



Undergraduate Bursary Programme 2026

General information

The Harpur Trust is awarding 16 students from lower income households across Bedford Borough with a bursary worth £4,500 to help those students make the most of their academic potential. The Harpur Trust Bursary Programme provides eligible students with **£1,500** per year for up to three years. If undertaking a 4–5-year degree, we will discuss payment arrangements if your application is successful.

Bursary monies can be used towards resources needed to undertake your degree (laptop, books, etc.), accommodation, travel or other costs associated with the degree.

The bursary is a grant not a loan and does not need to be paid back.

Eligibility criteria

To qualify for support, students must meet **ALL** of the following **essential criteria**:

- be aged 19 or under on 31 August 2026
- have been resident in the Borough of Bedford for a minimum of two years
- have an offer of a place on a full-time undergraduate degree course or full-time Foundation degree course at a UK university
- take up their place in the academic year beginning in the autumn immediately after their final term at school or college
- apply for all available forms of statutory support (student loan for tuition, student loan for maintenance, higher education maintenance grant)
- be a UK citizen, an EU citizen with settled status, or a have been granted Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK.

Students must also meet at least one of the **additional criteria** below:

- come from a low income family. For example, nominees will have been eligible for free school meals / receive support from the school or college's 16-19 Bursary Fund. Preference will be given to families with a household income of £25,000 or less.
- be living independently (for example in a Foyer or YMCA)
- have additional financial difficulties as a result of specific family or other exceptional personal circumstances. Full details should be included in the application form.

We will also take into consideration whether you are from the first generation of your family to attend higher education on leaving school.

Please note: If your school / college benefits from Connolly Foundation bursaries, you may apply to both if you meet the criteria, but students will not be awarded a bursary from both organisations. This is because we want to make sure that the maximum number of students in the borough will benefit.



How to apply for a bursary

If you meet the eligibility criteria, you can apply directly through the Harpur Trust website using the online application form <https://harpurtrust.org.uk/apply-for-help/support-for-individuals/university-bursary-programmes/>

If you require the application form in another format, please let us know.

- Complete the application form ensuring you fill in **all** questions – for any information not available, e.g. student finance please ensure you state your current situation e.g. will apply when able.
- Answer the motivation questions (600 words total) fully – these are your opportunity to sell yourself! Harpur Trust staff and Trustees do not know you, so it is important to say how you meet our criteria and a little about your current personal circumstances.
- Ask a tutor to support your application by providing a written statement of no more than 500 words and upload this to your application.
- You will receive a notification when your application is submitted.
- Participating schools have a member of staff overseeing the bursary scheme. They should be able to answer any queries students may have (usually the Head of Sixth Form).

The deadline to submit your application and supporting documents/tutor statements is the end of the day Monday 27 April 2026. All information will be treated confidentially.

Conditions of Grant

Successful applicants will be required to:

- provide The Harpur Trust, in due course, with evidence that they have taken up a university place as planned.
- ensure that The Trust has an on-going and accurate record of their personal contact details and those of their university department.
- join Trustees of The Harpur Trust and award winners from other schools and colleges at a celebratory reception in early September (date to be confirmed).
- participate in publicity organised by The Harpur Trust.

The bursary will be paid termly, subject to proof of the student's continued attendance at university.



Appendix

Example online application questions

Please find below the list of application questions in preparation for completing your online application for the Harpur Trust University Bursary Scheme.

Personal details

- How long have you lived there? If less than 2 years, what was your previous address?
- Please indicate your UK residential status (i.e. British citizen).

Your Post 16 education

- Name of school or college currently attended

Your education since the age of 11

- Name of school or college with from and to dates

Your academic qualifications

- Current course
- Existing qualifications

We want to know the predicted grades from your current courses and the grades of the qualifications you have already gained e.g. GCSEs. Please begin with your current courses and indicate whether grades are actual or predicted.

Degree course you intend to follow

- First choice and second choice

Your financial circumstances

- Have you applied to Student Finance England for a loan for tuition fees, a maintenance grant or maintenance loan? If yes, please give details and attach evidence. What was the outcome, if known?
- What are the annual tuition fees charged by your chosen university?
- What is the maximum bursary offered by your chosen university?
- Have you applied for the bursary? If not, please tell us why.
- Have you applied for any other help with your university studies e.g. scholarships or grants from other charities or trusts?
- If yes, please tell us which organisations you have applied to and what the outcome was.
Please note, if your school / college benefits from Connolly Foundation bursaries, you may apply to both if you meet the criteria, but please make this clear on your application. Students will not be awarded a bursary from both organisations as we want to make sure that the maximum number of students in the borough will benefit.
- Do you have a job?
 - If yes, please tell us:
 - What job you do
 - Whether you are expected to contribute to household expenses
- Will you or your family be making any provision towards your study costs?



Your personal circumstances

- Where do you live?
- How many dependents apart from you live at home?
- Are you a care leaver? (Someone who was in the care of the local authority at some point in your life)
- Are you a carer? (Someone who, without payment, provides help and support to a sick, elderly or disabled person, or for a child)
- Please provide details of your parent(s) or guardian(s) income. Evidence may be requested. If you are living independently, please provide details of your own finances.
 - Monthly income £
 - Universal Credit
 - Income Support/Jobseekers Allowance/ Employment Support Allowance
 - Other benefits (e.g. tax credits, child benefit etc.)
 - Pension
 - Wages
 - Other
 - Other
 - Total Monthly Income
- Have you ever received any benefits such as free school meals or the 16-19 Bursary whilst you have been at school or college? Please give details.
- Have you received any additional financial support through your school or college? Please give details and the amount received
- Has anyone in your family been to university? Please give details.
- Have any siblings received a Harpur Trust University Bursary?

Supporting statements

The application form asks you to tell us about your current circumstances and your future plans. This is your opportunity to tell us why you fit the criteria for this bursary and sell yourself. When answering the questions, remember to tell us:

- What you have gained from your post 16 education
- Why you have chosen your particular course
- Why you have chosen the universities identified
- What you hope to get out of university and your ambitions for the future
- What personal and educational challenges you have had to overcome to reach this stage in your education
- Why you feel you meet the Bursary criteria and are a suitable candidate for extra help from The Harpur Trust

Tutor supporting statement

Please ask a relevant tutor (a person who knows you well) to provide a signed supporting statement / character reference, to explain how you may benefit from the bursary programme and details of your current situation. Written statements should be no more than 500 words (one sheet of A4).

Please upload the supporting statements to your application form.

Submit your application



HARPUR
TRUST

When you are ready to submit your application, please go to section 9. Please first check that you have completed sections 1-8. In Section 9 you will need to check two boxes as shown below.

By checking the second box and clicking 'SAVE CHANGES', your application will be submitted.