Deciding to study at university is a big step for anybody. You will be entering a world of new opportunities, new friends and new ways of thinking.

At the University of Birmingham, we offer the highest quality academic experience within a supportive environment. If you are leaving care to come to university we believe that you deserve a little extra support; get the financial help you’re entitled to, settle in quickly to be able to focus on your studies and enjoy this university.

This leaflet is designed to help you find out how we can support you, from your first interest in applying, through to you studying at university.
GET A TASTER FOR UNIVERSITY LIFE

IF YOU’RE INTERESTED

Open days give you the perfect opportunity to visit a university, seeing first-hand from current students and staff about what life could be like at that chosen university. Often universities will offer tailored open day expenses. Request more information through open day teams, our team can be contacted by emailing openday@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Most Outreach and Widening Participation teams at universities will provide a variety of free events and activities to help you decide what or where to study and gain an insight into university life.

You would be able to find their contact details via their websites. Our contact is outreach@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Many universities will run Summer Schools for students in Year 10 or 12. These are a great opportunity to find out what it is like to study and live as a university student.

If you decided you’d like to study at the University of Birmingham, you might want to consider applying through one of our Pathways to Birmingham programmes. Care Experienced students are given priority across all of our Pathways to Birmingham programmes. The programmes offer a range of transitional support throughout year 12–13, and with successful completion you could be eligible for an alternative offer and financial support through a scholarship and bursary. This would be in addition to the Enhanced Chamberlain Award.

For more details of this see our webpage www.birmingham.ac.uk/a2b.

“A2B] WAS A GOOD EXPERIENCE AS I WAS ABLE TO DEVELOP UNIVERSITY SKILLS BEFORE ATTENDING.
– ARRON”

“[UNIVERSITY IS] AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE NOBODY CARES WHERE YOU CAME FROM. YOU DON’T HAVE TO DEFINE OR CATEGORISE YOURSELF AND THAT’S PROBABLY THE NICEST THING, YOU CAN BE ANYBODY AND MEET ANYONE; NO ONE CARES WHERE YOU’VE COME FROM. – RACHEL”
IN YEAR 13

When applying to universities we strongly recommend you tick the care leaver box on your UCAS application. This information can then be used by admissions tutors to understand the context of your academic achievements. It will also ensure universities are able to let you know about the financial, academic and personal support available to you. Universities won’t need to know why you’ve been in care and we understand that some students might see university as a fresh start and may be reluctant to let universities know. Please remember this information will only ever be used to enhance your experience as an applicant and student.

The definition universities use to define ‘care leaver’ will differ so you will need to check individual university websites to find out more. The University of Birmingham define a Care Learner as a young person over the age of 16 who has been in care of the local authority and/or Health and Social Care Trust for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14.*

The University of Birmingham provides all care experienced applicants and students with a single point of contact in the Outreach Team. They will contact you via the email address you’ve noted on your UCAS application to offer pre-entry support and guidance.

From there you will be sent information on all the support we offer and how to access it.

FOR EXAMPLE, OUR ENHANCED CHAMBERLAIN AWARD:
A financial award to cover the costs of University owned Halls of Residence or a bursary towards the costs of accommodation if you choose to live elsewhere.

CARE LEAVERS SCHOLARSHIP:
A financial award intended to provide additional financial support for you while studying at University and beyond.

Care leavers who have subsequently been adopted would not normally be eligible for a priority financial award.

CARE LEAVER CONTEXTUAL OFFER:
Your contextual offer is normally one grade lower than the typical offer shown on our course pages or in our prospectus, but can differ depending on the subject you would like to study.

FULL LIST OF SUPPORT:
For a full list of the support we offer and more information around transition to university visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/careleavers

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

Make sure you look out for other support networks working with care experienced students. For example, as part of your Pathway Plan with your local authority you may be entitled to a £2,000 Higher Education Bursary. Talk to your leaving Care Worker or Personal Adviser for more information.

PROPEL
This website is managed by the Who Cares Trust and is a designed to provide support and information to care leavers who want to enter Higher Education.

www.propel.org.uk

THE INSPIRE ME! APP
Inspiring stories for care leavers by care leavers.

www.inspire-me-live.herokuapp.com

UNITE FOUNDATION
Scholarships award students free purpose-built Unite Students accommodation for three years of study.

www.unitefoundation.co.uk

EVE BROOK SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Supports young people, 16 to 25, who have been in care in Birmingham by giving them the opportunity to go to college or university.

www.evebrookfund.org.uk

BUTTLE UK
Grant programmes, which have been helping young people in need across the UK.

www.buttleuk.org

*Care leavers who have subsequently been adopted would not normally be eligible for a priority financial award.
When you arrive at the University of Birmingham these are the staff members that you can turn to for support and guidance.

Your single point of contact for pre-entry support and guidance, and an ongoing point of contact throughout your time at University.

Your contact is: Alice McGowan
Email: a.v.mcgowan@bham.ac.uk
Tel: (0)121 414 7801

Access a comprehensive support system to help you manage practical, emotional and psychological issues that may impact on your academic success. We can offer an initial guidance session, at the start of your time here, for those that request it.

Your contact is: Emma Bryne
Email: e.l.byrne@bham.ac.uk

You will be given priority choice of university accommodation and you will have access to accommodation for 52 weeks a year for the duration of your course should you need it.

Your contact is: Fiona Innes
Email: f.innes@bham.ac.uk

All undergraduates have access to our award winning Careers Network to support you to plan for a successful career on graduation; access national-award-winning internships and placements in the UK and overseas.

Your contact is: Danny Mall
Email: d.mall@bham.ac.uk

Fill your spare time by joining a club or society, and there are over 250 to choose from! From A Capella to Harry Potter, and Shakespeare to Match of the Day whatever your interest there’s something here for you.

Your contact is: Joshua Williams
Email: president@guild.bham.ac.uk

Correct at time of print