

1 **Studying biochemistry at university - “I’ve been given a second chance to live my life”**

2 Over the summer, Nottingham University **received** a letter from one of its students. A letter about the  
3 power of education, the power of generosity, the power to change lives. This is Rachel’s story.

4 **“My life has been turned around since starting at Nottingham”**

5 I’ve just completed my first year as an **undergraduate** student here at Nottingham. I’m studying  
6 biochemistry – and it’s thanks to the **scholarship** I’ve received from Nottingham that this has been  
7 possible.

8 In order to understand how truly **significant** the scholarship I have received has been, I’d like to tell you a  
9 bit about myself. While I was in year 11 at school studying for my GCSEs my first child, a son, was born.  
10 My daughter followed a year later. As you can imagine, it wasn’t easy being a mother of two children at  
11 16.

12 At the age of 15, I was placed into foster care with my son due to difficulties at home and a lack of support.  
13 After my daughter was born when I was 16 however, I was given the **opportunity** to prove that I could live  
14 **independently** and **support** myself and my children. At age 17, I was able to rent a council home for my  
15 children and I, and our home life became much more **stable**. Despite the difficult **circumstances** I faced, I  
16 believed it was extremely important to **carry on** my education. With this in mind, I ventured back into  
17 education to **complete** my A levels and after studying for three years, I **achieved** AAB **grades** and secured  
18 a place at Nottingham.

19 **“It’s exceeded all of my expectations”**

20 The University was always my **priority** choice because of its locality. But since I’ve started here, it’s  
21 exceeded all of my expectations **regarding** University life. The academic **environment** that Nottingham  
22 **creates** has enthused me further to fulfil my education and achieve something with my life that I, and my  
23 children, will be **proud** of. Studying biochemistry here has been a life changing **experience**. I have  
24 developed academically and **personally**, and being taught by **researchers** at the forefront of their **fields** is  
25 truly inspiring. I **absolutely** love my course! Being at Nottingham feels as though as I have been given a  
26 second chance to live my life and become a positive **role model** for my children.

27 The scholarship has **enormously** helped me throughout this first year. I’ve been able to **purchase** a laptop,  
28 which has made it so much easier for me to study and gain **access** to the University student portal and the  
29 scientific information I need for my course. Although this might seem quite **basic**, without the scholarship I  
30 wouldn’t have access to a computer at home. It would have been very difficult for me to keep up with my  
31 **lectures** when my children have been off school due to illness for example.

32 The scholarship has also had a big **impact** on our quality of life. Being at University has given me the  
33 **confidence** to take part in **activities** outside of my course, and having this extra **income** has meant that the  
34 time my children and I spend outside of school and University has been quality time together. For example,  
35 my son and I attend kickboxing classes together. He’s **currently** being assessed for autism, but he **takes**  
36 **part in** a lot of great **extracurricular** activities, which really help him to gain in confidence when  
37 **interacting** with other people.

38 **“My life is moving in a positive direction”**

39 The **generous** support that has been given to me by your donors has been truly amazing. I feel that my life  
40 has been turned around since starting University and is moving in a positive direction. I am deeply **grateful**  
41 for this, and would like to **stress** that my scholarship has had a **significant** positive impact not only for me  
42 but also my children. I am sure that there are only good things to come over the next few years of studying at  
43 Nottingham! Thank you so much.

44 Adapted from [the University of Nottingham](#)