



The Frank Awards:
Supporting Serving Prisoners to Access Higher Education
A joint project from the Longford Trust and Prisoners' Education Trust

The Frank Awards, funded by the Longford Trust, administered by the Prisoners' Education Trust, offer a small number of scholarships to serving prisoners who can demonstrate that, without such financial support, they will lose the opportunity to study towards a degree-level qualification with the Open University while inside. Prisoners can apply for up to £3,636 to cover the cost of one 60 credits module or two 30 credits modules.

Among those who could benefit from these awards are:

- (1) Those who have been refused a student loan;
- (2) Those whose financial situation is such that they can present compelling evidence why they cannot, in any circumstances, take on the debt involved in a student loan;
- (3) Those who already have received a first degree and used up their entitlement to a student loan, but who, as a result of their conviction, now need to retrain to improve their employment prospects on release.

These are just examples of those who may be covered.

Conditions

- (1) You must have a conditional offer of a place on an OU degree-level module (these awards only apply to OU modules and **do not** cover Access modules);
- (2) You must be a serving prisoner, with at least six months of your sentence still to serve on the day when the module you are applying for begins;
- (3) All applications must be accompanied by a detailed covering letter from the applicant explaining the reasons why they are applying for this award (see attached guidelines).
- (4) You must provide evidence that you have applied for a student tuition loan while inside and been refused, or else set out the exceptional circumstances (providing additional evidence where appropriate) why you are unable to apply for student tuition loan funding;
- (5) All applications must be made on designated application forms which will be available only from the prison education departments;
- (6) All forms must be approved and endorsed for study on behalf of the prison governor as is the case for other distance learning courses in custody;
- (7) Completed forms must be handed into the education department, who will forward them to PET;
- (8) All applicants must have right to remain in the UK after completing their sentence;
- (9) The funding provided in an award will be paid directly to the OU by the Longford Trust on behalf of the successful applicant.

The Frank Awards are open to all eligible applicants who meet the criteria below, however the Longford Trust will give priority to applications from younger prisoners.

Criteria

- (1) Priority will be given in making awards to those who are studying for a first degree.
- (2) Second degrees, or post-graduate courses, will only be supported if compelling evidence can be provided that the course of study proposed will enhance the applicant's employment prospects on release.
- (3) **Priority will be given to younger applicants.**
- (4) The decision of the Longford Trust is final. There is no appeal process.

Applicants with sentences over 8 years are eligible to apply, however, we may contact the prison to discuss their sentence length if they are very far off loan eligibility. Alternatively, you can contact us to discuss before applying.

Application Deadlines

There are two rounds of Frank Awards each academic year:
OU modules starting in October 2024: **Thursday 15 August 2024**
OU Modules starting in February 2025: **Thursday 5 December 2024**

What Happens next

The completed applications will be reviewed after the submission deadline.

Applications are first reviewed by PET and the OU Regional Managers. The applications are then reviewed by the Longford Trust and final decisions made.

The prison will be informed of the outcomes via email. The Longford Trust and PET will send out letters to the applicants informing them of the outcome.

If successful, the sponsorship agreement form will be sent directly to the OU to finalise the registration process for the module.

Please note that there is no guaranteed ongoing funding for applicants who were successful in previous rounds.

If you have any questions, please contact PET: acesstolearning@prisonerseducation.org.uk

OU Region Contacts

London and the South East	SISE-Support-London-and-SouthEast@open.ac.uk
South and South West	SISE-Support-South-and-SouthWest@open.ac.uk
Midlands	SISE-Support-Midlands@open.ac.uk
East of England	SISE-Support-East-of-England@open.ac.uk
North	SISE-Support-North@open.ac.uk
Wales	wales-sise@open.ac.uk



Guidelines for the Frank Awards Application letter

All applications must be accompanied by a detailed covering letter from the applicant.

The covering letter provides an opportunity for you to tell us something about yourself and why you want to be funded for the module(s).

We have limited funds, and we are not able to award funding to everyone who applies. We need this information to decide whether or not to support your application.

