

## Emergency Fund Policy

### 1. Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 The Emergency Fund is designed to support you if you are facing immediate financial issues & crises, to the extent that essential costs cannot be met without additional funding support.
- 1.2 It is understood that financial circumstances can change drastically in a short period of time. Therefore, provision has been made for this fund to be made available to you where unforeseen & sudden financial pressures leave you with no other option but seek urgent financial help from the university.
- 1.3 The criteria and guidance below can be consulted on how the University's Emergency Fund is managed, how applications are assessed, and how funds are disbursed.
- 1.4 The fund operates all year round, and should you require additional support due to knock-on effects to your mental health, then the Student Services team can be consulted, who can provide counselling & one-to-one sessions to help you cope and develop strategies going forward.

### 2. About the Fund

- 2.1 Payment from the fund is in the form of a single non-repayable grant designed to resolve immediate & urgent financial crisis.
- 2.2 The Fund is to be used when there are no further financial avenues available that would react with the speed required to clear the specified urgent essential payment(s). You must demonstrate that you've utilised all funding available to you, through the application process
- 2.3 To apply to the fund, you need to complete an online application form. Please enquire to Student Services, either in person or via email at: [Studentservices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:Studentservices@aecc.ac.uk) to access the form. Once submitted, the Student Finance Advisor will indicate whether you are eligible for an award from the Fund via email communication (see point 10).
- 2.4 The fund is not designed to provide support with tuition fees.
- 2.5 If you are enrolled on a full-time undergraduate or postgraduate course, or a postgraduate research student at this university, then you are eligible to apply for the fund. If you are studying part-time, then you may be eligible to apply to the fund, eligibility depends on the course intensity, (the contact hours of the course). Contact the Student Services Team for advice if you are studying part-time and wish to apply to the fund.

### 3. Provision

- 3.1 The amount paid is on a case-by-case basis, but current provision will see payments of up to £250 awarded for emergency funding further to a successful assessment. Any amount above £50 will need managerial approval before a decision can be finalised.
- 3.2 If you have already been paid funding through the Student Support Fund, then the amount of emergency funding available to you will be reduced by that amount. £500 is the maximum payment across the two funds per student per academic year.
- 3.3 Any agreed payment will be credited to you within the timescale of the next working day once the application form has been completed, and all required evidence submitted.
- 3.4 If you are experiencing exceptional circumstances, a payment can be made from the emergency fund of over £250 provided there is sufficient justification for the amount and subject to managerial approval.

## 4. Priority Funding

- 4.1 We are aware that you may be studying with additional responsibilities that go beyond your course. The following student groups are designated to be in *priority groups* and are assessed in light of this. The priority groups include:
- Students with children or dependants
  - Students from a low-income household
  - Students with a disability
  - Care Leavers
  - Final year students entering clinic during the summer
  - Mature students
  - Estranged students
  - Students with caring responsibilities

## 5. Eligibility

- 5.1 To be considered for the fund you must:
- Be fully enrolled on your chosen course before application to the fund, i.e. you cannot be withdrawn or on a study break
  - Be designated as a 'home student' in relation to your tuition fees
  - Be studying on an undergraduate or postgraduate course, or be a postgraduate researcher enrolled at the university on a full or part-time study basis.
  - Be currently in receipt of:
    - 1) the full entitlement of funding available to you from Student Finance for your region, or equivalent. This could be the combination of your student loan plus a maintenance loan as a typical example
    - 2) any eligible statutory benefits, such as Universal Credit or childcare grants etc., and you must:
    - 3) declare if you are in receipt of a bursary or scholarship from the university.

## 6. Studying part-time

- 6.1 If you are studying a course on a part-time basis, there is an expectation that you are earning a minimum amount in paid work before you will be deemed eligible for the fund.
- 6.2 The difference from full-time study is that there is an understanding that you have made adequate provision to earn via paid work to help pay for your expenses. To be eligible for the fund, your net income per year is required to be above £9,988 as the minimum required provision (MRP).
- 6.3 If there is understanding that you have made every effort to secure part-time work, but you were unable to obtain a suitable job whilst studying, then this detail alongside the rest of the information from the application form can be presented to the Wellbeing Services Manager for a second opinion.

## 7. International Students

- 7.1 As set out in student visa requirements, there is an expectation that you have sufficient finance in place from the outset of your course. Therefore, it is only under exceptional circumstances that as an international student, you can be considered for the Emergency Fund. The following are examples of potential circumstances that could warrant support from the fund:
- Unforeseen medical costs of the you or a dependant
  - Emergency situations that necessitate the need for flights home
  - Emergency situations that necessitate a need to relocate

- Unforeseeable costs related to a visa extension (e.g. costs incurred due to delays in the process outside of your control)
- Internationally recognised crises directly affecting you.

7.2 Provision with separate criteria exists if you are an international student facing immediate financial crises. This is the International Emergency Fund for which full policy information can be found at: <https://www.aecc.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/International-Emergency-Fund-Policy.pdf>

## 8. How to Apply

- 8.1 To access the online application form, please contact Student Services either in person or via email at [StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk) and include:
- Your name and student number
  - Your request to access emergency funding from the University.

