

University of Sanctuary Scholarship 2026-27

The University of Sanctuary Scholarship is available to new postgraduate taught students taking up a place to study in October 2026, who have been granted UK Asylum status or Discretionary/Limited Leave to Remain as a result of an asylum application, and those with Humanitarian Protection, as result of an asylum application or through a dependants claim.

The scholarship includes:

- A full tuition fee waiver on a one-year full time Postgraduate Taught Masters programme
- University accommodation
- £6,000 to support living and study costs

Terms and conditions

The scholarship will be offered to one student in the academic year 2026-27, therefore the application process is competitive.

The following document outlines the full terms and conditions of this scholarship. Please ensure you read them in full before you complete and submit an application form. Please only apply if you meet all of the eligibility criteria and can provide evidence to support this.

Eligibility

- Immigration status: Eligibility will be based on the following permissions being granted by the Home Office and alignment with UNHCR guidelines:
 - a refugee (subject to obtaining an appropriate permissions), or
 - granted Refugee or Humanitarian Protection status, or
 - discretionary Leave to Remain, or
 - Limited Leave to Remain following an asylum application, individually or through a dependent's claim, or be seeking asylum within the UK

- Leave to remain must cover the duration of your studies
- A recognised refugee in a third country who obtains the appropriate visa from the UK to study here for the duration of that degree programme.
- This scholarship is restricted to students who are entirely self-funded*.
- This scholarship is available to Home UK or overseas fee payers.
- All applicants must have received a conditional or unconditional offer to study an eligible Postgraduate programme at the University of Essex before 2nd June 2026.
- Students must register at the University of Essex in October 2026 for the first year of a 1-year full-time Masters course in academic year 2026-27 only, leading to the degree of:
 - MA, MSc, or LLM
- This scholarship may not be held in conjunction with other University awards, except for the Refugee Bursary. Students who are eligible for this award and are joining Essex through a link agreement, which includes a discounted fee, will receive the award which is greater in value.
- Successful applicants should be available for promotional activities.

*Students receiving a repayable loan to fund their studies will be considered as self-funded.

Students who are not eligible

The following students are NOT eligible for this scholarship regardless of meeting the above criteria:

- Students undertaking a degree that is normally delivered wholly online.
- Courses below Masters level: including, but not limited to, Graduate Certificates, Graduate Diplomas, Postgraduate Certificates (PGCerts), and Postgraduate Diplomas (PGDips).
- This scholarship award does not apply to deferred entry. Where a scholarship has been awarded to a student who subsequently defers entry to the following academic year, the award will be withdrawn and the applicant will be considered again in line with the terms and conditions that apply in the new proposed year of entry.
- Students who are fully or partly sponsored.
- Students progressing from a University of Essex International College programme.
- Current students whose first year of Postgraduate study at the University of Essex, was prior to academic year 2026-27.
- Students transferring from another higher education institution.

How to apply

To be considered for this scholarship you need to:

- Meet the eligibility in relation to your immigration status
- Have applied to study on a postgraduate taught programme and have received an offer by 2nd June 2026.
- Have submitted your application for the Sanctuary Scholarship before the published deadline
- Apply for the Sanctuary Scholarship using the application form provided on the information page and send to askthehub@essex.ac.uk, along with evidence of your immigration status, and a letter of reference.
- The deadline for applications will close on **Friday 22nd May 2026 at 11:59pm (BST)**.

Selection Process

Selection will be based on your eligibility as well as the information and supporting statements that you provide as part of the scholarship application process.

An initial review will take place to ensure applications meet the criteria listed. All applications that meet the criteria will be passed to the selection panel, chaired by the Dean of Postgraduate Research and Education.

The selection panel will consider all applications in a fair and transparent manner.

1. *Rationale for Higher Education*: future goals and ambitions, and the necessity of the chosen course in achieving these
2. *Interruptions to Prior Education*: applicants who have previously met with barriers in entering and completing higher education will be prioritised for the scholarship. Applicants who have not previously completed a Masters will be given priority
3. *Immigration status*: applicants whose immigration status makes them ineligible for home student fee status will be prioritised for the scholarship
4. *Student financial alternatives*: Priority will be given to applicants who are unable to access mainstream funding through student finance

When will I be notified of the award?

The University will let the successful applicant know the outcome by the 30 of June 2026.

Payment arrangements

- The scholarship will only be made available as a reduction on the tuition fee that is payable on registration at the University. Payment cannot be offset against a tuition fee deposit if one is required.
- The University of Sanctuary Scholarship includes a bursary of £6,000. We will work with the successful applicant to determine the best format of payment, with the possibility for in-kind transfers or alternative sources of support, subject to Deputy Vice Chancellor approval.
- Payments will be made in four instalments for those that start in October. The first will be in October, one in January one in April and the final payment in July. *The university reserves the right to change the payment schedule, for example to monthly, to align with university processes if required.* Students must continue to be registered for full-time study in order to receive each payment.
- Students must be registered and meet the above conditions to receive payment. The scholarship will be suspended during a period of approved leave of absence (intermission) where this period covers a whole or part of an academic year. If you intermit from your course, you may, at the discretion of the University, be entitled to a pro-rata payment of the remainder of your tuition fee waiver and stipend on your return to study. Your free accommodation funded from the scholarship fund will cease immediately and will not be applied upon your return to study. There will be no payment for repeat periods of study in any circumstances. Please contact the [Funding Team](#) for further information.
- Please note that if our records show that you are in debt to the University when an award payment is due, the payment will be offset against your student account in the first instance, and you will be entitled to receive any balance.

Scholarship termination

If you withdraw from your studies, or are required to withdraw, free on-campus accommodation will no longer be available and no further payments will be made. Further bursary payments will be terminated if you cease to be registered as a student with the University.

Data Privacy Statement

The University of Essex takes confidentiality very seriously, your application form will only be seen by members of staff involved in processing your application. Information is kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as it applies in the UK, tailored by the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data will be used solely for statistical purposes and electronic record keeping and may be made available to authorised University staff to allow statistical information to be analysed.

This data will not be passed to any other third party without your consent, except when the University is required to do so by law. Any formal enquiries concerning the use of data noted here should be addressed to the Head of Student Services.

Resolution of disputes

Acceptance of this award constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions. Registered students should contact the [Funding Team](#) in the first instance for guidance regarding this award. In cases not covered by the above terms and conditions, or where a student claims exceptional circumstances, or disputes a decision not to make payments due under an award, final appeals on decisions regarding eligibility must be made via the [Student Complaints process](#). The Academic Registrar or their nominee will review the case and his/her decision will be final.

These terms and conditions apply to the academic year 2026-27. The University of Essex reserves the right to update these terms and conditions as necessary.