

UNIVERSITY STUDENT TRUST FUND REPORT 2022

The University of Hertfordshire is very grateful for the ongoing generous support from donors such as yourself towards the University Student Trust Fund.

These donations really do make a difference to those students who need it most, helping to remove financial worries that can become a barrier to them continuing their studies.

Helping students in hardship is intrinsic to fulfilling our promise of 'powering potential' and helping to transform lives - but this is not possible without your help.

The primary source of concern for students over the last academic year is the cost of living crisis. As we all know, prices are rising significantly, which is having a direct impact on students whose maintenance grants have not increased and is causing significant financial stress. The support we are able to give to our students from this Fund is therefore more important than ever. Thank you so much for your continuing support of the University and its students. Below is a summary of the impact of donations from the Herts community in the last academic year.

In 2022, the University Student Trust Fund supported:

- The University Financial Assistance 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:



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220

**students helped in
2021-22 through UFAF**

£300k

worth of support

95%

**of applicants are
full time students**

“ I have been able to clear my rent arrears that have been building up and making me feel unwell from stress and worry. This has also helped me as a single parent to pay for food shopping and things my daughter needs. It has taken a lot of stress off my shoulders and I am so grateful. **”**

University Student Trust Fund recipient

“ This fund has been such great help to me. Being on placement and not being able to work, I had no option but to apply for this funding. I got accepted and it has helped me tremendously. Thank you to the team involved. I think this fund is amazing and will help other students who find themselves in financial difficulties. **”**

University Student Trust Fund recipient

The University Financial Assistance Fund

The University Financial Assistance Fund (UFAF) 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. 64% of students cited that the cost of living was the reason for their application, and 16% said they had applied as they were in debt.

In 2021-22, we helped 220 students through UFAF, providing almost £300,000 worth of support. 81.7% of students applying to the fund were undergraduate students, with 36% of those being in their first year, 32% in their second and 24% in their final year. The vast majority of students applying (95%) are full time students. 72% of our student applicants were living in private accommodation, and 25% were living in university halls. 3% of applicants were in temporary accommodation or were homeless at the time of their application.

We are generally seeing an upward trend in applications to UFAF. During the 20/21 covid period applications were lower, due to a separate Covid fund being set up to support students through this period. As a result, fewer applied to UFAF.

During the 21/22 period, the Student Finance team worked to increase exposure of UFAF. This seemed to drive up the number of applicants, particularly during the summer months. This significant increase may also have been due to the cost-of-living crisis.

Student Research

As part of the University's Doctoral College support, donations to the University Student Trust Fund were also used to provide funding for our postgraduate research students to enable conference attendance. The majority of conferences are now running physically, so we are expecting more uptake in the coming year. Some of the feedback provided by students who benefitted from the funding is below.

Brain Tumour Conference 2022, Organised by Cancer Research UK – September 2022

“Attending the conference provided me with the chance to meet leading scientists in the field of brain cancer research and learn about the most recent and updated approaches implemented in combating the terrifying nature of brain tumours.”

Charting the Metallicity Evolution History of the Universe – September 2022

“This conference was a great opportunity to participate in discussions with researchers and experts in chemical enrichment and to share results and views during the coffee breaks and the conference dinner. It was the ideal opportunity to meet many academics and professionals from different countries who have similar research interests.”




Translational Immunometabolism conference, University Hospital Basel – June 2022

“This was a thoroughly interesting experience and one that I am grateful to have had the opportunity to attend and possibly look forward to again in the future.”

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