The following might help you structure your covering letter:

- Why you want to study the requested module(s). Tell us about your interest. What do you know about this subject? Tell us about any learning you have completed and qualifications achieved, before your sentence and while in prison.
- What are your plans for the future? This module may help you with your career plans, your rehabilitation and reintegration with society. You might have a short-term goal and also a long-term goal. This module may just be the first step in a long journey. Please us about it.
- It is often useful if you can tell us something about your past, for example about any work, or studies, or other relevant experiences. For some applications, where it has some relevance to your studies, it can be useful to tell us about your conviction and the length of your sentence. We will not judge your application by your past actions but telling us about your conviction and any steps you may have taken to assist you in your rehabilitation, may give us a stronger understanding of your learning journey.
- If you are successful with your application, have you thought about how you will finance your next module(s) until you are eligible to apply for the student loan?
- **Have you applied for a student loan? If yes, why were you refused and provide evidence. If no, please explain why not.**
- If you are applying for funding towards postgraduate study - have you already applied to Student Finance England/Wales? Loans are available to learners in prison for postgraduate study. If no, please explain why and tell us what difference studying at this level will make to your future plans.
- **Have you applied to the Open University Students Educational Trust (OUSET) and or other organisations for funding and what was the outcome?**
- When reading your letter, we will be looking to see that you have the motivation and determination to start and complete your studies.

Please note that there is no guaranteed ongoing funding for applicants who were successful in previous rounds.

If you have any questions or wish to comment about the application process, please contact PET acesstolearning@prisonerseducation.org.uk or write to FREEPOST Prisoners' Education Trust (no stamp needed)



The Frank Awards

Application form for Open University degree study

Before Applying:

- You must be a serving prisoner, with at least six months of your sentence still to serve on the day when the module you are applying for begins.
- All applications must be accompanied by a detailed covering letter from the applicant explaining the reasons why they are applying for this award (see attached guidelines).
- Priority will be given in making awards to those who are studying for a first degree.
- Second degrees, or post-graduate courses, will only be supported if compelling evidence can be provided that the course of study proposed will enhance the applicant's employment prospects on release.
- Priority will be given to younger applicants.
- **Please note: If we do fund one module of your studies, awards for subsequent modules are rare and are made only in exceptional circumstances.**



Completed application form and covering letter should be sent to:
Prisoners' Education Trust, The Foundry, 17 Oval Way, London, SE11 5RR
Alternatively, you can scan and email to: accesstolearning@prisonerseducation.org.uk

PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FORM ENSURING THAT ALL QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED.

If you leave any sections blank or without explanation, it may impact on our ability to reach a decision.

SECTION 1 - Applicant's Details

Please complete in block capitals

Name of prison from which application is made:

First Name: Last Name:

Prison Number: Date of Birth:/...../..... Age:

Gender (*please tick*): Woman Man Non-binary Prefer not to say Prefer to self-describe:

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Please give details of your conviction (continue on a separate document if required):

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Date of your sentence:

Earliest Expected Release Date /HDC / Parole: (*please say if HDC or parole and give date*):

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City, town, or county where you normally live:

If you are not a UK citizen, do you have the right to remain in the UK after completing your sentence?

Yes No

SECTION 2 - Academic Achievements

Please tell us of any existing qualifications gained before the start of your sentence:

(where possible give grades achieved)

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Please tell us of any educational achievements or courses you have taken while in prison:

(where possible give grades achieved)

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Continue on a separate document if required.

SECTION 3 - Course and Funding Details

Module code: **Title of the Module you wish to study:**

Qualification you are aiming to achieve:

When do you plan to start your studies? **Total Cost Required:**

Have you contacted the OU and reserved a place on the module? Yes No

If yes, please give us your OU personal identifier number:

Have you received any advice in choosing your module? Yes No

If yes, please tell us who gave you the advice:

Have you previously applied to the Frank Awards? Yes No

If yes, please give details of outcome:

Have you applied for a student loan? Yes No

If yes, why were you refused?

If no, please explain why not:

Have you applied to the Open University Students Educational Trust (Ouset)? Yes No

If yes, please give details of the outcome:

If no, please explain why not:

Please tell us if you are or will be the first in your immediate family to study at degree level?

