The standard assessment uses an ‘assumed income’ figure to cover these elements of income rather than taking into account the actual income. Actual earnings from part-time work are disregarded to give students the capacity to earn larger sums without affecting their payment from the Fund. This enables them to meet expenditure which is either not covered in the assessment e.g. mobile phone bills, or course costs and other items which exceed the standard/capped amounts used in the assessment. Assumed income rates are set out below.

A4.3 Assumed income rates

The assumed income rates to be used for full time undergraduate students are as follows:

	Standard	Healthcare Courses*
Year 1 students	£47 a week	£24 a week
Year 2 students	£30 a week	£16 a week
Final year	£0	£0
Students with dependent children or unable to work due to ill health/disability	£0	£0

*Students on healthcare courses are recognised as having less availability to work due to commitment to placements throughout each academic year. Based on this, the assumed income is 50% of a standard course.

For students on sandwich placements, use the student’s actual income. Where the placement is unpaid, then the income will be £0.

A4.4 Exceptions to assumed income

The assumed income is not used for students with dependants (even if the student is working) or those unable to work due to ill health/a disability. These two priority groups should have a zero assumed income. **Evidence is required for those students who are unable to work. This would usually be a letter from a medical professional, or can be evidenced through the type of benefit the student may be receiving (for example PIP/ESA/DLA).** In addition, BU has the discretion to reduce or remove the assumed income level for students with caring responsibilities. However, other types of benefit income may need to be included for these students relating to their caring responsibilities.

A5 Postgraduate students and Minimum Required Provision (MRP)

A5.1 For postgraduate students, which includes PhD* students there will be a set income level. This is detailed in the table below. This encompasses any income from the PG Loan/Doctoral Loan, NHS Grants, part time work and support from family and friends. **There is the expectation that realistic provision has been made to fund both tuition fees and living costs before embarking on the course.**

**For PhD and PGDip Social Work students, if a studentship/bursary exists where the tuition fee is covered and an income is received, if the income is above the MRP, use the income figure instead.*

MRP Figures: Student	MRP Amount per week
Student living elsewhere	£227
Student living in London	£327
Student with dependants* or students who are unable to work due to disability, living elsewhere.	£181
Student with dependants* or students who are unable to work due to disability, living in London.	£274

*who are financially reliant upon the student

Other than the income, postgraduate students will be assessed typically over 52 weeks, using the same assessment criteria as an undergraduate student.

A6 Part-Time Students

A6.1 Students on part time courses will be assessed using the MRP as outlined in A5.1. This applies to both undergraduate and postgraduate part time courses. Although part time undergraduate students can receive a pro rata student loan, this will not cover a

student's total costs over the year. Therefore, there is the expectation a student will supplement this income. Using the MRP ensures this is fair for all students applying, rather than using the student loan and variable income.

A6.2 The assessment period for part time students will be the same as full time students as the enrolment period remains the same, however, the award will be pro-rated based on intensity. Please see A6.3.

A6.3 The outcome of the assessment, if a deficit, should be multiplied as per full time students by the full number of weeks of the assessment. The award should then be calculated based on intensity of study. In most cases BU part time courses are 50%. Therefore, a student will receive 50% of the total award calculated. If the initial full time calculation results in an award at the cap level or above, then the cap should be applied and again calculated on intensity of study. Please see 6.2 for award caps.

A6.4 Any statutory or discretionary fee support should be disregarded.

A7 Estrangement

A7.1 Where students declare that the expected household contribution is not met, for example such as through estrangement, this can be checked through the SLC portal (HEBSS).

A7.2 The Fund will not be used towards subsidising the household contributions as calculated by SFE for cases other than genuine relationship breakdown. Students who find themselves in financial difficulty because their parents are no longer able to meet the cost of the household contribution due to a drop in income (of 15% or more), should be encouraged to contact SFE for a reassessment. However, parental outgoings such a high housing costs etc, will not be a factor in the anticipated household contribution.

A8 Apprenticeships

A8.1 Students on apprenticeship courses are not eligible for funding from the standard funding providers like Student Finance England or the NHS. Students will typically be receiving income from their employer/trusts. This income will be used in assessments for students on apprenticeships along with relevant income as detailed in A1.2. Students on apprenticeship courses are not eligible for the funding detailed in Appendix E.

APPENDIX B – Treatment of Expenditure

B1 Reasonable Living Costs

BU has judged that the amounts listed below are Reasonable Living Costs for the 2024-25 Academic Year.

