



POINT BLANK

MUSIC SCHOOL

POLICY 061

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FUND POLICY

DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX

SCOPE						
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School	London	X		Online		
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	Student Access			X		
	Public Access via Website			X		

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline Point Blank's approach to the eligibility for and allocation of emergency financial assistance funding.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to prevent a student's academic success and progression being impacted by an unexpected change in their financial circumstances.
- 1.3 This policy can be applied as a vehicle for intervention at all stages of Point Blank's Student Risk Intervention Framework.
- 1.4 This policy was formerly known as the Hardship Policy.

2. POLICY DETAILS

The Funds

- 2.1 Point Blank offers financial assistance support to students via two funds:
 - the Access and Participation Hardship Fund; and
 - the Point Blank Hardship Fund.
- 2.2 From time to time, new funds may be introduced via initiatives from Point Blank, the government, or the Office for Students, in response to national or global requirements. These will be offered with their own defined eligibility criteria and guidance will be provided should this be the case.
- 2.3 The financial assistance funds will normally be used:
 - To intervene in cases where a student may be forced to consider withdrawing from their programme of study due to financial hardship; and/or
 - To provide emergency support in response to an unexpected crisis; and/or
 - To assist those who need financial help to meet particular costs which are not already being met from statutory (or other) sources of funding. This includes funding for a diagnostic assessment by the Disability service (e.g. dyslexia assessment); and/ or
 - To support disadvantaged students in obtaining specific software and hardware required to engage with their course.

Application

- 2.4 Students are required to apply for financial assistance funding using the relevant form available from the Student Support team.
- 2.5 Completed application forms should be submitted to the Student Support team at support@pointblankmusicschool.com along with three month's bank statements for all bank accounts and any other supplementary documentation the student feels is relevant (e.g. a letter from their landlord detailing notice to terminate a tenancy agreement).

- 2.6 Students must also provide a breakdown of the requested amount that illustrates how the funds intend to be spent.
- 2.7 Only forms completed in their entirety and submitted with the full documentation as per item 2.5 and 2.6 of this policy will normally be considered.

Eligibility

Point Blank Hardship Fund

- 2.8 To be eligible to apply for support via the Point Blank hardship fund, a student should normally be:
- Fully registered and enrolled Higher Education course at Point Blank London;
 - Studying full-time, on campus;
 - Not be in arrears with their tuition fee payments, without an up-to-date, agreed payment plan;
 - If undergraduate and assessed as home for the purpose of fees, have taken out the full means-tested student loan and grant entitlement (based on household income) and be in receipt of the first instalment;
 - Must have adhered to the Student Charter throughout their time at Point Blank.
- 2.9 Students on distance education programmes via Point Blank online, international students and students on professional courses are not eligible for the financial assistance fund.
- 2.10 Applicants and individuals not yet enrolled onto a full-time, Point Blank programme at the London campus are not eligible for the financial assistance fund.
- 2.11 If the first instalment of a student's maintenance loan is delayed, a financial assistance funding application will normally be considered.
- 2.12 If maintenance funding has not been means-tested, the expectation is that they apply to their funding authority for means-testing first. A student in this circumstance will normally be considered for a smaller financial assistance award to support them in the interim.
- 2.13 If a student has elected not to take their full means-tested entitlement, the expectation is that they apply to their funding authority first. A student in this circumstance will normally be considered for a smaller financial assistance award to support them in the interim.

Access and Participation Hardship Fund

- 2.14 Eligibility for support via the Access and Participation hardship fund is outlined in Point Blank's Access and Participation Plan and may be updated when a new plan is implemented, as per its review cycle.

Assessment

- 2.15 Applications are assessed at face value, based on the information presented in the student's application.

- 2.16 Students are reminded that there are limited funds available, and Point Blank must allocate funds to those applicants considered to be the most in need. This is assessed by considering all aspects of the circumstances outlined in their application.
- 2.17 Should a student be found to have used misleading information or falsified any information in any way, or otherwise sought to misrepresent their circumstances, disciplinary action may be taken. Students must be aware that an act such as this may undermine their academic integrity and as such may incur other penalty in relation to this.

Outcomes

- 2.18 Students are not required to identify the fund for which they are applying, as this will be assigned, along with the outcome, by the Financial Assistance Panel.
- 2.19 All financial assistance applications are considered by the Financial Assistance Fund Panel who:
- Review the application and supporting documentation in line with this policy;
 - Consider the student's spending habits and establish whether any support in budgeting is required;
 - Make a decision on the outcome.
- 2.20 Examples of potential upheld outcomes are:
- The full requested amount being awarded in cash;
 - The full requested amount being awarded in vouchers or, in the case of software requests or rent payments, paid directly to the company or landlord, respectively;
 - An alternative amount being awarded with conditions of where it must be spent.
- 2.21 Where additional financial assistance funds are provided by external bodies (e.g. the OfS), eligibility criteria and potential outcomes that differ from those outlined in this policy, and are dependent on the conditions stipulated by the fund provider. In these cases, students will be advised of the correct eligibility criteria and other relevant conditions.
- 2.22 In some cases, as student may be required to attend a budgeting meeting before being awarded the full amount.
- 2.23 All decisions are final and there is no right to appeal, however students are permitted to reapply at a later point.
- 2.24 Students making continuous applications for the financial assistance fund may be referred to the Fitness to Study procedure if significant concern for their welfare arises as a result.

3. POLICY SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to UK domestic students studying full-time on Higher Education programmes at Point Blank London.
- 3.2 Students on professional courses are not eligible for financial assistance support as outlined in this policy.

4. RELATED POLICIES

- 4.1 Other Point Blank policies that relate to this policy are as follows:
- Safeguarding Policy;
 - Student Fees Policy;
 - Undergraduate Terms and Conditions;
 - Fitness to Study Policy;
 - Student Charter.

5. POLICY OWNER

- 5.1 This policy is under the responsibility of the Student Engagement and Experience Committee. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this policy is carried out in line with Point Blank's Quality Assurance Framework.
- 5.2 The Student Engagement and Experience Committee delegates the operational responsibility of this policy to the following staff:
- General Manager;
 - Registrar;
 - Designated Safeguarding Lead;
 - Student Support Officer.

6. PROCEDURES

- 6.1 The relevant procedure to accompany this policy is titled Procedure 016 – Hardship Assessment Procedure and can be found at www.pointblankmusicschool.com/legal/public-policies/.

7. EXHIBITS, APPENDICES AND FORMS

- 7.1 Please contact support@pointblankmusicschool.com for further information and to obtain a copy of the Financial Assistance Funding Application Form.

8. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 8.1 Internal
- Access and Participation Plan;

- Student Experience Strategy.

8.2 External

There are no external references to this policy.

9. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Version: 1

Approved on: 07 June 2023

Approved by: Quality and Standards Committee

Date of Next Review: August 2024