The Open University Undergraduate Bursary

The Open University Undergraduate Bursary scheme will provide a fund for new UK students from low income families, where the household income is less than £25,000, or if the applicant is in receipt of a qualifying benefit.

There are 50 bursaries available for students for the first 180 credits of study. Each bursary is for the value of £3,000 and is designed to help with study costs or other living expenses.

The Bursary is intended as a contribution towards study costs and is not a tuition fee payment method.

Terms & Conditions

These conditions contain the terms of the Bursary scheme. They set out the rights and responsibilities of each party which will apply in relation to your application for the scheme and, for successful applicants only, whilst you are a registered student.

Please read these Conditions carefully before you submit an application and make sure that you understand them.

A. Eligibility

1. In order to qualify for an Open University bursary the applicant must meet all of the following criteria;
   - Be registered to study their first Open University module which begins between 1st September 2018 and 31st October 2018
   - Have a gross household income of not more than £25,000 or be in receipt of a qualifying benefit listed in Appendix 2
   - Be ordinarily resident in the UK
   - Be a new student to The Open University – an applicant will not be eligible if they have previously studied any credit-bearing modules, including Access modules
   - Hold no existing Higher Education qualification
   - Be studying towards an undergraduate qualification listed in Appendix 1
   - Be studying a minimum of 30 credits per year

2. In addition to the criteria listed above the applicant must also meet at least two of the following criteria:
   - Registered disabled
   - Ethnic minority
• Care leaver within the last five years
• Female intending to study a STEM qualification, (Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths)
• Male intending to study Nursing or Subjects Allied to Medicine, Arts, Social Science, Law, Education or Languages

B. Bursary Payments

3. Up to £1,000 will be payable in each academic year for each 60 credits being studied. Where a student is studying fewer than 60 credits during the year the bursary total will be adjusted proportionately.

4. The annual bursary total will be paid in two equal instalments per academic year, subject to having an approved payment method in place and satisfactory participation in study. Students funding their studies with a part-time tuition fee loan must have a fully approved loan in place. The first payment will be made in early November. The second payment will be made on 1st February.

5. No further applications will be required. Once a bursary is approved, payments will be released automatically subject to the applicant being fully registered for at least 30 credits for the academic year.

6. Bursary payments will not be made in any year in which an applicant does not register for at least 30 credits.

7. Study breaks will be permitted up to a total of 24 months in aggregate. Study breaks of longer than 24 months will terminate the applicant’s bursary eligibility after which an application for exceptional reinstatement will be required.

8. Any bursary payment made by The Open University in error or paid as a result of false information submitted will be recovered from the applicant.

9. Bursaries do not normally have to be paid back, as they are a grant not a loan. However if the applicant withdraws from their course or takes a leave of absence they may have to repay a percentage of the bursary received in that academic year.

C. Applications

10. The deadline for applications is midnight on 20th September 2018. No further applications will be accepted after this date.

11. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide all supporting evidence requested in the application form. Any application form received without the supporting evidence cannot be considered.

12. In the instance that more applications are received than bursaries available, a draw will take place to allocate the bursaries. The draw will be open to all eligible applications received.

13. Applications are strictly limited to one application per person only. Unsuccessful applicants will not be permitted to apply for bursary funding in subsequent years.

14. Applications submitted on behalf of another person will not be accepted.
15. The Open University accepts no responsibility for applications that are incomplete, lost, delayed, misdirected or cannot be delivered.

16. Proof of delivery of the application is not proof of receipt by The Open University.

17. Applications will be chosen at random from a draw of all eligible applications. The applications drawn will each receive the bursary award of £3,000 payable in instalments, subject to satisfactory ongoing participation in study, as detailed in these terms and conditions.

18. Successful applicants will be notified by email and letter on or before 31st October 2018. If the applicant rejects the bursary or the application is invalid or in breach of these terms and conditions, the award will be forfeited and The Open University shall be entitled to randomly select another recipient.

19. The successful applicant may be requested to take part in promotional activity related to the bursary. The Open University shall use and take care of any personal information supplied to it as described in its privacy policy, a copy of which is available on request, in accordance with data protection legislation.

20. By entering the application process you agree to the collection, retention, usage and distribution of your personal information in order to process your application and contact you.

21. The Open University accepts no responsibility for any disappointment incurred by the applicant as a result of entering the application process. The bursary is discretionary and the outcome of the draw is final.

22. The Open University reserves the right at any time and from time to time to modify or discontinue, temporarily or permanently, this bursary scheme with or without prior notice due to reasons outside its control.

23. Promoter: The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA.

Frequently Asked Questions

When and how will the bursary be paid?
The bursary will be paid in two instalments each academic year, subject to satisfactory participation in your studies. The first payment will be made in early November. The second payment will be made on 1st February.

What happens if I decide not to take up my course place after the bursary has been awarded?
If you have not fully registered on your module, including securing a suitable payment method and incurring a fee liability (where appropriate) within three weeks of the course start date, the bursary will be withdrawn and offered to another eligible student.

What happens if I withdraw from my course?
Bursaries do not normally have to be paid back, as they are a grant not a loan. However if you withdraw from your course or take a leave of absence you may have to repay a percentage of the bursary received in that academic year.
What can the bursary money be spent on?
There are no restrictions on what you can spend the money on, however the bursary is intended to support you with costs related to your study.

Why is ethnicity one of the eligibility criteria?
This bursary is aimed at groups of students who are under-represented in Higher Education, the scheme aims to help towards the Open University’s aims of ensuring that our student population reflects the whole of our society.

Why is the scheme only open to some courses?
The scheme is targeted at specific students on specific courses who would benefit most from the limited funds available.

Can I appeal if I am not happy with the decision?
The bursary is discretionary and the outcome of the draw is final. We may contact some applicants who were unsuccessful for feedback on our application process.

I am studying for a Masters or other postgraduate degree – can I apply?
Our bursary scheme is only open to undergraduates – we do not currently have a scheme to support postgraduate students.
Appendix 1 - Eligible qualifications

- Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)
- Foundation degree
- Ordinary degree
- Honours degree

NB: Apprenticeships at these levels are also included

Appendix 2 - Qualifying benefits

Qualifying benefits for the 2018/19 academic year are:

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit (including Local Housing Allowance)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)
- Universal Credit
- For students in Wales only – A reduction under the Council Tax Scheme