



UNIVERSITY
of
GREENWICH

Support for Care Leavers at the University of Greenwich



[gre.ac.uk/care-leavers](https://www.gre.ac.uk/care-leavers)



Why study at the University of Greenwich?

The University of Greenwich recognises the unique challenges faced by care leavers when they enter higher education, so we offer you support from the application stage right through to graduation and the search for employment.

If you have accepted a place with us, please read on for information on what we can offer care leavers joining the University of Greenwich.

If you are still considering making an application, you may want to begin reading on page 6, where you will find details of support and advice that you can access prior to entering university.

Dedicated staff to support care leavers

The university has a Designated Member of Staff for care leavers as well as a dedicated Care Leaver Support Officer to support care leavers and care-experienced students from pre-entry to graduation.

If you require support with finance, accommodation, academic issues, or any other challenges that may hinder your success in higher education, please contact:

Will Calver

Designated Member of Staff for Care Leavers

E-mail: w.calver@gre.ac.uk

Chris Colson

Care Leaver Support Officer

E-mail: c.a.colson@gre.ac.uk

Exemplary support

The university has been awarded exemplary status by the Buttle UK Quality Mark for Care Leavers for its work. The quality mark is given to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care.



Financial advice and support

Care Leaver Bursary

At the University of Greenwich, we provide young care leavers with a bursary of £1,000 a year for each academic year of study, up to three years. In addition to the annual award, we provide £100 towards the cost of graduation. This bursary is not means tested, but you are required to be in receipt of full student support, and further eligibility criteria apply.

To find out more, please visit gre.ac.uk/ugbursaries and click on 'Care Leaver Bursary'.

Other bursaries and awards

You may also be entitled to additional awards. To find out more and to see if you are eligible, please visit gre.ac.uk/ugbursaries or use our Bursaries and Awards Checker at gre.ac.uk/students/md/checkup.

Access to Learning Fund

The Access to Learning Fund provides additional support to students to help them remain and succeed in higher education. The fund is means tested, so we cannot guarantee that you will receive an award. However, if you find yourself in difficulty, please speak to one of our finance advisers, who can help you apply.

The fund may also be able to assist you over the long summer break, especially if you are having difficulty finding temporary employment.

Main awards from the fund are means tested on income and expenditure. The university has criteria that we are required to follow to make these assessments.

You can apply online at gre.ac.uk/students/alf. You can also download a form if you prefer to complete a paper application.

You must submit the evidence needed to support your application to your campus Student Centre. Assessment of these applications can take up to four weeks. All replies are sent by e-mail to your university e-mail address.

Money Doctors

Once you have settled into university life and are getting used to managing your own money, it is important that you review your spending. The university is here to help you and offers a financial awareness scheme called 'Money Doctors'.

As part of this service, we provide students with confidential advice on budgeting, debt management, choosing products, and applying for additional help from charities, trusts and the Access to Learning Fund. We also offer a referral advice if things really start to go wrong. We provide a number of resources which you can access from our web pages at gre.ac.uk/students/finance.

Please do not wait until you find yourself in financial difficulty as this could cause you stress and worry. Instead, you should make an appointment with our Money Doctor or one of our finance advisers to help sort out your concerns straight away. You can access more help and advice, including further information about the Money Doctors scheme, through the 'My Support' tab on the university's student portal.

Budgeting

Once you know what support you are going to receive, you should draw up a budget. This is an efficient way of determining whether you will need further help.

A simple budget comparing your income and expenditure is all you need.

Our Student Lifestyle Calculator can help you assess your spending and can provide hints and tips on expenditure you may not have considered, such as regular laundry costs and a TV licence. You can find this at gre.ac.uk/calculator/page.

Care leaver mentoring services

Making you feel supported and welcome at university is important to us. Evidence suggests that students who participate in mentoring and engage in the support offered are unlikely to withdraw from their programme. We therefore encourage all care leavers to sign up for mentoring as we know that this will increase their potential to progress and succeed. You may take part in either or both of our mentoring schemes, which are described below.

Greenwich Friends

Starting at university can be challenging, especially as a care leaver. To help you navigate the first months of university life, we offer a 'friend' service from your first day on campus. Current second- and third-year students are available to support you through this exciting time.

We will try to match you with a student studying in a similar area. He or she will be able to offer a range of support and advice to help you begin university life and succeed in your studies.

To request a Greenwich Friend or find out more, please e-mail the Care Leaver Support Officer.

Staff Mentoring Scheme

Being mentored by a member of staff has proved helpful for current care leavers as staff work in the university system and have the ability to resolve most issues swiftly. Your staff mentor will be a first point of contact for any questions about your study, living independently or university life in general.

