



# Home Undergraduate Scholarship Eligibility Criteria 2025-26

November 2024

This document sets out the scholarship offerings for home undergraduate students whose year of entry is 2025/26.

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Version Letter</b>	<b>Officer Responsible for Procedures</b>	<b>Consultation Process</b>	<b>Date of Approval and Committee and/or Senior Management Officer</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
	1	Academic Registrar	Admissions, Academic Services	25 April 2024	September 2024
	2	Academic Registrar	Admissions, Academic Services	25 October 2024	November 2024

## Home Undergraduate Scholarship Eligibility Criteria 2025-26

### 1. SCOPE

#### 1.1 Purpose

*The purpose of this document is to outline the eligibility criteria and amount of funding available for home undergraduate students to receive scholarships from Aston University starting full time undergraduate degree programmes in 2025/26.*

#### 1.2 What is covered by the eligibility criteria

*This document sets out:*

- *The basis on which students entering in 2025/26 will be eligible and assessed for home undergraduate scholarships and the amounts awarded at each stage of the academic year.*
- *The implications of withdrawal or leave of absence on students' eligibility for scholarships.*

#### 1.3 Who is covered by the eligibility criteria

*All home undergraduate students entering in 2025/26 should be aware of and comply with this document. All those who undertake a role relating to the payment of scholarships at the University, including staff, must be aware of and comply with this document.*

#### 1.4 Ownership

*The Chief Student Officer is the officer responsible for this document. Any questions about the operation of this document should be referred in the first instance to the Academic Registrar.*

### 2. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*The terms set out in this section 2 apply to this document.*

**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 delivers a programme. For most undergraduate programmes, this normally begins at the end of September and ends in the middle of June (as outlined in the [University term dates](#)). Students should normally be in attendance during this period.

**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 document, a care leaver is defined as: a young person (under the age of 25) who:

- has been in the care of, or been given accommodation by, their local authority (LA) for a period of at least 13 weeks before the age of 16, in most cases, they've not returned to the care of their parent(s) prior to the first day of the first academic year of their course.
- Students will be asked to provide a letter from their Local Authority confirming their care leaver status and also confirmation from either Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland, Student Awards Agency for Scotland or Student Finance Services that they have been awarded full funding as a care leaver.

**Young Adult Carer:** A young adult carer is categorised as someone aged between 16 and 25 years old who cares for a family member or friend with either an illness or disability, mental health condition or an addiction. Evidence to verify this status would be a letter from a professional / verifier such as a Key Worker, Social Worker, Teacher or GP who can confirm status.

**Children from Military Families:** For the purposes of this document, children from military families are defined as students who have a parent or guardian who has previously or currently serves in the UK armed forces. The UK armed forces is defined as The British Army, The Royal Navy, The Royal Marines or The Royal Air Force. The parent or guardian must either be currently serving or have served at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life.

**Deferred studies:** 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 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.

**Home student:** The rules about qualifying as a home student depend on nationality, the immigration status of you and your family members and where you have all been living. 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.

**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.

**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.

**NHSBSA:** The NHS Business Services Authority Student Services is responsible for administering the NHS Bursary Scheme to eligible medical and dental students

**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. A placement year also incorporates those undertaking an integrated work-based learning year as part of an Integrated Masters Programme for the following: (MEng/MBiol/MOptom/MPharm/MBCHB).

**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 acknowledges 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.

**Refugees:** For the purposes of this document, refugees are defined as students who have a vignette or Biometric Residence Permit associated to an international passport that states they have been granted full

refugee status in the UK. This does not include students who have Indefinite Leave to Remain or another permanent residence status in the UK.

**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.

**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.

**Sponsor:** For the purposes of this document, a sponsor is an external organisation, not a family member nor the Student Loans Company or the NHSBSA for undergraduate medical students (if providing tuition fee support through an NHS Bursary only).

**Stage of study:**

Stage 1 equates to the entry to year 1 of a degree programme, year 0 of the Integrated Foundation Year Programme, or direct entry into year 2.

Stage 2 follows stage 1 after successful completion of that year of study,

Stage P is the placement/sandwich year and often follows stage 2,

Stage 3 follows stage 2 after successful completion of that year of study for those students whose programme of study is made up of four or more taught years of study e.g. MPharm

Stage F is the final year of study of a degree programme.

