



UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON
INTERCOLLEGIATE
HALLS

Support for Care Leavers and Estranged Students Policy

2025–26



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Introduction

The University of London federation of Member Institutions are some of the leading universities in the world and are open to all students no matter their background. We recognise that young people who are estranged from their biological or adoption parents, or who are care leavers, can face additional challenges when entering higher education. The University of London is committed to supporting students to ensure that they receive the help they need in order to have a successful university experience. We hope that the measures offered in this policy provide benefit to care leavers and estranged students who are resident in – or will be resident in – our Intercollegiate Halls, and provide the context for achieving personal and academic success.

Definitions

Estranged student

For the purposes of this policy, an estranged student is a person aged 25 or under at the time of enrolment and has experienced irrevocable breakdown in their relationship with both of their biological or adoptive parents, or only living parent, and often their wider family, for a significant period of time (usually 12 months).

Care Leaver

For the purposes of this policy, an care leaver is a person aged 25 or under, whom a local authority has looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, including some period at the age of 16 or older. "Looked after" and/or "in the care of a local authority" includes in foster care, in local authority accommodation, at home under a care order, or under kinship care.

Enhanced support for estranged students and care leavers

In addition to the pastoral and wellbeing support available for all residents in the Intercollegiate Halls, we offer the following measures specifically for estranged students and care leavers:

- Priority on our Intercollegiate Halls accommodation waiting list, if you are still seeking accommodation on or after 1st September. Please note that having priority on the waiting list cannot guarantee you a place, but it does make it more likely that you will be offered accommodation in the Intercollegiate Halls. If you wish to be considered for a priority place on the waiting list, you will need to apply in the usual way to get your name on the list, and then email residential.life@london.ac.uk to let us know that you have done so.
- The option to pay the deposit for your accommodation in three manageable instalments, with a deadline of final payment by the Friday immediately prior to your arrival.
- [For first-year students only:] Your Hall Warden will send you an email, within the 2 weeks prior to your arrival, to ask if you would like to schedule a phone call where they can help answer any questions you may have.
- [For first-year students only:] The option for early arrival at your Intercollegiate Hall, (up to five days before arrivals day, which usually falls on the second Sunday of September), free of charge, to help you settle into your new accommodation during a quieter period.
- [For first-year students only:] Should you choose the option for early arrival, the Warden or a designated Resident Advisor will meet and greet you at the nearest underground station to your hall to help you find your hall and personally welcome you. This option must be arranged during the telephone call with the Warden to ensure that a member of the Warden's Team is available to meet you. Please note that this option will not be available on the main arrivals day.
- A direct line of communication with the Student Health & Wellbeing Manager as an additional source of pastoral support and signposting to other services as appropriate.
- 365-day accommodation in an Intercollegiate Hall in your first year of full-time study (charged at the normal daily rate). This is a guarantee that you will be able to stay in an Intercollegiate Hall during the summer vacation.
- If required, 365-day accommodation in an Intercollegiate Hall for a further maximum of two years of full-time study (charged at the normal daily rate), subject to you having no outstanding debt to the University from the previous year(s).

How to apply for enhanced support

If you are a care leaver or estranged student and you would like to benefit from the support provision outlined in this policy, please contact

residential.life@london.ac.uk, including the following information:

- Your full name, current address, and date of birth;
- Details of your course (subject, year, and place of study); and
- Evidence of care leaver or estranged status (see requirements below).

Evidence of estranged or care leaver status

Please note the evidence required to confirm estranged or care leaver status under this policy may be different from the evidence required to meet the eligibility requirements for our Care Leavers & Estranged Student Scholarship (the requirements for this policy are less strict than the requirements for the Scholarship).

Care leavers

We can accept any of the following as evidence of care leaver status:

- A letter on headed paper from your local authority confirming that you are a statutory care leaver (England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) or care experienced (Scotland).
- A letter on headed paper from Student Finance confirming explicitly that you are in receipt of funds specifically for care leavers.
- A letter on headed paper from your GP, social worker, solicitor, or key worker stating that you are a care leaver or care experienced for statutory purposes.

Estranged students

We can accept any of the following as evidence of estranged status:

- A letter on headed paper from Student Finance stating that you have been assessed as an independent student on the basis of estrangement.
- A letter on headed paper from your GP, social worker, solicitor, or key worker stating that you are permanently not in contact with your family

Care Leavers and Estranged Student Scholarship

The University of London, in partnership with the Unite Foundation, offers an accommodation scholarship for care leavers and estranged students. The scholarship provides free accommodation in the Intercollegiate Halls for up to a maximum of three academic years.

All scholarship recipients will automatically be offered the support outlined in this policy. However, you do not have to apply for or be awarded the scholarship to register as an estranged student or care leaver and benefit from the enhanced support provision.

