



Care Experienced Student Support Student Money and Accommodation Advice

Starting university is a new adventure for anyone.

We understand that as a student who has experienced being in care you may have circumstances or concerns that might be different from other students.

At London Met we are committed to providing you with as much support as possible to help you adapt to university life and this information sheet provides an overview of the financial and pastoral support package you may expect to receive.

We recognise that you may not need, or want, any extra support but it's important to know what you are entitled to, especially when you are still thinking about applying, settling into a new course or the daunting prospect of a new place to live.

Sometimes, it can just be easier to know that there is one person who can point you in the right direction to ensure this process is as simple and supportive as possible. As named contact for care leavers I am keen to make sure your individual needs are met and I'm here to help prior and throughout your course, as and when you need, starting right now!

Whether it's just for a chat or to share any concerns, please contact me and I will treat any questions you have confidentially and will only refer to other departments or agencies with your permission.

We hope to make sure that studying here is as enjoyable and uncomplicated as possible.

Best Wishes

Neil Parsons
Student Adviser and Named Contact for Care Leavers
London Metropolitan University
careleaver@londonmet.ac.uk / 020 7133 2094



Who is a 'Care Leaver'?

At London Met we define a care leaver as a person who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and who was in care on their 16th birthday.

A young person's status as a care leaver is divided into three categories: Eligible, Relevant and Former Relevant Child. Often students from care studying at university will fall under Former Relevant Child status.

Further details can be found at:

www.londonmet.ac.uk/about/school-programmes-and-outreach/care-leavers/

London Met understands the specific challenges you may face. We offer a personalised support package covering money, accommodation and pastoral support.

Please note that a series of information sheets regarding funding available to our full-time and part-time students, and students with children, can be found at: www.londonmet.ac.uk/advice

1) Student Finance England - www.gov.uk/studentfinance

Full-time students

If you are leaving care, you are generally classified by Student Finance England as an independent student. This means your student funding allowance is assessed on your income, rather than that of a parent, guardian or foster parent(s).

You will need to provide an official letter on headed paper from your Local Authority, Foyer or Social Worker/Case Worker/Personal Adviser along with your application to Student Finance England to prove your independent status. This letter will need to confirm your care leaver status and detail the dates of which you have been in care/registered with the Local Authority. You will need to provide this letter to Student Finance England for each academic year you study.

You are likely to be awarded the funding listed below provided you are a 'Home' student commencing your studies from September/February 2017/18, have no previous university study, and a household income of under £25,000.

- Tuition Fee Loan – up to £9,250 (to be repaid)
- Maintenance Loan – up to £11,002¹ (to be repaid)

¹£11,998 if you retain an entitlement to income-assessed benefits while registered as a full-time student.

2) University funding

Care Leaver Bursary

London Met is pleased to offer a Care Leaver Bursary for full-time students of £1,500 for each progressive year of your undergraduate degree. This is intended to help towards course costs and basic living expense, and is paid in three instalments towards the beginning of each term. Applications for the bursary are made automatically² when you apply for your student funding. It is important you indicate you are a care leaver on your Student Finance England application and provide the necessary evidence to Student Finance England as detailed in section 1.

Please see link for further details:

www.londonmet.ac.uk/applying/funding-your-studies/bursaries-and-grants/care-leaver-bursary/

²If you are a parent and/or are married/live with a partner you will need to apply to the University directly for your Care Leaver Bursary. Please email the required letter to careleaver@londonmet.ac.uk or arrange a one-to-one appointment with our specialist Care Leaver Adviser Neil Parsons. As with Student Finance England this letter will need to be provided to the University for each academic year you study.

London Met Bursary (including extended degree courses)

Applications for the London Met Bursary are processed automatically when you apply for your funding through Student Finance England³. £1,000 cash bursaries (for each progressive year) are available to full-time students who meet the criteria starting on a three-year degree or extended degree programme. £500 cash bursaries per progressive year are also available to part-time students who meet the criteria. Please see link for further details:

www.londonmet.ac.uk/applying/funding-your-studies/fee-reductions-and-bursaries/undergraduate/

Important: The London Met Bursary and Care Leaver Bursary are met with the condition that students adhere to a minimum attendance rate of 75% throughout the academic year. For students starting in September attendance data is recorded in February. This is in regards to eligibility for the second instalment of the London Met Bursary and the second and final instalments of the Care Leaver Bursary. For students starting in February this data is recorded in May.

