

# **Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme**

## **Imprint**

**our reference**

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*For information purposes*

The Students' Charter of Avans University of Applied Sciences stipulates the rights and obligations of students enrolled at Avans University of Applied Sciences.

This Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme is part of the Students' Charter.

## **1 Introduction**

Section 7.51 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Whw) contains rules relating to the financial support of students who meet the criteria referred to in paragraph 3, article 2 of this Scheme.

Only those students who are enrolled for a full-time or work-study track study programme at Avans University of Applied Sciences, and who have received financial aid for studying for a bachelor's degree programme in higher education are eligible to receive financial support under this scheme.

## **2 General provisions**

### **Article 1. Definitions**

The following definitions are applied in this Scheme:

**Administrative activities:** the administrative activities that a student performs as a member of a board or administrative body at Avans University of Applied Sciences, or of student organisations designated or recognised by the Executive Board.

**Admissibility of the application:** the processing of the substance of the application, if the application has been submitted in full (containing all the necessary information) and on time (in accordance with the deadlines set).

**Applicant:** the student who is enrolled at Avans University of Applied Sciences who is applying for financial support on the basis of this scheme.

**Application:** request submitted by a student in order to qualify for financial support under this scheme.

**Avans University of Applied Sciences:** the institution (university of applied sciences) based on the Avans Foundation that upholds it.

**Diploma period:** the 10-year period during which students must have successfully passed the final exam of a study programme to have the Education Executive Agency DUO's conditional loan converted into a non-repayable grant, as referred to in Section 5.7 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000. This period starts on the first day of the month for which the first financial aid for studying is granted for the purpose of following higher education.

**DUO (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs):** the Education Executive Agency (formerly the Informatie Beheer Groep [Information Management Group]).

**Executive Board:** the board of Avans University of Applied Sciences, also the board of the Avans Foundation.

**Extension of the performance-related student grant period due to disability or chronic illness:** at the student's request a one-off loan remission of €1,200 may be applied to the student debt accrued, if dated statements from both a doctor and the board of the educational institution at which the student is enrolled show that the student is unable to successfully pass the final examination within the years on which the study programme's study load, as referred to in Section 7.3a of the Whw, is based, due to a disability or chronic illness.

**Financial support:** support students can receive if they have suffered or are expected to suffer a delay in their study progress *during their performance-related student grant period* as a result of special circumstances. The aim of the financial support is to reasonably enable the student to continue or complete their studies as soon as possible.

**Minister:** the Dutch minister of Education, Culture and Science.

**Performance-related student grant for higher education:** For full-time and work-study track students who became students on a performance-related student grant before 1 September 2015, this is an interest-bearing loan which, subject to certain terms and conditions, can be converted into a non-repayable grant consisting of a basic grant, possibly combined with a supplementary grant, partner's allowance or single-parent allowance. The performance-related student grant forms part of the Financial Aid for Studying Scheme as set out in Chapter 3 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000 (Wsf 2000). This does not include the interest-bearing part of the loan that cannot be converted into a non-repayable grant.

For full-time and work-study track students who became students on a performance-related student grant after 1 September 2015, this is a part of their financial aid for studying, consisting of a supplementary grant, travel allowance and a single-parent allowance, that can be converted into a non-repayable grant. The performance-related student grant forms part of the Financial Aid for Studying Scheme as set out in Chapter 3 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000 (Wsf 2000).

**Performance-related student grant period:** period during which a student is entitled to receive financial aid for studying in the form of a basic loan and a performance-related student grant (as set out above). The duration of the performance-related student grant period is linked to the regular duration of the study programme (as set out in Chapter 5 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000).

**Student:** person who is enrolled at Avans University of Applied Sciences as a full-time or work-study track student, as referred to in Section 7.32, 7.33 and 7.34 of the Whw, and who has received financial aid for studying for a bachelor's or master's degree programme in higher education.

**Student Financial Support Committee:** the committee established by the Executive Board that is responsible for the implementation of the Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme.

**Study Finance Advance Act:** act which amended the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000, replacing, among other things, the basic grant part of the performance-related study grant with a loan.