Outgoings	Maximum levels
Rent for single students <i>For students living in the parental home the composite living costs of £121 per week will be used, instead of any rent paid to parents.</i>	Up to £671.67 per calendar month (£155 per week)
Rent for students living with partner	Up to £927.33 per calendar month (£214 per week)
Rent for students with dependent children	Uncapped
Rent for students on placement in London	Up to £802.62 per calendar month (£185.22 per week)
Vehicle Maintenance including MoT	£500 per year (additional £500 considered with evidence as per exceptional awards for repairs)
Course requirements – books, printing, stationary, copying, equipment	£10 per week
Phones	£30 per month/£50 per month for Carers*

****Students asking for consideration to be given to costs associated with caring responsibilities may be asked to provide evidence that they are recognised as having caring responsibilities. This could be through a letter from their GP, carer’s centre, medical professional, previous education establishment or documentation that shows they are in receipt of Carer’s Allowance. However, in some cases this may be difficult to evidence, so discretion and flexibility should be exercised.***

+ These costs would only be considered if the equipment was essential to their course and the student could not access this through alternative means. It is generally expected for students to be able to access software they require through AppsAnywhere portal, this includes Adobe Creative Cloud. Therefore, there is not the need for a monthly subscription and to exclude this from any assessment.

B2 Composite Living Costs

B2.1 Composite Living Costs (CLC) figures have been determined to cover expenditure on basic costs such as food, household bills, clothes, entertainment and household essentials such as toiletries, which ensures that all applicants are treated fairly, regardless of where they study and regardless of their individual lifestyle choices. These take into account the different household needs for different groups of students. The CLCs are fixed and will be used in **all** standard award assessments.

B2.2 The following table illustrates CLC amounts for 2024-25 and has scope to change for each academic year.

<i>Student profile</i>	<i>Based on NASMA applicable amount (assuming no disability in family)</i>	
	<i>Elsewhere Per week</i>	<i>London per week</i>
Single student	£121	£167
Student with partner	£190	£229
Dependent children* (each)	£115	£116

*As evidenced through student’s child benefit/child tax credits/universal credit award notifications

B2.3 In addition add an extra one-off cost of £36 (family premium) where a student has at least one dependent child.

B2.4 The amounts for London apply to students eligible for the London rate of loan (and are calculated in line with the difference between the London and elsewhere loan rates). BU students on placement in London qualify for the higher levels of support.

B2.5 Where a student or their partner is receiving a premium, e.g. disability premium through a means-tested benefit, the amount of this premium should be added to the amounts shown above. The benefits notice from the DWP will give this information.

B2.6 The table below lists the elements that should/should not be included as CLC. This list is not exhaustive.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Composite Living Costs</i>	<i>Variable expenditure</i>
Independent or Commercial Rent/mortgage		Yes
Rent whilst living with parents	Yes	
Food	Yes	
Utilities	Yes	
Phone / Mobile		Yes
TV Licence	Yes	

Clothes	Yes	
Travel to and from University		Yes
Broadband/Internet/Wi-Fi	Yes	
Course requirements		Yes
Medication		Yes
Priority debt repayments		Yes
Entertainment / Clubs / Societies	Yes	
Childcare		Yes
Council Tax		Yes

B3 Variable expenditure

B3.1 Expenditure on rent, travel, course-related costs, childcare and other exceptional costs is excluded from the CLC, and actual or capped costs will be included in the assessment. BU will use caps relating to some expenditures as outlined through Appendix B.

B3.1.1 Travel Related Costs

The amount the student specifies on their application will be used in the calculation, providing it is not above the capped amounts as listed below.

It is generally expected that students on NHS courses, Paramedic Science and 3rd year Social Work students will need to be running a car due to placement.

- *Students with dependent children - uncapped + car costs (tax/insurance/maintenance)*
- *Students without dependents on healthcare courses, including 3rd year Social Work students, Paramedic Science students and PG students on Social Work and Physician Associate courses - £30 per week + car costs (tax/insurance/maintenance) or £50 per week public transport*
- *Students with caring and travel responsibilities - £30 fuel per week + car costs (tax/insurance/maintenance) or £50 per week public transport*
- *Students without dependents who live in outlying areas - £30 per fuel week + car costs (tax/insurance/maintenance) or £50 per week public transport*
- *Students without dependents who live on UNIBUS routes - £12 per week*

- *Parking – for students where a car is a requirement and have parking costs related to their course/placement the following cap will apply - £10 per week*

Further consideration can be given if students have other significant reasons for high travel costs, for example, a disability, if evidence is provided.

