

## DMU IT Access Hardship Scheme

In order to successfully undertake studies through blended learning, all students will require access to IT equipment to complete their studies. The university provides a wide range of access to IT equipment through a variety of different methods, which are explained in the Student IT Handbook, available at <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/ydmuf/itms-handbook.pdf>

- The University has introduced new IT services this year to enable students to access IT labs and software applications on their own IT equipment, including solutions to allow students to access software using YourDMULabs on lower specification IT equipment. The service is available at <https://yourdmulabs.dmu.ac.uk>.
- The student IT handbook provides guidance on how to access remote and blended learning on your own IT equipment, and does not require the purchase of high specification IT equipment.
- This is in addition to approximately 2,600 student teaching PCs, 1,000 student open access PCs and Library Laptop Loans across campus.

The IT Access Hardship Scheme is intended to provide assistance only in the most significant cases of need, where a student is unable to attend the campus due to COVID 19 related health guidance, and where the student would not be able to obtain their own equipment without causing significant financial hardship.

The IT Access Hardship Scheme relies on equipment provided by the University to help students who are facing genuine and unavoidable hardship in accessing IT equipment on campus. It will be reviewed at the end of each term, which may impact the way we assess future applications. This is to ensure we maintain sufficient equipment throughout the academic year.

### What does the IT Access Hardship Scheme help with?

- Students that are unable to access campus due to health guidance, due to a Covid 19 related reason, and do not have access to IT equipment otherwise, and for whom purchasing this would lead to significant financial hardship.
- Any IT equipment is provided as a loan, and for a set duration. Students will be responsible for that equipment, will return it at the end of the agreed loan period, and will be required to sign a loan agreement.

### Am I eligible to apply?

You must be enrolled on your course and meet the following general criteria:

- You must be a registered student
- You must be able to demonstrate that you are unable to access campus, for a reason related to health guidance resulting from COVID 19. This would not normally include that you have chosen to live away from a reasonable commuting distance.

- You need to be assessed for all the student funding that you are eligible for (Tuition Fee Loan, Maintenance Loan, Maintenance Grant, Adult Dependents' Grant, Parents' Learning Allowance and Childcare Grant, NHS Bursary) and had your full entitlement approved.
- Students who are sponsored through their employer should have access to IT equipment through their employer, and are unlikely to qualify for the IT Access Hardship Scheme.
- All students must be able to show that they have made adequate financial provision for both tuition fees and general living costs before they apply to the IT Access Hardship Scheme.

#### How do I apply?

You must complete all of the IT Access Hardship Scheme application form and provide all the documents requested for your circumstances. We cannot commence an assessment if the form or evidence is incomplete. Please refer to the guidelines at the top of the screen.

Download the documents below:

Download IT Access Hardship Scheme application form

Download IT Access Hardship Scheme Guidance Notes - **you must read this.**

Closing date for applications 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 – however, we may have to withdraw the scheme at any point prior to the closing date if all IT equipment has been allocated. Please note that loans may not be possible after the 26<sup>th</sup> March, and any applications not received by the 19<sup>th</sup> March are unlikely to be completed.

#### What happens after I apply?

Your form will be assessed through the following steps:

1. An assessment of the eligibility for the inability to access campus, for a reason related to health guidance resulting from COVID 19. If further information is required, then this will be requested and the application paused until this is provided. Any information you provide may be confirmed with appropriate services, including your faculty. If you have already made the faculty aware of exemptions and have evidence to support, please provide this.  
The current national lockdown means that students currently staying outside of Leicester will be unlikely to be able to attend campus. Please ensure you have provided the information on the form regarding your current and planned living arrangements.
2. If you do not meet the eligibility at this stage you will be notified, and your application will not be further assessed.
3. An assessment of financial hardship caused by obtaining IT equipment, first by checking whether all appropriate funding has been applied for, or whether other funding is available. This will involve sharing the relevant personal data from your application form with Student and Academic Services, and where necessary, with

your Personal Tutor. If further information is required, then this will be requested and the application paused until this is provided.

4. If you do not meet the eligibility at this stage you will be notified, and your application will not be further assessed.
5. Any applications that mean the eligibility will then be shared with the appointed senior academic colleague within the faculty for confirmation that they agree there is a pedagogic need for the IT equipment (for example, due to a gap in teaching or suspension/deferment).
6. If there is not a pedagogic need for the IT equipment, you will be notified and your application will not be further assessed.
7. If a Loan is approved, then you will be notified and you will be contacted to make the appropriate arrangements including the duration.

We will aim to assess your application within four working weeks of it being submitted, then (if eligible for an award) allow a bit longer to receive the payment. If an assessor contacts you to ask for clarification or for further evidence, it may take longer for your application to be assessed, but your application will not be put to the back of the queue. We will aim to continue with the assessment as soon as we can after receiving the additional information.

Please avoid contacting us about your application until the four week period has elapsed (check your receipt for your date of submission) unless you have a change of circumstances. Enquiries regarding the progress of your application, stops the assessors from working on assessments.

[Where can I get more advice?](#)

For advice on completing your application form or on issues relating to your application for the IT Access Hardship Scheme, please contact the IT Service Desk or your personal tutor.

Telephone number for IT Service: +44 (0)116 250 6050

Email address for IT Service Desk: [itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:itmsservicedesk@dmu.ac.uk)

For further information regarding your student finance, please contact the Student Finance and Welfare office, please email [sas@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:sas@dmu.ac.uk), or call 0116 257 7595.