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## **Undergraduate Scholarships**

### **1 Purpose and Scope**

1.1 This section of the document outlines the eligibility and assessment criteria for students to receive scholarships from Aston University as part of the Higher Education funding arrangements for undergraduate students starting undergraduate degree programmes in 2014/15 who do not receive sponsorship for their fees (for the purposes of this policy a sponsor is an external organisation, not a family member or the Student Loans Company). This policy is correct at the time of publishing but will be reviewed annually and is subject to change.

### **2 General Provisions**

2.1 A student who is not defined as studying an Equivalent or Lower Qualification<sup>1</sup> qualifies to be considered for an Aston Scholarship if:

(a) the student will start a new full time undergraduate degree programme<sup>2</sup> at Aston University on or after 1st September 2014 and

(b) the student will be liable to pay tuition fees of £9,000 or £1,000 in the placement year and

(c) the student qualifies to receive student support funding as part of the finance arrangements for new students starting their degree programmes on or after 1st September 2014; and

(d) the student is not a resident of the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man (unless the student is entitled to benefit from European Community provisions relating to employment or establishment and is in receipt of UK student support funding as a home or EU student).

2.2 A student who is defined as studying an Equivalent or Lower Qualification only qualifies to be considered for an Aston Excellence Scholarship if:

(a) the student will start a new full time undergraduate degree programme at Aston University on or after 1st September 2014; and

(b) the student will be liable to pay tuition fees of £10,500 or £1,000 in the placement year and

(c) the student is not a resident of the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man (unless the student is entitled to benefit from European Community provisions relating to employment or establishment).

2.3 The household income thresholds used to assess eligibility for the award of a scholarship approved on household income will be reviewed once each academic year.

2.4 A student will not be entitled to receive a scholarship in any academic year for which they do not have to pay tuition fees unless it is an unpaid placement year or year abroad, or deferred studies, repeating as if for the first time.

2.5 With the exception of a placement year, a student will not be eligible to be considered for an Aston Scholarship approved on household income for an academic year unless they have made an application to be income assessed for the same year by Student Finance England, Student Finance

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (see Glossary)

<sup>2</sup> Not including Foundation Degree Programmes.

Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services.

2.6 A student who has their fees paid by a sponsor will not be eligible for an Aston Scholarship<sup>3</sup>.

2.7 A student will not be eligible to receive a scholarship in full or in part if they are, at the time when payment is due to be made to them, considered to be in debt to the University. For the purposes of this policy a student will be considered to be in debt to the University if they have received the third notice that a payment is overdue.

### **3. Approving and awarding**

3.1 A student's scholarship eligibility will be approved on an annual basis. Receipt of any scholarship in any year of the degree programme does not necessarily guarantee approval of a scholarship in subsequent years. The exception to this is the Placement Scholarship, which once awarded will not be revoked unless the student does not meet the general requirements for the Placement Scholarship.

3.2 Students will not need to apply to be approved for a scholarship because Aston University will use UCAS data, household income information provided by the Student Loans Company and information held on University records for placement years, to determine awards.

3.3 Students who are eligible for one or more of the Aston Scholarships or the National Scholarship Programme will be required to confirm the format they wish that scholarship to take, in line with the choices offered in the first term of each academic year. This confirmation of choice will be final and will not be able to be amended.

3.4 Students will only be approved for Aston Scholarships once in an academic year. Scholarship entitlement will normally be approved by the end of November using the information that is available to Aston University at that time. Any scholarship assessments which cannot be considered at the end of November because the required information is not yet available will be reviewed on a monthly basis until all relevant information has been received and the student's scholarship entitlement can be approved. It is not normally possible to consider a student for an award of an Aston Scholarship after 30th May of the academic year in question.

3.5 The Student Loans Company charges interest on tuition fee loans at a daily rate from the date payments are made to universities. Aston University cannot accept any responsibility for interest applied to tuition fee loans by the Student Loans Company.

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<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this policy a sponsor is an external organisation, not a family member nor the Student Loans Company.

3.6 Eligibility for a scholarship approved on household income will be considered on the basis of information provided by the Student Loans Company once the student has been fully enrolled on the degree programme. Aston University aims to consider and approve scholarships based on household income within eight weeks of receiving household income information from the Student Loans Company. Any student who is approved for an income-based scholarship will be notified via MAP. Notification will be sent to the Student Loans Company about fee discounts and changes in tuition fee liability.

3.7 Eligibility for a scholarship during a placement year will be approved on the basis of information held on University records about previous scholarship approvals and placement details. Approvals of scholarships for placement years will be communicated to students via MAP usually by the end of term one. Notification will be sent to the Student Loans Company about any fee discounts and changes in tuition fee liability.

