

The Overstrand Learning Hub NPC Financial Aid Policy – Version 2, 3 March 2022

1. Background and Rationale

The Overstrand Learning Hub (OLH) offers learning support to students enrolled for academic programmes at South African accredited Academic Providers (AP) such as STADIO University. An applicant will register as a student with the applicable AP and will be responsible for the registration and tuition fees of that AP. The candidate will also register with OLH in order to access the learning support offered by OLH and will also be responsible for a small fee charged for the services provided by OLH.

OLH strives to support candidates from within the Overstrand region who will be able to plough back their newly obtained education into the local communities. It is envisaged that candidates recruited will comprise of both full fee-paying individuals as well as deserving individuals in urgent financial need. HVT will grant financial aid to such needy individuals as far as possible within the limits of its available funding.

2. Criteria for Financial Aid

After provisional acceptance by the applicable AP, an applicant may apply for Learner Support and Financial Aid from OLH. Applications will be assessed considering academic merit and financial means as well as any relevant aspect of an applicant's personal profile such as mature age and career orientation.

A financial means test is required. This is based on evidence of own/parent/guardian income and external sponsor contributions. In the case of applicants of twenty-five years and older, the means of parents or guardians are no.

(See Annexure A, B, C, D and E for detail on the process of applying for and the awarding of financial aid to qualifying candidates).

3. The payment of financial aid offered

Applicants will receive provisional offers of financial aid based on the outcome of interviews and the assessment of requested documentation submitted. One third of the amount offered will be paid to the AP in March of the academic year and another third in June. The progress of students will be formally assessed in July of the academic year, and based on this mid-year assessment, a final offer for financial aid will be made and the balance of the amount offered still outstanding will be paid to the AP in August of the academic year.

The amount of the final offer made will be determined taking into account student participation and progress in the following areas:

- i) Response to all electronic communication – WhatsApp, email, messages
- ii) Attendance at live stream events, tutorials, Academic Literacy and compulsory PPD sessions
- iii) Timely submission of assignments, projects or required work.
- iv) General academic progress
- v) Change in personal circumstances, e.g. employment status of student.

OLH will consider all aspects carefully. Any decision made by OLH regarding the final offer will be final and not subject to appeal. If a student declines to accept such final offer, then any amounts already paid by OLH to the AP on that student's behalf during the year will automatically be deemed to constitute a loan to that student. The repayment terms shall be determined as per this policy as described below.

4. The form of financial aid

It should be noted that Financial Aid which was granted to the 2021 student cohort, took the form of a bursary with no obligation to repay the capital or any interest on the amount granted. The 2021 student cohort that continue with OLH will still receive bursaries for the 2022 academic year.

This arrangement, however, is being phased out.

With immediate effect, all financial aid except the bursaries mentioned above will take the form of a low interest rate loan, repayable by the student from the date that they start their respective careers. Students will be required to sign a loan repayment agreement to commit to the repayment of capital plus an agreed low rate of interest. The detail of applicable interest rates and amounts of instalments will be agreed with students during their final year of study.

Annexure A – Awarding and Approving Financial Aid

Requirements for provisional approval of financial aid

OLH will apply a consistent scoring method in its assessment of each application for financial aid. Provisional approval of financial aid will require a score of at least **4/8** based on the academic interview and the assessment of the Application for Financial Aid.

Considerations in determining the appropriate amount of financial aid per candidate.

- The primary indicator of the appropriate amount of financial aid is an estimate of the portion of the *student class fees* which cannot be readily covered by the combined means of student, parents or guardian and/or sponsors. This amount will be assessed from the Application for Financial Aid and its supporting documentation.
- The means test will be an important input into the process of estimating the appropriate amount, but the candidate's personal profile, application score and the available OLH resources will also be taken into account.

