



# Money Matters

How we can help with  
Money, Budgeting &  
Benefit Advice



ADVICE CENTRE

FREE, INDEPENDENT AND IMPARTIAL ADVICE



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All information in this booklet is correct as of February 2018 and is subject to change. For the most recent version please visit:  
[www.hulluniunion.com](http://www.hulluniunion.com)





# Introducing the Advice Centre

We provide a free, confidential and impartial service for all students at the University of Hull. We are independent of the University and can help you with any issues you face whilst a student here.

Like a Citizens Advice Bureau or a Law Centre, we give practical advice on all kinds of subjects relating to student life.

Whether it's money and funding issues, academic problems, housing and tenancy queries or consumer and employment issues, there's a team member that can help. We also have a free phone so you can call student finance without having to worry about the cost of the call.

Being a member of Advice UK and subscribing to Citizens Advice and Advisernet gives us the up-to-date information we need to help thousands of students each year.

**Visit us in Student Central Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri – 9.30 – 3pm and Weds 12-3pm. If you can't make these times please email the team on [hull-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk](mailto:hull-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk) or call us on 01482 466263 to arrange a more convenient time for you.**



# Student Loan Not Arrived?

If your Student Loan has not arrived yet, there may be a simple explanation. To help get your loan as quickly as possible, try the following:

Telephone the Student Finance England Customer Services and ask why there has been a delay – 0300 100 0607, Mon - Fri 8am - 8pm, Sat and Sun 9am - 4pm.

- Have your email address or Customer reference number ready.
- Ask for the name of the person you are speaking to.
- Write down the reasons that are given and ask when you can expect your loan.
- Check that the details the Student Finance England (SFE) have for you are correct.

If you can't get through on the Helpline, try at different times of the day and evening. The line will get busy, so do keep trying. Alternatively, you can track the progress of your application on-line: [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance)

If you have tried the above steps and are still experiencing problems, come to the Advice Centre with the information you have and we will support you.

If you are experiencing financial hardship because your loan has been delayed, contact us and we will help you explore your options for short-term financial assistance. Because of the delays in the student funding process this year the University may be able to help you with a loan as well. Contact the Loans and Hardship Office on 462222 for further information.





# Student Budgeting Guide

1. Most students have to manage on a low income, so planning a budget early should help avoid getting into financial difficulty. We can help with this! The below tips should point you in the right direction but you can always come and see us for a more in-depth chat.
2. Maximising Your Income
3. The first thing to do is to make sure you are getting the funding that you are entitled to:
4. Undergraduate Student Support: Most 'home students' should be entitled to some 'statutory support' from the Government. You may have your tuition fees paid for you, be eligible for a student loan or a bursary if you have children. On some courses such as Nursing and Social Work you may have travel costs paid. EU students eligible to apply for the tuition fee loan.
5. Postgraduate Funding: There are a number of organisations, who fund postgraduate courses, see Careers for further information. If you are studying Teaching or Social Work, there is extensive statutory funding and Student Finance England postgraduate loans available.
6. Part-Time Funding: If you study part-time at least 60 credits per year (i.e. the equivalent of half a full-time course), you may be entitled to a tuition fee loan and possibly a maintenance loan.
7. International Students: There is no statutory funding for International Students, apart from tuition fee loan for EU undergraduates, but the rest of this leaflet should provide some suggestions if you are in financial difficulty.



It is essential to make sure you apply for what you are entitled to as most funding has deadlines for application. most funding applications have deadlines and these can be checked on the student finance website.

1. Depending on your credit rating you may be entitled to a STUDENT BANK ACCOUNT with an overdraft, especially if you are an Undergraduate Home Student. Shop around to find the best offer, taking into account the overdraft limit, cheque guarantee card limit, special offers, interest rates (especially if you go over your limit), accessibility of branches, graduate facilities and whether the local branch has a Student Officer as it often helps to deal with staff who understand the needs of students. Student bank advice can be found here: <http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/students/Student-bank-account>
2. Most students can supplement their income through PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT. The Careers JobShop in Student Central has details of available work for students.
3. If you are struggling financially you may be entitled to HARDSHIP FUNDS. The main one is the Hardship Support Fund; this is provided by the Government for Home Students with a shortage of funding and is administered by the University. The University also has other small funds to help all students in emergencies in the form of a grant or a loan. In certain circumstances, the Advice Centre can also arrange food spend cards for students.
4. There are a large number of EDUCATIONAL TRUSTS all over the country. You may well be entitled to apply for assistance if, for example, you are from a certain area or country, or you are studying a particular course. Try searching google for educational trusts and grants for more information.