3.8 Where a student has chosen to take their scholarship in the form of tuition fee discount and has taken out a tuition fee loan from the Student Loans Company, the University is required to notify the Student Loans Company of any changes in a student's tuition fee liability. If a student has taken out the maximum tuition fee loan available to pay their tuition fee in full, their maximum tuition fee loan entitlement and payments should be adjusted accordingly by the Student Loans Company. If a student has only taken a partial tuition fee loan to pay part of their tuition fees, the student will need to contact the Student Loans Company to adjust the amount of loan they wish to borrow.

3.9 Where a student has chosen to take their scholarship in the form of accommodation discount but leaves Aston University accommodation within six weeks of the beginning of the beginning of their first term, their scholarship will automatically be re-designated as a tuition fee discount.

3.10 For Aston Scholarships where eligible students are given a choice of award, students must make their choices by the deadline that will be published on MAP.

3.11 For Aston Scholarships where eligible students are given a choice of award and they have selected payment directly into their bank account, students must provide their bank account details when asked to by the published deadline on MAP. Should a student not provide this information by the published deadline, the award will default to be a tuition fee discount. This award will not be reversible.

3.12 For Scholarships other than the National Scholarship Programme: once an Aston Scholarship has been approved, the fee discount or accommodation discount will be applied to the student's tuition fee/accommodation cost liability in equal amounts in terms two and three. Aston Scholarships will normally only be available to students who have been in attendance, as defined by the University throughout term one and term two and are still in attendance at the start of term three. Students who withdraw from Aston University part way through an academic year will not be eligible to receive a scholarship in respect of that year. Any tuition fee discount or accommodation discount applied to the student for that academic year as the result of an Aston Scholarship will be revoked and the full cost for that period will be applied. The student will be liable to repay any underpayment that may result from this.

3.13 Students who have been assessed as eligible for a Placement Scholarship but whose eligibility changes after the award has been confirmed, may have their award amended on a pro-rata basis to reflect the period of time that the eligibility was in place for. Students will be liable to repay any overpayment of the award that may result from this

3.14 Students who are repeating their studies are not eligible for scholarships regardless of whether they are repeating with attendance, without attendance, or with partial attendance.

3.15 Where a student suspends their studies and takes a Leave of Absence for a complete academic year (i.e. October- October) no tuition fee is charged and, therefore, the student will not be eligible to receive a scholarship. When a student resumes their studies, following a Leave of Absence for a complete academic year, they will be eligible to receive the scholarship in-line with the conditions that applied in their original year of entry.

3.16 Students who suspend their studies part way through an academic year will be eligible to receive a scholarship for the academic terms they have completed in full. Students who suspend their studies and return from a suspension of studies part way through an academic year will only be eligible to receive scholarship for the terms they will complete in full. The amount of scholarship will be approved on a pro rata basis and in line with Aston University's Tuition Fees Charging Policy.

3.17 For the purposes of approving Aston Progression Scholarships, a student's academic progress will be deemed to be satisfactory if a student:

(a) is in their first year **for the first time (i.e. not repeating the year)**, or

(b) is not in the first year and has been considered by an Aston University Exam Board to have passed and to be eligible to progress into the next stage of study.

#### **4. Eligibility criteria for Aston University Undergraduate Scholarships**

Aston University offers two scholarship packages. The first scholarship package is approved on the basis of academic excellence or placement details. The second scholarship package is approved based on the household income as calculated by the Student Loans Company

##### **Scholarships that are approved on the basis of academic excellence or placement details**

#### **4.1 Aston Excellence Scholarship**

4.1.1 A student is eligible to receive an Aston Excellence Scholarship if:

(a) the student meets the general provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1 or 2.2 and

(b) the student has achieved grades AAB+ in their A levels (or equivalent qualifications as outlined in Appendix A). The grades refer to the student's highest qualifications, not their entry qualifications.

4.1.2 A student who is awarded an Aston Excellence Scholarship and is not studying an Equivalent or Lower Qualification will be eligible to receive:

(a) the choice of either:

i) a £1,000 discount from their accommodation costs for each year they are resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

ii) a £1,000 tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £9,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £1,000, paid in two equal instalments of £500 into their bank account in the second and third terms.

(b) where the student undertakes a placement year as part of their degree programme and where a placement tuition fee is charged to the student, the student will be eligible to receive the choice of either:

- i) a £1,000 discount from their accommodation costs for each year they are resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

- ii) a tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £1,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £1,000, paid in two equal instalments of £500 into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.1.3 A student who is awarded an Aston Excellence Scholarship and is studying an Equivalent or Lower Qualification will be eligible to receive:

a) the choice of either:

- i) a £1,000 discount from their accommodation costs for each year they are resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

- ii) a £1,000 tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £10,500 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £1,000, paid in two equal instalments of £500 into their bank account in the second and third terms.

(b) where the student undertakes a placement year as part of their degree programme and where a placement tuition fee is charged to the student, the student will be eligible to receive the choice of either:

- i) a £1,000 discount from their accommodation costs for each year they are resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

- ii) a tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £1,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £1,000, paid in two equal instalments of £500 into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.1.4 A student who is awarded an Aston Excellence Scholarship can also be considered for scholarships approved on household income for the same academic year.

