Student Money and Accommodation Advice

**Estranged Students**

Students who have lost family contact or whose relationship with their family has broken down may be able to apply for student support as an Estranged Student. This means that you will be assessed as an independent student and means-tested on your own income rather than your parents’ income.

We provide a named contact to help with the following:

* Advice and guidance for Student Finance England (SFE) applications
* Advice about other funding opportunities, such as from Buttle UK
* Guidance in addressing housing issues

Our named contacts are Eloise Peters and Isabel Patrick. If you have estrangement-related queries, please email CEES@londonmet.ac.uk or, to book an appointment, email studentservices@londonmet.ac.uk/.

**Student funding**

If you wish to apply for independent status because you are estranged from your parents, you must provide confirmation from a professional person, outside your family, who knows about your circumstances.

Examples of evidence you could provide are:

* A letter from your social worker if you have one;
* If you claimed Income Support or Universal Credit when you were under 18, a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions or your online Universal Credit account showing you were in receipt of this benefit because of your circumstances;
* If your relationship with your parents broke down while you were at school or college, a letter from an advice worker, personal tutor or teacher, confirming your circumstances; or
* If you have visited your doctor because of problems relating to the breakdown of your relationship with your parents, a letter from your doctor to confirm your circumstances.

To qualify for independent status through estrangement, you will need to prove the lack of contact with your parents is permanent.

Student Finance England will normally expect you to have had no contact with your parents for at least 12 months, although this may not apply in exceptional circumstances. You won’t be able to apply for independent status just because you don’t get along with your parents or because you don’t live with them. Similarly, you won’t automatically be able to apply for independent status because your parents refuse or don’t want to provide details of their income. For more information, read the Stand Alone ‘supporting people that are estranged’ student guide: [www.standalone.org.uk/guides/student-guide/](http://www.standalone.org.uk/guides/student-guide/)

SFE will accept a [Confirmation of Estrangement form](https://media.slc.co.uk/sfe/2324/ft/sfe_confirmation_of_estrangement_form_2324_o.pdf) - This form allows the student and a third party to confirm the information SFE needs to confirm their status.

**UNITE Foundation Accommodation Scholarship**

London Met is proud to have been chosen as a Unite Foundation Scholarship Scheme provider. [www.londonmet.ac.uk/applying/funding-your-studies/scholarships/unite-foundation-scholarship-scheme/](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/applying/funding-your-studies/scholarships/unite-foundation-scholarship-scheme/)

Applications open on 1 January 2023 and the closing date is usually 1 June (please check the Unite Foundation website to confirm – <https://thisisusatuni.org/>).

 Scholarship applicants need to be:

* aged 25 or under
* a statutory care leaver or estranged from their family
* starting or studying their first undergraduate degree
* UK ‘Home’ fee status

**Other sources of help and support**

**Buttle UK**

Awards of up to £2,400 to estranged young people aged 16-20 for support with education, employment/training, setting up home, and improving emotional/physical wellbeing. Applications should be made by statutory/voluntary organisations on your behalf. [www.buttleuk.org](http://www.buttleuk.org)

**Lawrence Atwell’s Charity**

Grants of £100 – £1,500 to young people aged 16-26 to help with training courses, including buying equipment, living expenses during the course and fees for tuition, enrolment or exams. [Skinners' Charity Foundation - The Skinners’ Company](https://www.skinners.org.uk/charities/scf/young-people/)

**StandAlone**

StandAlone is a charity set up to support people who are estranged from their family. They have produced a guide for students who are applying for independent status from Student Finance England and Wales. More information is available on their website: <http://standalone.org.uk/students>

**Turn2us**

Turn2us is a free service that helps people in financial need access welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help. Their website has a free and easy to use benefits calculator and grants search: [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## How to contact us

Visit [www.londonmet.ac.uk/advice](http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/advice) for up-to-date appointments and drop-in times.

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. June 2023