**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.

**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 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.

### 3. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A student qualifies to be considered for an Aston Scholarship if:

- (a) the student will start a new full time undergraduate degree programme at Aston University between 1st September 2025 and the 31st August 2026.
- (b) the student will be liable to pay the full-time stage 1 and placement Undergraduate tuition fees confirmed for that academic year. Please cross-reference our terms and conditions to understand expectations regarding fees.
- (c) the student is classified as a home fee payer and is in receipt of UK student support funding.
- (d) the student qualifies to receive student support funding as part of the finance arrangements for new students starting their degree programmes between 1st September 2025 and the 31st August 2026.

A student who is awarded a scholarship will be eligible to receive that scholarship in line with the conditions that applied in their original year of entry irrespective of subsequent transfers or suspension of studies.

If a student has to repeat a previous stage of study in full due to an examination board providing an outcome of fail restart. The student will continue to remain on their original year of entry and be eligible for funding for the stage they are repeating if they continue to meet all general provisions and scholarship specific conditions for that academic year.

The household income thresholds used to assess eligibility for the award of a scholarship approved on household income will be reviewed once in the academic year in the students first year of study on entry at the University.

A student will not be entitled to receive a scholarship in any academic year for which they do not have to pay tuition fees. 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.

With the exception of a placement year and the aspiration scholarship, a student will only be eligible to be considered for an Aston Scholarship approved on household income for an academic year if they have made an application to be income assessed for the same year by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency for Scotland.

A student who has all or part of their fees paid by a sponsor (other than the SLC or NHS) will not be eligible for an Aston Scholarship. 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 by the University to be in academic debt as outlined in the Tuition Fee Charging Policy. For the purposes of this document, a student will be considered to be in academic debt to the University if they have received the third notice that the payment is due.

## **4. APPROVING AND AWARDING**

### **4.1 Annual review**

Aston University reviews its portfolio of scholarships on an annual basis. Scholarships offered for one entry cohort may not be offered for following cohorts. The terms and conditions of specific scholarships may differ dependent on the year of first offering.

### **4.2 Scholarship awards**

Students will only be approved for Aston Scholarships once in an academic year. Scholarship entitlement will normally be determined by the 30th November 2025 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 determined. It is not normally possible to consider a student for an award of an Aston Scholarship after 31 May of the academic year in question. Funds will expire on 31st May of the academic year in question after this date remaining funds will be removed from your account and will no longer be redeemable.

Students do not need to apply to be considered 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. Students who are eligible for one or more of the Aston Scholarships will receive communications concerning their award/s through My Aston Portal (MAP).

Students who are eligible for one or more scholarships where a payment choice is available 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 amended. Where a student does not make a choice by the published deadline on MAP, the award will default to a tuition fee discount and cannot be amended.

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 before the fund expiration date.

For Aston Scholarships where payments are made directly into their bank account students must provide their bank account details before the fund expiration date. If the student does not provide bank details by the published deadline the scholarship will no longer be redeemable.

### **4.3 Scholarships and the Student Loans Company**

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.

Eligibility for a scholarship approved on household income will be determined 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 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. The University will notify the Student Loans Company about fee discounts and changes in tuition fee liability.

Where a student has a choice 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.

#### **4.4 Scholarships and the placement year**

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 of that academic year. The University will notify the Student Loans Company about any fee discounts and changes in tuition fee liability.

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

Students who have been assessed as eligible for a Placement Scholarship need to have their placement record approved in the student records system by the end of January of the relevant academic year the placement falls within. Failure to get a placement approved by this date will make the student ineligible for the scholarship.

#### **4.5 Withdrawing from, repeating or suspension of studies**

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 Aston Scholarship applied to the student for that academic year will be revoked and the full cost for that period will be recovered.

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.

Where a student suspends their studies and takes a Leave of Absence for a complete academic year, no tuition fee is charged and, therefore, the student will not be eligible to receive a scholarship.

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 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 the Tuition Fee Charging Policy for that academic year.

#### **4.6 Assessment of Fee Status**

Failure to provide evidence to the Fee Assessment Team to enable verification of home fee status by 30<sup>th</sup> November, when entitlement is normally determined, would mean scholarships are unable to be offered on the basis you have not met the general provisions.

#### **INDIVIDUAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR HOME UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Aston University offers a variety of scholarships which have individual eligibility criteria in addition to the general provisions outlined in section 3 and approving and awarding criteria as listed in section 4.

