Humanitarian assistance
Our projects, services and support for refugees and at-risk scholars

University of Sanctuary

In 2017 we were designated a University of Sanctuary in recognition of the culture and practice of welcome within the university and our wider communities.

universities.cityofsanctuary.org

Support for at-risk academics

The University supports the Council for At-Risk Academics (Cara) by providing Postdoctoral placements and helping to deliver in-country workshops for displaced academics. We currently host three fellows. Taking an innovative approach in collaboration with Cara, we created and funded the post of Cara Scotland Manager to empower universities, research institutes and civic society groups in Scotland to support at-risk academics.

www.cara.ngo

Chaplaincy activity

The University Chaplaincy has been involved in numerous staff and student activities including the following:

- Syrian tutoring programme to enable students to tutor Syrian teenage refugees in a variety of subjects. The students won the William Darling Memorial award for their work.
  UNHCR website | Edinburgh students help Syrian refugees to integrate

- The 2016 campaign “A light for Aleppo” drew attention to the plight of those in Syria through a network of beacons lit around Edinburgh’s coastline and beyond by student, community and faith groups.

- Student led Project Elpis installed the first solar powered mobile phone charging units in the Greek refugee camps. Elpis leaders have been awarded our Principal’s Medal for service to the community.
  UNHCR website | Project Elpis offers a ray of hope in refugee camps

- Sanctuary walk for refugees - 50 staff and students walk then travelled by boat to sites of sanctuary outside Edinburgh echoing the journeys of refugees, raising £20,000 to educate refugees here and through online education.
  Chaplaincy website | Sanctuary walk for refugees support

- In January 2019, we hosted Students with Refugees: A Duty to Spread Hope a student and community conference that aims to dispel harmful stereotypes surrounding refugees and asylum seekers and motivate students to help during this crisis.
Student action for refugees

Student Action for Refugees (STAR) Edinburgh are a student-run organisation who seek to connect students with opportunities to campaign, fundraise and volunteer on behalf of refugees.

www.facebook.com/STAREdUni

Advice service for refugees

The University of Edinburgh Refugee Advisory Service offers coordinated advice and assistance to prospective students and staff with refugee or related status. Covering immigration, English language tuition, finance and scholarships, admissions, counselling support and more. We have widened participation to students seeking asylum from within the United Kingdom by setting fees as equivalent to ‘Scottish domiciled’ for undergraduate and postgraduate degrees (now taken up elsewhere in Scotland).

In December 2018, we set up a Refugee Advisory Group in recognition that levels of knowledge relating to refugee/humanitarian work – especially in relation to access to the University – were distributed throughout the University and the location of knowledge and ability to take action were in different areas. The group has membership from across professional services, academic colleagues, and student/refugee representatives. The aim of the group is consult, share best practice and seek to develop a community of practice and institutional responses in this area of work.

www.ed.ac.uk/studying/international/welfare/access-for-refugees

Fees and scholarships

Refugees are eligible for government funding and for general financial assistance opportunities the University makes available to all UK-domiciled students. We offer asylum seeker scholarships to cover the tuition fees and living costs of those who have not received refugee status (asylum seekers). Additionally, the University made the decision to classify students seeking asylum from within the United Kingdom as equivalent to ‘Scottish domiciled’ for tuition fee purposes in the event of their admission to undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes.

We also offer 12 funded places (fees) on summer pre-sessional programme. To qualify, applicants must have refugee or asylum-seeker status, an offer of a place on a Masters programme at Edinburgh or another UK University and an IELTS score no more than .5 below that required for the Masters programme.

www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching/ele-courses/summer-eap-courses

Admissions

We are committed to supporting applicants and students with refugee, asylum seeker, or humanitarian protection status (including those resettled in Scotland under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Programme (VPR)) and have developed a policy on applying flexibility in the admissions process in support of these applicants.