

McNaughtan Bursaries

Award Use

Awards from the McNaughtan Bursary Fund are made to contribute to the costs of accommodation, travel, study and general living expenses, and can be awarded at the beginning of an academic year in anticipation of financial commitments or at a point during an academic session when an unexpected financial situation arises for an eligible student.

Where an ad-hoc application is made, awards will normally be made on the basis that the situation could result in the student not being able to carry on with their studies, if not resolved.

Eligibility Criteria:

To be eligible for consideration for an award, a candidate must be a student entering an undergraduate degree this academic session, and:

- Be a care leaver¹; or
- Be entering the University from an FE college; and
 - Have a household income of £24,000 gross per year or less (as calculated by the relevant student funding body to which the student has applied for support); or
- Be entering the University from a Scottish secondary school with a Higher Education progression rate of less than 25%²; and
 - Have a household income of £24,000 gross per year or less (as calculated by the relevant student funding body to which the student has applied for support); or

Applications and selection: Procedures and processes

Inviting applications

Care leavers will be identified with reference to existing data collected by the Recruitment and International Office and will be invited to apply. College leavers and students from low progression schools will be identified through data held by the Widening Access team and also invited to apply. Low progression schools will also be alerted to the availability of the scholarship.

Assessing applications

The application form will ask for basic personal and financial information to allow a general assessment of overall financial position and will invite students to complete a personal statement which explains in more detail their personal circumstances and how these have or will impact on their finances and ability to undertake their University course. Students will be asked to submit a Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance award letter. This will allow assessors to identify students whose household income falls below the required threshold. Where a student meets the basic criteria but is not in receipt of such an award, the Student Financial Support team will investigate the reasons for this and, if relevant, what other funding the student has secured. This will be reported to the panel.

¹ For the purposes of this document a care leaver is defined as a person aged 25 or under on the 1st of September in the year which they commence their programme of study at the University who has previously been cared for by a local authority via residential care, foster care, cared for by friends or relatives or cared for at home, for three months or longer at some point during their school education.

² RUK students who have this level of household income will already be eligible for an Access award from the University.

The Student Financial Support team will assess whether a student meets the basic eligibility criteria detailed above and present all eligible applications to the panel. The panel will consider the financial implications of a student's personal circumstances and how an award from the McNaughtan fund will assist the student in overcoming these difficulties or in alleviating a problem. They consider all applications from eligible students and give consideration to the following factors:

- previous, current or predicted financial hardship
- personal circumstances that may have exacerbated previous financial hardship or may continue to present challenges to the student
- access to personal and professional support networks
- availability of alternative sources of financial help

In allocating bursaries, the panel will consider the likely effectiveness of an award in alleviating hardship and assisting a student to remain in higher education.

Award Amounts and Payments

Awards of £1250 per student, per academic year will generally be made. However, in some circumstances and based on clearly demonstrated need, an award of a greater amount may be allocated.

Timing

Applications will be invited for a deadline in late September or early October and a panel convened shortly after this deadline to consider the applications.

Follow up applications

In the event that not all the awards for the current academic year are allocated in October, the Student Financial Support team will identify potential applicants in the course of their work with students in financial hardship in Semester 1 and present candidates to a reconvened panel in December.

Administration of the bursaries

Administration and record keeping for the bursary will be undertaken by Student Experience staff.

Panel

A McNaughtan Bursary Fund Panel will meet to consider all initial applications and to agree awards. The Panel membership will comprise:

- Deputy Director Student Experience and Enhancement Services
- Student Support and Wellbeing Manager (or deputy)
- Widening Access Manager (or deputy)
- Alumni & Development Team Development Officer
-

Where an ad-hoc application is made, and given that speed of decision and award making is likely to be important, it will not be necessary for the full Panel to meet and consider the application. As required in order to effectively support an eligible student, a minimum of two Panel members can consider and approve an award.

The initial meeting of the Panel in session 13/14 will take place in October 2013.

Award Responsibilities

Students who receive an award from the Fund will be required to provide a short written report at the end of each academic year in which they have been in receipt of an award, describing how they used the award and how it assisted them.

The Deputy Director Student Experience and Enhancement Services will be responsible for coordinating the gathering of these reports, and overall comment and feedback from students, and for collating this into an end of year report for the donor.

Application form

A draft application form is attached.