If the Student Money Adviser considers the travel costs are unrealistically high, then further information or break down of costs can be requested.

B3.1.2 Child Support Maintenance

Payments that a student has to make from their salary, following an order to pay Child Support Maintenance should be counted as variable expenditure.

B3.1.3 Students with shared parental responsibilities

If the student has children who are living with a former partner, and the student is not receiving Child Tax Credit/Universal Credit or Child Benefit for them, a level of expenditure will still be considered for costs associated with visits/weekend or holiday care, linked to the level of contact/care.

B3.1.4 Students with caring responsibilities (student carers)

For students who have caring responsibilities* for a family member, either at weekends or during holidays or if the relative is living with them, the income of that person should not be included but a level of expenditure associated with their caring responsibilities can be considered. Evidence may be requested in some cases, depending on the caring responsibilities and associated costs.

*Caring responsibilities do not generally include the care of a student's children unless this is above and beyond standard parental responsibilities.

B4 Debts

B4.1 Set out below are debts that are classed as priority and those that are classed non-priority. The BU Financial Support Fund cannot normally be used to assist with repayment of non-priority debts, only priority debts.

B4.2 The amount used in the assessment should be based on the minimum payment required to prevent further action being taken by the creditor during the rest of the academic year.

Priority Debts

- Loan repayments which are subject to a realistic and minimum repayment plan
- Rent arrears where non-payment may result in eviction or court action
- Council tax where non-payment may result in eviction or court action
- Debt which will result in serious action if not paid, for example, court action, eviction, re-possession of goods
- Car Finance/Hire Purchase/Conditional sale agreements for goods that are essential for the debtor to retain*

Non-Priority Debts

- Loan repayments to family members and friends
- Bank overdraft facilities
- Credit card and store card debt**
- Tuition fee debt
- Debts which relate to non-essential items or items that could have been purchased at a more reasonable value
- Credit and store card debt for a student's partner
- Those where non-payment will not result in the loss of the debtor's home, liberty, essential goods or services

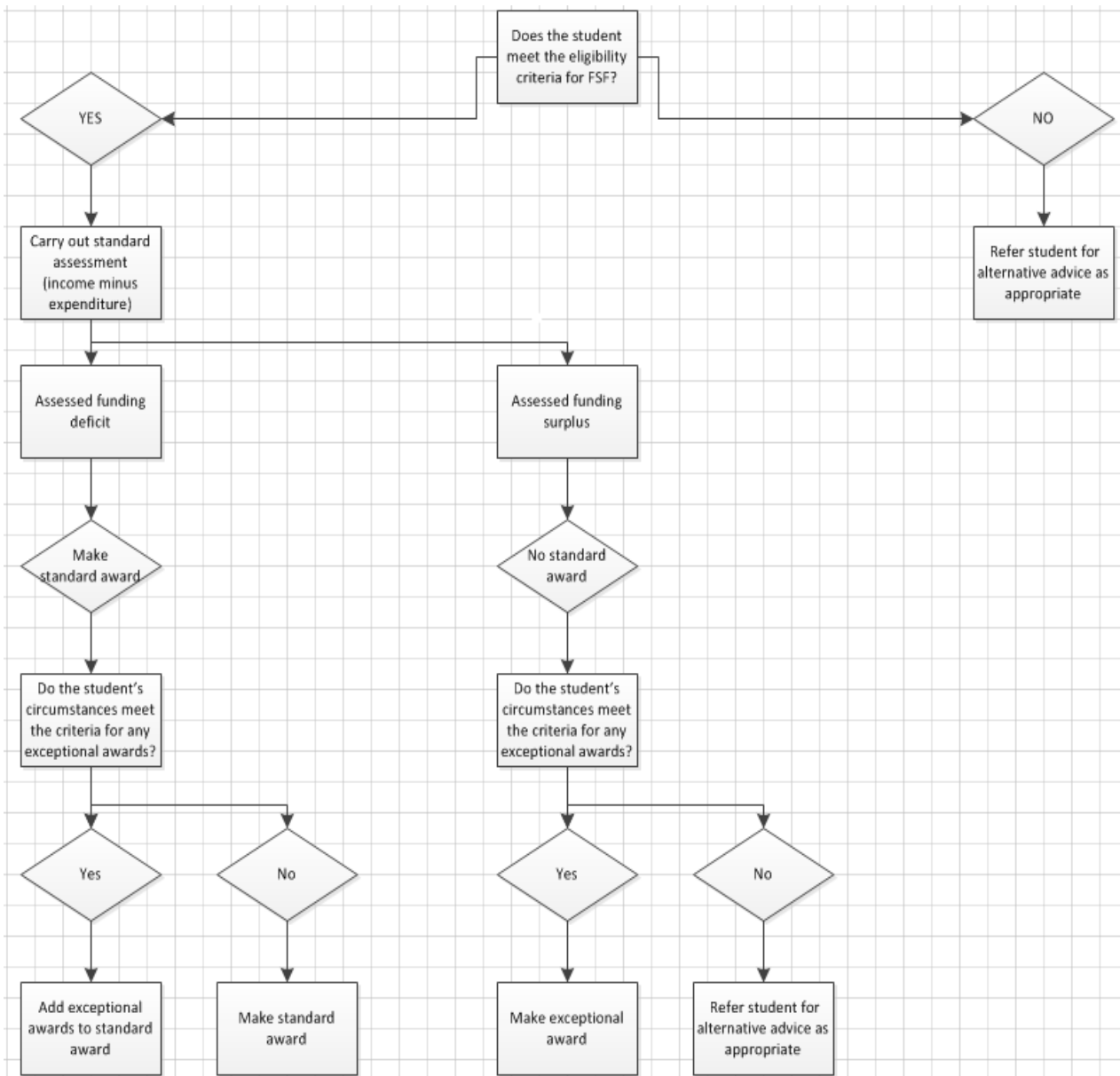
**A car will need to be considered as an essential requirement for their course or where a student has children or caring responsibilities. Where a student has Car Finance/Hire Purchase or other loan relating to a purchase of a car prior to the current academic year, up to £500 will be factored into the assessment, thereby disregarding the actual amount paid by the student.*

