Student Guidance Notes – URSS 2022

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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.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Undergraduate Research Support Scheme ("URSS") is co-ordinated and administered by the Skills Development Team, Student Opportunity 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 a rigorous application and scoring process, which occurs once each year after the URSS application closing deadline.

1.3 The University shall always use reasonable endeavours to act fairly when making decisions to whom to allocate the bursary. 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 There is a limited amount of funding for the URSS and payment of bursaries shall always be subject to University budget constraints.

1.5 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.

1.6 If your application is successful, you are automatically entered onto the Moodle URSS Experience skills development programme and you are required to complete certain training sessions and submit certain outputs. It is structured to help you develop reflective practice by reflecting on your experience during project. Completion is compulsory in order to gain a certificate of completion and acknowledgement on your HEAR record.

2. Project Preparation

2.1 You should secure your own project before applying for a bursary. This can be either in your own department, or another that offers a subject of interest to you. The URSS accepts no responsibility for securing a project for you. You are advised to approach a member of staff and enquire about the possibility of undertaking a project via URSS to see if they can supervise, or recommend a colleague or post-doctoral student who can. Some departments advertise projects available to undergraduate students, so check with your departmental administrator.
2.2 When arranging the dates of your project, you must ensure that you complete your research far enough in advance of the URSS deadline to allow you to complete and submit the required URSS tasks.

2.3 You cannot use your URSS project for anything required as part of your course; it must not involve any work which will later be submitted to be marked (e.g. final year dissertation/research project), except as background information e.g. the introduction in that work.

2.4 Please note that the URSS bursary is intended for living and other associated costs only (accommodation, subsistence, travel, childcare, etc.) that you accrue whilst carrying out your research. You may need to contribute funds if the bursary is not sufficient to cover all your costs for the duration of the project. The bursary is not intended to provide a salary.

2.5 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 output to URSS and/or the department on or by the deadline given.

2.6 Following discussions with the project supervisor, the URSS Co-ordinator reserves the right to require repayment of the entire up-front award should they reasonably determine 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 you fail to complete the required outputs. You should make available to the Co-ordinator all information reasonably required to establish such correct use of the award funding.

3. Who is Eligible for URSS Funding?

3.1 If you are a fully-registered full-time or part-time Warwick undergraduate student, then you are eligible to apply for a URSS bursary. This excludes students visiting Warwick via an exchange or internships programme as part of your degree course (i.e. not extra curricular). However, Warwick students abroad on an exchange are eligible (if you are unsure what your status please contact Student Records).

3.2 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 no more than 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 appeared 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 International Office: Working in the UK web pages.

3.3 As a finalist, you can 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. The URSS Co-ordinator will arrange an extension to your University ID card so you can access the IT, the library and other buildings whilst you complete your research project.
3.4 If you have previously received a URSS bursary you are not eligible to apply for funding again. You can only receive a URSS bursary once during the course of your studies. If you wish to undertake another project, you can apply again but must seek an alternative source of funding (e.g. Turing, departmental funding etc) or fund the project yourself.

4. **Completing the Application Form**

4.1 The form is to be completed in conjunction with the lead academic supervisor of your project. You must complete part 1 of the form and the lead supervisor must complete part 2. You are advised to discuss your project costs, travel plans and ethics considerations with your supervisor before completing the form. You will need the support of a Warwick academic or post-doctoral researcher when completing the form even if you are not planning to do the project at Warwick.

4.2 You can only make one application per year.

4.3 You are unable to go back and edit/make changes to the form; this means the content should be decided and agreed by both parties before submitting the online application.

4.4 The URSS administration will NOT follow up on incomplete applications. Please therefore ensure you complete all sections of the form and do this in full communication with your prospective supervisor.

4.5 The form comprises a number of mandatory questions including some that collect data for recording and monitoring, as well as some that will be evaluated against the selection criteria (see below) to ensure the process is fair and transparent. The process is competitive.

4.6 The form asks for an 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.

4.7 The form asks for your visa status. We collect these details for recording purposes only. They are not divulged to the reviewers and do not affect your application in any way.

4.8 As mentioned previously, if you are planning to complete your project in the summer vacation in which you graduate, the URSS Co-ordinator will arrange an extension to your University ID card so you can access IT services, the library and other buildings whilst you complete your research project.

4.9 Giving your year of study 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.

4.10 To show that you understand the project you need to give an outline of what you plan to research. This should be written clearly in your own words for a non-disciplinary audience, although your supervisor should offer advice and guidance as they will need to approve the project title.

4.11 Knowing what benefits and applications your project 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). You may want to discuss this with your supervisor before completing the application.

4.12 The project must have a full member of Warwick academic staff or post-doctoral researcher as lead supervisor. If someone else is actually supervising your project on a day-to-day basis (e.g. clinician in hospital, 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, Ms, Mx etc.)

4.13 If you are planning to travel abroad as part of your project, the URSS needs to know, as we take the wellbeing of our students very seriously. This information will also be shared with the Student Support team, who handle calls that you or your family make to the University, particularly out of hours, and will liaise with the URSS Co-ordinator as necessary.

4.14 The University holds travel insurance which does cover staff and students travelling on University Business. Indication that you will be travelling abroad will also be passed to the University Insurance Office. Please see the web page for full details and contact the department to ensure that you are covered.

4.15 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.

4.16 Along with your outline of your project and your explanation of the potential benefits, the supporting information are the primary areas assessed by the reviewers against the impact section of the assessment criteria (see below). 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. Remember that transferable skills are as valuable as research-specific ones. Please ensure this section is detailed but succinct.

4.17 A good application will contain information that is clear, realistic and appropriate and shows evidence of being well-thought-out.

4.18 As mentioned previously, you are welcome to apply for URSS funding in successive years. But you must 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.

4.19 If you wish to carry out a project via URSS but do not need a bursary you are welcome to do so. Please 0 in the section asking how much you are applying for.

4.20 Students who qualify for extra support can apply for an additional top-up bursary of £250. Please contact URSS@warwick.ac.uk for further information.

4.21 You need to look into the costs you think you will incur (up to a maximum of £1500 for home and 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 reasonableness of the project plan in relation to your suggested timescale. You need to discuss this 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 (Summer Vacation 2021): £13 - £20 per night = £91-£140 per week. The cost may be increased for 2022
✓ Subsistence (food) suggested spend, based on self-catering all meals): £25-35 per week
✓ Travel: based on West Midlands Day-Saver: 5 ticket scratch card = £19
✓ Total per week- £135 - £194

You can apply for a maximum bursary of £1500. You therefore need to consider how this will support your entire living costs. E.g. £1000 over 10 weeks = £100 per week - campus accommodation costs £91 per week minimum, leaving £59 per week. To ensure you can buy food & pay travel costs, you may need to reduce the length of your project.

An additional top-up bursary of £250 is available for students from particular backgrounds or this from underrepresented groups.

4.21 A bursary will NOT be granted to pay for direct project costs, so mention of these should not be included.
4.22 The amount requested does not affect the decision to award a bursary.
4.23 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.
4.24 You must be able to agree to all of the terms & conditions of Application, otherwise you are ineligible to apply.
4.25 You need to read the URSS Rights and Responsibilities and tick that you agree to adhere to them if your application is successful.
4.26 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 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.

5. Application Review Process

5.1 All applications go through a Review Board decision process in March and you will be informed of the outcome there after.

5.2 The bursary application is scored on five areas of assessment criteria:

- **Personal/Career Impact:** this refers to the level of impact that participating in the project will have on your future plans (study, employability, skills development, career choices).
- **Quality of Proposal:** is about the project itself, i.e. the nature of the research. It should include a clear and well-written description of the project. It is essential that you understand the objectives and limitations of the project and can explain these in the application form. You should include an introduction to the project, how you intend to carry out the research and what you hope to conclude.
- **Value for money**: requires an accurate, breakdown of projected living and associated costs to carry out the research project. It should include ALL living and associated costs, particularly if the total reaches more than £1500.

- **Reach and Significance**: looks at the potential reach of the public engagement project and how significant that interaction may be for the student, partners, or audience involved.

- **Quality of Evaluation**: examines the students plans for evaluating their success against their intended objectives and ensuring they have a robust plan in place for this.

5.3 A good application will contain information that is clear, realistic and appropriate. It should show evidence of being well-thought out and personalised.

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

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