

Care Leaver Bursary – Terms and Conditions

Bursary details

1. At the University of Hertfordshire, we use the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 definition for care leavers: ‘those who have been in the care of the local authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday’.
2. Care leaver status is confirmed through a letter from the relevant local authority, or the student’s case/social worker or aftercare/leaving team.
3. The Care Leaver Bursary is a payment of £1,800 available for undergraduate degree students with a ‘Home’ fee status who are recognised as care leavers.
4. Students will receive the bursary for the duration of their undergraduate degree programme, usually for a maximum of three (3) years.
5. Bursary funds are provided to help with the additional costs associated with studying full-time, including food, travel, bills, and study materials.

Eligibility

6. To be eligible for the Care Leaver Bursary, students must be:
 - a. under the age of 25 on the first day of the academic semester in which they start their programme of study, according to the dates published in the University of Hertfordshire’s academic calendar;
 - b. registered on a full-time University of Hertfordshire undergraduate degree programme delivered directly by the University of Hertfordshire or one of its consortium colleges, studying 120 credits per academic year;
 - c. actively studying (i.e. not in a period of dormancy or suspension of studies);
 - d. a ‘Home’ fee paying student as assessed by the University of Hertfordshire ([find out more about your fee status here](#));
 - e. studying their first undergraduate degree; and
 - f. confirmed with care leaver status from the relevant local authority (or the student’s case/social worker or aftercare/leaving team).
7. Students will not be eligible if they are:
 - a. studying an initial or foundation year prior to their undergraduate degree programme. They will be eligible for the bursary (subject to the above conditions) once they have completed their initial year or year zero programme and have progressed to year one (level 4) of their undergraduate degree programme;
 - b. studying a foundation degree;
 - c. studying a distance learning/online degree programme;
 - d. undertaking a degree apprenticeship; or
 - e. studying a part-time degree programme.
8. Students registered on a full-time undergraduate degree programme, studying fewer than 120 credits but more than 30 credits per academic year may still be considered for a pro-rata Care Leaver Bursary, calculated in proportion to their credit load, up to a maximum of £1,200 (in three (3) instalments of £400). If they are studying fewer than 30 credits, they will not be eligible for the bursary.

Application process

9. Students seeking to apply for the Care Leaver Bursary should email careexperienced@herts.ac.uk.
10. Students must provide a letter from the relevant local authority, or a letter from their case/social worker or from their aftercare/leaving care team, on headed paper which confirms:
 - a. their date of birth;
 - b. the date that they entered the care system;
 - c. their immigration status, where relevant; and
 - d. name and contact details for their current social worker.
11. Students should provide the above evidence by email to careexperienced@herts.ac.uk, along with their name, programme of study, student ID number, and contact details.
12. Newly identified, or self-identified, care leavers will be contacted to advise them of their bursary eligibility and the application process.
13. All students who meet the eligibility criteria and provide the evidence detailed above will be considered for the Care Leaver Bursary. All applications will be considered on an individual basis and awarded subject to the availability of funding.

Payment

14. The bursary will typically be paid in three (3) instalments of £600 in each term of an undergraduate degree programme. For students with confirmed care leaver status and starting their degree in September, this will typically be:
 - a. 1st payment – October
 - b. 2nd payment – January
 - c. 3rd payment – May
15. The bursary amount will vary according to when care leaver status is confirmed:
 - a. confirmation in autumn term, full bursary of £1,800;
 - b. confirmation in spring term, second and third instalments only, totalling £1,200; or
 - c. confirmation in summer term, third instalment only, totalling £600.
16. The bursary amount will be calculated in proportion to credit load, as above (point 8).
17. Subject to continuing eligibility, students will receive the bursary for the duration of their undergraduate degree programme, usually for a maximum of three (3) years.
18. Students who are identified as being eligible during the academic year will have their payments backdated to the beginning of that same academic year. However, bursary payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for previous academic years.
19. Students are responsible for ensuring the bank details they provide to the University of Hertfordshire are correct. Incorrect bank details may cause delays in payment.

