

London Metropolitan University

Policy for International Students in Exceptional Circumstances of Financial Hardship

22 October 2013

Introduction

The University is committed to providing students with a positive and supportive learning experience. We recognize that our international students sometimes experience significant and profound difficulties in their personal lives that can affect their ability to study and to complete their courses. The University has a number of policies that address such situations, relating to academic assessment and progression. This policy deals only with students facing serious financial problems arising directly out of an exceptional event, such as war or civil unrest in their native country, or the death of a family member who was providing financial support.

The University has only limited funds available for use in such circumstances (from the Lord Limerick Fund) and normally provides only modest sums to students (ie up to £500). Once the University's discretionary funds are exhausted, further applications for support may not be able to be considered.

Eligibility

In order to be eligible for consideration for support, the student must be :

- a) An international student
- b) Normally, in their final year of study
- c) Enrolled on a full-time programme
- d) Of good academic standing

The student must also demonstrate that:

- e) They have the support of their Faculty (ie their Personal Academic Tutor, endorsed by the Dean)
- f) They have maximized their income and support from all other available sources
- g) They have made appropriate plans to finance their studies up to the point of completion and only now that they find themselves in financial difficulty due to these exceptional circumstances
- h) They have made efforts to reduce their social expenditure to cope with their reduced income
- i) Provide documentary evidence, where possible and appropriate, to support their request

Process

Appeals for financial support must be put in writing to the University Secretary who will make a judgment, in consultation with the Students' Union President, in his/her absolute discretion as to the eligibility of the student for support.

The University Secretary may determine, as appropriate, what financial support the student may receive, which may be, among other things:

- j) A waiver of their outstanding fees
- k) A waiver of any existing University debts (ie library fees or fines)
- l) Cash support (usually to a maximum of £250)
- m) Payments of visa costs or return travel to the student's home

Appeal

If the student is not happy with the decision of the University Secretary, they may appeal in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will consider whether or not the University Secretary has applied the criteria fairly and has reached a reasonable judgement in all the circumstances.

The decision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor is final. The student may complain about the decision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. However, it should be noted that, at the time of this policy being produced, OIA complaints were taking up to six months to be actioned.