## 9. Number of Applications

- 9.1 You can only claim from the Emergency Fund once per academic year.
- 9.2 Additional applications to the fund beyond the first require managerial approval before you can proceed. The limitation above is intended so that the available budget for the fund can be spread amongst more students.

## 10. What is Required

### 10.1 Information for the application form:

Evidence:

- The most recent month's bank statement from your 'main' bank account. This is used to determine eligibility based on activity on the account as well as the balance.

Income & Expenditure:

- Details of your Income & expenditure will be asked to be provided in the application form, in order to support your request for funds. The requested details are the following:
  1. Grants or bursaries you are currently in receipt of
  2. Any applicable Government benefits (such as Universal Credit)
  3. The portion of the monthly income from your partner (if applicable), that you would consider your portion of the family funds to use.
  4. The amount monthly that your parent(s) provide towards you and your living costs, only if declared as a regular amount and only if applicable to you.
  5. The cost of the current rent or mortgage. If the mortgage is in joint names, then only be the amount to which you personally are paying towards the mortgage will be taken into account.
  6. The regular cost of insurance, but only if that insurance is covering an essential such as a car that is used to get to the university and / or part-time work where other methods of travel are not appropriate.
  7. The amount to which you pay towards regular health costs, which could be via prescription or other required medication as examples.
  8. The repayments towards any secured debts if applicable. Examples include hire finance / hire purchase on vehicles repaid monthly, or mortgage repayments on a property.

### 10.2 Documentation required:

- The application form will require the latest monthly statement uploaded for evidence if not supplied at the financial assessment.

**Please note that if any of the above evidence cannot be gathered and attached to the application form, then this may cause delays with accessing the fund.**

## **11. Description of your current situation**

11.1 A brief summary of what has caused you to be in the position of requesting support from the Emergency Fund and what support you require from the fund will be required in the application form.

## **12. Timescales**

12.1 Further to the latest months' bank statement being received and any queries answered sufficiently, the expectation would be the next working day to receive payment from the Emergency Fund.

## **13. Declaration**

13.1 The declaration at the end of the application form will need to be complete before your application can be moved forward for processing.

## **14. Outcome**

14.1 We will endeavour to ensure if you apply to the Emergency Fund, you are kept informed throughout the process. The following touch-points are key:

1. Amount awarded from the fund: A decision will be made further to the receipt of the application form to accept or reject a case for funding and the amount required to support the described emergency.
2. Outstanding evidence required: You are informed via email further to submission of your application form, if there are any queries relating to your attached bank statement that may need addressing before the application can be processed.
3. Award payable: If you have completed and submitted your application form, any outstanding queries have been addressed, and have been deemed that you're eligible for an award should check your bank account for receipt of funds within the next working day.

14.2 The link to the online application form will be provided by Student Services further to you contacting Student Services in person or by email at [Studentservices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:Studentservices@aecc.ac.uk).

14.3 Should further information be needed to determine eligibility, then an email explaining the application is 'on hold' will be sent to you, detailing what is required to move the application forward. Examples could include: bank statement missing from the form, or unanswered queries relating to transactions on their bank statement that need addressing.

14.4 In the even a request is declined, an explanation would be provided via email following receipt of the application form. The email will detail the reason(s) why you have been rejected funding, and appropriate other avenues that could be used to gain additional support. You will also be invited to book an appointment to discuss your needs and next steps further.

## **15. Appeals and Reassessments**

15.1 You may request a review of the decision. The following may be reasons for an appeal or reassessment:

- Your financial circumstances have changed since the application form was originally submitted.
- The required bank statement was unable to be provided, for valid reasons during the application process.
- You have evidence that a procedural error has occurred.

## **16. Questions and Support**

16.1 Should you wish to talk with someone about wellbeing, do remember you can speak with a Wellbeing Adviser. To book an appointment just email: [StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk)

- 16.2 For any further questions related to applying for the Emergency Fund, or to book your financial assessment meeting, please email [StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk)
- 16.3 The Student Finance Advisor can also support with budgeting and can help you in managing your day-to-day money and expenses more effectively. You can also book an appointment to discuss this further using this email address: [StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk](mailto:StudentServices@aecc.ac.uk)

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| <b>Version:</b>             | 2   |
| <b>Ratified by:</b>         | SMG   |
| <b>Originator / Author:</b> | Robert Jones, Student Money and Accommodation Advisor                           |
| <b>Reference source:</b>    | NASMA guidance  |
| <b>Date approved:</b>       | 02/07/2024  |
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| <b>Review date:</b>         | May 2025  |
| <b>Target:</b>              | Staff, students   |
| <b>Policy location:</b>     | Sharepoint site, Moodle   |
| <b>Equality analysis:</b>   | This policy has been developed in due regard to the University's equality duty. |

## Appendix 1

