

Estranged Student Bursary – Terms and Conditions

Bursary details

1. At the University of Hertfordshire, we use the following definition of estrangement: ‘someone who has not had verbal or written contact with both of your biological, adoptive parents or your only living parent for a significant period of time and this will not change’. A ‘significant period of time’ is usually considered twelve (12) months or longer, although periods of fewer than twelve (12) months will be considered in some circumstances.
2. Independent student status due to estrangement is confirmed through Student Finance England or an equivalent awarding body.
3. The Estranged Student Bursary is a payment of £1,800 available for undergraduate degree students with a ‘Home’ fee status who are confirmed as estranged.
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 Estranged Student 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 as having independent student status due to estrangement through Student Finance England or an equivalent awarding body ([find out more about how independent student status is assessed here](#)). When a student is 25 or over, Student Finance England will no longer confer estranged status.
7. For continuing students over the age of 25 with prior confirmed estrangement from Student Finance England, an assessment of status (with supporting evidence) will be undertaken by the University of Hertfordshire’s Widening Access and Student Success team to determine the student’s continued eligibility for the bursary.
8. 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.
9. 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 Estranged Student 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

10. Students seeking to apply for the Estranged Student Bursary should email independent-estranged@herts.ac.uk.
11. Students must provide evidence of being independent due to estrangement in the form of a confirmation letter or email from Student Finance England or an equivalent funding body.
12. Students should provide the above evidence by email to independent-estranged@herts.ac.uk, along with their name, programme of study, student ID number, and contact details.
13. Students will be required to submit evidence of their ongoing estranged status each year of their undergraduate degree programme.
- a. For students under 25, this must be in the form of a confirmation letter or email from Student Finance England or an equivalent funding body.
 - b. For returning students who are over 25, an assessment of estranged status (with supporting evidence) will be undertaken by the University of Hertfordshire's Widening Access and Student Success team.
14. Students who have self-identified as estranged but do not yet have confirmed independent status on the basis of estrangement through Student Finance England will be advised of the process for confirming their status by the Widening Access and Student Success team.
15. All new and returning students who meet the eligibility criteria and provide the evidence detailed above will be considered for the Estranged Student Bursary. All applications will be considered on an individual basis and awarded subject to the availability of funding.

Payment

16. The bursary will typically be paid in three (3) instalments of £600 in each term of an undergraduate degree programme. For students with confirmed estranged status and starting their degree in September, this will typically be:
- a. 1st payment – October
 - b. 2nd payment – January
 - c. 3rd payment – May
17. The bursary amount will vary according to when estranged 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.

18. The bursary amount will be calculated in proportion to credit load, as above (point 9).
19. 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.
20. 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.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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 independent-estranged@herts.ac.uk.

Change of circumstances

24. **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.
25. **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.
26. **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.
27. **Withdrawal from study:** Students who withdraw from their programme at any stage prior to completion will no longer be eligible for the bursary.
28. **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.
29. **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 22, 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 in circumstance

30. Students whose circumstances change in relation to any aspect of their eligibility, must contact independent-estranged@herts.ac.uk at the earliest opportunity to seek confirmation of their continued eligibility to receive bursary payments.
31. 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

32. 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

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

Complaints

36. 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 Estranged Student Bursary, or to discuss your eligibility, please contact independent-estranged@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