4.1.5 A student will only be awarded one scholarship in relation to the placement year.

4.1.6 Eligibility for an Aston Scholarship based on achievement will normally be approved on the basis of information provided by UCAS. Eligibility for Aston Scholarships based on achievement will be communicated to students as part of their Unconditional Offer and will normally be confirmed by the end of November. Information will be available through the student homepage on MAP. Notification will be sent to the Student Loans Company about fee discounts and changes in tuition fee liability where appropriate.

## **4.2 Aston Placement Scholarship**

4.2.1 A student is eligible to receive an Aston Placement Scholarship if:

- (a) the student meets the general provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1, or
- (b) the student is undertaking an unpaid placement for their sandwich placement year,

or

- (c) the student is undertaking a work or study placement overseas.

4.2.2 A student who is awarded an Aston Placement Scholarship will be eligible to choose between receiving either:

- (i) a £1,000 discount from their accommodation costs for their placement year,

or

- ii) a tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £1,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £1,000, paid in two equal instalments of £500 into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.2.3 A student can only be awarded one fee discount scholarship for the placement year so students cannot receive any other placement fee discounts in addition to this award.

## **Scholarships that are approved on household income**

### **4.3 National Scholarship Programme**

The National Scholarship Programme is targeted at:

- English domiciled students in receipt of funding through Student Finance England and who have been assessed by Student Finance England to have a household income up to and including £25,000, and
- are living in Aston University accommodation on campus, or
- who have identified that they are a Care Leaver<sup>4</sup> at pre-enrolment.

4.3.1 A student is eligible to receive a National Scholarship Programme award if:

- (a) the student meets the general provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1, and
- (b) the student receives funding as a “home student” through Student Finance England, and
- (c) the student is in receipt of an amount of Maintenance Grant or Special Support Grant from Student Finance England for the current academic year, and
- (d) the student has currently been assessed by Student Finance England to have a household income of up to and including £25,000, and has either:
  - (e) lived in Aston University accommodation on campus for the full duration of their first year, has paid their residence fees, or
  - (f) has identified that they are a Care Leaver at pre-enrolment.

4.3.2 A student who is awarded a National Scholarship Programme award will be eligible to receive:

- (a) a £2,000 discount from the cost of their of Aston University accommodation for their first year of study of the programme.

In their subsequent Placement Year they will be eligible to receive:

- (b) either:
    - (i) a full placement tuition fee discount where the student undertakes a placement year as part of their degree programme and where a placement tuition fee<sup>5</sup> is charged to the student;
- Or
- (ii) a payment equivalent to the placement tuition fee, paid in two equal instalments into their bank account in the second and third term.

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<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this policy a care-leaver has identified this at pre-enrolment and is defined as “If you were looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and were in the care of the local authority and/or a health and social care trust on your 16th birthday” (Buttle Trust)

<sup>5</sup> Placement tuition fee is currently £1,000.



4.3.3 Students who have identified they are a care-leaver at pre-enrolment and are not in Aston University accommodation are entitled to a £2,000 tuition fee discount for the first year of the programme where a £9,000 tuition fee is charged to the student. In their subsequent Placement Year they will be eligible to receive either:

- (i) a full placement tuition fee discount where the student undertakes a placement year as part of their degree programme and where a placement tuition fee<sup>6</sup> is charged to the student;

Or

- (ii) a payment equivalent to the placement tuition fee, paid in two equal instalments into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.3.4 A student who has previously received a National Scholarship Programme award in their first year of study can be considered for the Aston Progression Scholarship as relevant in later years of study on the programme (see 2.1).

4.3.5 A student can only be eligible for one scholarship award for the placement year.

#### **4.4 Aston Progression Scholarship**

Aston Progression Scholarships are awarded annually and are targeted at Home and EU students who have been assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services to have a household income up to and including £42,000 and are not in receipt of a National Scholarship Programme award that academic year.

4.4.1 A student is eligible to receive an Aston Progression Scholarship if:

- (a) the student meets the general provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1, and
- (b) the student receives funding as a “home” student through Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or has been awarded a tuition fee loan as an EU student through Student Finance Services, and
- (c) the student has currently been assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services to have a household income of up to and including £42,000, and
- (d) the student's academic performance has been satisfactory, and
- (e) the student has not received a National Scholarship Programme Award in respect of the same academic year.

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<sup>6</sup> Placement tuition fee is currently £1,000.

4.4.2 A student who is awarded an Aston Progression Scholarship will be eligible to receive:

a choice of either:

- i) a £500 discount from their accommodation costs for each year they are resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

- ii) a £500 tuition fee discount for each year of study where a £9,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £500, paid in two equal instalments into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.4.3 For the purposes of assessing and approving Aston Progression Scholarships, a student's academic progress will be deemed to be satisfactory if a student:

- (a) is in their first year, or
- (b) is not in the first year and has been considered by an Exam Board to have passed and to be eligible to progress into the next stage of study.

