

University of Essex

Refugee Bursary 2025-26

We recognise that refugees face significant barriers to successful participation in higher education, particularly when considering access to additional financial help usually offered by family and friends to support them throughout university. This bursary is in place to support costs associated with university and is offered as part of our commitment to widening participation at university, making higher education more accessible.

If you are an undergraduate or postgraduate student, verified as a refugee or are a dependant of a UK refugee, you could be eligible for a bursary of up to £1,500.

The deadline to apply for this bursary is Friday 17th July 2026.

Definitions

Asylum seeker

- A person who has crossed an international border and is seeking protection from persecution or serious human rights violations in another country.

Refugee

- A person who has fled their country and is seeking protection because of a fear of being persecuted due to their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. Therefore, you have been given permission to stay in the UK and granted official 'refugee' status. More information can be found on the [UCAS](#) website.

Settlement

- **Indefinite leave to remain** is how you settle in the UK. It's also called '**settlement**'. It gives you the right to live, work and study here for as long as you like, and apply for benefits if you're eligible. You can use it to apply for British citizenship.

Terms and Conditions

Eligibility

You must meet the criteria listed below to be eligible for an award:

- The university's Admissions Team (during the course application process) or the Refugee Bursary assessor (if there has been a change in-year), must have verified that the student is one of the following:

- a UK refugee, who has not yet been granted '**settlement**'.
- a dependant of a UK refugee, who has not yet been granted '**settlement**'.

OR

- is someone who has been granted leave under one of the following schemes, or are a dependent of someone granted leave under one of the following schemes:
 - Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme
 - Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy Scheme
 - Ukrainian Family Scheme
 - Homes for Ukraine Scheme
 - Ukraine Extension Scheme

- This bursary is restricted to students who have been assessed as paying Home fees and are entirely self-funded*. If you are granted refugee status throughout the academic year, you may still be eligible for this bursary. Please contact the funding team for further advice.
- Students must register at the University of Essex on a full-time or part-time**, undergraduate or postgraduate course in academic year 2025-26.
- Students must have applied for and have been **approved** for funding from Student Finance England (SFE) (or other UK funding provider) with the University of Essex as their chosen institution and have consented to the sharing of data.
- Undergraduate students must have had a **means-tested assessment** for funding from SFE (or other UK funding provider).

*Students receiving a repayable loan to fund their studies will be considered as self-funded. This includes but isn't restricted to tuition fee loans from Student Finance England or other UK funding body.

**Substantial part time refers to a student who is registered on a part-time programme that is at least 50% of the full-time equivalent programme.

Students who are not eligible

The following students are not eligible for this award regardless of meeting the above criteria:

- Students who are not in attendance, and on an assessment only programme.
- Students who are undertaking a repeat year of study or are repeating part-time.
- Students whose course is sponsored by an employer.
- Students on a distance learning programme.
- Students on unsubstantial part-time or short courses.
- Students who are studying through a University of Essex Partner (e.g. Kaplan, University of Essex Online, Tavistock, etc.).
- Students on Higher/Degree Apprenticeship courses.

Evidence

You will not be required to provide evidence of your status if you have already provided this at the point of applying for your course. The Funding Team will review the evidence on your student file.

If your status has changed in-year and you now meet the criteria as outlined in these T&Cs, you will be required to provide evidence as part of the bursary application process.

Evidence would normally be a copy of your BRP*** (Biometric Resident Permit) card (both sides) or a letter from the Home Office confirming your status. Additionally, an upload of your E-visa may be required. If you are a dependent of a UK refugee, you will also need to provide your birth certificate to evidence your relationship.

If you are unable to provide this evidence, you should contact the Funding Team for further advice askthehub@essex.ac.uk

How to apply

The deadline to apply for this bursary is Friday 17th July 2026.

1. Ensure that you meet the eligibility criteria above and you have carefully read these T&Cs.
2. Login to your [Blackbullion](#) account – you will need to register as a University of Essex student if you do not already have an account.
3. Click the 'Funds' tab and select 'Refugee Bursary'.

4. Follow the instructions to complete the application form, upload the required evidence and submit your application.

Assessment and payment

- We aim to complete an assessment within 3 weeks of a full and complete application and evidence. You will be notified of the outcome to your **Essex email account**.
- If you are successful in being granted an award and are studying full-time, you will receive a bursary of £1,500. If you are studying part-time** you will receive £750.
- Awards will be split into **two instalments**, with payments made by the end of January and the end of April.
- We will contact you prior to each payment date with instructions on how to receive payment of your bursary.
- Students who are awarded the bursary **after** the January payment date will receive the full award by the end of April. Students who are awarded the bursary **after** the April payment date will receive a payment of the full amount and will be contacted regarding the payment date.
- If you have not claimed your bursary by **Friday 29th July 2026**, you will no longer be eligible for the bursary and you will not receive payment for the 2025-26 academic year.

Can I hold this with other awards?

The Refugee Bursary cannot be held in conjunction with the Care Experienced Bursary or the Estranged Bursary offered as part of the [University Access and Participation Plan](#) funding.

With the exception of the above, the Refugee Bursary can be held in conjunction with other University awards that you may be eligible for, including financial support.

Appeals

You may appeal if you think you have valid grounds. Appeals will only be upheld if it is deemed that the application assessor's original decision would or should have been different, while taking into consideration the eligibility criteria noted in these T&Cs.

Appeals that do not have valid grounds will be dismissed. Before requesting an appeal, please read the eligibility criteria above first. If you still believe that you have valid grounds and meet all eligibility criteria, please detail your reasoning in an email to the [Funding Team](#) within 2 weeks of your initial outcome email.

Your appeal will be considered at the discretion of the Funding Manager or their nominee, and you will receive an outcome within 2 weeks.

Resolution of disputes

Acceptance of this bursary 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 this scheme, 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 their decision will be final.

These terms and conditions apply to the Refugee Bursary awarded to students for the academic year 2025-26. The University of Essex reserves the right to update these terms and conditions as necessary.

****The UK government has transitioned from physical Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs) to a digital system called e-Visa. As of January 1, 2025, BRPs are no longer valid, and the e-Visa system is in place. The e-Visa is an electronic version of a person's visa attached to their passport.*