Yes No

APPLICANTS MUST SIGN THE DECLARATION:

DECLARATION: I declare that the information given above on this form is correct. I understand that misleading or inadequate information could lead to my application for the Frank Awards being withdrawn. I have read the Privacy Policy document attached to this form and accept the details it sets out on how my information will be treated to ensure confidentiality. I will keep in touch with the Longford Trust and or Prisoners' Education Trust about my progress and inform them if I am transferred to another prison or released.

Applicant's signature: **Date:**

SECTION 4 - Monitoring for Diversity

We constantly monitor our programme to ensure that our award holders truly reflect those in prison, so the questions below will help us in that. If, however, you don't want to complete this section, please don't feel under any obligation. It will not impact on our decision on whether to make you an award.

Ethnic background:

Asian/Asian British – Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White and Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian/Asian British – Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White and Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian/Asian British – Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Mixed background	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Asian background	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arabic	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>	White British	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black/Black British – African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other White background	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black/Black British – Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irish Traveller/Gypsy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other Black background	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mixed White and Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Mental, physical, and learning disabilities and difficulties:

Do you consider yourself to have a long-term disability or difficulty that affects your daily life?

Yes No Prefer not to say

If you answered 'Yes', please state which sort of disability or difficulty below (you may tick more than one box).

Mental health disability or difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning disability or difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physical health disability or difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain:

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SECTION 5 - Staff Endorsement

STAFF TO COMPLETE:

Please indicate whether or not you consider that the applicant has the ability to complete the chosen module and complete the declaration below. You may continue on another sheet if necessary.

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DECLARATION: I hereby declare that the information given is correct to the best of my knowledge; that the module is suitable for the applicant educationally and with regard to the nature of their offence; and that the applicant has the Governor’s permission to take the module and that it will not in present circumstances be withheld for reasons of security or control. I further undertake to keep Prisoners’ Education Trust and or the Longford Trust in touch with the applicant’s progress and will inform them if they are transferred or released.

Signature of an authorised member of staff..... **Date**

Name:

Position or Office:

What Happens next:

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The prison will be informed of the outcomes via email. The Longford Trust and PET will send out letters to the applicants informing them of the outcome.
If successful, the sponsorship agreement form will be sent directly to the OU to finalise the registration process for the module.

Please note that there is no guaranteed ongoing funding for applicants who were successful in previous rounds.

If you wish to comment about our application process, please contact accesstolearning@prisonerseducation.org.uk



How we use the information about you:

Before submitting your form, please read what follows carefully to see how your information will be processed to ensure confidentiality.

The information we request will help us understand your educational plans and assess your eligibility for funding through the Frank Awards. We treat all the information you give to us as confidential and handle it in line with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations.

Your application form will be held securely by Prisoners' Education Trust (PET), paper records are stored in locked cabinets in PET's office which is secured with an alarm and all electronic records are saved on secure servers, only accessible by PET staff. For the purposes of accessing your eligibility for the Frank Awards funding, your information will be electronically shared by secured email with the Open University and the Longford Trust.

Information shared with the Longford Trust is stored securely in locked cupboards within locked and alarmed premises. All electronic data is password protected and only accessible by Longford Trust staff. Any unsuccessful applications (electronic and paper) are deleted following confirmation of final decisions.

In order to process your application, we may need to contact your prison by phone or email for additional information if the application is incomplete or requires clarification.

Once the funding decision has been made, we will write to you to inform you of the outcome and will also notify the prison.

If your application is successful, we will share your information (name, prison, prisoner number, date of birth, gender and course/materials choice) with the OU Students in Secure Environments (SiSE) Student Registration team for the purpose of enrolling you onto your chosen module(s). In turn the OU will provide PET and the Longford Trust with progress reports to help us track your success.

As far as possible we always will anonymise the information we share. Your information may be shared with our funders to report back to them regarding how their donations were used and to encourage further funding.

If you wish to comment about our application process, please contact PET - accesstolearning@prisonerseducation.org.uk