4.4.4 Students will be assessed annually for each academic year of study for eligibility for this award. A student who is eligible in year one of their degree programme should not assume that they will automatically remain eligible in subsequent years.

#### **4.5 Aston Alumni Scholarships**

Aston Alumni Scholarships are awarded annually and are targeted at Home and EU students who have been assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services to have a household income up to and including £42,000 and are not in receipt of a National Scholarship Programme award that academic year.

4.5.1 A student is eligible to receive an Aston Alumni Scholarship if:

- (a) the student meets the general provisions outlined in paragraph 2.1, and
- (b) the student receives funding as a "home" student through Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or has been awarded a tuition fee loan as an EU student through Student Finance Services, and
- (c) the student has currently been assessed by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services to have a household income of up to and including £42,000, and
- (d) the student's academic performance has been satisfactory, and
- (e) the student has not received a National Scholarship Programme Award in respect of the same academic year.

(f) the student agrees to the responsibilities expected of them under the terms of the Alumni Scholarship Award as set out below:

4.5.1.1. Upon receipt of an Alumni Scholarship, the student will:

- on reasonable request from the Development & Alumni Relations Office, participate in periodic events organised by the University at which some of the alumni donors might be present;
- on reasonable request from the Development & Alumni Relations Office, contribute to University publications where these Scholarships are promoted;
- comply with any reasonable request from the Development and Alumni Relations Office.

4.5.1.2. Upon receipt of an Alumni Named Scholarship, the student will:

- through the Development & Alumni Relations Office maintain contact with the Donor or their family by way of an annual communication within specified deadlines;
- through the Development & Alumni Relations Office may meet the donor and, where this occurs, the meeting will be arranged and attended by a representative from the Development & Alumni Relations Office;
- on reasonable request from the Development & Alumni Relations Office, participate in periodic events organised by the University at which some of the donors or their family might be present;
- comply with any reasonable request from the Development and Alumni Relations Office.

4.5.2 A student who is awarded an Aston Alumni Scholarship will be eligible to receive:

a choice of either:

- i) a £500 discount from their accommodation costs for the current year of study whilst resident in Aston University accommodation,

or

- ii) a £500 tuition fee discount for the current year of study where a £9,000 tuition fee is charged to the student,

or

- iii) if the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation they can choose a payment of £500, paid in two equal instalments into their bank account in the second and third terms.

4.5.3 For the purposes of assessing and approving Aston Alumni Scholarships, a student's academic progress will be deemed to be satisfactory if a student:

(a) is in their first year, or

(b) is not in the first year and has been considered by an Exam Board to have passed and to be eligible to progress into the next stage of study.

4.5.4 Students will be assessed annually for each academic year of study for eligibility for the award they have been chosen to receive. A student who is eligible in year one of their degree programme should not assume that they will automatically remain eligible in subsequent years.

4.5.5 The Alumni Scholarship will be either awarded under the title 'Alumni Scholarship' or it may be titled after a specific alumni donor (Alumni Named Scholarship). It is expected that most Alumni Scholarships will be named after a specific donor.

4.5.6 The University will decide whether to offer a student the opportunity to receive either an Aston Progression Scholarship or an Aston Alumni Scholarship on the basis of a random selection process.

4.5.7 A student is not eligible to receive an Aston Progression Scholarship and an Aston Alumni Scholarship in the same academic year.

4.5.8 Should a student fail to uphold their responsibilities in relation to the Aston Alumni Scholarship Award their scholarship will be replaced by an Aston Progression Scholarship.

# Taught Postgraduate Support Scholarship Scheme

## 1. Purpose and Scope

1.1 This section of the document outlines the eligibility and assessment criteria for students to receive scholarships from Aston University as part of the Higher Education Funding Council for England's (HEFCE) funding arrangements for students starting taught postgraduate degree programmes in 2014/15. This policy is correct at the time of publishing but will be reviewed annually and is subject to change.

## 2. Application eligibility

2.1 A student may be considered to receive a Postgraduate Support Scheme (PSS) Scholarship if:

- a) they are classed as Home/EU for tuition fee purposes and they are not defined as studying for an Equivalent or Lower Qualification<sup>7</sup>
- b) they are holding an offer for a full time taught postgraduate Masters programme at Aston University which will start between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015.
- c) they complete the PSS application procedure fully

2.2 A student who is awarded PSS will be eligible to receive:

- a) a tuition fee scholarship of £7,500 for their full time taught postgraduate Masters programme studied at Aston University in 2014/15:
  - i) If the student's tuition fee exceeds £7,500 the student will remain liable for the remaining fee outstanding,
  - ii) where the tuition fee is less than £7,500 and the student is resident in Aston University accommodation the balance of the scholarship will be used as an accommodation discount paid in two equal instalments in term 2 and term 3.
  - iii) where the tuition fee is less than £7,500 and the student is not resident in Aston University accommodation the balance of the scholarship will be paid into the student's United Kingdom bank account in two equal payments in term 2 and term 3.

