Student Guidance Notes 2016/17

Applying for a URSS bursary to undertake a summer project should not be undertaken lightly. There is a significant time commitment required at a time of year when friends and family (and the weather) may demand your attention. You must consider this carefully before accepting the bursary.

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. The **Undergraduate Research Support Scheme** ("URSS") is co-ordinated and administered by the Student Development Unit, Centre for Student Careers & Skills at The University of Warwick ("University"). The purpose of the unit is to provide skills development for all students in order to enhance your employability and the quality of your life-choices.

1.2. Bursaries will only be allocated following an annual, rigorous application and scoring process, in February/March. There is a limited amount of funding and payment of bursaries shall always be subject to University budget constraints.

1.3. The University shall always use reasonable endeavours to act fairly when making decisions about bursary recipients. The University reserves the right to decide, at its absolute discretion, how it wishes to allocate the bursaries to applicants. It shall not (unless required by law) be required to give any reasons for its decisions.

1.4. If your application is successful, you are automatically entered onto the URSS Experience skills development programme and you are required to complete certain training sessions and submit certain outputs. For full details please see the URSS Experience web page.

2. Who is Eligible for URSS Funding?

2.1. If you are a **fully-registered** Warwick undergraduate student, then you are eligible to apply for a URSS bursary, except for the following:

2.2. **Exclusions** include **visiting Erasmus** students and students visiting via **other exchange** or **internships programmes** as part of your degree course (i.e. not extra-curricular. Students who have taken **a year's temporary withdrawal** from their studies are **not eligible** until their period of withdrawal is complete. If the withdrawal period is only **part** of the academic year, please discuss with the prospective supervisor and then contact the URSS administration (URSS@warwick.ac.uk) to discuss the feasibility of undertaking a URSS project, as timing is important.

2.3. Warwick students abroad on an Erasmus exchange are eligible (if you are unsure what your status, please contact Student Records).

2.4. For international students subject to immigration control (Tier 4 visa), you need to consider how many hours you are allowed to work outside of your course before applying for a URSS bursary:

- **Tier 4 visas for non-finalists**: If you have a Tier 4 visa which was issued for a degree level course or above, you are allowed to work **up to a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time** and full time during vacations. It is **your responsibility** to adhere to your visa requirements, so please discuss this with your supervisor when submitting your application.

- **Tier 4 visas for finalists**: Under a Tier 4 visa, you should only be working **up to a maximum of 20 hours per week** until the end date that appears on your CAS. Once the end date on your CAS has passed, you are allowed to work full-time but cannot fill a permanent vacancy. For further information see the Office for Global Engagement web pages: Employment during and after your studies web pages (www.warwick.ac.uk/immigration/tier4/working/).

2.5. As a finalist, you are most welcome to apply for a URSS bursary, however you will probably be completing some or all of your research project after your graduation, when you will no longer be classed as a full member of the University. This may add additional complications, in particular for IT, Library and building access and although the URSS Team tries to minimise the impact that this has on your URSS experience, this is not always possible.

2.6. You can apply for URSS funding in successive years, whether or not a previous application was successful. However, you will be asked to detail what more you will gain from undertaking another project and what additional skills and experience you will develop. This will be taken into account by the Reviewers.

3. **Project Preparation**

3.1. **You must secure your own project before you can apply for a bursary** - the URSS does not do this for you. A project can be either in your own department or another that offers a subject of interest to you. To do this, you need to approach a member of staff and enquire about the possibility of undertaking a project via URSS, supervised by him/her. If they do not have one available, they may suggest someone else to speak to. Some departments advertise projects available to undergraduate students, so check with your departmental administrator.

3.2. A URSS project **cannot be used for anything required as part of your course (i.e. credit-bearing)**; it must not include any work which will later be submitted for assessment (e.g. final year dissertation/ research project), except as background information or in the introduction.

3.3. Projects should last between 6 and 10 weeks; anything less is deemed too insubstantial to gain a good understanding of the research experience.

3.4. Projects usually take place over the summer vacation, but in reality can start any time after summer exams are completed, on agreement between you and your supervisor.

3.5. When arranging the dates of your project, you must ensure that you complete your data-gathering / field work far enough in advance of the URSS deadline to allow you to complete and submit the required URSS tasks.

3.6. **For projects involving overseas travel**:

- If your application is successful and involves travel abroad a full risk assessment form must be completed by you in partnership with your supervisor and signed off by the relevant Head of Department, allowing sufficient time in advance of travelling for any issues to be addressed. One copy should be kept by the lead supervisor, with further copies passed to the

additional supervisor(s) – if applicable, the Head of Department or departmental administrator, as appropriate *and* the URSS administration.