**Whw:** the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act (Whw, Dutch Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 593, 1992 and later additions and amendments).

**Wsf 2000:** the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000 (Wsf 2000 Dutch Bulletin of Acts and Decrees 571, 2000 and later additions and amendments).

### **3 Special circumstances for financial support in accordance with Section 7.51 of the Whw**

#### **Article 2. Financial support**

1. The Executive Board has made arrangements for the financial support of students who:
  - a. are enrolled as a full-time or work-study track students on a study programme at Avans University of Applied Sciences for which they have not yet obtained a degree and who are required to pay statutory tuition fees,
  - b. are not following parts or all of the study programme due to special circumstances,
  - c. are or were entitled to receive a performance-related student grant for this study programme as referred to in Chapter 5 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000, and
  - d. have fallen behind or are expected to fall behind with their studies due to special circumstances, as referred to in articles 3 and 4 of this Scheme, or
  - e. are enrolled on a study programme that has not been reaccredited and for which they have not yet obtained a degree, as a result of which the student is no longer entitled to financial aid for studying.
2. The Executive Board grants financial support subject to the condition that the student is actively pursuing their studies.

### **Article 3. Special circumstances: circumstances beyond one's control**

1. The special circumstances are laid down in Section 7.51, paragraph 2 of the Whw. They are as follows:
  - a. illness or pregnancy and childbirth,<sup>1</sup>
  - b. a disability or chronic illness,
  - c. special family-related circumstances,
  - d. an unfeasible study programme,
  - e. circumstances other than those listed above, if refusal would result in considerable unfairness.
2. If the student has suffered a delay in their studies as a result of a physical or other functional impairment, they must as a condition for qualification for financial support submit a written application to extend the period of the grant (as referred to in Section 5.2b paragraph 1 of the Wsf 200).  
When awarding financial support on the basis of a disability, any compensation that the student may already receive in relation to the study delay due to disability, in the form of extra grant entitlements, is taken into consideration.

### **Article 4. Special circumstances: administrative activities**

Based on Section 7.51, paragraph 2 of the Whw, special circumstances also include:

1. membership, including chairpersonship, of the Avans Joint Consultative Council, a subcouncil, the board of a study programme or a study programme committee, as well as membership of the board of a foundation whose objective, according to its articles, is to exploit facilities that are part of the student facilities or a body that, in view of its tasks, can be deemed to be equivalent to this, at the discretion of the Executive Board,
2. administrative or social activities that the Executive Board deems to also be in the interest of Avans University of Applied Sciences or of the education that the student is following,
3. membership of the board of a student organisation that has legal personality.<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this Scheme, only associations and foundations are taken into consideration that:
  - a. have full legal capacity,
  - b. in accordance with the articles, are geared towards students belonging to the institution or towards students in the broader sense,
  - c. in principle are accessible to every student,
  - d. other circumstances to be specified by the Executive Board in which the student concerned carries out activities within the context of the organisation and administration of the institution.

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<sup>1</sup> In the event of pregnancy, the maximum support period is 4 months. This period was derived from the Ministerial Directive Extension Enrolment Period [Ministeriële Richtlijn Verlenging van Inschrijvingsduur] (Dutch Government Gazette 1988, no. 145).

<sup>2</sup> In the event of administrative activities on the basis of Section 7.51k (such as membership of a national political youth organisation that develops activities relevant for higher education), please refer to the ministerial regulation that has been laid down for this purpose. These activities do not qualify for compensation from the Profileringsfonds fund.

