



Estranged Students Student Money and Accommodation Advice

Students who have lost family contact or whose relationship with their family has broken down can possibly 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 can provide a named contact to help with the following:

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

Our named contact is Isabel Patrick. If you have estrangement-related queries for Isabel, please email SMAA@londonmet.ac.uk or book an appointment with Isabel via your Student Hub.

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 when you were under 18, a letter from your Jobcentre Plus office 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 on 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/

Accommodation Scholarship

London Met has been chosen as one of only 28 universities whose students are able to apply for the Unite Foundation Scholarship Scheme. 70 scholarships are currently still available in the 2018 academic year. Please see the following link for closing dates (this is usually the end of May or beginning of June):

www.londonmet.ac.uk/applying/funding-your-studies/scholarships/unite-foundation-scholarship-scheme/

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

Buttle UK provides thousands of grants to young people in the UK, often when there is no other source of help available to them. One particular grant that might be available to estranged young people is the Students and Trainees Programme. The Student and Trainee Grants programme awards financial support to young people (aged 16-20), who are estranged from their parents to help them attend education. Remember to check the eligibility criteria prior to applying:

www.buttleuk.org

Brightside

Brightside has some useful information for students whose parents are unwilling to provide their income details, as well as for estranged students finding it difficult to evidence independence:

www.brightknowledge.org

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

How to contact us

Telephone your Student Hub and ask to book a phone or face-to-face appointment with a Student Money and Accommodation Adviser:

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

Email: SMAA@londonmet.ac.uk

Website: www.londonmet.ac.uk/advice

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. September 2018