Step-by-Step Guide to OUSET Application

Please read these notes carefully before completing your application form.

**SECTION 1 – PERSONAL DETAILS**

The Trust (also referred as ‘OUSET) require you to complete your personal details in Section 1. This information is for internal purposes only. This enables OUSET staff to allocate a case number to you as well as contact you should we require further information. We will also use the ‘OU Personal Identifier’ when requesting supplementary information from the Open University such as a letter of support from your Student Support Team to accompany your application.

Please ensure the details you enter in this section are correct. We mainly communicate with applicants using the provided email address but may call should we require any further details urgently.

**SECTION 2- STUDY DETAILS**

Within the next section of the application form you are required to enter the details of the module(s) you plan to study and the qualification you are studying towards. You can find this information on either your student home page or by searching for your module/qualification on the main Open University website.

Your qualification will show on your student home page. If your module is not displayed this would mean that you have not reserved your place on the module(s). OUSET will only consider an application when a reservation is in place. Please reserve your module(s) online or by calling the Open University Student Registration Team on 0300 303 5303.

Finally, in this section we ask you to tell us of any other academic qualification(s) you have achieved, where this was studied and the date it was obtained. If you are planning to study a postgraduate module, we need to know the undergraduate qualification that you have successfully completed.

Please be aware your previous study does determine whether you are eligible for OUSET consideration. OUSET will not accept any application from those who already have an Equivalent or Lower Qualification (ELQ) degree whose degree is less than 10 years old unless under exceptional circumstances. OUSET will only consider postgraduate study for students who are graduates of The Open University and who will normally have completed their first (Bachelor’s) degree within the last 5 years.

**SECTION 3 – DETAILS OF REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

This next section asks you to specify the details of the assistance you are requesting.

If you are applying for support towards module fees, then please ensure the cost is entered correctly. Module fees vary depending on your residency. The correct module fee will be displayed on your student home page or the main Open University website. If you do not think the fee shown here is correct, please contact Student Registration. They will perform a residency check to determine the correct figure.

If you are applying for financial help towards travel costs, then a full breakdown of the amount required must be included in your application. We will need to know the event, date, location, the method of transport and an estimate of the travel cost. If there are multiple events you are planning to attend, please list them all here. Due to limited funds being available to the Trust if an online alternative is available then funding will not be considered, unless under exceptional circumstances.

If you are applying for any additional study related expenses, please add the details next to the ‘Other financial assistance’ box. List here any equipment or study materials you will need. Equipment, such as a laptop, will not be considered if you are in the first or final module of your qualification. To prevent any delays please provide a link or details of where the item(s) can be found. We will try to source the same item but due to limited resources an alternative device might be awarded if your application is successful.

The second half of Section 3 asks you to give information regarding other funding sources you have approached prior to contacting OUSET. An OUSET applicant must make enquiries about all funding methods and only apply to OUSET as a last resort. If you are unaware of the various options that could be suitable for you, please speak with the Student Registration team at the Open University. Once done, and you have been informed that they are not appropriate, then please enter in this section the funding options approached and reason why you would be rejected.

Finally, we ask for details specifically about the reason a Student Loan, or other national funding source is unavailable to you. OUSET will not consider an application from any undergraduate or postgraduate student who is eligible for a loan from the Student Loans Company, or any National funding sources outside of England and has chosen not to take this option or is currently in receipt of a student loan.

**SECTION 4 – STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF APPLICATION**

This section asks you to provide a statement on the reasons you are approaching OUSET for support.

This is your opportunity to communicate directly with to the Trustees that will be considering your case. We would like you to elaborate here as to the reason you are applying, how far into your qualification you are, your success so far, to comment on your intentions post the completion of your qualification and how achieving this will help you moving forward. Here we also ask you to provide more context on your financial situation. OUSET will only consider applications from those in financial hardship who have no other alternative available to them. Any information you can give to provide further insight into your circumstances will be beneficial to your case.

**SECTION 5 – FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**

This section asks applicants to provide financial documentation to support your application. We ask that you tick each box ensuring that the requested evidence is provided.

Your application must be accompanied by documentary evidence of your current income and expenditure, including the three most recent consecutive months’ bank statements for every account held in your sole or joint name. This includes savings accounts and ‘unused’ accounts with very low balances. The Trust reserves the right to request additional household financial information to support applications.

It is essential that you provide full and documented details of your total monthly income as well as your total monthly expenditure and commitments in the Financial Disclosure section of the application form. The Trustees will assess your level of financial hardship having regard to disposable income. You should further note that if you simply state ‘loan repayment’ or ‘credit cards’ without giving any further explanation, the Trustees will regard such amounts as disposable income.

If the financial documents you have are not written in English, we ask that translations or fully annotated versions are submitted.

Failure to supply the requested evidence, completion of the Financial Disclosure table or untranslated documents will result in a delay or a rejection of your application and your documents will be returned to you. To ensure your case is processed quickly, and without delay, please ensure all necessary evidence is submitted to OUSET in the first instance.

**SECTION 6 – CHECKLIST**

Before submitting your application to the Trust, we ask that you look through the checklist as any item missing from the list will result in your application being returned as incomplete or delayed.

**SECTION 7 – DATA PROTECTION**

An important part of our operations (processing your application is to keep your personal data safe. Our OUSET Team understands the importance of keeping the data secure. We implement appropriate security measures to ensure that we process your personal data in accordance with the current Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

**SECTION 8 – DECLARATION**

This section of the application is very important, without your authorisation to contact other agencies we will not be able to process your application. Please review this section carefully before submitting your application to OUSET.