Your staff mentor will advocate on your behalf where necessary or advise you on where to go to find other sources of information. Additionally, he or she will support you in making your own informed choices.

As with the Greenwich Friends scheme, the amount of contact between the mentee and mentor will be negotiated.

To request a staff mentor or find out more, please e-mail the Care Leaver Support Officer.

Accommodation

The university can offer you priority for accommodation in our halls of residence. This applies throughout the year, including Christmas, Easter and summer, although not all halls are open to students in the summer and room moves may be necessary because of conference and course commitments.

If you need help with accommodation, especially during the summer months, please contact Accommodation Services. For contact details, please visit gre.ac.uk/study/accommodation.



Support and advice prior to entering university

The number of care leavers entering higher education is very low, with around 6% progression to higher education, compared to a national progression rate of 34%.

As part of the university's commitment to enhancing the progression of care leavers into higher education, we support care leavers before and during the UCAS application process, with the aim of assisting care leavers to successfully achieve a place at university.

To maximise the chances of care leavers progressing into higher education, we:

- Offer course-related support to care leavers on Level 3 programmes such as A-levels and BTEC Nationals. We can also provide support for related qualifications, such as GCSE mathematics and English, that are part of the university's standard entry requirements. Support is delivered by outreach ambassadors on a one-to-one basis and at a time to suit both parties.
- Advise and support care leavers through the UCAS process by providing help with personal statements and finance issues and by liaising with colleagues at other universities to help students to move into higher education.
- Encourage care leavers to attend the university's range of outreach events, such as the Care Leaver Summer School and subject-specific taster days.
- Act as an advocate on behalf of care leavers to enable them to access support from other agencies where required.
- Offer financial support for care leavers entering higher education.

Student support – Student Finance England

Full-time undergraduate students who meet the eligibility criteria are entitled to apply to Student Finance England for a tuition fee loan to cover the costs of study and a maintenance loan and grant for general living costs.

Whether you qualify for the non-repayable grant will depend on your circumstances. As a care leaver, you will be required to provide a letter from your local authority to confirm your previous care arrangements. For speedy payment of your student finance loan, please ensure that you have attached a copy of this letter to your finance application.

To apply for student support, please visit www.gov.uk/browse/education/student-finance. You should make this application online as soon as you know you intend to enter higher education.

Local authority support

In 2009, the government introduced a local authority bursary of £2,000 to be paid to all relevant care leavers entering higher education. If you are eligible, you should speak to your local authority to determine how you will receive your bursary as it can be paid in a lump sum or in instalments.

Local authorities have an existing responsibility to offer assistance with accommodation and other costs related to entering higher education. The bursary cannot therefore be paid by the local authority towards these costs.

You should ensure that you discuss with your local authority what level of support it will provide to you, in addition to the bursary.



UCAS application form

To ensure that we can identify you and give you support once you enter university, please make sure that you tick the 'Care Leaver' box on the UCAS application form.

Your next step

If you are considering becoming one of our students, there are a number of ways to find out what we offer:

- You can attend an Open Day. These include a programme of talks and the opportunity to speak to staff and students. For dates, visit gre.ac.uk/opendays or contact the Enquiry Unit. We can help care leavers from Kent and Medway and the London boroughs with the cost of Open Day visits and interviews attended at the university.
- You can request a one-to-one guided tour of the campus from one of our outreach ambassadors at a time to suit you. Please e-mail the Care Leaver Support Officer.
- You can sign up as a Greenwich VIP to create a Greenwich web page personalised to your choice of programme and interests, receive our text and e-mail alerts, and enter online competitions. It is also a fast route to ordering publications and booking an Open Day. Please visit gre.ac.uk/study to sign up.

The information in this booklet is available online at gre.ac.uk/care-leavers. Further information about our programmes and facilities can be viewed at greenwich.ac.uk, or you can contact our Enquiry Unit:

Telephone: 020 8331 9000

Fax: 020 8331 8145

E-mail: courseinfo@gre.ac.uk

We look forward to welcoming you to the University of Greenwich.



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**For further information on support for
care leavers, please contact:**

Access & Partnerships Unit

University of Greenwich
Avery Hill Campus
Southwood Site
Avery Hill Road
London SE9 2UG

Telephone: 020 8331 9793

E-mail: access@gre.ac.uk

Website: gre.ac.uk/care-leavers

This document is available in other formats on request

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Every effort has been made to ensure that this document is as accurate as possible. However, the university reserves the right to amend without notice any information detailed here.