

GRANTS FOR INDIVIDUALS – APPLICATION GUIDANCE NOTES

Introduction

The Walcot Foundation gives grants to Lambeth residents to support them to move from benefits or low income to financial self-sufficiency. We believe that education and employment offer a positive route for people to make a long-term sustainable change to their financial circumstances. If you live in Lambeth and come from a low-income household, and are pursuing/or want to pursue education or training that has a strong likelihood of leading to employment, then we are here to help. Let us know what the financial barriers are to you succeeding in education, training or entry into employment and, if you meet our criteria for a grant, we will try to remove those barriers. We recognise that you may require more than one grant, and perhaps a series of grants over a period of time, as you take steps to improve your financial circumstances.

If your grant request is related to enhancing the quality of your life or if you are temporarily experiencing financial difficulties, then we are not the charity for you. Our focus is on Lambeth residents who have experienced long-term financial poverty (i.e. come from households that have been dependent on benefits or on very low incomes for many years). If we are not the charity for you, you may wish to visit www.turn2us.org.uk for suggestions of other charities. This website is designed to help individuals find charities that can potentially meet their needs.

Moving toward financial self-sufficiency requires a considerable time commitment. If this is not the right time in your life to make that commitment then we may not be the charity for you.

Eligibility criteria:

To apply for a grant you need to:

- live in Lambeth and have done so for at least 1 year
- Be turning *at least* 19 in the academic year that you are applying for
- Come from a low-income household – you (or your parent(s)/carer(s) if you are living with them) need to be in receipt of one of the following **Income based benefits**:
 - Universal Credit
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group)
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit

OR currently eligible for Free School Meals

OR on very low income. If you (or your parents/carers if you are living with them) are working (and not on any of the above income-based benefits) please use our [on-line financial eligibility checker](#) to see if you are eligible.

What we fund

a) *Students*

Students can apply for a grant for one of the following:

- **A degree course**
For students starting their degree in September/October 2018, successful applicants receive a grant of £1,500 per year (split termly) for every year of their course (up to a maximum of four years). For students who are already in Years 2, 3 or 4 of their course, successful applicants receive a single grant of £1,500 grant split termly into 3 x £500 payments. Grants can be used towards general living expenses at university (e.g. travel, accommodation fees), course related items (e.g. books, laptop, specialist equipment) and childcare.
- **A vocational/non-degree course up to NVQ level 4 or an apprenticeship:**
Students can apply for a grant of up to £1,500 towards travel costs; books; special clothing; equipment; study/field trips, childcare and course fees.
- **A degree course at a Russell Group university:**
Each year the Foundation offers three '[Townsend Scholarships](#)' to Lambeth-resident Black and Minority Ethnic pupils from low-income homes who gain a place at a Russell Group University. Each scholarship is worth £1,000 a term for three years (£9,000 in total). More information about this scheme and the application process is available at <http://www.walcotfoundation.org.uk/townsend.html> for further information.

Please note: If you already have a first degree and/or a vocational qualification (at NVQ-4 or equivalent), you are not eligible to apply for a grant.

b) *Moving into employment*

If you've been out of work for much of the last five years and haven't gained a degree or NVQ-4 (or equivalent) vocational qualification in the last ten years, we could make a grant to help you move into employment. Grants can be made for costs associated with -

- a further education or vocational training course that has a strong likelihood of leading to work
- costs associated with gaining work experience that will strengthen your chances of getting paid work
- costs associated with making the transition from long-term unemployment to employment, such as suitable work clothes and equipment

If you are applying for a grant for the above, its very likely that we'll refer you to the Walcot-funded careers advisor for 1:1 support and guidance to help you to transition into employment.

What we do not fund:

- a) Grants **are not** made to reimburse for goods or services already purchased or for debts.
- b) Grants **are not** made for the payment of council tax, rent (except for costs towards accommodation whilst studying away from home at university) or other taxes.
- c) Grants **are not** made for post-graduate studies or second degrees, personal development courses, or career changes.
- d) If you already have significant work experience with a reasonable level of responsibility (what we would classify as a 'career'), we will not fund further study even if you do not have a qualification.
- e) If you already have a first degree or a vocational qualification at NVQ-4 or equivalent, we will not fund further study. If in any doubt, please call a member of the Grants Team before completing this form.
- f) Grants **are not** made for course fees or childcare in cases where it is unclear that the applicant will be able to raise the balance of fees required to complete the entire course.
- g) Grants **are not** made for childcare applications which include a child who is under the age of 2. This is due to high cost of childcare for under 2's which a Walcot Foundation Grant cannot cover.
- h) Grants **are not** made for childcare costs linked to distance-learning courses (e.g. Open University)
- i) Grants **are not** made for costs relating to starting up your own business or for self-employment.
- j) Grants **are not** made for household goods, household furnishings or general clothing unless it is very clear that these are necessary to ensure success in an *existing programme* of education, training or employment. If you have an *intention* to engage in education, training or employment but are not actually *undertaking* it, you would *not* be eligible for a grant of household goods, household furnishings or general clothing.
- k) Grants **are not** made for study at private institutions unless it can be evidenced that the course will lead to employment and that it is not available via a statutory provider (e.g. Further Education College). If an individual is receiving government funding to attend a private institution, then a grant for course related expenses can be considered. We do not award grants for students in independent education. Our focus is on those who are educated in the state system.
- l) Grants **are not** made to purchase goods and services provided by central or local government.
- m) Grants **are not** made for independent education (e.g. private school fees) or to anyone educated outside of the state sector at the time of application.
- n) Grants **are not** made for any of the following purposes: holidays, gifts or toys, funerals, court orders, fines.
- o) Grants **are not** made to people who own their own homes (or if living with parents, where parents own their own home). Grants are focused on supporting people in long-term financial poverty – owning a home is normally a considerable financial asset.

Other Issues

1. We cannot help in a crisis. Our assessment process is very thorough and it may be a few weeks before you first hear from us and often that is to request additional information. You can speed up the process by ensuring that you include everything that we ask for with your application.
2. If you are applying for help towards course-related expenses, there must be at least three months left until the end of your course from the date of your application. For example, if you applied on 1 April 2018 and your course was due to finish on 19 June 2018, then you would not be eligible to apply.
3. For a Walcot Foundation Student Grant, you need to be turning at least 19 in the 2018/19 academic year in order to apply
4. Our grants cannot replace statutory funding/funding available from the government – we generally expect university students to apply for, and take up, their full student finance entitlement to cover tuition and course fees. If you are aged 24 years and over and planning to undertake a level 3 or 4 qualification we cannot make a grant towards your course fees and would expect you to take up the 24+ advanced learning loan. We will only consider funding tuition fees if the applicant can provide official evidence that the outstanding tuition fees can be paid by other available scholarships/bursaries.
5. All students studying full time degree courses need to show evidence that they have lived in Lambeth for at least one year before the course started.
6. For students studying via 'Distance Learning' (e.g. Open University), it is likely that we would require that you meet with the Walcot-funded Careers Adviser before considering an application. Also, we would not typically give childcare grants for Distance Learning courses.
7. There is no *entitlement* to a grant or a repeat grant. All grants are discretionary and awarded on the evidence of need presented at the time of application. A staff member may wish to interview you either in our offices or your home or by telephone.
8. If there are questions arising from the information provided that we would like explored further (e.g. questions related to benefits, debts, immigration status, student loans/grant eligibility and the like), with your permission, we will pass your details on to the Walcot funded Advice/Support Worker based at Centre 70 advice centre in West Norwood who will contact you directly.
9. If there are questions arising from the information provided that we would like explored further (e.g. questions related to your field of study or employment, your future job prospects and the like), with your permission, we will pass your details on to the Walcot funded Careers Adviser based at High Trees in Tulse Hill who will contact you directly.
10. If, based on our checks at your college/university/training centre, your attendance on your current or most recent course is less than 90%, you will not be eligible for a grant until such time as you achieve 90% attendance for a reasonable period of time (normally for a full term following our check).

11. We must receive receipts for a minimum of 75% of a previous grant before any further grant can be released (e.g. if a grant was for £100, we must receive receipts for *at least* £75 worth of purchases made in accordance with the agreed grant purpose).
12. Please note that it is very likely that we will come back to applicants with further questions. If you are referring yourself for a grant, we *may* ask that you find a recognised referrer to assist you with the next stages of your application. Recognised referrers are professional staff in educational institutions, social care and health care agencies, voluntary organisations and faith-based groups.
13. The Walcot Foundation reserves the right to withdraw any application if we do not receive prompt responses to queries or reference requests we make at any time.