



Guidelines for the allocation of grants from the Mental Health Fund of the Student Union at Graz University of Technology

As student representatives at Graz University of Technology, we are committed to supporting our fellow students in every way possible during their studies. This includes helping students who would like to seek therapy but cannot afford it. This is why we have created this Mental Health Fund, which aims to provide financial and psychological support to socially disadvantaged students who are struggling with mental health issues.

We ask applicants to understand that the funds available in the Mental Health Fund are limited and represent voluntary support from HTU Graz. The decision-making body consists of administrators and the representative of the Department of Social Policy of the Student Union at Graz University of Technology.

Decision date: June 17, 2025

§ 1 General requirements

- (1) The prerequisite for receiving funding from the HTU Graz Mental Health Fund is that the applicant
 - a. is studying at Graz University of Technology,
 - b. is socially disadvantaged within the meaning of the guidelines under § 2,
 - c. is not receiving free psychotherapy/clinical psychological treatment from any other source, and
 - d. attends therapy after the grant has been awarded and submits a fee note for the five sessions attended.
- (2) The applicant must prove that they are studying at Graz University of Technology by submitting a confirmation of enrollment for the semester in which the funding was applied for.
- (3) The applicant must ensure that the application is completed in full and that all information in the application is clearly and obviously verified by the relevant documents.
- (4) There is no legal entitlement to financial support from HTU Graz.

§ 2 Social need

- (1) Social need within the meaning of these guidelines exists if the student's monthly income (in the last 6 months prior to submitting the application) falls below the





poverty risk threshold specified in paragraph 2 and the monthly income exceeds the necessary monthly expenses by less than 10%.

- (2) Any savings exceeding the amount specified in paragraph 3 shall be counted towards the monthly income within the meaning of paragraph 1.
- (3) The poverty risk threshold is set at 80% of the amount determined by Statistics Austria for the previous year. This takes into account the fact that most students do not reach the official poverty risk threshold with their income. The official threshold is calculated for individuals in private households. However, many students live in shared apartments or student residences, where the cost of living is at least 20% lower than for people living alone.
- (4) To prove social need, the student must clearly state their total income for the last 6 months and the sum of all monthly expenses in the application. These must be documented by a bank account statement in which income is clearly separated from expenses.
- (5) The basis for and proof of total income must be provided (e.g., money from parents by means of a written statement signed by the parents, wages by means of pay slips, study grants by means of a notification from the scholarship office, etc.).
- (6) For all expenses exceeding 20% of monthly income, the invoice or legal basis must be submitted with a brief explanation; this applies in particular to rent.
- (7) For students who have to pay tuition fees, these must be declared as such (as an expense and, in the case of a refund, as income), as must all other study-related expenses exceeding 20% of monthly income, and must be disregarded when assessing social need.
- (8) The social need of an applicant who lives in a shared household with their parents or partner is deemed to exist if the joint income falls below the poverty risk thresholds specified in paragraph 2 multiplied by the following factor:
 - a. joint household with partner, without children: factor 1.5
 1. with 1 child: factor 1.8
 2. with 2 or more children: factor 2.1
 - b. shared household with one parent: 1.5
 1. with both parents: 1.8
 2. With one parent and siblings: 1.8
 3. With both parents and siblings: 2.1
- (9) In the case of paragraph 7, proof of income and expenditure as specified in paragraphs 2 to 5 must be provided for the entire household.





§ 3 Application

- (1) Applications for funding from the HTU Graz Mental Health Fund can be submitted by students of Graz University of Technology to the HTU Graz Social Policy Department. Applications can only be submitted online via the HTU website. Incomplete applications will not be processed.
- (2) Applications for funding from the Mental Health Fund can be submitted from October 1 to January 30 and from March 1 to June 15 and will be processed on an ongoing basis by the award committee. The latest version of the application form must be used to submit an application. The form is available from the HTU Graz office and can be downloaded from the HTU Graz website (<http://www.htugraz.at>).
- (3) The following must be enclosed with the completed application:
 - a. Confirmation of enrollment for the current semester,
 - b. Proof of income of the applicant (including social benefits and support from family and friends) and, if applicable, proof of income of the partner or parents/children/siblings living in the same household (including social benefits and support from family and friends),
 - c. Invoices or legal basis with a brief explanation for expenses exceeding EUR 200.00 (for the applicant or for all persons living in the same household),
 - d. Continuous bank statements for the last six months (for the applicant and for all persons living in the same household)
 - e. Registration form for the applicant and, if applicable, all persons living in the same household, stating the nature of the relationship to these persons. Proof must be provided (for married couples: marriage certificate; for other couples, a jointly signed affidavit regarding the relationship; for parents and children: birth certificate)
 - f. For third-country nationals: a copy of the valid residence permit
 - g. A signed affidavit in which the applicant confirms the accuracy of all information provided in the application and the attached documents. (A false statement may result in criminal prosecution.)
 - h. Hand-signed consent to the processing of personal data (within the meaning of Articles 5-9 GDPR)