- e. students who have received a board activities grant during their studies waive their rights to any payment from the Profileringsfonds fund in the event they suffer (additional) delay in their study progress due to administrative activities.<sup>3</sup>

## **4. Student Financial Support Committee**

### **Article 5. Role and composition**

1. The Student Financial Support Committee was established by the Executive Board and is charged with the execution of the Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme, the Facilitation Scheme for Students/Top Athletes, the Board Activities Grant Scheme [Regeling bestuursbeurzen] and the Hardship Fund Scheme for Students.
2. The Student Financial Support Committee consists of 3 members. The members of the committee are appointed by the Executive Board.
3. The Student Financial Support Committee is available at the following address:  
Avans University of Applied Sciences  
Marketing, Communication and Student Relations Unit  
Attn: secretary to the Student Financial Support Committee  
PO Box 90116  
4800 RA Breda  
The Netherlands

### **Article 6. Duties and powers**

1. It is the Committee's job to take decisions in relation to the applications and requests as described in this Scheme, in relation to:
  - a. awarding financial support or a claim to this type of support,
  - b. making interim changes to or discontinuing financial support,
  - c. making arrangements.
2. In connection with the performance of its duties, the committee is authorised to:
  - a. formulate more detailed criteria, which an application/request for financial support must meet,
  - b. obtain more detailed information relating to an application/request from the student counsellor, the designated contact person on behalf of the study programme or, after the student has given permission in writing, from the care worker,
  - c. carry out all monitoring activities deemed necessary for the purposes of assessing an application correctly.

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<sup>3</sup> For details about facilities available to students participating in administrative activities as referred to in article 4, please refer to the Avans University of Applied Sciences Framework scheme for students participating in administrative activities. Any compensation a student has already received for their administrative activities in the form of ECTS credits or financial compensation will be taken into consideration when calculating the amount of the financial support from the Profileringsfonds fund.

3. The Student Financial Support Committee will take a decision on the application no later than 6 weeks of the application being submitted, unless the application is incomplete or further investigation is required.

#### **Article 7. Reporting**

Each year, the Student Financial Support Committee updates an anonymous register of the nature and extent of the applications handled by the committee for the Executive Board.

#### **Article 8. Confidentiality**

The members of the Student Financial Support Committee are obliged to maintain confidentiality with regard to all matters that come to their attention in their capacity as committee members to help protect the privacy of the student who has applied for financial support.

## **5 Application procedure and decision-making process**

#### **Article 9. Reporting; limiting a possible study delay<sup>4</sup>**

1. In the case of study progress delay as a result of circumstances beyond the student's control, as referred to in article 3, it is essential that special circumstances that may lead to this delay are reported to the student counsellor *as soon as possible once they have arisen* so that the measures can be considered that can limit the delay as much as possible. The exceptional circumstances must have been recorded in the student counsellor's meeting file by the end of the academic year in which they occurred. Not reporting this information in good time can make it more difficult to provide evidence justifying the granting of support when making an application at a later point in time.
2. The student is obliged to discuss the following with the student counsellor:
  - a. the possibility of interim deregistration if the study delay is expected to exceed 2 months,
  - b. the possibilities for taking measures to limit the study delay as much as possible.
3. Students experiencing special circumstances that may result in a delay to their studies are expected to study in a responsible manner. This means they must draw up a study plan every year in consultation with the student counsellor and their study development counsellor to reduce the delay as far as possible.

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<sup>4</sup> The student concerned must exhibit 'responsible learning behaviour', i.e. a student falling behind with their studies must do everything in their power to limit the delay to the extent possible. The university of applied sciences provides study counselling, assistance with planning and, if necessary, special facilities. Students suffering a delay in their studies as a result of special circumstances must, in so far as reasonably possible, actually make use of the institutions's support and facilities if they want to qualify for financial support.

This includes the obligation to report to the student counsellor as referred to in this article. Together with the student counsellor and, if required, the study development counsellor, the student will discuss the measures that will help prevent the study progress delay from needlessly increasing.