# Students and Welfare Benefits

Welfare benefits are amounts of money paid to people as part of the Social Security System to supplement extremely low incomes or to compensate for disadvantages, for example when people are sick or unemployed. The benefit system is huge and supports millions of people in many different situations.

Many people think that students cannot apply for Benefits. In a lot of cases this is true, but some students can receive them or at least are eligible to apply, these may include:

Single parents.

Single people looking after foster children.

Students with a disability or illness and in receipt of a disability benefit (DLA or PIP)

Some refugees.

Part-time students.

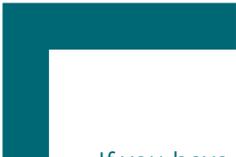
Pensioners dependent on income.

Couples who are both students with children.

Carers.

Some suspending students when waiting to return to their studies after taking time out because of illness or caring responsibilities that have now finished.

Students with responsibility for children.



If you have a partner who is not a student, they can apply. The important thing is for people to apply if there is any doubt. We can inform you about entitlement and investigate further if you are refused benefits or are not receiving what we think you should be.

Students can make an application for means tested benefits if they fit the criteria above and most students can apply for help towards their medical costs via the HC1 form, which are available from the Advice Centre. In most cases you have to be considered a 'home' student in order to qualify. For medical assistance, you can request a HC1 form.

You may encounter issues when trying to claim benefits as a student. The regulations are constantly changing which can be confusing to both DWP staff and the student applying. Details including your income, accommodation, student status and partners wages all have an impact on benefit decisions. Make an appointment and we'll go through the benefits you may be entitled to and how to apply for them.





# Dealing with Your Debts

If you're having issues with debt while at university, contact us for an appointment to find out how we can help. The following sample letters will help you to negotiate with your creditors.



Dear Sir/Madam

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Since making the above agreement with you, my/our circumstances have changed.

I/We cannot now afford the agreed monthly payments because \_\_\_\_\_

I/We enclose a Personal Budget sheet which shows my/our total income from all sources and my/our total outgoings. As you can see I/we have only £\_\_\_\_\_ per month left for my creditors.

The offers I/we have made to my/our creditors have been worked out on a pro rata basis and I/we have written to all my/our creditors asking them to accept reduced payments.

In view of my/our circumstances, please would you agree to accept a reduced offer of £\_\_\_\_\_ per month. If interest or other charges are being added to the account I/ we would be grateful if you would freeze these so that all payments made will reduce what I/we owe you.

Should my/our circumstances improve I/we will contact you again.

I/we would be grateful if you would send a (paying-in book) (standing order form) to make it easier to pay you. Thank you for your assistance. I/We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours Faithfully

**Explain what the problems are, for example if you have lost your job, separated from your partner or had an unexpected increase in outgoings or a drop in income.**





**Use this example letter if you are making no offer of payment or token payments:**

Dear Sir/Madam

Account No. \_\_\_\_\_

Since making the above agreement with you, my/our circumstances have changed.

I/We cannot now afford the agreed monthly payments because

\_\_\_\_\_

I/We enclose a Personal Budget sheet, which shows my/our total income from all sources and the total outgoings of my/our household. As you can see, I/we have no money left to make offers of payment to my/our creditors.

In view of my/our circumstances, would you please accept (no payments at present) (a token offer of £2.00 per month) to be reviewed in six months. If interest or other charges are being added to the account, I/we would be grateful if you would freeze these so my/our debt does not increase.

Should my/our circumstances improve I/we will contact you again.

I/we would be grateful if you would send a (paying-in book) (standing order form) to make it easier to pay you.

Thank you for your assistance. I/We look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

**If a creditor doesn't accept your offer, or this leaflet doesn't cover the difficulties you are experiencing, or if you would just like some further information or assistance, don't worry. The Advice Centre can provide a wealth of help, from advising on budget sheets to your local CAB or Step Change can assist you further with debt negotiation.**



# International Students: Facing Financial Difficulties

Financially preparing for study abroad should be a focus for international students. For students requiring a visa or residence permit to study in the UK, this will be a condition of your visa/residence permit. Unfortunately, because of the above, if the financial difficulties could have been avoided, it is unlikely that there is anything the university can do for you. If you find yourself in a position of long-term financial difficulty and face a return home, the international Office will be able to advise you if you find yourself in this position.

