Information for care leavers
What is a care leaver?

The legal definition of a care leaver is someone who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14, and was in care on their 16th birthday.

However, at King’s College London we recognise that any time spent in local authority care can have a significant impact on educational opportunities and outcomes, and therefore provide pre-entry and on-course support to students who have spent any time in local authority care.

Pre-entry support

King’s College London is committed to providing fair access and support for prospective students who have spent time in local authority care.

If you are care-experienced and interested in applying to King’s College London, you can contact Anne-Marie in the Widening Participation Department for impartial information, advice and guidance about applying to university in general, as well as the extra support available for care-experienced students.

All communication with Anne-Marie is completely confidential and will have no impact on your application to the College.

Activities in preparation for university

If you are a care-experienced student in Year 12 studying in Greater London, you may be eligible to apply for King’s College London’s K+ programme. K+ is a two-year programme that aims to equip post-16 students across London from under-represented groups with the knowledge, confidence and skills to successfully transition to university.

If you live outside of London, many other universities have similar access programmes and summer schools so it may be worth contacting your local university. The Widening Participation Department at King’s also hosts a residential Sutton Trust summer school each year, for which applications from care-experienced students are prioritised.

Travel expenses

King’s College London hosts University taster days especially for care-experienced students. We also have numerous open days and visit days throughout the year and are able to reimburse travel costs for care-experienced students. Please contact Anne-Marie for more information about this.

Coordinator contact details

Anne-Marie Henderson
Widening Participation Coordinator
Widening Participation Department
anne-marie.henderson@kcl.ac.uk
020 7848 3948
@kclwp
Additional consideration

King’s College London strongly advises all care-experienced applicants to disclose this on their UCAS application form.

This will allow admissions staff to take your circumstances into consideration and will not have a negative impact on your application. We also advise teachers to ensure this information is included in their student’s reference.

It is helpful if this can inform universities of how long and how recently you were in care. UCAS have produced a really useful video explaining how to include your care experience on the application form, as well as the benefits of doing so, which can be seen here: www.ucas.tv/ucas/video/TWzg2

King’s has a competitive admissions process and most programmes have many more applications than places. If required, King’s will ensure that applications from care-experienced students will be given additional consideration as part of the admissions process. Additional consideration will vary from course to course and indeed applicant to applicant.

Some examples of the form that additional consideration might take are given below:

- Students whose predicted grades are marginally lower than that required for the course may be given an offer (at the standard level)
- Students whose application is considered as being close to the standard required to gain an interview may be offered an interview to fully assess their potential
- Students whose admissions test score is considered as being close to the required standard might be given additional consideration
- Students who just fail to meet their conditional offer will be given additional consideration as to whether their place should be confirmed.

If the Admissions Office has been informed of an applicant’s care-experienced status, the Director of Admissions and the Head of Widening Participation will personally review every care-experienced student’s application before an unsuccessful decision is made.

King’s does not make lower or variable offers, other than for our Enhanced Support Dentistry Programme and Extended Medical Degree Programme, and care-experienced applicants would not normally be made lower offers. King’s is ambitious for the attainment of care-experienced students and provides activities to support students in their journey to higher education.
Support once you’re at King’s College London

Accommodation

From September 2014, King’s College London will be offering 365-day accommodation within the King’s/nominated residences, to all care-experienced students who apply for accommodation by the 30 June in their first year of study. More information is available at kcl.ac.uk/wp.

Finance

Government Support

Care leavers* are classed as independent by Student Finance England and are therefore usually entitled to the maximum amount of financial support, including the full non-repayable Maintenance Grant. In addition to this, care leavers* under the age of 25 are entitled to financial support from their local authority during their time at university.

*This support applies to young people who meet the legal definition of the term care leaver.

Support at King’s

The Care Leaver Start-up Bursary is given to all students who meet the definition of a care leaver and is worth £1000 for the first year at King’s College and does not need to be repaid.

All students at King’s College London who have their household income assessed as less than £42,600 per year are entitled to the King's Living Bursary, which is worth up to £1500 per year.

Care-experienced students are also eligible to apply for the UNITE Accommodation & Access Bursary. Students who are awarded this bursary are offered the full cost of accommodation at Moonraker Point, plus a cash bursary of £4000 per year, for up to a maximum of three years.

For more information about fees and funding at King’s College London, please visit www.kcl.ac.uk/funding.

Once you have been accepted at King’s College we offer a one to one meeting with our designated member of staff for care leavers before you start. They will help and advise you of the support available including applying for bursaries, accommodation, study support etc.

Useful links

King’s College London
Widening Participation Department
www.kcl.ac.uk/wp

The Unite Foundation
www.unite-group.co.uk

Buttle UK
www.buttleuk.org

The Who Cares? Trust
www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk

The Catch 22 National Care Advisory Service (NCAS)
www.leavingcare.org

The Care Leavers’ Foundation
www.thecareleaversfoundation.org

The Care Leavers’ Association
www.careleavers.com

The Sutton Trust
www.suttontrust.com

Student Finance England
https://www.gov.uk/student-finance

King’s College London
Fees and Funding
www.kcl.ac.uk/funding

Coordinator contact details

Anne-Marie Henderson
Widening Participation Coordinator
Widening Participation Department
anne-marie.henderson@kcl.ac.uk
020 7848 3948
@kclwp