

# Supporting asylum-seekers and challenged migrants in accessing higher education at Imperial College London

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## Imperial College Union Notes:

1. Many young asylum-seekers face difficulties in accessing higher education in London.
2. Asylum-seekers and migrants with Discretionary Leave to Remain (DLR)/Limited Leave to Remain (LLR) are not eligible for student finance and are charged international tuition fees to study at UK universities.
  - a. This arrangement poses significant barriers to the young people with these statuses and who are currently finishing their A-levels.
  - b. Total numbers are uncertain, but the scale is large: 500 young people in this situation have sought legal advice from one London-based organisation alone. Most of them are in South East England, with their hopes set on London universities.
3. Their difficulties have been recognized by top universities in the capital, with UCL, King's College and City University offering a total of 11 scholarships to asylum-seekers or migrants with DLR/LLR status.
4. Imperial College does not currently deliver any such scheme, and there is no mention of migrants, refugees or asylum-seekers in the College's Diversity Policy or Access Agreement.

## Imperial College Union Believes:

5. The barriers faced by asylum-seekers and migrants with DLR/LLR status are preventable. The College has the power to decide the tuition fees it charges and the financial assistance it offers to a specific group of applicants. It is the duty of the College, as an institution taking pride in its diversity, to remove these barriers and provide fair access to education for all.
6. In writing, through the statements of its leaders, and in practice, by hosting exceptional academics<sup>1</sup> and students<sup>2</sup> with some of the above statuses, the College knows well the talent and value of refugees and asylum-seekers. There is great scope for this College to further open its doors to this talent and value, and to become a true representative of equality and diversity in higher education.

## Imperial College Union Resolves:

7. To create and run a campaign to garner student and staff support.
8. To work with the College to offer a number of financial aid packages to asylum-seekers and migrants with DLR/LLR settled in the UK.
9. To lobby the College to revise the tuition fee status of applicants with the status of asylum-seeker or DLR/LLR, through a dedicated working group.
10. To work to ensure Imperial College's formal contribution to existing initiatives for the facilitation of higher education access for challenged migrants and asylum-seekers.

<sup>1</sup>Prof. Walter Hayman, Emeritus Professor in the Department of Mathematics, who fled from Germany as a refugee in 1938.

<sup>2</sup>Emmanuel Opoku, an undergraduate student in Chemistry, who is under DLR status despite having arrived from Ghana at the age of 4 and having British upbringing and schooling.