

# Wolfson College

## General Financial Assistance Fund

### 2023-2024

The General Financial Assistance Fund is a discretionary fund intended to provide short-term financial assistance for students experiencing unexpected and unforeseeable financial difficulties. Please ensure you have read the information below before making an application.

#### How to apply

Please complete the online application form, [here](#). Please note that whilst you are not required to provide any supporting evidence as part of your application, the assessment panel may request this if it is necessary. If you would like to provide any supporting evidence you are welcome to do so within the online form, and your application will be strengthened by any evidence you can attach to verify your unexpected and unforeseen circumstances.

#### How will my application be assessed?

Applications are reviewed by a panel consisting of at least three of the following: the Senior Tutor (and Dean of Welfare), the Academic Registrar, the Student Support and Engagement Officer, and the College Accountant.

Applications will normally be considered on a monthly basis. If your situation requires a more urgent response then please inform the Academic Registrar ([academic.registrar@wolfson.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.registrar@wolfson.ox.ac.uk)) when you submit your online application. It may be possible to review your application earlier or to consider whether some temporary, emergency financial assistance could be provided in the interim.

There are also University Financial Assistance Funds to which you may be eligible to apply for.<sup>1</sup> If you are eligible then the College will ask you to make an application to the Oxford Financial Assistance Fund in addition to any application to the College. Please contact the Academic Registrar for information and forms at [academic.registrar@wolfson.ox.ac.uk](mailto:academic.registrar@wolfson.ox.ac.uk).

Those who wish to appeal the outcome of their application must submit a written appeal to the Bursar within 14 days of the decision notification email by emailing [bursars.office@wolfson.ox.ac.uk](mailto:bursars.office@wolfson.ox.ac.uk).

#### What level of support is available?

Grants from this fund are usually in the region of £200 - £1,000 and do not normally exceed £1,500.

We regret that students whose financial situation appears unsustainable (i.e. the situation cannot be resolved with the level of financial assistance support available) are unlikely to be eligible for financial assistance. If you are having serious long-term financial difficulties and are not eligible for financial assistance support, you may need to consider a suspension of studies. If you think you are in this situation then you should speak to your college adviser, the Academic Registrar, the Senior Tutor, or your supervisor for advice on what to do next.

#### Important information regarding eligibility

The General Financial Assistance Fund is a limited fund to assist enrolled Wolfson College students who are experiencing **unexpected** financial difficulties which they could not realistically have anticipated or planned for. Whilst the College is sympathetic to the financial constraints and challenges that many students experience from time to time, this fund is only able to provide short-term help in exceptional circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/assistance/oxford>

We expect students who are applying for financial assistance to have first assessed whether savings can realistically be made in other aspects of their lives prior to making an application. The University's [expected living costs](#) should normally be adhered to (noting that the table is for students without dependents living in Oxford, so students not in that situation will be expected to have a reasonable expenditure befitting their circumstances). If your expenditure exceeds the estimated costs listed in the table, you should ensure you explain the reason for this.

In the current economic climate, we understand that managing money on a tight budget can be even more difficult. If you haven't already done so, you may wish to review tips, apps, and other resources to help you manage your finances. This may be a good starting point: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding/assistance/managing-finances>.

The following guidance offers further information on the type of circumstances that would **not** usually be considered to be unexpected or unforeseeable:

- Research students whose funding has run out before they are ready to submit their thesis. Students are expected to have made appropriate provision to fund the duration of their studies in advance and to be making academic progress in accordance with expectations. The College may use its discretion in cases where research has been disrupted for reasons beyond a student's control.
- Students who have been affected by fluctuations in exchange rates.
- Students who are unable to obtain paid employment unless a contract was in place prior to their studies.
- Students who require assistance with childcare costs, where this has not been taken into account at the start of their studies.
- Students who need assistance in repaying debts which were in existence prior to start of their course.
- Assistance will not normally be given to support maternity or paternity leave for children born whilst a student is on course, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Students who are requesting funding to replace damaged or stolen belongings will be expected to report losses to the police and to make any insurance claims before applying to the General Financial Assistance Fund. Students are expected to have insured belongings both within and away from the home including items such as laptops and mobile phones. Please note that, if exceptionally an award is made to fund repair or replacement costs these are likely to be capped, and are unlikely to cover a like-for-like replacement.
- Assistance for costs associated with supporting family members.
- Assistance with medical or dental costs
- Students whose family or sponsors have withdrawn their support unless there are exceptional circumstances.

To be awarded a financial assistance loan or grant students must be enrolled and be in good academic standing. Doctoral students who have submitted their thesis and students undertaking a course of 12 months or less are **not** eligible for a financial assistance grant, although applications for a loan may be considered. All applications are considered on a case by case basis. Students will not normally be eligible for more than one grant or loan from this fund. Exceptionally, a further award may be made, but the fund is not able to provide long-term recurrent support for students.