

Care Leavers and Estranged Students Support Policy

Approved by HE Academic Board & LCC Policy Panel on 26th March 2021

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Applies to: | |
| Harrogate College | |
| Keighley College | |
| Leeds City College | |
| Leeds Conservatoire | |
| White Rose Academies Trust | |
| University Centre | x |

CHANGE CONTROL

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Version: | 1 | |
| Approved by: | HE Committee HE Academic Board & LCC Policy Panel. | |
| Date approved: | 26th March 2021 | |
| Name of author: | Higher Education | |
| Name of responsible committee: | Higher Education | |
| Related policies: (list) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bursary Policy HE Student Support Procedure General Appeals Policy General Appeals Process Student Guide to Appeals and Complaints | |
| Equality impact assessment completed | Date: | |
| | Assessment type <input type="checkbox"/> Full <input type="checkbox"/> Part <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not required | |
| Policy will be communicated via: | | |
| Next review date: | July 2024 | |

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. POLICY STATEMENT | 4 |
| 2. POLICY AIMS/OBJECTIVES..... | 4 |
| 3. DETAILS OF THE POLICY..... | 5 |
| 4. REVIEW | 7 |

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to care leavers and estranged higher education students who are studying at University Centre Leeds, Leeds City College.

Its purpose is to ensure that these students are aware of the care leaver and estranged students support package and how it is administered.

University Centre Leeds understand that young people who are estranged or who are leaving the care system may face challenges and may have very different concerns about starting a degree than other students.

To help care leavers and estranged students make informed decisions about their higher education and degree choices, University Centre Leeds can offer:

- Personalised tours;
- Foster Family / Care Experienced Taster Days;
- 1:1 Application support;
- Contextual admissions.

To help support new students leaving care or estranged students to start full time higher education at University Centre Leeds, the following financial support will be offered:

- Care Leavers / Estranged Students Bursary (up to £1000 awarded by University Centre Leeds);
- Supporting the cost of interview travel and/or on-course materials (where applicable – up to 50% of costs);
- Supporting the cost of graduation gown hire and photographs (up to 50% of costs);
- Act as guarantor for student accommodation agreements.

Payment will be made in two instalments (October and February).

Other support offered to care leavers and estranged students include:

- Nominated care leavers support from the University Centre Leeds HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer and /or a named contact from within the Safeguarding Team;
- Buddying and/or mentoring schemes;
- Mental health and wellbeing support and/or counselling.

The financial support outlined above is intended to support:

- students who are leaving care to attend university; or
- students who have been living independently since leaving care; or
- students estranged from their family.

2. POLICY AIMS/OBJECTIVES

The aim of the policy is to:

- Ensure that procedures are explicit and applied fairly and consistently;
- Ensure that information and guidance provided for students is accurate;
- Ensure that the decision-making process and outcomes are transparent and demonstrably rigorous and fair.
- Ensure that outcomes are monitored and reviewed on an annual basis.

3. DETAILS OF THE POLICY

| Policy | Bursary Policy | Quality Code Ref |
|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|
| Care Leaver Bursary | <p>Eligibility for the bursary is dependent on the following essential criteria:</p> <p>Students must provide evidence that they have left care prior to starting higher education.</p> <p>Support will normally be provided to students under the age of 25.</p> <p>Further criteria includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students must provide a copy of your student finance breakdown from Student Finance England for each relevant academic year; and 2. Students must provide details of their bank account so that the bursary can be paid directly to the student via BACS; and 3. Students must remain registered on their course up to the payment of each instalment of the bursary in each academic year of your course. <p>Payment will be made in two instalments (October and February).</p> | |
| Estranged Students Bursary | <p>Eligibility for the bursary is dependent on the following essential criteria:</p> <p>Students must provide evidence that they are estranged from their family, such as confirmation of funding as an independent (estranged) student from Student Finance England.</p> <p>Support will normally be provided to students under the age of 25.</p> <p>Further criteria includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students must provide a copy of their student finance breakdown from Student Finance England for each relevant academic year; and 2. Students must provide details of their bank account so that the bursary can be paid directly via BACS; and 3. Students must remain registered on their course up to the payment of each instalment of the bursary in each academic year of your course. <p>Please note, estranged students will be required to provide up to date evidence of estrangement each academic year, unless Student Finance England have awarded independent status for the duration of their course.</p> | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | Payment will be made in two instalments (October and February). | |
| Application process and bursary panel | <p>The HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer will use the data included on the student's application or enrolment form. If a student has indicated that they have been in, or are leaving, Local Authority care, or that they are estranged from their family, the student will be contacted and advised of possible eligibility for the bursary.</p> <p>If a student did not tick the relevant box on the application or enrolment form then they should contact the HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer, including the information detailed above, and they will ensure the student is considered for the bursary.</p> <p>Students will need to complete an online form which is available here or from the HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer.</p> <p>The Panel meets to discuss individual student's application and evidence. The panel has the final say on bursary payments being made.</p> | |
| Supporting the cost of interview travel and/or on-course materials | <p>Students will be offered an online interview in the first instance.</p> <p>Where a face-to-face interview is preferred, students must provide evidence that they are in care, leaving care, have left care or estranged from their family.</p> <p>Support will normally be provided to students under the age of 25.</p> <p>Students will need to complete an online form which is available here or from the HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer.</p> | |
| Supporting the cost of graduation gown hire and photographs | <p>Students must provide evidence that they are in care, leaving care, have left care or estranged from their family.</p> <p>Support will normally be provided to students under the age of 25.</p> <p>Students will need to complete an online form which is available here or from the HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer.</p> | |
| Act as guarantor for student accommodation agreements. | <p>Students must provide evidence that they are in care, leaving care, have left care or estranged from their family.</p> <p>Support will normally be provided to students under the age of 25.</p> <p>Students will need to contact the HE Progression and Wellbeing Officer to discuss accommodation options who will confirm with the Dean of HE.</p> | |
| Notification | Students receive the following notifications regarding financial support: | |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are initially notified by if they are eligible to receive the financial support they have applied for. Following on from the bursary panel, students are contacted with confirmation of the outcome. | |
| Staff Development and Training | All staff associated with the support, guidance and administration of support for care leavers and estranged students will be given appropriate training and development and meet the requirements of the awarding body and where appropriate, the Quality Assurance Agency Code of practice. | |
| Equality and Diversity Statement | This policy will be implemented in accordance with the College's Policy on Valuing Diversity and with consideration of the QAA Quality Code | |
| Monitoring and Review | The College will regularly monitor and review this policy and its associated procedures to assess the effectiveness of its implementation and outcomes. | Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Common Practice 1 |
| Regulatory requirements of awarding and professional bodies | The College requires that all staff are aware of and operate under the specific regulatory requirements of its awarding bodies and, where appropriate, professional bodies. The College has developed appropriate internal policies and procedures that cover major requirements. | |
| Appeals | <p>Students can appeal the decision made by the bursary panel, if they feel that they have mitigating circumstances that can explain either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missing evidence that they have left care prior to starting higher education or estranged from their family. Missing evidence of their student finance breakdown from Student Finance England for each relevant academic year <p>Appeals need to be made within 10 working days of students receiving notification that their bursary payment has been withheld.</p> <p>Appeals need to be made following the LCC General Appeals process. This can be found on the Higher Education page of the College's website.</p> | Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Core Practice 1 |
| Associated Documentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bursary Policy HE Student Support Procedure General Appeals Policy General Appeals Process Student Guide to Appeals and Complaints | |

4. REVIEW

Owner: HE Registry
Last review: March 2021
Next Review: July 2024