## 3. General Provisions

3.1 There are no more than one hundred PSS scholarships available to be awarded.

3.2 The household income thresholds used to assess eligibility for the award of a scholarship approved on household income will be reviewed once as part of the application process only.

3.3 A student who has their fees paid by a sponsor will not be eligible for an Aston Scholarship

3.4 A student will not be eligible to receive a scholarship in full or in part if they are, at the time when payment is due to be made to them, considered to be in debt to the University. For the purposes of

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<sup>7</sup> As defined by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (see Glossary)

this policy a student will be considered to be in debt to the University if they have received the third notice that a payment is overdue.

3.5 An offer of a PSS does not constitute an offer for on-campus accommodation. Students wishing to live on campus must make an application directly to the University Accommodation Office.

#### **4. Approving and awarding**

4.1 PSS Scholarships will be awarded by the PSS Panel who will consider all eligible applications and allocate 100 based on eligibility criteria and personal statements.

4.2 PSS Scholarships are primarily for the payment of tuition fees. Where a successful applicant is awarded a scholarship in excess of their tuition fees they will be required to confirm the format they wish the remainder of their scholarship to take. This confirmation of choice will be final and will not be able to be amended.

4.3 PSS Scholarships will only be approved once in an academic year. Scholarship entitlement will normally be approved before the commencement of the degree programme. It is not normally possible to consider a student for an award once the degree programme has commenced.

4.4 Eligibility for a scholarship approved on household income will be considered on the basis of information provided by the applicant.

4.5 Where a student receives a scholarship in excess of their tuition fees and will take the remaining part of their scholarship in the form of accommodation discount but leaves Aston University accommodation within six weeks of the beginning of their first term, that part of their scholarship will automatically be re-designated as a payment to their bank account.

4.6 For PSS Scholarships where eligible students have selected payment directly into their bank account, students must provide their bank account details when asked to by the published deadline on MAP (My Aston Portal). Should a student not provide this information by the published deadline, the award cannot be paid.

4.7 Once a PSS Scholarship has been approved, any accommodation discount will be applied to the student's accommodation cost liability in equal amounts in terms two and three. PSS Scholarships will normally be available only to students who have been in attendance, as defined by the University throughout term one and term two and are still in attendance at the start of term three. Students who withdraw from Aston University part way through an academic year will not be eligible to receive a scholarship in respect of that year. Any accommodation discount applied to the student for that academic year as the result of a PSS Scholarship will be revoked and the full cost for that period will be applied. The student will be liable to repay any underpayment that may result from this.

4.8 Once an PSS Scholarship has been approved, the fee discount will be applied to the student's tuition fee liability. Aston Scholarships will normally be available only to students who have been in attendance, as defined by the University throughout term one and term two and are still in attendance at the start of term three. Students who withdraw from Aston University part way through an academic year will not be eligible to receive a scholarship in respect of that year. Any tuition fee discount applied to the student for that academic year as the result of an Aston Scholarship will be revoked and the full cost for that period will be applied. The student will be liable to repay any underpayment that may result from this.

4.9 Students who are repeating their studies are not eligible for scholarships regardless of whether they are repeating with attendance, without attendance, or with partial attendance.

4.10 Where a student suspends their studies and takes a Leave of Absence for a complete academic year (i.e. October- October) no tuition fee is charged and, therefore, the student will not be eligible to receive a scholarship. When a student resumes their studies, following a Leave of Absence for a complete academic year, they will be eligible to receive the scholarship in line with the conditions that applied in their original year of entry.

4.11 Students who suspend their studies part way through an academic year and take a Leave of Absence will be eligible to receive a scholarship for the academic terms they have completed in full. When a student resumes their studies following a Leave of Absence, part way through an academic year they will only be eligible to receive a scholarship for the terms they will complete in full. The amount of scholarship will be approved on a pro rata basis and in line with Aston University's Tuition Fees Charging Policy.

4.12 PSS Scholarships are valid for study on a postgraduate taught Master's programme at Aston University and are not transferable to another University

4.13 The PSS Scholarships are valid for programmes of study commencing in the academic year 2014/15 only and cannot be carried forward to another academic year

4.14 The PSS Scholarships are valid for the specified programme of study at Aston University and may not normally be transferred to a different programme

4.15 Applicants must provide evidence to support their application e.g. proof of family income, proof of being a care leaver, DSA support evidence. All evidence provided will be treated with complete confidentiality and will be used solely for the purpose of the Scholarship application. The evidence provided will not be available to any other department within the University for any other purpose

4.16 Any evidence submitted after the application has been considered by the Postgraduate Support Scheme Panel will not be considered.

4.17 If any information provided in the application is found to be false or missing any offer of a Postgraduate Scholarship may be withdrawn. The applicant may be liable for any tuition fees or accommodation fees incurred.

