

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS)
Awards for Students from Black, Asian or Minority
Ethnic Backgrounds
Frequently Asked Questions



How were the eligibility criteria decided?

The aim of the awards is to provide recognition and celebrate our diverse student population, and ensure that students receive encouragement to help them succeed in their studies. The eligibility criteria were designed to encourage individuals from specific target groups to maximise their experience with The Open University.

Why do the entry criteria positively discriminate when The Open University claims to be "open to all"?

We value all our students and we want to do our best to ensure that the Faculty reflects the whole of society. Analysis indicates that a smaller proportion of students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds complete their modules or awarded high marks when compared with white students. Addressing this disparity is a top priority for the Open University, and we feel these awards can contribute by providing positive role modelling, promoting a sense of belonging, and recognising and celebrating the achievements of students who are Black, Asian or from Minority Ethnic backgrounds to help inspire others. Widening access to and success in higher education is at the heart of the OU's mission. We aim to support students whatever their backgrounds, to reach their potential and fulfil their ambitions.

Why isn't the award scheme open to all students?

The eligibility criteria are in place to maximise the benefits of the scheme and ensure it reaches those who will benefit from it most at this point in time.

What can the award money be spent on?

There are no restrictions on how the money can be spent.

Do I have to contact my tutor about my application for the Professor Stuart Hall Award?

We would encourage you to speak to your tutor in order to submit the strongest possible application. However, you do not need to do so, and we will consider all applications from students who are from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

How will the winner of the Professor Stuart Hall Award be selected?

The statements written by students applying for the award will be assessed individually by members of a diverse panel of staff from across the University. The panel will then meet to discuss their recommendations and jointly agree on the student who, in the combined judgement of the panel, has demonstrated the most outstanding achievement in their FASS studies.