

## The Stand Alone Pledge

18 November 2020

I am writing to confirm the University of Bradford's commitment to the Stand Alone Pledge and to supporting estranged students in accessing and succeeding in higher education.

We were proud to be recognised as the Times/Sunday Times University of the Year for Social Inclusion 2020, for our outstanding impact on social inclusion and our work to enable students from socially and economically diverse backgrounds to maximise their talents while achieving positive academic and graduate employment outcomes. As set out in our Access and Participation Plan 2020-21 to 2024-25, we are passionate about ensuring our University is open and supportive of all students from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

We understand the unique challenges that estranged students face. We provide a wide range of support for estranged students and in the 2020-21 academic year we are pleased to be re-launching our support package with some additional enhancements. Our focused work in this area includes a dedicated effort to raise awareness of the support on offer to estranged students to further encourage engagement with higher education. Of equal importance is having a range of interventions and opportunities that ensure estranged students are supported in their studies, able to forge relationships and connections as part of their experience, and are provided with the additional financial and life support that may otherwise be an additional barrier to their academic and professional success.

The University offers dedicated support to estranged students which includes the following:

**Outreach** – There is a dedicated pre-enrolment point of contact for estranged students who provides support and guidance with all aspects of the application and enrolment process. The University hosts dedicated events for estranged students to find out more about studying in higher education and the support available at the University of Bradford. In addition, we are currently building on our Student Ambassador role by recruiting current students to provide dedicated support to estranged students specifically.

**Financial Support** – In 2020-21 academic year we have launched a £1000 Estranged Student Bursary which will be open to all estranged students. Estranged students are a priority applicant for the University hardship fund, including for the summer vacation period. We offer financial support with guarantor fees for private accommodation as well as assistance for applying to Student Finance England as an estranged student.

**Accommodation** - We support estranged students to find suitable accommodation for the full 52-week calendar. We provide financial assistance for accommodation with support for guarantor fees for private accommodation.



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**Mental Health and Wellbeing** – Estranged students have access to the University's Counselling Service which is open all year round and offers a confidential space for estranged students to talk about emotional and mental wellbeing issues. We enhance the support available by having service champions for Estranged Students, who are focused on the unique challenges Estranged Students face, and work to ensure that services meet these needs. The University also has dedicated pastoral support for estranged students in the Student Life service.

As a University we continue to monitor, review and further improve our support for estranged students and welcome the opportunity provided by the Stand Alone Pledge to inform and focus our ongoing efforts in this area.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley Congdon".

Professor Shirley Congdon  
Vice-Chancellor