## **Article 10. Establishing study delay**

1. When determining the extent of the study delay, the link between the special circumstances and the curriculum is taken into account.  
The duly determined period of study delay, expressed in months, is the maximum period relating to the circumstance in question for which the support is granted, except for the situations stipulated in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this article.
2. In exceptional cases when special circumstances, including permanent ones, occur that cause a greater delay than expected, the student may submit a request for extension of the financial support with the Student Financial Support Committee. A personal explanation for the additional delay, an overview of the student's study results, a study plan and a recommendation from the student counsellor must be attached to this request. This type of request must be submitted before the end of the period in which financial support is received.
3. In the event of new special circumstances that may result in a study delay or additional study delay, the student may contact the student counsellor to report these circumstances and submit a new application if necessary.
4. The extent of the study delay, including any delays as referred to in paragraph 2, has been set at a maximum of 12 months for each special circumstance, except for *pregnancy and childbirth*. For these circumstances, only a maximum of 4 months applies per pregnancy. *Please refer to the footnote corresponding to article 3 paragraph 1a.*
5. No financial support will be awarded in the event of study delay of less than 1 month.

## **Article 11. Instalments, level and payment of financial support**

1. Full-time and work-study track students who became students on a performance-related student grant before 1 September 2015 and who received financial aid for studying for the first time between 1 September 1996 and 31 August 2015, financial support is provided in the form of a non-repayable grant amounting to the sum that the student previously received in the last month of the period of the grant entitlement when they were entitled to mixed student financial aid.
2. Full-time and work-study track students who became students on a performance-related student grant after 1 September 2015, financial support equals a monthly amount of €100 whose living at home with their parents, or €280 for those living on their own<sup>5</sup>, increased with - where applicable - the supplementary grant and single-parent allowance the student benefits from or would have benefitted from to pursuant to Chapter 3 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000, if the student were to claim this or be entitled to claim this, as stated in the last DUO-Bericht notification concerning the performance-related student grant period.  
These amounts are indexed annually on the basis of the consumer price index development.

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<sup>5</sup> These amounts are in correspondence with the guiding principle included in the letter from the Dutch minister of Education, Culture and Science to the institutions ('profielingsfonds and study loan' letter, spring 2016 ref. 908110) of maintaining the level of the basic grant, which has served as a benchmark so far.

3. Payment is made on the condition that the student is enrolled as a full-time or work-study track student at Avans University of Applied Sciences at the time of the payment being made, pays Avans statutory tuition fees for this and is yet to pass the final exam for their study programme. The student is also expected to actively pursue their studies during the period that the support is paid out.
4. The support is paid in the form of a non-repayable grant.
5. Payment is made in monthly instalments. An instalment is paid at the end of the month to which it relates.
6. The financial support cannot be paid until a student has made full use of all their grant entitlements (including any additional grant year with the Education Executive Agency DUO).
7. In so far as the student's administrative activities have already led to an exemption in the form of ECTS credits for a part of the study programme, a proportionate part of the delay will be deemed to have been compensated for by this.
8. In so far as the student's administrative activities have already led to financial compensation, this will be deducted from the financial support to be paid.<sup>6</sup>

#### **Article 12. Application to qualify for financial support on the basis of circumstances beyond one's control as referred to in article 3**

1. Using the form provided for this purpose, an application for financial support can be submitted through the student counsellor to the secretary of the Student Financial Support Committee (see article 5, paragraph 3). This form is included as an annexe to this Scheme.
2. The application must be submitted **during** the performance-related student grant period, preferably 2 to 6 months before the performance-related student grant period ends, so that payments can be made immediately following this period.
3. If the application is submitted once the performance-related student grant period has ended, it will be declared inadmissible.

**Note: no retrospective payments will be made.**

4. An application for financial support must include the following, on penalty of inadmissibility:
  - a. details of the surname, first names, address, student ID number and bank/giro account number of the student, as well as the study programme for which the student is enrolled,
  - b. a statement of enrolment as a full-time or work-study track student at the institution,
  - c. a statement from the student counsellor confirming that the student reported the special circumstances in good time,
  - d. a statement from the student counsellor suffices if the application is made for one of the reasons stated in article 3, paragraph 1a to c. To be able to provide this statement the student counsellor must be provided with a statement from a treating doctor, psychologist or obstetrician that indicates the period during which the circumstances occurred,<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Students who have already received a board activities grant as stated in article 4 paragraph 3e do not qualify for financial support from the Profileringsfonds fund.

<sup>7</sup> Not every doctor is prepared to issue a medical certificate; the Royal Dutch Medical Association's guideline on this matter is that they are not required to do so.

