



Are you an Estranged Student?

What is an estranged student?

An estranged student is someone who no longer has the support of their family due to a breakdown in their relationship which has led to ceased contact. This might mean your biological, step or adoptive parents or wider family members who have been responsible for supporting you in the past.

Find out what support is available to help students who are estranged succeed at Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt University is committed to offering the opportunity for university study to students from a diverse range of backgrounds who have the potential to succeed. We recognise that students who are estranged may face obstacles to university participation and success. We are committed to offering support for you from the pre-application stage to graduation and beyond.

Support for estranged students

- **Applying to University:** If an applicant who is estranged makes us aware of their circumstances via UCAS or contacting us directly, they are eligible for a contextual offer and one-to-one support with their application. We also provide the opportunity for students to declare their circumstances at enrolment or at any point throughout their studies.

When considering applications, we take your circumstances into account and recognise that you may have faced more obstacles than others during your school or college career, which may have impacted your grades. For these reasons, we look at applications from estranged students under the Heriot-Watt University Fair Access Policy (bit.ly/HWUfairaccess)

UCAS also provides dedicated advice for estranged students wishing to apply to university. You can find this information by visiting: www.ucas.com/estranged-students

- **The Active Student Programme:** During your time at Heriot-Watt you might want to de-stress by engaging in sport and exercise. The Active Student Programme is an option available to you to help you get started, where you are entitled to a free 12-week exercise programme with support from an exercise professional.

For more information regarding referral to this programme please email Emma Smail (Edinburgh Campus) or Gillian McLaughlin (Scottish Borders Campus), you can find their contact details under 'Who to contact'.

- **Accommodation:** The University guarantees to make an offer of accommodation to all eligible students in their first year of study. Please see our Accommodation guarantee for full details: bit.ly/HWaccommodationguarantee

Students who are estranged are also eligible for year-round access to University accommodation for the duration of their studies. Please contact us when you apply for accommodation so we can discuss the options available to you.

- **Financial Support:** If you are estranged, you can apply for the **Heriot-Watt Access Bursary**, which is worth £1,000 for each year of undergraduate study.

Students who are estranged are eligible for support towards **travel costs** for each year of their undergraduate studies.

In addition, estranged students are given priority access to hardship funds and emergency funding from our Student Union Advice Hub if needed. For more information visit bit.ly/HWHardshipfund

You can access one-to-one financial advice from our drop-in service in the **Student Service Centre**. The drop-in service is available **Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm**.

- **Get Ready for Success at HWU** is a three day event that takes place prior to Welcome Week. It is an opportunity for students to get a head start at university, develop key academic skills, and begin to explore the University and its resources. Contact studentsuccess@hw.ac.uk for more details.

Who to contact

If you would like to speak to someone about applying or would like to arrange a visit to the University, please contact:

Suzanne Ewing, Widening Participation Officer,
S.Ewing@hw.ac.uk

If you are an enrolled student and would like to access support please contact:

Edinburgh Campus: Emma Smail, Student Wellbeing and Transition Advisor, E.Smail@hw.ac.uk

Scottish Borders Campus: Gillian McLaughlin, Student Advisor, G.McLaughlin@hw.ac.uk

More information on support

If you would like more information on the support Heriot-Watt currently provides for students who are estranged, visit our webpage:

www.hw.ac.uk/estranged-students

The University has signed the **Stand Alone Pledge** to continually improve the support for current and future Heriot-Watt students who experience estrangement at any time during university. For more information please visit:

www.thestandalonepledge.org.uk