



AA HARDSHIP FUND

Guidance Notes: 2020/21

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About the AA Hardship Fund

The AAHF is intended to support students who made realistic and adequate financial provision at the start of the academic year, but who have encountered unexpected circumstances and find themselves in temporary financial hardship. The AAHF is not an alternative to a scholarship.

AAHF awards range from £200 to a maximum of £5,000 and are granted depending on need demonstrated by supporting evidence. The awards can be used to cover unexpected living costs, material needs required to undertake the academic provision, or to offset tuition fees where payments agreed on a payment plan arrangement cannot be met

The purpose of the AAHF is to help eligible applicants as much of possible within the resources available. AAHF awards are not guaranteed and applicants may not receive the total amount requested. There is no standard award amount within the ranges, and an award to one applicant does not set a precedent in respect of an award to another.

The AA Hardship Fund (AAHF) is made up of funds from the school's annual operating budget and donations that specifically support the stated intention of the funding provision.

AAHF Panel

The AAHF Panel comprises:

- Staff member from Registrar's department (Chair)
- Staff member from Finance department
- Staff member from Teaching and Learning

Quoracy: Any three members

Eligibility & Priority

Applicants must be full-time registered students of the AA School on a degree programme, specifically:

- Foundation Course;
- Experimental Programme (Years 1-3);
- Diploma Programme (Years 4-5);
- All Taught Postgraduate Programmes;
- PhD Programme.

This does not include:

- part-time students registered on the Semester or Visiting School provision;

- students registered on the Part III Course;
- students on a Year Out.

All applicants should be able to demonstrate that they have made reasonable and realistic provision at the start of their programme to fund both their tuition fees and living costs.

All students meeting the above eligibility criteria may apply, but please note that priority will be given to:

- students with [disabilities](#)
- those with children, especially single parents
- those who are carers as [defined by the NHS](#)

When to apply

The application periods for the **2020/21 academic year** are:

Term 1:

- Applications open: Friday, 30 October
- Applications close: Wednesday, 11 November 2020 (12pm UK time)

Term 2:

- Applications open: Friday, 5 February
- Applications close: Wednesday, 17 February 2021 (12pm UK time)

Applicants can expect to be informed of the outcome no more than 10 working days from the application deadline.

How to apply

Students must ensure that ALL requested supporting evidence is provided with their application.

Step 1:

Students must complete the following forms and collect the following supporting evidence:

- Online AAHF Application Form;
- Student Budget Planner;
- Student's financial statements for each bank account held (e.g. current, savings, credit card, etc.), covering the most recent 3 months in full;
- Student's last 3 months' payslips (*if applicable*)
- Student Finance Notification Letter from Student Finance England (*if applicable*)

Please note, the AAHF Panel reserves the right to request additional supporting documentation or information. Examples include:

- If tuition fees and/or living costs are covered by a financial sponsor (partner / parent / guardian, etc.):
 - Financial Sponsor's statements for each bank account held, covering the most recent 3 months in full;
 - Financial Sponsor's last 3 months' payslips (if applicable)
 - Financial Sponsor's written consent that their information be shared as part of the AAHF application; and
- Evidence of any unexpected costs (e.g. receipts, invoices);
- Evidence of rent / mortgage payments (e.g. tenancy agreement);
- Any supporting evidence for being in a priority category (listed above)

Step 2:

Students must submit the documents listed above to the AAHF Panel by 12pm on the advertised deadline in one of following ways:

- uploaded as part of the online AAHF application form (up to a maximum of 10 documents); and/or
- emailed to hardship@aaschool.ac.uk with the AA student number in the subject line.

Applications delivered after the advertised deadline will not be considered by the AAHF Panel unless resources remain.

Assessment and decisions

Each application will be considered on its merits. The Panel will consider:

- The circumstances surrounding a student's hardship
- A student's income and expenditure (or that of their financial sponsor as the case may be)
- Any scholarship or bursary the student is already receiving from the AA
- A student's ability to work to support themselves
- Any hardship fund support previously awarded and any expectations set out when that award was made.

Applicants can expect to be informed of the outcome no more than 10 working days from the application deadline.

If more evidence is required, the waiting period may be reset, so applicants must ensure they have submitted all required supporting evidence. Students who do not respond to the request within one week of the request may have their applications closed.

The offer of an AAHF award is entirely at the discretion of the Panel and the Panel's decision is final.