

Press Release

8 February 2017

Uni ‘family day’ seeks to raise awareness of student homelessness

- **London Metropolitan University is opening its doors to students’ children**
- **Over 100 students signed up to bring children along to campus**
- **The event is inspired by London Met expert’s research into homelessness among students in London**

Students at London Metropolitan University are being encouraged to bring their children to campus on 14 February as part of its ‘Family Day’.

‘Love Your Family, Love London Met,’ is inspired by lecturer Patrick Mulrenan’s research on homelessness among students in London. The research found that student homelessness was a hidden problem in London, with some students sleeping on floors, staying with friends and relatives or in council temporary accommodation.

He said: “When I asked students during my research about what made them keep going and continue in their studies, one of the most common things that came up was their children. They wanted to stay the course to make their kids proud. It was also clear that students actually receive a lot of support from their children during their studies.

“I wanted to raise awareness of the challenges facing students across London when it comes to finding accommodation, but also to celebrate the support that children give to their parents at university.”

The students’ children will be able to sit in on lectures and tour London Met’s facilities. There will also be activities on offer such as face painting, a theatre production by London Met theatre students, talks, a treasure hunt and children’s games.

The children will also be given an exclusive tour of London Met’s sustainability facilities and given plant pots for them to grow their own plants at home.

London Met has one of the largest proportions of mature students in the UK. Over 100 students have enrolled so far and 149 children are expected to attend with their parents.

“I think my children will really benefit from the Love Your Family, Love London Met day,” said Cheryl King, a second year Criminology and Youth Studies student at London Met.

“Being a mature student, I didn't step into any uni until I was 28. When I was growing up, I thought uni was for privileged people. I thought it was out of reach. My children won't feel like that, they would already have experienced it and it won't be alien to them.

“It's also great for them to see where mummy goes everyday while they're at school!”

The initiative follows research on homeless students by Senior Lecturer Patrick Mulrenan. The research found that homeless students faced many challenges in their studies, but were determined to complete their degrees so they would be a role model to their children. As one homeless student said: “I just look at my children and I want them to be proud of me.”

Mulrenan worked alongside colleagues Simon Cox and Julia Atkins to carry out the survey in April 2016 and found that student homelessness affects a range of students at university.

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About London Metropolitan University

London Metropolitan University has been providing education to people from all backgrounds since 1848, with the creation of the Metropolitan Evening Classes for Working Men. Six schools teach cutting-edge, relevant courses across the arts, sciences, business, law and humanities. Accelerator – London Met's specialist business incubator – helps graduates get their enterprises up and running and was named among the Top Five 'Most Active' accelerators in Europe in 2015, highlighting its contribution to London's booming start-up industry.

London Met is home to world-leading academics who regularly give expert comment to the media. The University scored well in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, being ranked 4th in the country for Area Studies and performing strongly in Education and Social Studies.

The University is strongly focused on employability. In 2016, London Met recorded its highest ever graduate employment score, with 93% of all 2014/15 graduates in work or further study six months after graduation. It was also ranked above all five Russell Group universities in London for teaching quality in 2016.

londonmet.ac.uk/news