

Hardship Grants Procedure

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This procedure supports the University of Newcastle Scholarships and Student Benefits Scheme which gives practical expression to the University's longstanding commitment to access and equity.

Section 2 - Procedure

Administration and Management

(2) The Student Hardship Grants Scheme is administered by Student Central.

(3) The Student Loans and Grants Advisory Group (SLGAG) oversees and monitors both the Student Hardship Grants Schemes and the Student Loans Scheme.

(4) The SLGAG Group is advisory to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Vice President and meets on at least a quarterly basis to:

- a. monitor effective management of the Hardship Grants fund;
- b. monitor effective use of Hardship Grants; and
- c. recommend changes to policies/procedures as required.

Hardship Grant Monies

(5) Hardship Grant monies are accessed from the Student Equity Scholarships fund.

(6) The Advisory Group reviews the Hardship Grants allocation annually and recommends any changes for the following year.

Approved Purposes

(7) Hardship Grants are available to meet urgent needs which:

- a. the student, due to financial hardship, is not able to meet themselves and
- b. if not met, would place a student's continued study in jeopardy.

(8) Hardship Grants will be considered in preference to loans in situations where

- a. the applicant's studies will be negatively affected because of immediate and pressing financial need and
- b. due to ongoing financial hardship, the student is not able to demonstrate a clear capacity to repay or a history of meeting financial obligations.

(9) Hardship Grants may be allocated for such urgent needs as:

- a. accommodation costs;

- b. basic living costs - which may include medical costs;
- c. text books and course materials/equipment;
- d. practicum costs if relocating.

(10) In certain circumstances grants may be available for transport expenses (repairs, registration, insurance of vehicles) where the student:

- a. is not on a public transport route;
- b. is studying a program that requires off-campus travel; or
- c. can point to other extenuating circumstances.

Eligibility

(11) A student must:

- a. be enrolled at the University of Newcastle;
- b. be a full or part-time student at the undergraduate or postgraduate level;
- c. be an Australian Citizen or hold Permanent Residency Status;
- d. provide copies of bank statements, Centrelink Benefit payments and/or other evidence of financial disadvantage;
- e. provide a supporting statement attesting to the nature/level of the urgent financial need as well as the context of ongoing financial hardship in which this need has arisen.

(12) The student's academic record, attendance and progress in their program will be taken into consideration.

Hardship Grant Conditions

(13) The following conditions apply:

- a. hardship grant applications must be made to Student Equity and AccessAbility on the appropriate form;
- b. appropriate documentation (see Eligibility, clause 11 and 12)) must be supplied with the application;
- c. hardship grants can be granted up to a maximum of \$2,000;
- d. under exceptional circumstances larger amounts can be considered if recommended by the Associate Director, Student Wellbeing and approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

Exceptional Circumstances

(14) Exceptional circumstances such as family circumstances, illness or accident may be considered by the Associate Director, Student Wellbeing on recommendation from Student Equity and AccessAbility or Wellbeing Officer, and recommended to the Advisory Group.

(15) In such instances, the Advisory Group may seek approval from the Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Experience and Academic Registrar.

Delegations

(16) Grant approvals will comply with the Delegations Schedule in the Delegation of Authority.

Review of Hardship Grant Fund

(17) All hardship grants awarded will be monitored at the quarterly meetings of the Advisory Committee.

(18) In addition, the Manager, Transactional Services will arrange for a financial report to be produced at each month end, detailing amounts awarded as hardship grants.

(19) This report will be given to the Health and Welfare Coordinator and the Commercial Manager, Financial Services.

(20) The Health and Welfare Coordinator and the Wellbeing Advisors will monitor the Hardship Grant Fund on an ongoing basis with the help of the monthly financial reports to ensure that grants are not advanced for more than the annual budgetary allocation.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	12th March 2007
Review Date	31st December 2019
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	12th March 2007
Expiry Date	30th November 2022
Responsible Executive	Belinda Tynan Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Enquiries Contact	Scott Laing Associate Director, Student Wellbeing <hr/> Student and Academic Administration

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Vehicle" - Has the same meaning as section 4 of the Road Transport Act 2013.

"Applicant" - Where referring to a student, an applicant is an individual seeking entry to a program or course offered by the University or its partner organisation/s. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Campus" - means any place or premises owned or controlled by the University, but may also specifically refer to a designated operating location such as the Callaghan Campus.

"Course" - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Financial hardship" - An inability to meet basic living needs.

"Postgraduate" - Any qualification being at the level of Graduate Certificate or above.

"Program" - When referring to learning, a program is a sequence of approved learning, usually leading to an Award. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Undergraduate" - Refers to any qualification up to and including the level of a Bachelor Honours degree.