20. Students may receive an additional 'gift year' of bursary funding if needed. The provision of a 'gift year' is at the discretion of the University of Hertfordshire and subject to the availability of funds.
21. Any further support beyond this entitlement will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the University of Hertfordshire and subject to the availability of funds. Requests for additional support on the basis of exceptional circumstances must be submitted in writing to the University of Hertfordshire's Widening Access and Student Success team by email to careexperienced@herts.ac.uk.

Change of circumstances

22. **Mode of study:** Students who change their mode of study from full-time to part-time or to distance/online learning will no longer be eligible for the bursary.
23. **Dormancy:** Students who take a period of dormancy (a voluntary suspension of studies) and are in receipt of the bursary will not receive any further payments whilst dormant.
24. **Placements or study abroad:** Students will continue to receive the bursary if they undertake a placement or study abroad as part of their degree subject to confirmation by the programme lead (or equivalent) that the student is undertaking a placement or study abroad as part of their degree programme.
25. **Withdrawal from study:** Students who withdraw from their programme at any stage prior to completion will no longer be eligible for the bursary.
26. **Suspension of study:** Bursary payments will not be paid during any period of suspension. Reinstatement of payments will be dependent on the student returning to active study status. Students will not receive any payments that were withheld during the period of suspension.
27. **Transfer of course:** Students who transfer to a new programme of study will receive the bursary for the remainder of their undergraduate degree programme, usually for an overall maximum of three (3) years. The addition of a 'gift year' as described in point 20, may also be agreed if needed. For example, a student who completes year 1 of an undergraduate degree programme and then transfers to a different undergraduate degree programme, may receive the bursary for a maximum of a further three (3) years.

Declaration of change of circumstances

28. Students whose circumstances change in relation to any aspect of their eligibility, must contact careexperienced@herts.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity to seek confirmation of their continued eligibility to receive bursary payments.
29. Students who fail to declare a change in circumstance which alters their eligibility and who continue to knowingly receive bursary payments, may be asked to return some or all of the funds paid to them.

Return of funds

30. The University of Hertfordshire reserves the right to seek a full or partial return of funds if a student discontinues their studies within a short time of receiving payment. This typically applies to discontinuation/withdrawal/dormancy that takes place within four (4) weeks of payment being issued. The decision as to whether a partial or full repayment is required in these circumstances, will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the University of Hertfordshire's Widening Access and Student Success team.

Other bursaries

31. Students cannot be considered for other Access and Participation bursaries (including the Estranged Student Bursary, the Refugee Bursary, and the Young Adult Carer Bursary) if they receive the Care Leaver Bursary.
32. Students cannot be considered for the UH Bursary if they receive the Care Leaver Bursary. However, if a student qualifies for the Care Leaver Bursary after having received the UH Bursary, they will be transferred to the bursary of greater value and payments will be adjusted accordingly.
33. Students awarded the Care Leaver Bursary may also be eligible to apply for University of Hertfordshire scholarships¹.

Complaints

34. Complaints will be dealt with according to the University of Hertfordshire's complaints procedure. In the first stage, informal complaints should be made to the University of Hertfordshire's Widening Access and Student Success team via studentsuccess@herts.ac.uk. Every reasonable effort will be made to respond to the issue raised and reach an informal resolution. If a resolution is not reached at this stage, a formal complaint can be made using the process detailed in the University of Hertfordshire's complaints procedure.

Further information and contacts

For further information about the Care Leaver Bursary or to discuss your eligibility, please contact careexperienced@herts.ac.uk.

For further information on bursaries or scholarships available at the University of Hertfordshire, please go to herts.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/financial-support/scholarships-grants-bursaries.

¹ Bursaries usually refer to a one-off annual or termly payment, to help with living costs, awarded on the basis of student background or personal circumstances. Scholarships can be either to support with living costs or to cover tuition fees and are usually awarded via application on the basis of achievement.

Details of all bursaries and scholarships available at the University of Hertfordshire are available here: herts.ac.uk/study/fees-and-funding/financial-support/scholarships-grants-bursaries