- The University holds travel insurance which covers students travelling on University Business. Indication that you will be travelling abroad will be passed to the University's Insurance Services. Please see the web page (www.warwick.ac.uk/finance/insurance) for full details. However, it is advisable for you to contact the Insurance Services Office directly to ensure that the policy is activated for the duration of your time abroad.

4. Bursary Information

4.1. Applications are made for a bursary of up to £1000 for UK-based projects and up to £1500 for research overseas. This is a *contribution* to your **living and other associated costs** whilst carrying out the project (e.g. accommodation, travel, subsistence, childcare, conference registration). The bursary *does not* provide a salary and *cannot* be used to purchase project-related equipment or services (e.g. laboratory consumables or other equipment, photocopying, library access cards).

4.2. You will be paid the bursary amount agreed by the Review Board into your bank account in April/May. Further details of how and when will be communicated to you if and when your application has been successful.

4.3. The bursary is given in good faith; i.e. if your application is successful and you accept the funding, you are expected to complete your project in the agreed timescale, communicating with your supervisor regularly, as expected in a professional position. You are also expected to submit the required outputs to URSS and/or the department on or by the deadline given – early in the autumn term.

4.4. The [Rights and Responsibilities](#) document outlines the rights and the responsibilities of all parties involved in URSS. In particular the following should be noted: "Following discussions with the project supervisor, the URSS administration reserves the right to require repayment of the entire up-front award should it be reasonably determined that the bursary has not been used for the purposes set out in the application or the project has been largely not attempted or if the student fails to complete the required outputs. The participant should make available all information reasonably requested to establish such correct use of the award funding."

5. Specific Guidance for Completing the Student Application Form

5.1. General:

5.1.1. You can only make one application per year.

5.1.2. This form is to be completed in conjunction with a separate but parallel one from the lead academic supervisor of your project. This will then be combined with the corresponding form from your supervisor as, as for technical reasons, the application form cannot be completed jointly.

5.1.3. Please note that once submitted, you are unable to go back and edit/make additions to the form(s). Any **major** discrepancies between the forms may count against the application.

5.1.4. The URSS administration will NOT follow up on incomplete applications (e.g. where one half of the full application is missing). Please therefore ensure you complete this in full communication with your supervisor.

5.1.5. The bursary application is scored on three areas of assessment criteria:

Impact: refers to the level of impact participating in the project will have on the student and his/her future plans (study, employability, career choices). This section is described fully in the student's application, but you should take this into account when detailing the support you/your department will provide.

Quality: is about the project itself (i.e. the nature of the research), how it fits into departmental research and the ways in which students will be supported in in developing any required skills. It is essential that the student understands the objectives and limitations of the project and can elucidate these in his/her application form.

Value for money: requires an accurate, breakdown of projected living and associated costs that the student will need to pay in conducting the research. As this can only be up to a maximum of £1000, consideration must be taken as to how this will support the student's living costs for the proposed period. E.g. £1000 over 10 weeks = £100 per week - campus accommodation costs £91 per week minimum, leaving £9 per week. Therefore to ensure the student can still buy food & pay travel costs, the project may need to be reduced in length.

5.2. Advice relating to specific questions:

5.2.1. **Alternative email address:** we need you to provide an alternative email address in case you are unable to access your Warwick one for some reason. This will only be used for URSS purposes, or for contacting you about further dissemination opportunities after the year's Scheme is complete.

5.2.2. **Visa status:** details of visa status and year: We collect these details for recording purposes only. They are not divulged to the reviewers and do not affect your application in any way.

5.2.3. **Finalists:** In order to minimise, problems accessing building and IT services we ask you to alert us, so that we can attempt to make arrangements to mitigate these.

5.2.4. **Year:** Giving your year will also allow the URSS to identify the preferred point at which you undertake a URSS project and allow us to develop the scheme appropriately in future. In addition, should we need to contact you after your project, we should be able to ascertain the correct email address to use.

5.2.5. **Title:** Please ensure that the project title is EXACTLY the same on both your and your supervisor's application forms, as this field is used to link the forms together into the full application.

5.2.6. **Project Outline:** To show that you understand the project you need to give a brief outline of what you plan to research. This should be in your own words (not copied from your supervisor's application), although your supervisor should offer advice and guidance.

5.2.7. **Wider benefits:** Knowing what benefits and applications your project may have is an important aspect of disseminating research. This may be to the local community, to the wider world, or to the knowledge base of that particular subject (knowledge for knowledge sake). Each is equally valuable, you just need to show you can share it effectively.