Requirements for final approval of financial aid

Final approval of financial aid is subject to the following requirements:

- Receipt by OLH of all the requested supporting documents from the candidate before or on the date as agreed with OLH.
- Receipt of the *upfront OLH fee* from the candidate before or on the date as agreed with OLH.
- *Satisfactory participation and progress* in the course undertaken by the student as well as demonstrable progress and participation in the OLH Learner Support program.

Annexure B – APPLICATION FOR FINANCIAL AID

Important information:

- i) As a very small institution, OLH is solely dependent on external donor funding in order to sustain its operations.
- ii) OLH and its donors bear the largest portion of the total cost of delivering the Learner Support to you, including whatever facilitation we provide to facilitate and enhance your distance learning experience with your accredited AP. but we do expect you to also carry a portion of the cost, in the form of a student fee.
- iii) The purpose of this application is to learn more about your personal profile and to clarify financial information about yourself and the people in your circle of support. It is important to know who will assist you to honour the obligation to pay the student fee, in order for us to assess the extent of the financial assistance you require. This is to ensure that the funds available for financial aid are allocated fairly amongst applicants.
- iv) Financial aid, once granted, will be paid to the Academic Partner (AP) with whom you are registered. This AP will apply these funds as a credit against your student account in three instalments, the first one in March, the second one in June and the final one in August of the academic year. Please note that the payment of each instalment is subject to your satisfactory participation and progress in the course with the AP and on the OLH Learner Support program.
- v) Irrespective of financial aid granted, the student is responsible for the payment of OLH fees not later than March of the academic year.
- vi) The amount granted as financial aid will take the form of a low interest-bearing loan, repayable to OLH in monthly instalments after the student graduated. Repayment will start from the date on which the student starts his/her career. Details of an applicable interest rate and the amount per instalment will be set out in a separate agreement during the final year of study.

Annexure B (continued)

SECTION A - GENERAL INFORMATION

SURNAME	
FIRST NAME	
CELL NUMBER	
ID NUMBER	
AGE	
COURSE AND LEVEL	
MARITAL STATUS	
NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS	
AGE OF DEPENDENTS	

Annexure B (continued)

SECTION B - EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

	SELF	SPOUSE (if married)
EMPLOYER		
POST		
YEARS EMPLOYED		
PERMANENT OR CONTRACT		
REMUNERATION PER MONTH		

If you are younger than 25, the following section must also be completed:

EMPLOYED PARENTS OR GUARDIANS		
EMPLOYER		
POST		
YEARS EMPLOYED		
PERMANENT OR CONTRACT		
REMUNERATION PER MONTH		

Annexure B (continued)

SECTION C – OTHER INFORMATION

GIVE US ANY INFORMATION WHICH YOU THINK WILL STRENGTHEN YOUR APPLICATION (SUCH AS PREVIOUS QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE) IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW:

PROOF OF INCOME FOR DECEMBER 2021 and JANUARY 2022 MUST ACCOMPANY THIS APPLICATION.

ANY ENQUIRIES ABOUT THIS FORM CAN BE MADE PER WHATSAPP TO WILLEM AT 084 422 5705.

EMAIL THE COMPLETED APPLICATION WITH PROOF OF INCOME TO willem@overstrandhub.org.

FOR OFFICE USE - SCORING SHEET	
Aspect measured	Score
ACADEMIC MERIT Very good-3; Good-2; Fair-1	/3
STUDENT TRACK RECORD Very good-3; Good-2; Fair-1	/3
MATURE AGE (21+ - 1; 23+ - 2)	/2
TOTAL SCORE	/8

Annexure C – Means test

As explained in Annexure A, the means test will be an input in determining the appropriate amount of financial aid, but the candidate's application score and the available OLH resources will also be taken into account.

The means test is based on the combined means of the candidate's household. The following formulae is used to calculate a guideline percentage of student fees to be granted as financial Aid (**A**):

$$A = (B - C)/B \times 100, \text{ where:}$$

B is the upper limit of combined means where the guideline percentage will be zero and

C is the combined annual income of the particular candidate.

