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## UNUM ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY BURSARY 2020/21: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHO IS THE BURSARY OPEN TO?

The UNUM Access to University Bursary is open to new undergraduate students at Birkbeck who are in need of extra financial support to undertake their degree. The full eligibility criteria can be found at: [www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/unum-bursary](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/unum-bursary)

### WHAT DOES THE BURSARY PROVIDE?

Each bursary of £1000 is made in three instalments over the first year of study. The bursaries are paid directly into the student's bank account, and can be used for whatever the student chooses (including a laptop or books). They do not need to be paid back.

### DO I NEED TO HAVE AN OFFER OF A PLACE AT BIRKBECK BEFORE I CAN APPLY FOR THE UNUM ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY BURSARY?

You need to have **accepted an offer** to study a course at Birkbeck before you can apply for the bursary. The scholarship application and the application for your course at Birkbeck are separate and you will need to write a separate personal statement for each.

### HOW DO I APPLY FOR A COURSE AT BIRKBECK?

[Please see further information here](#) about how to make your application to Birkbeck. There is no official deadline for application at Birkbeck but popular courses may become fully subscribed earlier on in the year and will not accept further applications once full. There is, however, a deadline for the bursary: midnight on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

### HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE BURSARY?

The form to apply for the UNUM Access to University bursary for the academic year 2020/21 is available to download on Birkbeck's website here: <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/unum-bursary>

Complete the application form, including eligibility questions and supporting statement and send to [getstarted@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:getstarted@bbk.ac.uk) before the deadline of midnight on **Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2020**.

### WHEN WILL I FIND OUT IF I HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE BURSARY?

All applicants will be notified of the outcome by **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020** at the latest.

### WHY DO I HAVE TO GIVE SO MUCH PERSONAL INFORMATION TO APPLY FOR THE BURSARY?

The secondary eligibility criteria and supporting statement will be used in the decision making process, so we ask you to identify which of the criteria you meet and any barriers to education you have faced, so that this can be taken into account. All personal information disclosed will remain confidential and will not be shared beyond Birkbeck's

Access and Engagement and Development and Alumni departments who are involved in the shortlisting and selection process for the bursaries.

## **HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHO GETS THE BURSARIES?**

For shortlisting, the personal statement and secondary eligibility criteria will be reviewed. We receive a number of applications and there are only ten bursaries available, so the personal statement is your opportunity to explain why you should be awarded one of them, using clear examples and reasoning. You'll also have the chance to tell us any other information which might be relevant; this might include challenges you've overcome and/or related learning you've undertaken (either formally or informally) before coming to Birkbeck.

The scholarships are not awarded according to greatest financial need, beyond the basic income threshold for eligibility. The successful applicants will need to show, through their application and interview, how they have prepared themselves for their chosen course at Birkbeck and will take best advantage of the opportunity which the scholarship would provide. They will also need to demonstrate they are ready for study and considered any necessary support needed to ensure they will succeed on the course.

## **WHAT CAN I USE THE BURSARY FOR AND DO I HAVE TO PAY IT BACK?**

We don't specify what the bursary has to be used for, but previous recipients have purchased laptops or put the money towards travel to university. You do not have to pay it back at the end of your studies.

## **IF I DON'T GET THE BURSARY, WHAT OTHER FUNDING IS AVAILABLE TO HELP ME DURING MY STUDIES?**

Please attend one of our [Money at University workshops](#) or go to the Gov.uk site to find out more about eligibility for a [Government Maintenance Loan](#) to cover other outgoings such as rent and bills, as well as a [Childcare Grant](#) and/or an [Adult Dependant Grant](#). Assistance for those from a low income household is [available at Birkbeck](#) if you need additional support. [Birkbeck's Student Advice Service](#) can also advise as to how studying might impact on benefits, as well as additional financial support you may be eligible for.

We strongly recommend planning in advance including budgeting and identifying how much financial support will be available to you *before* you make your application, to ensure you will be in a position to sustain yourself financially during your studies.

## **WHAT CAN I DO TO PREPARE MYSELF FOR UNIVERSITY STUDY AND MAKE A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION TO BIRKBECK?**

- Come along to an Open Day at Birkbeck to meet staff and current students;
- [Attend a workshop or taster day](#) at Birkbeck to help you get ready to study;
- [My Study My Way](#) is a free, self-directed resource to help you to identify any support which might make things easier for you at university.

**If you would like further information on making an application for a course at Birkbeck or our UNUM Access to University bursary, please email [getstarted@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:getstarted@bbk.ac.uk)**