§ 4 Procedure

- (1) Applications are processed by the award committee.
- (2) Members of the award committee are the university's mental health and accessibility officer and the social services department administrator.
- (3) Members of the allocation committee have access to the applicant's documents. HTU Graz does not pass on any student data to third parties.
- (4) The decision on an application is made by the allocation committee, taking into account the "Guidelines for the allocation of funding from the Mental Health Fund of the Student





- Union at Graz University of Technology" in the latest valid version.
- (5) The allocation committee makes its decisions at its meetings, which take place at least three times per semester. The allocation committee's decision on applications is made by a simple majority of the valid votes cast. The department has a quorum when three members of the allocation committee, including the representative for mental health and accessibility, are present. In the absence of the Mental Health and Accessibility Officer, the Allocation Committee has a quorum if the Officer has authorized another person (from among the administrators) as his/her representative in writing.
 - (6) The award committee regulates its own process for processing applications on an ad hoc basis at its individual meetings.
 - (7) The decision on an application shall be communicated to the applicant in writing and shall be signed by the social policy officer.
 - (8) In the event of a positive decision, the relevant amount of funding (see § 6) will be transferred by the Economic Affairs Department to the applicant's account (as specified in the application) by bank transfer. The transfer can only be made to the applicant's account. The applicant is responsible for ensuring that the account details they provide are correct.
 - (9) The decision of the award committee is final.
 - a. If the award committee has grossly violated these guidelines in its decision-making, the applicant concerned may lodge a complaint.
 - i. This complaint must refer to the specific provision of the guidelines that has been violated and provide detailed reasons why this provision was violated.
 - ii. Such a complaint can be submitted in writing (by email or via the online form) to the HTU's Social Policy Department within ten days of the decision being delivered.
 - b. In the event of an appeal, the award committee will decide.
 - i. If the appeal is justified, the award committee must make a new decision. The new decision must take the appeal into account.
 - ii. Unjustified complaints shall be rejected as such.
 - iii. The decision on the appeal must be communicated to the appellant in writing, together with a brief statement from the award committee.
 - (10) Any funding obtained on the basis of false or incomplete information or in any other unlawful manner must be repaid. Any facts that become known after the date of the funding decision and that would result in the suspension or repayment of the funding must be reported to the Social Affairs Department of HTU Graz within two weeks. HTU Graz reserves the right to take legal action in the event of non-compliance.
 - (11) Incomplete applications within the meaning of §§ 1 and 2 must be rejected immediately. In such cases, it is not permitted to submit the missing documents or information at a later date.
 - (12) Grants awarded on the basis of these guidelines will provide €50 per therapy session for 5 therapy sessions for individual therapies.
 - (13) Funding is generally distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.





- (14) Each student may only apply for funding once per semester.
- (15) Students who received funding in the previous semester may only submit their application after June 1 to ensure that the funding is distributed to as many different students as possible.
- (16) If funding for individual therapy is approved, the student must select a psychotherapist from the list on the Social Affairs Office website within three weeks and arrange an appointment for an initial consultation. **Otherwise, the funding will be reallocated.** After an initial consultation, it is possible to change therapists. In this case, the three-week period will start again. If the initial consultation is offered free of charge by the psychotherapist, it will not be counted towards the subsidized therapy sessions.
- (17) In the case of individual therapy, any remaining amount must be paid by the student. Payment via the social security provider does not prevent the subsidy from being granted on the basis of this guideline. The student must submit the paid invoice and provide an account number so that the subsidy can be granted. It is also possible to submit all invoices together.
- (18) In the case of individual therapy, the subsidized therapy sessions must be taken no later than 5 months after the subsidy has been approved. Otherwise, the entitlement expires.
- (19) If the application is approved, the subsidies will only be paid out after the invoice(s) or fee note(s) have been submitted. The payment dates are November 15, January 15, and February 31 in the winter semester, and April 15, May 15, and June 30 in the summer semester.

§ 6 Amount of funding

- (1) The total amount of funding for one year is determined at the beginning of the year by the university representatives.
- (2) If this amount is exhausted, the award committee may apply to the university council for an increase in the total amount. If no such application is made or if the university council rejects the award committee's application, all subsequent applications must be rejected on these grounds.
- (3) If the total amount is not exhausted at the end of the year, the university council shall decide on the disposal of the remaining funds.
- (4) The subsidy amounts to EUR 50.00 per unit for five therapy units, i.e., a total of EUR 250.00.

§ 7 Entry into force and announcement

- (1) These guidelines shall enter into force on June 17, 2025.
- (2) These guidelines, together with brief information about funding from the Mental Health Fund and the corresponding form, shall be published on the HTU Graz website and thereby made known to all students at the TU.

