# Birkbeck bets on HyFlex and bursaries to deepen evening‑study advantage



Birkbeck occupies a distinctive niche in London higher education: rather than centres of daytime campus life it advertises a campus that comes alive in the evening, when the majority of its teaching takes place. According to a recent university guide, most classes are scheduled between 6pm and 9pm to accommodate students who work or have caring responsibilities, and the college points to a long history of flexible provision that dates back two centuries. The result is a student body that does not fit comfortably into the typical metrics used to rank full‑time, residential universities — a feature the guide describes as both an asset and a complication for comparison. (This account is in line with the college’s own description of evening study as a deliberate model to support mature and part‑time learners.)

A major strand of Birkbeck’s current strategy is the digital enhancement of teaching. The university says it is installing HyFlex classroom technology across campus — a multi‑million‑pound programme, supported in part by Office for Students funding — designed to synchronise in‑person and online participation so remote students can join and contribute in real time. The institution has set a multi‑year timetable for fitting more than 100 rooms and expects the rollout to be largely complete for the 2026–27 academic year, with some students able to use the new facilities from October 2025. Birkbeck claims the upgrade will improve access for time‑poor students and raise the quality of recorded lectures used for catch‑up.

That focus on flexibility is reflected in admissions and student support. The university emphasises recognition of prior work experience and vocational training as routes onto courses for applicants who do not hold conventional A‑level combinations, and it runs foundation years and pre‑entry programmes to help students transition into degree study. Birkbeck also operates peer mentoring and summer orientation schemes designed specifically for students entering higher education later in life or balancing study with other commitments, measures the college cites as important to maintaining strong progression rates.

Practical financial support is a substantial part of Birkbeck’s offer. The university’s published bursary scheme provides an £800 cash award to eligible full‑time Home students from households with income under £25,000 (paid pro rata for part‑time study), and up to £450 for those in the £25,000–£39,999 band. Birkbeck’s needs‑based Financial Support Scheme can supply tailored awards of up to £4,000 following an assessment of additional need, while a limited Access to Digital Learning Fund offers up to £500 to help with laptops and broadband for students who meet the eligibility criteria. Emergency hardship support, including a seasonal Summer Support Fund worth up to £600, is also available on a case‑by‑case basis. The college’s web guidance stresses that some awards are limited and may be allocated on a first‑come, first‑served basis, and that students must supply documentary evidence to support claims.

Alongside digital investment, the university is making physical improvements to campus life. The guide notes the opening of a virtual‑reality and immersive learning suite intended to expand teaching methods, and capital works that include two new student lounges in central buildings to provide collaborative spaces and additional teaching accommodation. Most students continue to live at home, but intercollegiate halls remain available; published accommodation costs for the 2025–26 year range widely depending on contract length and room type, reflecting the premium of central London locations.

Birkbeck is expanding its curriculum too: the university plans five new degree programmes for 2026–27, covering areas such as computer science and cybersecurity, environmental science, criminology with psychological studies, and a BA in arts and humanities, each offered with and without a foundation year. The institution presents these additions as part of an evolving portfolio intended to match changing student demand and labour‑market needs, while retaining routes for those who require preparatory study.

Taken together, the picture presented by the guide and the college’s own material is of an institution that has deliberately reshaped itself around the needs of non‑traditional students. That positioning brings clear strengths — practical support, evening timetables, adaptive admissions and new digital tools designed to reduce attendance barriers — but also structural challenges for comparison with conventional universities. Birkbeck argues that its HyFlex investment and targeted welfare and digital funds will reinforce inclusion and keep study accessible for those juggling paid work and family life; external observers will watch closely to see whether the technology and additional facilities translate into measurable gains in retention, attainment and student experience as the rollout proceeds.