Sometimes, however, you can find yourself in short-term financial difficulty because of unforeseen emergency costs or because of unexpected reduction in your funding. In these situations, there may be a range of options open to you through a variety of sources.

If you find yourself in this situation there are two things you should do:

- Contact us using the contact details below
- Speak to your Academic Support tutor about your situation, as your worries may be affecting your academic performance.

We are experienced in dealing with students with financial problems, although if you require a visa or residence permit to study we advise you to contact the Immigration Advisers. We can help you go through all your options to reduce your financial difficulties.

Email: [huu-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk](mailto:huu-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk)  
Phone: 01482 466263



## **What can the Adviser do?**

Before seeing an advisor, we would ask that you complete the budgeting sheet included with this leaflet to get an idea of the amount of support you might need. An Advisor will then explore a range of options with you including options to how to increase your income and reduce your costs.

### **1. Reduction of your expenditure**

If you have outstanding bills or tuition fees, we can put you in touch with the right people for help and ask for extra time for you to pay whilst we try and resolve your situation. We may look at offering alternatives to paying for goods, such as the short-term use of food parcels.

### **2. Increasing your income**

If your sponsors are not meeting their obligations, we may contact them for details of the problem and ask them to consider making interim payments. We may assist you in making an application to Educational Trusts and Charities for additional help, or direct you to the Job Shop to look for part time employment to help supplement your income (in accordance with visa limitations please seek advice from the International office).

### **Things an adviser cannot do.**

Neither the International Office or the Advice Centre holds funds for International students themselves. They don't offer loans to cover long term problems. It is also extremely difficult to obtain a fee waiver. Neither service is able to authorise such action, though we may look at requesting this from the department in very exceptional circumstances (normally only for final year students). We also can not authorise the registration of students who cannot meet the requirements to pay the 50% of their fees.

We will assist you as far as we can, but please understand that help may be limited.



### **Additional Information for Visa Nationals**

If you are a Visa or residence permit to study in the UK, it is a condition of your Visa that you are able to support yourself financially, for both tuition and maintenance costs, for the full duration of your course.

You must also be a registered student and studying on a full-time programme. Therefore, if you are experiencing financial problems, it will not be possible for you to study part time.

It is likely that your visa or residence permit will have a condition that means you do not have recourse to public funds. This means that you cannot claim most welfare benefits.

We strongly recommend that if you are struggling financially that you contact the Advice Centre for support.

International Office, Hull

Tel: 01482 462190

Email: [immigration@hull.ac.uk](mailto:immigration@hull.ac.uk)



## Budget Planner

	WEEKLY	MONTHLY
<b>STEP ONE - INCOME</b>		
Sponsorship/Bursary Maintenance loan		
Money from friends/family		
Wages/Salary		
Other Income		
Total Income (BOX A):		
<b>STEP TWO - EXPENDITURE</b>		
Rent/Accommodation Fees		
Food & Toiletries		
Gas		
Electricity		
Water Rates		
TV Rental/License		
Childcare Costs		
Clothing		
Laundry		
Telephone		
Medical Costs		
Study Costs		
Car Tax/Insurance		
Tuition Fees		
Other Expenditure		
Total Expenditure (BOX B):		
<b>STEP THREE -TOTAL</b>		
Total Income BOX A		
Take Away Total Expenditure BOX B		
<b>SHORTFALL</b>		



# Contacts

## **Advice Centre**

Visit us in Student Central Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri – 9.30 – 3pm and Weds 12-3pm. If you can't make these times please email the team on [huv-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk](mailto:huv-advice-centre@hull.ac.uk) or call us on 01482 466263 to arrange a more convenient time for you.

## **International Office, Hull**

Tel: 01482 466904

Email: [international@hull.ac.uk](mailto:international@hull.ac.uk)

## **Money Doctors**

Use the online budget calculator from the Money Doctors at [www.hullmoneydoctors.co.uk](http://www.hullmoneydoctors.co.uk)



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