³To be assessed for both bursary schemes as a full-time student you will need to be eligible and apply for the maximum amount of maintenance loan available through Student Finance England. If you wish to be considered for the bursary, please ensure the box on your Student Finance England application which states you 'consent to share your bursary data with your university' is ticked.

Hardship Support Fund

Available during both term-time and the summer period⁴ with a potential grant award of up to £1,500 (per academic year) this fund is intended to assist students who are facing particular financial difficulty to remain on their course. Care leavers are treated as priority applicants and whilst there is no guarantee of a successful application, we strongly recommend you apply.

Please see link for further details:

<http://student.londonmet.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/hardship-fund/>

⁴Year on year funding is dependent on future budget availability and is not guaranteed.

3) Additional funding

As a care leaver studying in Higher Education, often your registered Local Authority will provide a Higher Education Bursary of £2,000 towards your first year of study. Please speak to your Local Authority or social/case worker for more information about available support or contact our specialist Care Leaver Adviser Neil Parsons⁵.

Please see below for contact details of your registered Local Authority:

- Within London - <http://directory.londoncouncils.gov.uk/>
- Outside London - <http://local.direct.gov.uk/LDGRedirect/Start.do?mode=1>

⁵Please note that consent-to-share and/or data protection documents may need to be signed before the University can speak on your behalf with a third party.

Accommodation

London Met understands the importance of a fixed address when focusing on your studies. We will work with you to help you find suitable accommodation and assist you in arranging

accommodation for 365 days of the year. More information can be found at www.londonmet.ac.uk/accommodation

Pastoral support

Our specialist Care Leaver Adviser Neil Parsons is available via email, telephone and one-to-one appointments. In addition to assisting you with funding from Student Finance England and checking you are receiving all the financial support available to you, he may also use your pathway plan and work in partnership with your Social Worker/Personal Adviser to co-ordinate the best arrangements and support to suit your needs. He can also advise on any other concerns you may have, and will be able to refer you internally or externally.

Students are also notified of care leaver workshops which run throughout the year free of charge, and are provided with opportunities to attend external events such as presentations on careers and study skills, work experience placements, and away days.

Additional support and resources

Become

Become is a voice and a champion for young people in the UK living in care. They believe, as we do, that every care-experienced young person should receive the support, encouragement and opportunities necessary to enjoy life and achieve. www.becomecharity.org.uk

Buttle UK

Offers grant programmes for children and young people in need. www.buttleuk.org

Coram Voice

Enables and equips children and young people to hold to account the services that are responsible for their care. www.coramvoice.org.uk

Drive Forward Foundation

Offers CV and interview skills as well as access to a professional network of entrepreneurs and professionals from many industries to open your eyes to different career paths and ways to succeed. www.driveforwardfoundation.com

Samaritans

Provides emotional support 24 hours a day. Tel: 116 123; www.samaritans.org

How to contact me

Telephone your Student Hub and ask to book an appointment with Neil Parsons:

Aldgate Hub – 020 7133 7002; Holloway Hub – 020 7133 7001; Moorgate Hub: 020 7133 7003

Email: careleaver@londonmet.ac.uk

Website: www.londonmet.ac.uk/advice

The Social Security Fraud Act 2001

The Advice Information & Funding Service reminds all clients who may be in receipt of benefits from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and/or Local Authority of the need to disclose to the DWP/Local Authority any relevant changes of circumstances and of the need for clients to make full and accurate disclosure of all the relevant facts to the DWP and/or Local Authority.

The content of this information sheet has been compiled using information from external sources, as well as University data. The content has been carefully checked and is given in good faith. However, the University cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of any inaccuracy. May 2017