

STUDENT TRUST FUND REPORT 2021

University of
Hertfordshire **UH**

The University of Hertfordshire is fortunate to receive ongoing generous support from donors such as yourself towards the University Student Trust Fund.

These donations make an enormous difference to those students who need it most, ensuring that financial worries are not a barrier to them continuing their studies and that they are not precluded from opportunities.

Helping students in hardship is one way that we can fulfil our promise of 'powering potential' and helping to transform lives - but we cannot do this without your help.

Throughout the whole of the last year, the constant changes brought about by the pandemic have of course continued to have an impact on students financially. The support we were able to give to our students from this Fund was therefore more important than ever. We were also able to continue to provide additional funds from an emergency Covid-19 Student Relief Fund, which many of our donors supported.

Thank you so much for your continuing support of the University and its students. Below is a summary of the impact of your donation.

In 2021, the University Student Trust Fund supported:

- The University Financial Assistance Fund
- The Covid-19 Student Relief Fund
- Student Research

Our sincere thanks to everyone who has helped support our students through this difficult time.

If you have any questions, please contact



Hollie Rendall, Head of Development
h.rendall@herts.ac.uk

£1.5m

awarded from the Covid-19 Student Relief Fund

£822

average University Financial Assistance Fund grant

131

University Financial Assistance Fund grants

“ I am very grateful for the contribution made in support of my education.... I have gained Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Points, accredited by The Faculty of Pharmaceutical Medicine of the Royal College of Physicians of the United Kingdom. ”

University Student Trust Fund recipient

The University Financial Assistance Fund

The University Financial Assistance Fund provides grants for students facing real financial hardship which, without help, could force them to withdraw from their studies. In addition to direct financial support, advice and mentoring is given to all applicants regarding financial management and budgeting, with individuals required to complete online training modules prior to their application being assessed.

Whilst the Financial Assistance Fund aims to help all eligible students with an unexpected financial need, it is not always able to provide support for everyone that applies. The University's professional guidelines give priority to certain groups of students when deciding how to allocate the fund.

Each year, the University receives applications from a wide range of students, including mature students many of whom have dependants, as well as single students endeavouring to complete their degrees in challenging circumstances.

In 2020/21, a total of 131 grants were given directly to students; 40 of these were student with dependants, and 71 were final year students. The average grant awarded was £821.93.

The positive impact of the funding is expressed by one of our students, who wrote: "Thank you for sorting this funding out - it's very much appreciated as I have been so stressed lately."

The figure represents a drop from last year; this is due to the much larger pot of funding that became available through the Covid-19 Student Relief Fund, more about which is detailed below.

The Covid-19 Student Relief Fund

Throughout the course of the 2020/21 academic year, the Covid-19 Student Relief Fund continued to disburse funding to both home and international students. In total, nearly £1.5 million has been awarded to thousands of our students through the pandemic, with funding provided from the Office for Students, corporate partners such as Santander Universities, the University's own funds, as well as through the University Student Trust Fund.

A full evaluation took place of the students who received the bursaries, which identified the key challenges faced by these individuals. Students indicated their need to work in order to support themselves whilst studying; the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality sector has been a major factor in the drop of part-time work

availability. Many students who might have expected some financial support from family found that those family members were furloughed or unemployed and could not provide any help. In many cases, not only was this income needed to support themselves, but many students have further caring responsibilities for their family or for children.

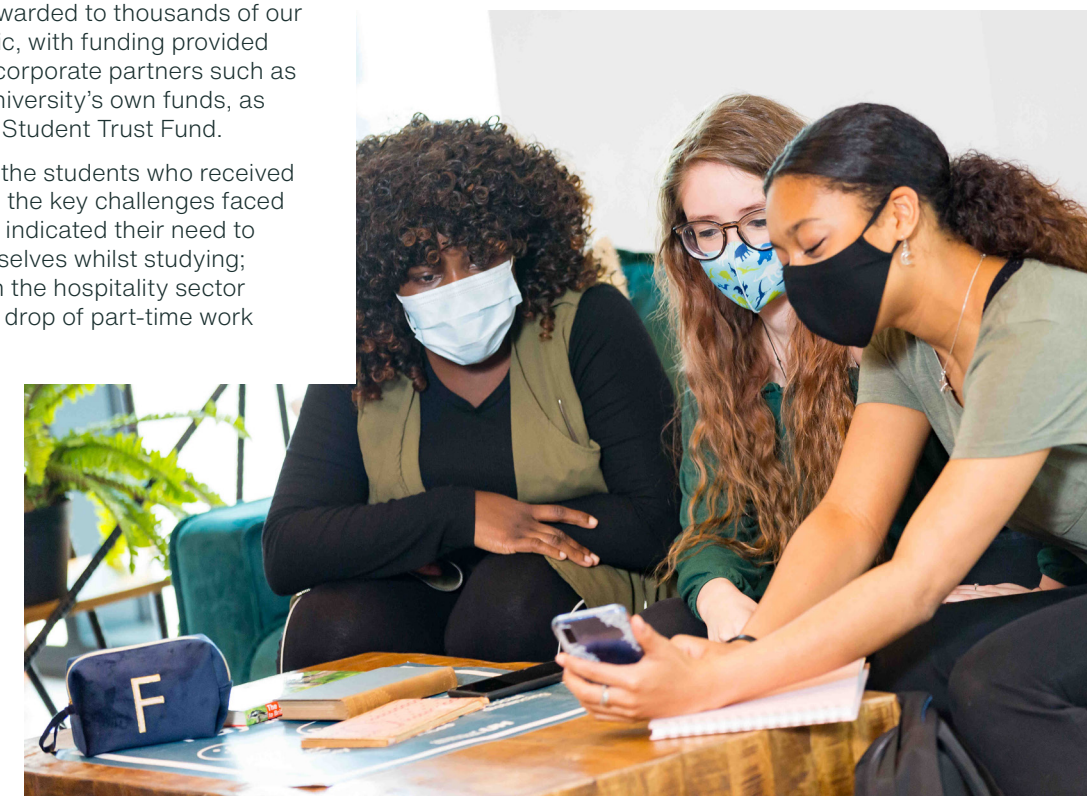
The funding was distributed during the year in a phased way to try to reach as many students as possible. The funding particularly helped many of our international students, who often had even fewer options available to them than home students when it came to practical support. We also saw a high number of post-graduate students applying for and being granted funding through this time. One round of funding was a rent rebate to compensate for the time that many of our students spent away from their accommodation.

Student Research

As part of the University's Doctoral College support, donations to the University Student Trust Fund were used to provide funding for our postgraduate research students to enable conference attendance. For obvious reasons, physical conference attendance was significantly down in this period; however there were students who were able to use this funding.




“ In addition to showcasing my own research within a cohort of likeminded and interested colleagues, the conference provided the opportunity to meet new, and catch up with existing, colleagues within the field of gerontology. ”

University Student Trust Fund recipient and British Society of Gerontology conference attendee



University of Hertfordshire
Hatfield, UK
AL10 9AB

+44 (0)1707 284000
herts.ac.uk

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