



Please pay particular attention to the following:

- Please note the term time deadline of 4.30pm on Friday 1 June 2012.
- Do not wait until the end of the academic year before applying to ALF - if the budget has been exhausted your application will be unsuccessful.
- Students applying **only** for the cost of a diagnostic assessment should contact the university's Disabled Student Centre in the first instance. If you also want to apply for an ALF award you will need to complete the ALF application form as well.
- Eligible part-time students must have applied for the fees and course grants. Contact the Information Centre for further details.
- Your application form will be returned to you if you have not completed all relevant sections and/or you have not included photocopies of all the necessary documentation. Documents have to remain on file for auditing purposes. Photocopying is the responsibility of the applicant
- Your form must be signed by you, the Student Advice Centre and your tutor
- The full Notes of Guidance can be downloaded at www.staffs.ac.uk/askalf

Application forms are available from the Information Centres and the Students' Union Advice Centres and can be downloaded at www.staffs.ac.uk/askalf

Important contact information

Student Finance - Access to Learning Fund

t: 01782 294510
e: askalf@staffs.ac.uk
www.staffs.ac.uk/askalf

Information Centres

Stafford Campus

Beacon Building t: 01785 353400

Stoke Campus

Flaxman Building t: 01782 295705

Opening Hours

Monday - Thursday 8.30am to 5.00pm
Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

e: information-centre@staffs.ac.uk

Or visit the Information Centre Website
www.staffs.ac.uk/information_centre

Students' Union - Student Advice Centre (SAC)

Stoke campus t: 01782 294469
Stafford campus t: 01785 353311
www.staffsunion.com/advice

Money Doctors - part of the SAC

Stoke campus t: 01782 294469
www.staffsunion.com/moneydoctors

Student Enabling Centre

Stoke campus t: 01782 294977
Stafford campus t: 01785 353302
www.disability@staffs.ac.uk

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Access to Learning Fund

2011-12

Financial assistance

Part time Undergraduate students

**Term-time deadline -
4.30 pm Friday 1 June 2012**



■ CREATE THE DIFFERENCE

What is the Access to Learning Fund?

Part-time students must be studying a minimum of 50% of a full-time course (usually 60 credits) **throughout the academic year**. Primarily the fund, which is in excess of half a million pounds, is to help part-time students with course related costs such as childcare and travel and only in exceptional cases will awards be made for living costs. You can apply to the Fund at any point throughout the academic year as long as funds are available. Any help you receive from the Fund is usually non repayable.

Priority groups

Part-time undergraduate students

- who are on a low income
- have dependent children
- who are in receipt of the full fees and course grants
- who are disabled

Assessment process

Standard assessments will look at the difference between accepted **reasonable** expenditure and **expected** income to see if there is a need for additional financial help. **Non-standard** assessments will look at exceptional, unforeseen circumstances.

Summer Applications

We would not expect part-time students to apply for a summer vacation award unless there had been severe unforeseen circumstances.

Timetable for making a decision

Applications that are fully completed and have all of the relevant documents attached will usually be assessed within twenty working days of submission.

However, applications that have missing signatures or evidence may be put to one side during busy periods until there is sufficient time to chase the student for the missing information. The twenty working days service standard would not apply in these cases.

Payments to students

Awards are usually split into instalments and will be available from the Information Centre on the Stoke or Stafford campus. Third party payments can only be made at the student's request. However, where a non-standard award has been made for a specific purpose such as an overdue priority debt, we would expect to raise a cheque made payable directly to the creditor.

Disabled students

Please complete the 'fast track' application form if you require help to meet the cost of a diagnostic assessment only ie a Dyslexia test. Please contact the university's Student Enabling Centre for more details. (See over for telephone numbers).

Students' Union Advice Centre (SAC)

Attendance at an SAC ALF workshop is a compulsory part of the application process. Times and dates are listed in the ALF Application Pack. However, part-time students whose work or caring responsibilities prevent their attendance at a scheduled workshop should contact the SAC to make alternative arrangements. (See over for telephone numbers).

Taster Modules

'Home' and EU students undertaking a **taster module** may be eligible for a fee waiver and a small grant towards course and travel costs if :

- they are studying on a recognised 'taster module' which is between 10% and 50% of a full-time equivalent course
- the course lasts for no more than one term or semester whichever is the longer
- they have little or no previous experience of higher education

Your tutor will be able to advise you if your course meets the above criteria.

Help with tuition fees

There is now a package of support for part-time undergraduate students. This includes a grant of up to £1230.00 to help with tuition fees and a grant of £265.00 to help meet the cost of books, travel etc. The maximum amount of fee support you can receive will be linked to how much study you undertake throughout the year. All students studying the equivalent of at least 50% of a full time course, i.e; not less than 60 credits, are eligible to apply. Entitlement to the grants will depend on your income, and that of your husband, wife or partner. You will not have to repay the grants.

The university cannot waive fees for students on low incomes if they choose not to apply for this support.

Students whose fees are higher than the maximum fees grant may also be eligible for support. Please contact the Information Centre.

Regrettably if you are taking less than 50% of a full time course, you will not be eligible to apply for support.

However, students studying less than 50% and are in receipt of one or more of the following benefits will normally be given full remission of tuition fees by the university.

- Income Support
- Job Seekers' Allowance
- Housing Benefit/Local Housing Allowance
- Long Term Incapacity Benefit
- Council Tax Benefit
- Gross Income of less than £16,845 or £18,845 if you have a spouse/partner. These thresholds increase if you have dependent children.
- State Retirement Pension
- State Widows Pension

Fee remission will be conditional on the University receiving appropriate documentary evidence. Please note that all students are required to pay any registration fees or residential charges associated with their chosen course.

Please contact the Information Centre on 01785 353337 for more information about fee remission for students studying less than 50% of a course.