4.18 Applicants must meet all conditions of their offer (e.g. offer is conditional on obtaining specified grades) to be eligible for a scholarship.

4.19 The decision of the Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme Panel is final. Applicants may appeal against the decision of the Postgraduate Scholarship Scheme Panel only if they can show that there has been a procedural error. Appeals should be addressed to the Director of Registry and Student Planning.

4.20 Applicants who qualify for more than one scholarship or discount, will only receive the one which is the most financially valuable to them.

## Appendix A Qualifications and Grades that qualify for the Aston Excellence Scholarship for 2014/5 entry.

UK and EU undergraduate students starting degree programmes in 2014/15 holding one of the following qualifications or combinations of qualifications and grades will be eligible to be considered for an Aston Excellence Scholarship.

Students do not have to apply separately for the Aston Excellence Scholarship. Eligibility is normally confirmed via the UCAS process on publication of results and on enrolment at Aston University.

Aston University is not able to consider other alternative qualifications or combinations of qualifications or grades for the Aston Excellence Scholarship but does admit and make offers to students who have lower or different qualifications. The qualifications listed below do not guarantee entry to Aston University as our requirements may include particular grades in specific subjects.

Other Aston scholarships may be available to Aston students in 2014 entry including scholarships based on household income and placement year/year abroad.

[www.aston.ac.uk/scholarships](http://www.aston.ac.uk/scholarships)

Acceptable grade/qualification combinations are:

Qualifications	Grades
<b>A-levels (including VCE advanced)</b> (best 3 grades)	A*, A*, A*
	A*, A*, A
	A*, A, A
	A*, A*, B
A Double Award A-level counts as two single awards at the grade awarded.	A, A, A
	A*, A, B
	A*, A*, C
	A, A, B
	A*, A*, D
	A*, A, C
	A*, B, B
	A*, A* and an A at AS-level in a different subject



Qualifications	Grades
<b>Level 3 BTEC National</b> from the suite of qualifications that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 x BTEC National Diploma</li> <li>• 1 x BTEC Extended Diploma</li> <li>• Combination of 1 x BTEC National Certificate and 1 x BTEC National Award</li> <li>• 3 x BTEC National Awards</li> <li>• 1 x BTEC Diploma + 1 x Subsidiary Diploma</li> <li>• 3 x Subsidiary Diplomas</li> <li>• 1 x BTEC National Certificate + 1 x Subsidiary Certificate</li> <li>• 1 x BTEC Diploma + 1 x National Award</li> <li>• 2 x National Award + 1 x Subsidiary Diploma</li> <li>• 2 x Subsidiary Diplomas + 1 x National Award</li> </ul>	Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction, Distinction
<b>2 x BTEC 90 Credit Diplomas OR 1 x BTEC 90 Credit Diploma + 1 x BTEC Subsidiary Certificates</b>	Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction*. Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction, Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction, Distinction, Distinction
<b>CACHE Level 3 diploma in Child Care and Education</b>	Grade A
<b>CACHE Level 3 Extended Diploma for the Children and Young People's Workforce</b>	Grade A*
<b>OCR National Extended Diploma</b>	Grade D1
<b>OCR National Diploma + OCR National Certificate</b>	Grade D, Grade D
<b>3 x OCR National Certificates</b>	Grade D, Grade D, Grade D

Qualifications	Grades
<b>OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical qualification: One Extended Diploma</b>	Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction, Distinction
<b>OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical qualification: 1 x Diploma + 1 x Introductory Diploma</b>	Distinction*, Distinction* + Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* + Distinction Distinction*, Distinction + Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction + Distinction Distinction, Distinction + Distinction* Distinction, Distinction + Distinction
<b>OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical qualification: 3 x Introductory Diplomas</b>	Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction, Distinction
<b>OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technical qualification: 2 x Subsidiary Diplomas</b>	Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction*. Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction, Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction, Distinction, Distinction
<b>NPTC Level 3 Land Based Extended Diploma</b>	Distinction* Distinction
<b>Progression Diploma</b>	Grade A*
<b>Scottish Advanced Highers (best 3 grades)</b>	A, A, A A, A, B
<b>International Baccalaureate</b>	35+ points
<b>Irish Leaving Certificates (best 4 grades)</b>	A1, A1, A1, A1 A1, A1, A1, B1 A1, A1, A1, A2