***Where a student has already agreed a realistic repayment arrangement of a non-priority debt and has stopped using that source of credit, the repayments can be included as expenditure in the assessment for a standard award.*

B4.3 Where a student has advised and evidenced on bank statements that they have incurred charges relating to overdraft fees, these can be included in expenditure. These are calculated by adding up any fees/charges listed and dividing by 52 weeks.

B4.4 It is recommended that students with debts should be encouraged to seek advice from a debt advice service (e.g. SUBU Advice) or externally (e.g. Citizens Advice or Step Change) - www.bournemouth.ac.uk/students/help-advice/financial-support/external-funding-guidance

APPENDIX C - BU Financial Support Fund Application Flow Chart



APPENDIX D - Acronyms and abbreviations

BU	Bournemouth University
CB	Child Benefit
CLC	Composite Living Costs
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DSA	Disabled Students Allowance
DWP	Department for Work & Pensions
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HE	Higher Education
MRP	Minimum Required Provision
PG	Postgraduate
RLC	Reasonable Living Costs
SFE	Student Finance England
SLC	Student Loans Company
UG	Undergraduate
WP	Widening Participation

APPENDIX E – WP Funding

Awards can be made for £350 where an undergraduate* student meets any one of the following criteria:

- Household income of £25,000 per year or below
- Mature students - HESA benchmark 21 or over at start of course
- Additional learning needs/disability
- Care leaver
- Students from low participation neighbourhoods
- Black Minority Ethnic
- Female students taking STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)

Awards will be made where a student qualifies for no standard award or an award less than £350. Discretion will be used by the Money Advice Team to ensure a student has demonstrated they have no funds available and require funding for essential costs, prior to any award being made.

Discretion can also be used to consider a higher award of £500. This may be where a student has additional financial responsibilities or where a student has received £350 and requires the additional £150 at a later date.

*Including MSc Nursing (funded as UG by SFE)
Excluding Apprenticeship courses

APPENDIX F – Lesley Milne Estate

BU have received a donation from the estate of Lesley Milne who was a Senior Lecturer in Midwifery.

Lesley's wishes were for the donated funds to support midwifery students who face financial difficulty.

As the bequest was to support midwifery students in financial difficulty, discretion can be used to provide an award of £500, where a student has already maximised funding provided by BU or does not meet standard criteria, where the student is still demonstrating no money available and financial difficulty. This enables the funding to have the most impact.

APPENDIX G – BU Financial Assistance and Emergency Fund

Alongside this fund will operate the BU Financial Assistance and Emergency Fund. This fund will enable students to access funding who are awaiting their first loan from the UK funding provider and for students who do not meet the criteria for any of the other funds BU offer. There will be separate guidance published outlining the eligibility criteria for this fund and separate application forms.

Students can qualify for £250 above the published thresholds outlined in this document in 7.2 by receiving a payment from the BU Financial Assistance and Emergency Fund.