

15 May 2018

Stand Alone
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Professor John Raftery
Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive

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Dear Becca,

This letter confirms London Metropolitan University's commitment to the StandAlone Pledge to support our estranged students who are studying without the assistance and encouragement of a family network.

London Met has had an enduring commitment to widening participation and social justice for over 160 years and has one of the most socially diverse populations in the UK. With a large number of estranged students, the 'New Starts', London Met is placed third nationally for having the highest number of independent students estranged from parents (Unite Foundation / StandAlone 2015).

We currently offer the following support:

- A designated named contact for current estranged students at London Met: Isabel Patrick, Student Money and Accommodation Adviser, within our Student Journey team.
- A designated Widening Participation contact for prospective students considering HE: Liz Routhorn, Widening Participation and Outreach Manager.
- We are a UNITE Foundation scholarship partner university, one of 28 nationally, giving our estranged students and care leavers the opportunity to apply for a scholarship for free accommodation throughout their studies.
- Estranged students currently get priority status for the University hardship funds.
- Dedicated information in print and online for current estranged students.
- Information for estranged students provided in outreach and university transition activities, such as pre-enrolment 'Headstart' days.

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While we understand many of the needs of our estranged students, we also recognise that there is more the University can do and, therefore, we undertake to do the following over the next two years:

- Improve data collection at enrolment, September 2018, as well as contacting all those who declare themselves estranged via UCAS, to promote proactively support and opportunities available, including financial support, employment opportunities and mental health provision.
- Organise focus groups with our estranged student population to have a better understanding of our students' needs and areas the University can improve its services.
- Awareness raising and training opportunities for London Met staff and students.
- Continue to foster relationships with appropriate local organisations such as AccessHE's collaborative 'Care Experienced and Estranged Students Forum'

The pledge will be overseen jointly by Isabel Patrick and Liz Routhorn from our Student Journey and Widening Participation departments to ensure we are able to support students throughout their entire student lifecycle. We will also continue to review our package and develop it further where possible.

We are proud to take the pledge and we hope to improve the lives, not just of our own students, but also estranged students across the UK. We look forward to working with StandAlone over the next two years and beyond.

and, Dear Berca you will be welcome
(as we discussed on email) to come to visit
us. Just get in touch to arrange.

Professor John Raftery
Vice-Chancellor and chief Executive

Yours sincerely
John Raftery