The following formulae is used to calculate the guideline amount to be granted to a particular student (**D**):

$$D = A \times E, \text{ where:}$$

E is the part of annual student fees eligible for financial aid.

Notes:

1. The means of parents and or guardians will only be taken into account for candidates up to twenty-five years of age.
2. The lower boundary of combined means where the guideline percentage will be 100%, is zero.
3. The upper boundary of combined means is set per student cohort, considering the profile and number of candidates per cohort.
4. The part of annual student fees eligible for financial aid is set per student cohort, considering the funds available to be distributed.
5. The final amount allocated to a particular student as financial aid will factor in qualitative factors as reflected in the application score.

Annexure C (continued)

Example

A thirty-year old student provided evidence of annual means for herself and her spouse of R120 000. OLH management set the upper boundary of means to be R400 000 per annum and the amount of student fees eligible for financial aid as R20 000.

$$A = (B - C)/B \times 100 = (400\ 000 - 120\ 000)/400\ 000 \times 100 \\ = 70\%.$$

$$D = A \times E = 70\% \times 20\ 000 = R14\ 000.$$

The amount to be offered as financial aid loan is recommended to be R14 000 for the year, subject to the consideration of qualitative factors as reflected in the application score.

Annexure D – Provisional offer made to student

The Overstrand Learning Hub NPC

Provisional offer of financial aid to student

Student surname:

Student first name:

Course:

Student ID number:

Amount of financial aid provisionally offered:

Date of offer:

The offer made to the student is preliminary in nature and subject to the following terms and conditions:

- Receipt of the OLH fee of R1 500 for the year from the student before or on the date as agreed with OLH.
- Satisfactory participation and demonstrable progress by the student in the course with the AP during the first semester of the academic year combined with active participation and progress on the OLH Learner Support programme. The assessment of participation and progress will include the following areas:
 - i) Response to all electronic communication – WhatsApp and email messages.
 - ii) Attendance at lectures, tutorials, Academic Literacy and compulsory PPD sessions
 - iii) Submitting assignments, projects or required work on time.
 - iv) General academic progress.
 - v) Change in personal circumstances, e.g. employment status of student.
- If the participation and progress of the student during the first semester has been assessed as satisfactory, the student will receive a final offer of financial aid early in the second semester.

Annexure D (continued)

- The amount to be offered as financial aid will be paid directly to the Academic Partner in three instalments. The first instalment is paid in March, the second in June and the final one in August of the academic year.
- In the event of inadequate progress, the student will receive a letter of withdrawal of the provisional offer of financial aid.
- The assessment of student participation and progress and the resulting offer or withdrawal of financial aid is final and not subject to appeal.
- **The amount granted as financial aid will take the form of a low interest-bearing loan, repayable to OLH in monthly instalments after the student graduated, as from the date on which the student starts his/her career. Details of an applicable interest rate and the amount of instalments will be set out in a separate agreement during the final year of study.**

Acceptance of provisional offer of financial aid

I, _____ hereby accept the provisional offer of
financial aid and the terms and conditions as stated in the offer dated

Student

Date

Annexure E – Final offer made to student

The Overstrand Learning Hub NPC

Final offer of financial aid to student

Student surname:

Student first name:

Course:

Student number:

Amount of financial aid provisionally offered:

Amount of final financial aid offer:

Amount already paid to ACADEMIC PARTNER:

Amount still to be paid to ACADEMIC PARTNER

Date of offer:

The offer made to the student is final, having considered compliance to terms and conditions as set out in the provisional offer. Please note that the student is responsible for any amount still due to STADIO after our final payment to be made by 15 August.

The amount granted as financial aid will take the form of a low interest-bearing loan, repayable to OLH in monthly instalments after the student graduated, as from the date on which the student starts his/her career. Details of an applicable interest rate and the number of instalments will be set out in a separate agreement during the final year of study.

WA Lotter (Head of finances: OLH