- e. if the application is based on article 3, paragraph 1d, a reason must be stated why, in the applicant's opinion, the study programme was set up in such a way that they will not be or were not reasonably able to pass the final exam within the performance-related student grant period, supplemented with a statement from the study programme, if required,
  - f. if the application is based on special family-related circumstances: written evidence that proves the special family-related circumstances,
  - g. a statement from the designated contact person on behalf of the study programme concerning the actual study delay suffered and the expected length of studies until graduation,
  - h. the student counsellor's recommendation in relation to the application,
  - i. an overview of the student financial aid for studying received in higher education and a statement from Education Executive Agency DUO relating to the level of financial aid for studying in the last month of the academic year in which the special circumstances occurred.
5. If the application is incomplete, the student will be given a period of 4 weeks to complete the application. If the application is not supplemented within this period, it will be declared inadmissible.

**Article 13. Application to qualify for financial support on the basis of administrative activities as referred to in article 4**

1. Using the form provided for this purpose, an application for financial support on the basis of administrative activities can be submitted to the Student Financial Support Committee.  
With due observance of the provisions contained in article 4 of this Scheme, the administrative function in question must have been fulfilled during the period in which the student lays/laid claim to a performance-related student grant.
2. The application must be submitted *within 2 months at the latest following the end of the administrative activity* that qualifies as a special circumstance. Applications submitted later will be declared inadmissible.
3. An application must include the following, on penalty of inadmissibility:
  - a. details of the surname, first names, address, student ID number and bank/giro account number of the student, as well as the study programme for which the student is enrolled,
  - b. a statement of enrolment as a full-time or work-study track student at the institution,
  - c. a statement backed up by one or more supporting documents, which shows that the student performs/has performed administrative activities,
  - d. an overview of the student financial aid for studying received in higher education and a statement from Education Executive Agency DUO relating to the level of financial aid for studying in the last month of the academic year in which the special circumstances occurred,
  - e. a statement from the student counsellor confirming that the student reported their board membership or intention to become a board member in good time,
  - f. a statement from the designated contact person on behalf of the study programme concerning the actual study delay suffered in relation to the curriculum,
  - g. the student counsellor's recommendation in relation to the application,

- h. a statement confirming the student's current or previous board membership in accordance with the provisions of article 4 of this Scheme,
  - i. a statement from the student concerning the means by which they have already received compensation on the basis of the performance of the activities referred to, for example, in the form of ECTS credits or exemptions or financial compensation,
  - j. a declaration that the board membership is being/was performed in the period in which the student is/was entitled to a performance-related student grant.
4. If the application is incomplete, the student will be given a period of 4 weeks to complete the application. If the application is not supplemented within this period, it will be declared inadmissible.

#### **Article 14. Processing and decision-making**

- 1.
  - a. The Student Financial Support Committee will take a decision on the application no later than 6 weeks of the application being submitted. If the application concerns a supplement as set out in article 12 or 13, this period commences from the moment the application was supplemented.
  - b. If the application requires further investigation, the period referred to under a will be extended for a period equal to the duration of the investigation, which is no longer than 3 weeks. The student will be informed of the duration of this extension in writing by the Student Financial Support Committee.
- 2. The decision will be either:
  - a. the granting of financial support for an amount and over a period to be specified,
  - b. a rejection of the application, stating reasons, or,
  - c. a decision to declare the application inadmissible, because it was not submitted on time, or because an incomplete application was not supplemented within the deadline set.
- 3. This decision is communicated to the student in writing, stating reasons. In the decision, the student's attention is drawn to the fact that they are entitled to file a written, substantiated complaint against the decision in accordance with the provisions of article 17.

#### **Article 15. Hardship clause**

The Student Financial Support Committee may deviate from the provisions of this Scheme if the strict application thereof would result in excessive unfairness.

#### **Article 16. Repayment**

- 1. If it transpires afterwards that the student was not entitled to receive the non-repayable grant or part of it, then the Student Financial Support Committee may recover the amount unduly paid out. The student must repay the wrongly paid out sum in monthly instalments of €100 or more.
- 2. In deviation from the above, a different repayment arrangement may be agreed upon in consultation with the student.

