

Transforming lives through education

At Ulster, we believe that higher education should be accessible to everyone and that a university experience can immeasurably benefit our students and the social progress of our most disadvantaged communities, leading to a more inclusive, equitable and confident society.

We are extremely proud of our reputation for supporting students from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds. Currently, **over 40% of our 27,000 students present with widening access indicators** such as financial hardship, background of care, health issues, or other barriers that complicate and compromise successful study – **that's almost 11,000 individuals.**

Ulster University is **one of the top 5 UK universities** for widening access to higher education and **first in Northern Ireland.**

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students have lost part-time jobs and are experiencing reduced family income. It has become even more important to provide the means to financially support new and existing students so that they can come to Ulster and have the means to see out their education.

"The COVID-19 crisis has heightened already deeply rooted challenges and further widened existing inequalities in our most disadvantaged communities. There is a real danger that students may not progress to university or complete their third level education for financial reasons."

Professor Duncan Morrow
Director of Community Engagement

Putting Students First

As we face an overwhelming funding challenge, our worry is that our most vulnerable prospective and current students will never get to follow their dreams and achieve their full potential. More importantly, their impact on society as leaders, employers and problem solvers will never be seen.

We believe that together, we can transform lives.

It is only thanks to the support that Victoria received that she was able to fulfil her potential. It is our responsibility, more than ever to ensure no student, like Victoria, is struggling or unable to realise their ambition.

"Having entered the care system as a teenager, I was determined that education would transform my life, despite little encouragement to study. Receiving this scholarship allowed me to reduce my working hours and pay for childcare which

enabled me to spend extra time on my studies and achieve the best degree possible. Against the odds, I have been able to transform my life and give my children a better future. It simply would not have been possible without the scholarship."

Victoria Burns
First Class BSc Psychology 2020



Targeted support to those who need it most

At Ulster University, we have identified that lack of social equality is a major barrier to progress.

We believe that equipping more people from our most disadvantaged communities with qualifications, experience and skills through higher education is essential to our economic recovery and to addressing already deep-rooted social inequality.

Lack of social equity was already a pressing issue for Northern Ireland, and will be exacerbated as our most disadvantaged communities are one of the groups most affected by the long-term impact of COVID-19.

In April 2020, the number of students requesting urgent financial support increased by 69% due to hardship caused by the pandemic.

These unprecedented times present a whole new set of challenges for students and we know the demand for support from those hit hardest will increase.

In these challenging times, you can support the many students facing crisis like Carey.



"The COVID-19 pandemic has presented me with extra challenges this year, mainly due to my dyslexia and learning difficulties. I no longer have access to the face to face support that I would have previously received as lectures and tutorials have moved online. As a result, I have had to purchase a laptop with additional software that allows me to record lectures and spellchecking technology for my written assessments. I have found this year very difficult but the scholarship has been a life-line to me continuing my studies and to changing my life."

Carey McCarthy-Quigley
BSC Environmental Health

The
We Believe
Scholarship
Appeal
Help us transform lives



"As an asylum seeker coming to Ireland at the age of 14, I have already faced many challenges in my life. Despite all the significant upheaval and uncertainty, one thing however has remained constant - my desire for an education to make an impact on the world and to build a better future for me and my family. As I'm ineligible for student finance and not allowed to work part-time, the scholarship this year has made a huge impact. I was able to buy a computer to access lectures online and carry out my coursework at home. I don't know how I would have managed this year without the support ; it's helped me keep on track to transform my life."

Nick Beta
BEng Mechanical Engineering

Help make a difference

Now is the time for the Ulster University community to come together and help our most vulnerable students. Without financial help, many talented and ambitious students will miss out on their dreams and the future it will open to them.

Through the generosity of so many, annually we provide financial support to around 100 students. Our We believe Scholarship Appeal aims to double this current provision to 200

a year – meaning we will invest in the future of 1,000 students over the next 5 years and be in the position to provide essential support in the future.

We aim to urgently build our scholarship provision to protect our most vulnerable students, encourage those most at risk to take the step into university, provide confidence and security, and reward our most talented and committed students to reach their full potential.

Our **We Believe Scholarship Appeal** will focus on providing support for three main areas:

Access - removing financial barriers to encourage those most-at-risk prospective students to progress to higher education



Potential - supporting existing students whose ambitions may not be realised due to lack of income



Excellence - rewarding our most talented and committed students to help them reach their full potential



By giving our less advantaged students the opportunity to achieve their ambitions, you will be contributing to stronger and more diverse talent pipelines, equality in the workforce, and economic prosperity in Northern Ireland.

You have the potential to support today's talent, adding real value to students' lives.

Join us today in transforming lives.

We believe everyone has a right to an education.

What do you believe in?

Donate today. Transform Lives.
ulster.ac.uk/transformlives

#WeBelieveInBrave