5.2.8. **Supervisor(s):** The project must have a member of staff who is a **full Warwick employee** as lead supervisor, primarily for ease of administration and communication. If someone else is actually supervising your project on a day-to-day basis (e.g. clinician in hospital, post doc, PhD student, member of an external organisation), these should be detailed in the 'additional supervisor' section. Please check the spelling of all names before you submit your form. You **do not** need to include the person's title (Dr, Prof, Mr, Mrs etc.)

5.2.9. **For projects involving overseas travel**: Please ensure that you indicate on the form whether you will be travelling overseas as part of the project and to where. This is essential, as the URSS administration will require this information should the application be successful.

5.2.10. **Ethics:** Undergraduate projects do regularly involve areas that require ethics consideration and/or approval. The URSS works closely with the University's Research Ethics Committees (RECs) and will pass on details of projects which indicate that ethics considerations are present. Your supervisor should advise and guide you in this area, but the RECs **welcome** any enquiries from you directly. Please see the REC's web page for further information.

5.2.11. **Supporting Information:** Along with the outline of your project and your explanation of the potential benefits, the supporting information (questions 1-5) are the primary areas assessed by the reviewers against the impact section of the assessment criteria (see section 5.1.5 above). A strong application will contain information that is clear, realistic and appropriate. You should evidence that you have thought about how participating in the project will impact on you and your future plans (further study, employability, career choices). It should include the skills (both research-specific and transferrable) and qualities (e.g. confidence) that you wish to develop.

5.2.12. **Successive Applications:** Ensure you give clear and well-thought through evidence of what **more** you will gain from doing another URSS project. This will be taken into account by the reviewers.

5.2.13. **No bursary required:** If you wish to carry out a project via URSS but do not need a URSS bursary you are welcome to do so, BUT you will still need to research and submit an indicative breakdown of your living costs (up to £1000, £1500 abroad), as if you were applying for a bursary. You should title this section 'Indicative breakdown' and put 0 in the section asking how much you are applying for.

5.2.14. **Funding Breakdown**: You need to look into the costs you think you will incur (up to a maximum of £1000 (UK) or £1500 (overseas)) and create a realistic and thorough funding breakdown. It will remain a key element of the application form so the Review Board can assess the feasibility of the project plan in relation to your suggested timescale.

A bursary will NOT be granted to pay for direct project costs, so mention of these should **not** be included.

You need to summarise it and share it with your supervisor to ensure you have both agreed on the purposes of the funding. You will have your own specific needs regarding these living costs. However, at the most basic level, the following information may help you when working out your funding breakdown:

On campus accommodation (shared facilities) – per night: £13 (www.warwick.ac.uk/accommodation/reception/faq/#vacation accommodation)	**£91 per week**
Subsistence (food) suggested spend, based on self-catering all meals):	**£25-35 per week**
Travel: based on nbus regional ticket - per day (mon-fri): = £5 (http://nxbus.co.uk/west-midlands/miscellaneous/nbus) – other daysaver tickets s are available	**£25 per week**
Total per week	**£141 - £151**

£1000 (maximum bursary) will only cover 6-7 weeks at the above rates

5.2.15. The amount requested does not affect the decision to award the bursary. Further funding cannot be granted once the application has been reviewed and accepted, so please ensure the funding breakdown is correct at the time of submission.

5.2.16. If the amount requested differs between the two forms, the student's amount will be used in the review process.

5.2.17. **Rights and Responsibilities:** You need to read the URSS Rights and Responsibilities document and tick that you agree to adhere to them if your application is successful.

5.2.18. When you submit your completed application, you will receive an automated response and copy of your submission to say the application has been submitted successfully. If you DO NOT receive this email immediately, please **check you clutter/junk folder,** and then contact URSS@warwick.ac.uk to verify your submission. This receipt will be taken as proof of application in case of query, so please retain for future reference.

6. Application Review Process

6.1. Following the application closing date, all applications go through a Review Board decision process in February/March where the applications are scored on three areas of assessment criteria:

- **Impact**: refers to the level of impact participating in the project will have on you and your future plans (study, employability, career choices).

- **Quality**: is about the project itself (i.e. the nature of the research), how it fits into departmental research and the ways in which you will be supported in developing any required skills. This is detailed in the staff application form.

- **Value for money**: requires an accurate and well researched, breakdown of projected living and associated costs that you will need to pay in conducting your research. It should include ALL living and associated costs, particularly if the total reaches more than the maximum.

6.2. You should expect to hear the outcome by the end of the spring term.

6.3. The URSS will not return your application and nor will it provide individual feedback on applications.

6.4. If the application is successful, the bursary amount will be transferred to you in April/May. Further details will be given to you if your application is successful.