### 📌 Reference Map:

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/evening-study/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/news/new-technology-boosts-flexible-learning-providing-students-with-greater-choice-over-where-when-and-how-they-learn)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/evening-study/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/cash-bursary-scheme), [[4]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/access-to-learning-fund/), [[5]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/access-to-digital-learning-fund), [[6]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/hardship-fund/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/evening-study/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[7]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/news/new-technology-boosts-flexible-learning-providing-students-with-greater-choice-over-where-when-and-how-they-learn), [[2]](https://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/evening-study/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/university-guide/article-14914765/Birkbeck-University-London.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/prospective/evening-study/> - Birkbeck’s 'Evening study explained' page describes the college’s long-standing focus on evening teaching that enables students to combine study with work or caring commitments. Most courses run between 6pm and 9pm, with some modules offering daytime options. The page explains why learners choose evening study, the support available to evening students—including late opening library facilities, cafés and student services—and emphasises Birkbeck’s two-century history of flexible provision. It highlights that evening delivery suits mature students, part‑time learners and those seeking career progression, while asserting that campus life and academic support are deliberately scheduled to accommodate people studying outside conventional daytime hours.
3. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/cash-bursary-scheme> - Birkbeck’s cash bursary scheme page sets out eligibility and award levels for Home students who meet income and intensity-of-study criteria. Bursaries are paid pro rata and are only available against the first 120 credits of study. Where household income is under £25,000 a maximum award of £800 is available (paid as £200 per 30 credits); part-time students with household incomes between £25,000 and £39,999 may receive up to £450 (£150 per 30 credits). The page explains enrolment assessment, application routes during online enrolment, and clarifies that funding is awarded on a first-come‑first-served basis and is not guaranteed annually to students.
4. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/access-to-learning-fund/> - The Birkbeck Financial Support Scheme page explains the college’s needs-based assessment process and wider financial guidance for students. Home students undergo an online enrolment assessment to be considered for means‑tested assistance and are sent a Financial Support Enquiry form. Awards are scaled to intensity of study and calculated against household income and essential expenditure; successful applicants may receive tailored awards of up to £4,000 depending on assessed additional need. The page also outlines one-to-one advice to access government loans, budgeting tools, referral to external agencies and the requirement to provide documentary evidence for applications and eligibility checks.
5. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/access-to-digital-learning-fund> - The Birkbeck Access to Digital Learning Fund page describes a limited, means-tested scheme providing up to £500 to help Home students buy essential IT items such as laptops and broadband to engage with online study. Eligibility includes enrollment on at least 30 credits, household income thresholds and categories such as receipt of means‑tested benefits, disability-related need where DSA is unavailable, or refugee status. Applications open via an online form sent to students who opt for means‑tested consideration at enrolment; approvals require documentary evidence and receipts, and successful applicants receive payment by BACS and must provide receipts within fund maximum limits.
6. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/student-services/financial-support/hardship-fund/> - The Birkbeck Hardship Funds page explains emergency support available to students who experience unforeseen changes in personal or financial circumstances. It sets eligibility criteria—enrolment on at least 30 credits, being up to date with fees, residency in the UK and usually household income thresholds—and describes the application process via Student Advice Service. The page details the Summer Support Fund, offering awards of up to £600 to help with living costs, and explains that the hardship fund opens seasonally. It also signposts funds, the ISH Mary Trevelyan Hardship Fund and other funding sources, and emphasises the bespoke, case‑by‑case nature of awards.
7. <https://www.bbk.ac.uk/news/new-technology-boosts-flexible-learning-providing-students-with-greater-choice-over-where-when-and-how-they-learn> - Birkbeck’s news release on new technology describes a multi‑million‑pound investment—supported by Office for Students funding—to install HyFlex classroom technology across campus. The article explains that HyFlex hardware will synchronise in‑person and online learning so remote students can participate fully, and that installation will extend to over 100 classrooms over a multi‑year timetable. It notes improved access, higher recorded lecture quality for catch‑up, and that the work supports Birkbeck’s strategy to serve time‑poor students who combine study with employment. Senior leaders are quoted describing HyFlex as central to the college’s flexible, inclusive educational mission and to enable blended and hybrid pedagogy.