### **Article 17. Objection and appeal**

1. A reasoned complaint may be filed, in writing, against the decision made by the Student Financial Support Committee within 6 weeks of the date of this decision. The notice of complaint must be addressed to:  
the Disputes Advisory Committee  
Attn: the secretary  
PO box 90116  
4800 RA Breda  
The Netherlands

For this, the procedure set out in the Avans University of Applied Sciences Student Appeals Procedure must be followed.

### **Article 18. Effective date and temporary provisions**

This Scheme shall take effect from 1 May 2019, replacing all previous versions of this Scheme.

This Scheme can be cited as Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme.

## **Application Form for Financial Support for Students from the Profileringsfonds fund**

*This application results in an obligation to inform the Student Administration Office of any change of address and changes in the applicant's enrolment, on pain of a fine (Section 15.4 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act).*

*Instructions for completing this form:*

- Please tick as appropriate;*
- Choose a, b, c, d or e (please refer to article 3 paragraph 1 of the Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme).*

### **1. Details of student**

First name and surname: .....

Initials: .....

Address: .....

Telephone number: .....

Personal email address: .....

Avans email address: .....

Postcode and town/city: .....

Student ID number: .....

Bank/giro number: .....

### **2. Avans University of Applied Sciences:**

School: .....

Campus: .....

Study programme: .....

### **3. Date on which you received financial aid for studying in higher education for the first time:**

Date: .....

**Note: enclose copies of Education Executive Agency DUO documentation**

**4. Date from which you no longer qualify for financial aid for studying in the form of a grant:**

Date: .....

**Note: enclose copies of Education Executive Agency DUO documentation**

**5. Period/periods during which you were enrolled as a student at Avans University of Applied Sciences:**

Period from..... to.....

Period from..... to.....

**6. If you have previously enrolled at a different university of applied sciences/research university: at which institution and for what period of time?**

Institution: .....period from..... to.....

Institution: .....period from..... to.....

**7. Which units of study do you still need to complete?**

Unit of study: ..... number of ECTS credits.....

Name of supervisor: .....

*If you have any questions about the completion, you can contact the study adviser.*

**8. Nature of special circumstances**

Special circumstances as referred to in article 3: paragraph.....\*

Period from..... to.....

Special circumstances as referred to in article 4:

Membership: .....

Period from..... to.....

Application under the Facilitation scheme for students/top athletes:

Period from..... to.....

**9. Did you already report these special circumstances?**

Yes  No

If so, to whom and when? If not, why not?  
(enclose copy of notification form)

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**10. Did you already receive financial support on the basis of the provisions in the Fund for Financial Support of Students Profileringsfonds Scheme?**

Yes  No

If so, letter dated..... reference: .....  
(enclose copy of decision)

**11. Was your financial aid for studying period extended for 1 year (in connection with a disability or chronic illness), as referred to in Section 5.2b paragraph 1 of the Dutch Student Finance Act 2000?**

Yes  No  
(enclose copy of decision)

**12. The designated contact person of the study programme department**

Name.....

recognises that this student has suffered a delay of..... months in their study progress as a result of recognised special circumstances.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**13. Recommendation of student counsellor**  
(enclose substantiated recommendation separately if required):

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In view of the reasons stated above, financial support for a period of..... months is recommended.

Name of student counsellor: .....

Signature (*student counsellor*): .....Date: .....

**14. Statement**

*The undersigned declares to agree to the fact that financial support in the form of a non-repayable grant from the Profileringsfonds fund is only awarded on the condition that the undersigned is enrolled at Avans University of Applied Sciences as a full-time or work-study track student and is actively pursuing their studies during the term of the provision.*

*The Student Financial Support Committee may recover the amount unduly paid out if these conditions are not met.*

Signature: ..... Date: .....

**The student is advised to provide details on the nature and backgrounds of the special circumstances in a separate document, and enclose this document with the application form.**