***In each of 4-8 – 4.11 below chunks of text removed about distribution of award – this is on website and doesn't need to also be here. It's not eligibility***



#### **4.7 Aston Aspirational Scholarship**

A student is eligible to receive an Aston Aspiration Scholarship in the academic year 2025/26 if:

- (a) at enrolment the student meets the general provisions outlined in Section 3 and the approving and awarding criteria in section 4, and
- (b) the student is regarded as a home student for fee purposes, is eligible for UK student support funding, and
- (c) the student is assessed in the first year of the programme (i.e in the 2025/6 academic year) by Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency for Scotland to have a household income of up to and including £42,875.

Students who are entering stage 0 of the Integrated Foundation Year Programme and meet all the other criteria will receive their scholarship as they enter stage 1. These students will not be eligible for a further Aspirational Scholarship in stage 2 of their chosen degree programme.

Students who are direct entrants into stage 2 and meet all the other criteria will receive their scholarship as they enter stage F.

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.

#### **4.8 Aston Placement Scholarship**

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

- (a) at enrolment the student meets the general provisions outlined in Section 3 and the approving and awarding criteria in Section 4, and
- (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, or
- (d) the student is undertaking the Integrated Masters Programme (MEng/MBiol/MOptom/MPharm) integrated work based learning year.

A student can only be awarded one scholarship for the placement year so students cannot receive any other Scholarship awards for this specific year.

Those students who are undertaking an integrated masters programme will be eligible in stage 3 of study with the exception of MPharm and MOptom where it will be in stage 4.

#### **4.9 Aston Support Scholarship**

The Aston Support Scholarship is targeted at students classified as being in one of the following groups as defined in the glossary:

- UK domiciled students who have identified that they are a care leaver at pre-enrolment.
- Young carers
- Children from military families
- Refugees

A student is eligible to receive an Aston Support Scholarship if:

- (a) at enrolment the student meets the general provisions outlined in Section 3 and the approving and awarding criteria in Section 4, and
- (b) the student is regarded as a home student for fee purposes, is eligible to receive UK student support funding, and
- (c) the student has identified that they are a care leaver at pre-enrolment, meets the definition provided in the document and provides a letter from their local authority confirming their care leaver status and also confirmation from SFE that they have been awarded full funding as a care leaver. This evidence is to be provided by the deadline which will be published on MAP.

Or

The student meets the definition of young carer as provided in the document and had provided the requested evidence to show that this is the case by the deadline which will be published on MAP.

Or

the student has identified that they are a child from a military family at pre-enrolment, meets the definition provided in the document and has provided evidence to show that they are from a military family by the deadline which will be published on MAP.

Or

the student meets the definition of a refugee as provided in the document and has provided evidence to show that they have been granted full refugee status in the UK by the deadline which will be published on MAP.

#### **4.10 Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarships**

The Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship is an application-based scholarship. A student must apply for the Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship. If the student is successful in the application process, the student must agree to the responsibilities expected of them.

A student is eligible to receive an Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship if:

- a) at enrolment the student meets the general provisions outlined in Section 3 and the approving and awarding criteria in Section 4, and
- b) the student is regarded as a “home student” for fee purposes, is eligible to receive UK student support funding, and
- c) the student is assessed by either Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Finance Northern Ireland or Student Awards Agency for Scotland as having a household income of up to and including £25,000. This assessment must have been carried out and finalised and available to the university by the beginning of September.
- d) the student meets at least one of the selection criteria as specified on the application form for this scholarship.
- e) the student meets all deadlines for application submission
- f) the assessor deems that the student should be offered the scholarship based on the application submitted. The decision of the assessor is final and any appeal against the decision can only be made based on an administrative or procedural irregularity.

4.10.1 The Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship will be either awarded under the title ‘Aston Forward Scholarship’ or it may be titled after a specific donor (Named Undergraduate Scholarship).

4.10.2 Should a student fail to uphold their responsibilities in relation to the Scholarship Award their scholarship could be revoked.

4.10.3 If awarded the Aston Forward Scholarship or Named Undergraduate Scholarship, a student will still be entitled to receive other undergraduate scholarships as listed within this document subject to meeting the conditions to receive them and any general provisions.

#### 4.10.4 Responsibilities for recipients of an Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship

- Upon receipt of an Aston Forward Undergraduate Scholarship Undergraduate the student agrees:
- through the Alumni Relations & Development Office to maintain contact with the Donor or their family by way of an annual communication within specified deadlines;
- through the Alumni Relations & Development Office, meet the donor if agreed and, where this occurs, the meeting will be arranged and attended by a representative from the Alumni Relations & Development Office;
- on reasonable request from the Alumni Relations & Development 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 Alumni Relations & Development Office.

- **END** -