Qualifications	Grades	
<b>Cambridge Pre-U (From the Principal Subject or Global Perspectives and Research (GPR) elements only</b>	D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D3 D1/D2 D1/D2 M1 D1/D2 D1/D2 M2 D1/D2 D1/D2 M3 D1/D2 D1/D2 P1 D1/D2 D3 D3 D1/D2 D3 M1 D1/D2 D3 M2 D1/D2 D3 M3 D1/D2 M1 M1 D1/D2 M1 M2 D3 D3 D3 D3 D3 M1 D3 D3 M2 D3 M1 M1	
<b>A postgraduate research degree</b>		
<b>A postgraduate taught degree</b>		
<b>A first degree</b>		
<b>1 x A level + 2 x Level 3 BTEC Subsidiary Diplomas or National Awards</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A A* A A* A B B B	<i>BTEC grades</i> Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction
<b>2 x A level + 1 x Level 3 BTEC Subsidiary Diplomas or National Awards</b>	<i>A level grades</i> A*, A* A*, A* A*, A A*, A A, A A, A A*, B A*, B A, B A*, C	<i>BTEC grade</i> Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*

Qualifications	Grades	
<b>1 x A level + 1 x Level 3 BTEC Diploma OR 1 x Level 3 BTEC National Certificate</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A A* A A* A B B	<i>BTEC grades</i> Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction` Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction
<b>2 x A levels + 1 x OCR National Certificate</b>	<i>A level grades</i> A*, A* A*, A* A*, A A*, A A, A A, A A, A A*, B A*, B A, B A*, C	<i>OCR grade</i> Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*
<b>2 x A levels + 1 x OCR Cambridge Technical Introductory Diploma</b>	<i>A level grades</i> A*, A* A*, A* A*, A A*, A A, A A, A A*, B A*, B A, B A*, C	<i>OCR grade</i> Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction Distinction* Distinction*
<b>1 x A level + 2 x OCR National Certificates</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A	<i>OCR grades</i> Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction
<b>1 x A level + 2 x OCR Cambridge Technical Introductory Diplomas</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A A* A A* A B B	<i>OCR grades</i> Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction` Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction

Qualifications	Grades	
<b>1 x A level + 1 x OCR National Diploma</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A	<i>OCR grades</i> Distinction Distinction
<b>1 x A level + 1 x OCR Cambridge Technical Diploma</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A A* A A* A B B	<i>OCR grades</i> Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction` Distinction, Distinction Distinction, Distinction Distinction*, Distinction* Distinction*, Distinction
<b>2 x A levels + 1 x Cambridge Pre-U Certificate</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A*, A* A*, A A, A A*, B A*, C A*, D A*, A* A*, A A, A A*, B A, B A*, A* A*, A A, A A*, B	<i>Cambridge Pre-U grade</i> D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D1/D2 D3 D3 D3 D3 D3 M1 M1 M1 M1
<b>1 x A level + 2 x Cambridge Pre-U Certificates</b>	<i>A level grade</i> A* A A* A B A* A B	<i>Cambridge Pre-U grade</i> D1/D2, D1/D2 D1/D2, D1/D2 D1/D2, D1/D2 D1/D2, D3 D1/D2, D3 D1/D2, D3 D3, D3 D3, D3 D3, D3
<b>Access to Higher Education Diploma</b>	Overall Pass - must include 45 credits at Level 3, of which 40 credits must be at Distinction and the remainder at Merit or higher	

## **Appendix B      Glossary**

These meanings apply only to Aston University Home and EU Scholarship Policy 2014/15 and may not hold the same meanings or be interpreted in the same way in other documents.

### **Academic Term**

The academic year is divided into three academic terms for undergraduate payment arrangements.

### **Academic year**

This is the period over which Aston University teaches a programme. For most undergraduate programmes, this normally begins at the start of October and ends in the middle of June. Students should normally be in attendance during this period.

### **Alumni Scholarships**

These Scholarships are offered by the Development and Alumni Relations Department of Aston University from funds donated by alumni of Aston University. These Scholarships might be named after a specific donor or may be from a general fund donated by more than one donor.

### **Alumni Named Scholarships**

These Scholarships are offered by the Development and Alumni Relations Department of Aston University from funds donated by alumni of Aston University. These Scholarships are named after a specific donor.

### **Aston Scholarship**

There are two types of Aston Scholarships. The first are not approved on household income and are approved on the basis of academic excellence<sup>8</sup> or placement<sup>9</sup> details. These are the Aston Excellence and the Aston Placement Scholarships. The second type of scholarships is approved based on the household income. These are the National Scholarship Programme awards, and the Aston Progression Scholarship.

### **Attendance**

For the purposes of Aston Scholarship approvals, a student is considered to be in attendance if Aston University's student records systems show that they are a current student. Attendance requirements to pass a degree programme may differ and should be clarified with the specific programme leader.

### **Care leaver**

For the purposes of this policy a care-leaver has identified this at pre-enrolment and is defined as "if you were looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and were in the care of the local authority and/or a health and social care trust on your 16th birthday" (Buttle Trust)

### **Deferred studies**

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<sup>8</sup> If the student has GCE A level grade AAB or above, or equivalent (see the Appendix for definition of equivalences).

<sup>9</sup> If the student takes a paid placement year or year abroad, the tuition fee for that year will be just £1,000. If the student takes an unpaid placement year, there will be no tuition fee.

This is when exams and/or assessments are delayed until an agreed period of time has elapsed.

### **Equivalent or Lower Qualification**

A student holds an Equivalent or Lower Qualification<sup>10</sup> if they already hold an awarded qualification which is at the same level as or is higher than the programme they will be studying at Aston University.

### **ERASMUS fee waivers**

Students who undertake a work or study placement outside of the UK but within the EEA may qualify for financial help from an organisation called ERASMUS. In some cases, ERASMUS will pay the student's tuition fees for their placement year and this is called an ERASMUS fee waiver.

### **EU student**

This is a student who is an EU national (or the relevant family member of an EU national) and who qualifies to be considered for a tuition fee loan from the UK government. These students cannot be charged more than £9,000 for their tuition fees. The rules about who qualifies as an EU student depend on the immigration status of the student and their family members and where they have all been living.

### **Home student**

This is a student who qualifies to be considered for a tuition fee loan and grants and loans for living costs from the UK government. These students cannot be charged more than £9,000 for their tuition fees. The rules about who qualifies as a home student depend on nationality, the immigration status of the student and their family members and where they all have been living.

### **Household Income**

This is the household income as calculated by the relevant funding authority for a student's application for student funding from the UK government. It is not possible for Aston University to accept any alternative assessment method of a student's household income.

### **Maintenance grant**

This is a grant for living costs from the UK Government which is assessed and awarded by the relevant Student Finance national body. Students cannot receive the Maintenance Grant and the Special Support Grant at the same time.

### **My Aston Portal (MAP)**

This is the Aston University online student portal through which students can view and update personal information and find information about their programme. Students will be able to access information about the progress of Aston Scholarship assessments and approvals from their student homepage on MAP.

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<sup>10</sup> As defined by the Higher Education Funding Council for England

## **Re-enrolment**

All students are expected to re-enrol each September, irrespective of their start date. The purpose of re-enrolment is to confirm that the student accepts the University's terms and conditions and the University's Regulations for that specific academic year. The re-enrolment process is also used to update any changes to the student's personal information. Re-enrolment is via MAP and the student will be emailed when the MAP task is available for the student to complete.

## **Repeating studies as if for the first time**

This is when exams, assessments or modules are retaken but are treated as a first attempt and the mark the student receives is not limited to the pass mark, this is usually due to exceptional circumstances that are agreed on an individual case by case basis.

## **Repeating studies with attendance**

This is when a student does not progress to the next level of study and has to retake exams and/or assessments in the following year and is required to attend all of the lectures, classes and tutorials for those modules.

## **Repeating studies without attendance**

This is when a student does not progress to the next level of study and has to retake exams and/or assessments in the following year and is not required to attend any of the lectures, classes and tutorials for those modules.

## **Repeating studies with partial attendance**

This is when a student has to retake exams, assessments and/or modules in the following year and is required to attend some of the lectures, classes and tutorials for those modules.

## **Sandwich placement year**

This is a period of industrial, professional, linguistic or occupational training/work experience or study abroad which is approved by the University and forms part of the assessment for a sandwich degree or language degree at Aston University. Sometimes a student is paid during their placement for the work they do by their placement employer which is called a paid placement. In other cases, students do not receive any money from their placement employer for their work and this is called an unpaid placement. If the placement takes place outside of the UK then it is considered to be a work or study placement overseas.

## **Satisfactory academic performance**

For the purposes of Aston Scholarship approvals, a student is considered to have a satisfactory academic performance if they have been accepted to start the first year of their programme or they have been considered by an Examination Board to have passed and to be eligible to progress into the next stage of study.

## **Special Support Grant**

This is a grant for living costs from the UK Government which is for students who have an entitlement to receive Social Security Benefits (for example they have children or are disabled). It is assessed and awarded by the relevant Student Finance body. Students cannot receive the Special Support Grant and the Maintenance Grant at the same time.



### **Student Awards Agency for Scotland**

This is the organisation that assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to Home students who live in Scotland. This organisation also assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to EU students who study in Scotland.

### **Student Finance England**

This is the organisation that assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to Home students who live in England.

### **Student Finance Northern Ireland**

This is the organisation that assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to Home students who live in Northern Ireland.

### **Student Finance Services**

This is the organisation that assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to EU students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It is also sometimes known as the EU Team or the European Services Team.

### **Student Finance Wales**

This is the organisation that assesses and awards student funding from the UK government to Home students who live in Wales.

### **Student Loans Company**

This is the organisation that manages the payment and repayment of loans and grants for student support funding. This organisation is also responsible for collating information about household income and sharing this information with Universities for bursary and scholarship assessments.

### **Suspending studies (Leave of Absence)**

This is when a student stops their studies for a period (normally longer than 60 days) for reasons such as illness. This is also sometimes called a Leave of Absence.

### **UCAS**

This stands for the University and Colleges Admission System. It is the system students use to apply for undergraduate places at universities and colleges in the UK.

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