

APPLICATION FOR UCT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SOUTH AFRICAN AND PERMANENT RESIDENT STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR HONOURS, MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL DEGREES IN 2027

CLOSING DATE: 10 NOVEMBER 2026

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Merit-based bursary applications are NOT being accepted for 2027. Only applications for financial need-based funding (Financial Aid or GAP tuition bursary) will be considered. If you do not meet the financial need eligibility criteria below, you will not be eligible for a UCT award and should not submit an application.

Students who intend to register towards an Honours, Master's or Doctoral qualification at UCT may be eligible to apply for financial support. Depending on the eligibility and selection criteria, this support may include a combination of bursaries, as bursaries are offered based on demonstrated financial need only. Merit bursaries are not available for 2027.

In line with the UCT transformation agenda, in allocating funding for these awards, priority will be given to funding Black South African and permanent resident applicants who qualify for financial need. In the current context "Black" includes African, Coloured and Indian students. "Financial need" refers to students who qualify via the National Means Test for either Financial Aid (where gross annual family income <R350 000) or GAP tuition bursaries (where annual gross family income is between R350 001 and R600 000).

It is critical for prospective students to also source other awards for which they may be eligible, such as from the National Research Foundation (NRF), the department/Research group where the student will be registered, as well as through other external sources such as private/external donors. For details of all awards administered via the Postgraduate Funding Office, see <http://www.students.uct.ac.za/students/fees-funding/postgraduate-degree-funding/noticeboard/>.

General Eligibility

- Applicants must be South African or permanent residents.
- Applicants must apply for a full-time Honours, Master's or Doctoral program in the relevant department/faculty (i.e. *Only applicants who have applied for an academic place via the UCT's Admissions Office will be considered for funding*).
- We encourage all Honours, Master's and Doctoral applicants who apply for the financial aid bursary to apply for an NRF bursary, if they are eligible for NRF funding.
- Minimum grade point average (GPA) is 70% and above (for the previous qualification).
- Students will not be eligible for funding support if they are employed more than 20 hours per week during the year of study. (Note – NRF funding cannot be held concurrently with UCT funding)
- **Merit-based applications are not being accepted for 2027. Only applicants who qualify for financial need-based funding will be considered for a UCT award. Applicants who do not meet the financial need criteria should not apply, as their application will not be able to proceed to an award.**

Conditions of Financial Aid Bursary

- Eligible applicants are funded for one year for the Honours degree, two years for the Master's degree (first and second year only) or three years for the Doctoral degree (first, second and third year only), and must be full-time students. Should your funding application be successful, funding is renewed automatically.
- **Certain professional degrees and full coursework Master's degrees, including MBA's and MMED's, are ineligible for funding.**
- **Students who register for the 4th year of a Bachelor's degree, PGCE, LLB or Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas are ineligible for these awards.**
- **A second degree at the same level will not be supported.**
- **Research component of less than 33.3% will not be supported for Master's and Doctoral degrees.**

Financial Need Eligibility Criteria

- Information provided on the financial aid application form will be used to determine an applicant's financial need (the "assessed need") by applying the National Means Test (NMT) used by the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) and the criteria used by UCT to determine eligibility.
- Applicants will be defined as either:
 - financial aid eligible, where gross annual family income is <R350 000, or;
 - eligible for GAP tuition bursary where family income is between R350 001 and R600 000, or;
 - not eligible for needs-based financial support.
- **Applicants who are found not eligible for needs-based financial support will not be considered for any other form of UCT funding, as merit bursaries are not available for 2027.**

Value of Financial Aid Awards

- The value of the financial aid bursary in 2027 will be a contribution towards cost of studies for the academic year.
- Students who do not meet the UCT financial need-based criteria but meet the criteria for a GAP tuition bursary according to family income, will be eligible for a percentage of their approved course tuition fees.

Application Instructions

- **Applications are for financial need-based funding only. Merit applications are not being accepted for 2027 — please do not apply if you do not expect to meet the financial need criteria above, as your application will not proceed to funding.**
- Applicants who apply for financial aid must provide all supporting documentation for assessment. If the incorrect documentation is submitted, applicants have 2 days to resubmit the documentation.
- A webinar on how to complete and submit the form including the awarding process will be available in August, September, and October.
- Students who have previously been supported by NSFAS/UCT as undergraduates or full Financial Aid at Honours, still need to complete the form to apply for funding for their Honours, Master's or Doctoral degree.
- The closing date is 10 November 2026.

Enquiries: 021 650 3622 Email enquiries: pgfunding@uct.ac.za

Please use the Service Request tile to submit any enquiries.

The University reserves the right to cancel, withdraw and recover any funds paid to the award-holder if she/he does not comply with the Conditions of Award.