

Mathematical and Physical Sciences Faculty Caring Fund

Document type	Procedure
Scope	All staff and PhD students within MAPS
Purpose	Offers information and guidance on how to apply for financial assistance within the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical sciences to cover caring expenses associated to work related activities

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1. Background

Sustainable coexistence of work or study with parent and other caring responsibilities is essential to develop a healthy and efficient academic culture. UCL has identified a college-wide need to improve the consistency of support experienced by staff and students around childcare and caring responsibilities.

In response to this need, a Caring Fund within the MAPS faculty was created during the 2017-2018 year, to enable staff (interpreted broadly as academics, researchers, teaching fellows, professional services technical staff) and PhD students with **caring responsibilities, to attend meetings, conferences, workshops and events outside normal working patterns***. For the academic year 2023-24, there will be a budget of **£3500** allocated for this purpose.

For the 2023-2024 academic year and as part of the MAPS faculty EDI strategic plan for the 2022 - 2027, we have revised the form and guidelines for this Fund. These will be evaluated annually.

Please, note that applicants having access to grant funding where caring expenses are allowed should use such grant funds in preference to this scheme. Your Head of Department must confirm that you have sought this funding first, if applicable. Please, see link below.
<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/finance/policies-procedures/accordion-expenses/annex-5>

If they are sufficiently justified, we will consider applications asking for 'top-up' funds which would augment the existing care funding provided by a research grant in its entirety. In such cases, the total amount from both sources (research grant in entirety plus proposed MAPS caring provision) should not exceed our stated maximum for the MAPS Caring Fund applications.

2. Eligibility

2.1 In order to be eligible for the MAPS Caring Fund you need to be either a member of staff (academics, researcher assistants, teaching fellows, professional services and technical staff) or a PhD student within the MAPS faculty.

3. Procedure

- 3.1. Complete the MAPS Caring Fund application form located in Appendix A and submit it **at least three weeks before the event** to: maps.caring@ucl.ac.uk.
- 3.2. A Faculty-level panel will consider the applications on a "first-come-first-served" basis until the fund is exhausted in a given financial year. The financial year ends on the 31st July 2024.
- 3.3. Successful applicants will be notified via email and an account code to which authorised expenditure should be charged will be indicated.

- 3.4. After the expenditure has been incurred, applicants should submit an expense claim form via iExpenses and attach receipts to the expense claim for approval. Claimants should use the 'Exceptional Items' category on iExpenses.
- 3.5. If funding is approved, please complete the feedback form sent to you in the outcome email, within a month of the activity.

4. Conditions

- 4.1. For the purposes of this fund, 'Caring' can mean childcare, care of elderly or any other family members or dependants requiring help.
- 4.2. Claims up to **£500** will be considered per person, per year. In very exceptional circumstances there may be scope for higher awards to be made, at the discretion of the panel. If in doubt submit a request for the higher amount.
- 4.3. If funding is approved, please complete the feedback form sent to you in the outcome email, within a month of the activity.
- 4.4. Childcare or caring responsibility costs may only be claimed in association with work activities undertaken outside of normal working patterns* (e.g., childcare or eldercare costs while the primary carer attends a conference, training or meeting requiring them to work outside usual contracted hours).

**Outside normal working patterns: at present we are not able to consider teaching activities at UCL within timetabled hours as exceptions to a working pattern.*

- 4.5. Some examples of how the grant could be used are: extended hours for a child-minder or a care worker to cover time when arriving home later than normal; babysitter costs; overnight care costs; travel expenses for extended family or friends to come to look after dependants*; after school activities; clubs or play schemes. This is outside normal working patterns as stated in 4.4.

**Please note that in line with the expenses policy UCL will not meet the cost of expenses claims for spouses and partners. 'Partners' include those in partnerships that are neither marriage nor civil partnership. Those that have legal caring responsibilities would also fall into this criterion.*

- 4.6. There must be an auditable record such as conference attendance confirmation and receipts for the cost of the childcare or caring responsibility. These must be submitted in order for the claim to be processed. Applicants are advised to submit their claims with receipts as soon as possible once expenditure has been incurred.
- 4.7. Grants will be made on a "first-come-first-served" basis until the fund is exhausted in a given financial year. The fund can cover any caring responsibility until the 31st July 2024. Any caring responsibilities past this date will be able to form a basis for application for the next 2024-2025 Caring Fund, where the claim limit will reset to £500 per person, per year.

- 4.8. The allocation of awards will be decided by a small Faculty panel chaired by the MAPS Vice-Dean (EDI). Priority will be given to applicants without alternative access to funds.
- 4.9. In the event of cancellation or non-attendance applicants should notify the Faculty Office ASAP (maps.caring@ucl.ac.uk) so that the funds can be redistributed.
- 4.10. The Fund and its conditions will be reviewed by the beginning of the academic year 2024-2025.

Appendix A: MAPS Caring Fund application form

MAPS Caring Fund application form 2023/2024
Name of applicant, department and date of application:
Details of event (e.g. conference) for which funds are sought (name, dates, location): <i>(for any event up until 31st July 2024, see point 4.7)</i>
What will the funds be used for? <i>e.g., extended hours for a child-minder or a care worker to cover time when arriving home later than normal; babysitter costs; overnight care costs; travel expenses for extended family or friends to come to look after dependants*; after school activities; clubs or play schemes. This is outside normal working patterns as stated in 4.4.</i> <i>* Please note that in line with the expenses policy UCL will not meet the cost of expenses claims for spouses and partners. Those that have legal caring responsibilities would also fall into this criterion.</i>
Funds requested, including breakdown of total cost into the categories above:
Have provision of funds been sought from other providers <i>e.g. RCUK, London Mathematical Society, IoP, where relevant? If so, please specify amount.</i>

Please, note that applicants having access to grant funding where caring expenses are allowed should use such grant funds in preference to this scheme. There must be a reasonable case for application for those who are seeking 'top-up' funding to augment the existing, entire provision of their research grant – *in such cases, the total funding from both sources cannot exceed the stated maximum for the MAPS Caring Fund.*

Your Head of Department must confirm that there is no equivalent funding available for your application through an existing research grant:

Yes, I can confirm No I cannot confirm [please explain why below] N/A

Head of Department Approval (name, signature, date):

Line Manager Approval (name, signature, date):

Note: If funding is approved, please complete the feedback form sent to you in the outcome email, within a month of the activity.

For the panel use only: Successful Unsuccessful

Approved Funds (in GBP £):

Signature of Panel Chair (name and date):

Notes: