# **Statement of Service**

# **Money Advice Team**

## Vision

The Money Advice team is committed to achieving excellence in providing student funding advice and guidance and delivering student support via hardship funds. The team provides timely, accurate, and equitable advice that is consistent and accessible. The Money Advice team is committed to continuous improvement, developing and refining its services based on stakeholder feedback and in transparent alignment with both University / Student Life objectives and the needs of our students.

## Mission

Our mission is to enable prospective and enrolled students to make informed decisions about their finances, including addressing their eligibility to access statutory funding, scholarships and bursaries. We provide accessible guidance and support services on student money matters, centred around a model of accessibility, impartiality and non-judgement. We strive to provide innovative student-focused initiatives that seek to inform and empower students, ensuring fewer students have their education compromised by financial difficulties and have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

## Our Values

StudentLife services operate to a defined set of Core Values and it is an expectation that our staff are able to demonstrate a commitment to these values from the point of application through to the day to day delivery of their roles.

Our Values are:

### We are Professional

We take pride in applying our knowledge, skills, creativity and judgement to deliver innovative, effective, efficient services and solutions of excellent quality: We take pride in accepting and demonstrating personal responsibility for getting things done on time and to the required standard; We provide, seek and value regular constructive feedback, using it to identify personal development and improve our delivery of excellence; We are open minded to new ideas and proposals to deliver and create innovative solutions; We are accountable for failure as well as success, making informed decisions and taking responsibility for them.

### We Work Together

We take pride in working in a proactive, collaborative environment of equality, trust, respect, co-operation and challenge to deliver services that strive to exceed the needs and expectations of customers: We work respectfully with others, building trust by communicating and sharing information and keeping them informed; Listen to and understand the views of others to enable the best solutions to be found; We are aware of how our actions impact on others and challenge where inappropriate actions undermine equality, trust, respect and cooperation; We are accountable for working with others in a proactive way that strives to exceed the needs and expectations of customers.

### We Care

We take responsibility for listening, understanding and responding flexibly to our students, colleagues, external partners and the public so that every contact they have with us is a personalised and positive experience: We take personal responsibility for genuinely listening and fully understanding who our customer is and their needs; Respond in a caring and flexible manner to ensure these needs are met, seeking support if unable to find a solution, and keeping the customer updated of progress; Understand the importance of keeping promises, acknowledging when things go wrong and working hard to put them right; Provide clear, helpful and timely support and information, personalised to meet the needs of each individual customer.

## The Team

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## What we offer

* Information on entitlements to statutory loans, grants and bursaries, and assistance with appeals against incorrect or unfair decisions made by funding bodies.
* Administration of the University’s Hardship Funds (Swansea University Opportunity Award Fund for home students /International Student Support Fund). Please see Swansea University Hardship Funds Guidance for further information relating to each Fund.
* Financial literacy education, including advice and guidance on budgeting.
* Administration and co-ordination of the financial support bursaries available to students who are care experienced, estranged or student carers.
* Administration and co-ordination of the financial support elements of the Sanctuary Scholarship.
* General information, advice and guidance including referrals to internal and external agencies regarding debt, benefits, housing issues, gambling and associated money related matters.

## What you can expect

* Timely, informed, impartial, non-judgemental and confidential advice.
* A StudentLife Reception open Mondays – Fridays between 9.00 - 5.00pm during student term time and vacation periods.
* Helpful and welcoming staff who update their knowledge and skills through professional development, attendance at relevant training events and through professional membership/accreditation.
* Information, advice and guidance provided through:
* Appointments and Live Chat sessions.
* A dedicated Money Advice Team email address: moneyadvice@swansea.ac.uk and a dedicated Hardship Funds inbox: hardshipfunds@swansea.ac.uk. We endeavour to respond to all email enquiries within three working days.
* StudentLife social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to interact with our service and engage with the latest news, event information, and signposts to StudentLife and external resources *(\*please note we do not provide specific, individualised advice and guidance through our social media channels and you are asked to contact us via email to discuss your personal circumstances*).
	+ Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CampusLifeSU/>
	+ Twitter: <https://twitter.com/campuslifesu>
	+ Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/campuslifesu/>
* Where a staff member may be absent, an out of office message (bilingual wherever possible) will detail when they will return to the office and who to contact in their absence.
* We endeavour to provide transparent communication and inform you during extremely busy times when we may not be able to meet all service standards.

## What we expect from you

* It is our aim to foster independence, self-awareness and personal responsibility in students. It is within this context that we expect students to take active responsibility and appropriate actions to manage the issues and concerns on which they seek our assistance.
* That you treat our staff with respect in line with University regulations and codes of conduct.
* That you explain what your query is about and provide us with as much information as possible.
* That you use your student contact details when contacting us to prevent any accessibility issues. If you are an enrolled/ current student we ask that you please use your student email address only when emailing us (if applicable).
* That you are responsible in providing all necessary documentation in a timely fashion to enable us to respond to your enquiry.
* That you respond to any written, telephone or email request for information in a timely fashion/by the deadline specified.
* That you make us aware of any changes to your circumstances, including changes to your address and contact details.
* That you attend appointments on time or inform us if you are going to be unavoidably late/ need to reschedule.
* That you engage with and act upon any advice received.

## We cannot assist you with

* Requests for information, advice and guidance outside of our advertised service hours. The Money Advice Team is a day-time service, and does not provide emergency services or out of hours support. Out of hours concerns (emergencies only) should be directed to [Swansea University Security via the Safezone app](https://www.swansea.ac.uk/life-on-campus/security-and-safezone/).
* Debt management advice; legal advice; complex benefits advice; tenancy advice including contractual obligations and landlord disputes; advice on tax or pensions. The Money Advice Team will signpost to appropriate services for follow up support on these matters.
* Loans or emergency funding provision other than accessing food vouchers where appropriate.
* The immediate management of serious incidents and emergencies. This is a responsibility of statutory services such as the Police and the NHS. StudentLife does not provide an immediate emergency response function, although staff are normally involved in responding to the aftermath of welfare or discipline related incidents involving students, providing advice and assistance to those affected.

## Feedback

**We value feedback from students, colleagues and stakeholders.** Please help us to continuously improve our services by offering your insights, comments and suggestions via email and responding to our requests for feedback via surveys / focus groups sessions where applicable.

The services we provide are confidential and we act in line with GDPR compliance. We do not share the information you provide with any third parties and we protect it in accordance with The General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) & the Data Protection Act 2018.

If you would like to provide feedback on our service, please contact:

Jess Lawson Hughes

Manager – Money Advice Team

Email: jessica.l.hughes@swansea.ac.uk

### Contact Us

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