

North Highland College UHI

# CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN

## INTRODUCTION

For over 50 years the North Highland College has offered education and training opportunities for the communities of Caithness, Sutherland and Ross-shire. The North Highland College UHI is the most northerly college on the Scottish mainland and the area covers a population of 43,000 people and contains some areas of very high rurality.

Established in 1959 in response to the development of the fast reactor at Dounreay, The North Highland College UHI is now an academic partner of the University of the Highlands & Islands which was granted University Title in February 2011. The main North Highland College UHI campus is located in Ormlie Road in Thurso and includes a state-of-the-art Engineering, Technology and Energy Centre and a purpose-built Rural Studies Centre located approximately 9 miles from the main campus. In addition, the North Highland College UHI also operates campuses in Dornoch and Alness as well as delivering courses to candidates all over Scotland who study on a flexi-basis. Students studying at our campuses in Alness and Dornoch have access to members of the Student Support Team who are based there. These are designated members of staff for this cohort. The Student Support Team based in Thurso makes and maintains close contact with the tutors delivering flexi-learning courses to ensure there are no gaps in the support and provision required for these students.

The College has a prestigious research centre, the Environmental Research Institute (Thurso), and hosts the UHI Centre for History (Dornoch). Both centres support the educational and economic development of the area, with research focussed on energy and the environment, and the role of heritage tourism.

Students studying subjects in the Service Industries section train in the College's commercial hair and beauty salons or café based in Thurso or the Burghfield House Hotel in Dornoch. This provision helps students develop skills and experience for work and allows them to gain industry-standard qualifications.

The North Highland College UHI offers programmes of study ranging from SCQF level 3 up to postgraduate (SCQF 11) in five key areas: Business and Rural Studies; Energy Technology and the Built Environment; Care and Creative Arts; Service Industries; Science and the Environment, Golf. The North Highland College UHI is part of the University of the Highlands & Islands and it is through this partnership that the delivery of Higher Education takes place. The College offers a wide variety of courses, from SQA National/Higher awards, FE college and work based programmes and many degree programmes, providing excellent progression routes for learners.

The North Highland College UHI works in partnership with industry and commerce, the community and individuals, to offer education and training in a range of subjects to help people develop skills and experience for work. Work based learning is offered in conjunction with local employers and organisations. A selection of SVQ qualifications at different levels are offered to ensure that differing abilities and employer requirements are catered for. The College also has strong links with a large number of employers in industry, and it is through these connections that the College can educate Modern Apprentices in Engineering, Gamekeeping, Hospitality, Professional Cookery, Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy. The North Highland College UHI works locally and regionally with employability partnerships including Skills Development Scotland, Highland Council, the Department of Work and Pensions and the local Developing the Young Workforce Regional Board.

The College was successful in achieving the Buttle UK Mark (Higher Level Award) in December 2014 and has been building on this award to develop its corporate parenting plan.

## What is Corporate Parenting?

A corporate parent is an organisation or individual who has special responsibilities to looked after children and care experienced young people. 'Looked after children' are children in care provided by the state – a group that includes:

- those in residential care
- those in foster care
- those in kinship care
- those who are looked after at home with social work involvement

The North Highland College UHI has developed effective partnerships with Highland Council (the only local authority in our area) and relevant external partners in order to establish provision and support to reduce the number of young people between 16-19 not in education, employment or training. The School Liaison Team attends Highland Council More Choices More Chances meetings with key partner agencies from the voluntary sector, alongside Education and Children Services and Skills Development Scotland. This group discusses individuals who may be at risk of a negative destination and considers the most appropriate provision to suit the individual. The college also has partnerships with a local social enterprise organisation, the Pulteneytown People's Project in Wick and works with them to identify, support and provide progression for young people who are having difficulties transitioning or who need to re-engage with education, training and work. Further working partnership agreements have been developed and established with Skills Development Scotland and 11 schools within Caithness, Sutherland and Ross-shire.

In addition to this, as part of the 16+ Learning Choices initiative the School Liaison Team attends meetings on request at schools within the Highland Council area to identify potential students who may require enhanced support and they work collaboratively with schools to enhance post school transitions, providing information and guidance from a college perspective. Our systems have been developed to identify care leavers at application stage, who are then guided through the application and induction processes by a designated person. A Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) will be devised and relevant areas of this will be shared with the appropriate course tutor. Student Support will liaise with the course tutor on a weekly basis to ensure the student is attending college; in addition the course tutor will be advised to contact the Student Support Team should there be any incidents or concerns. One to one reviews and focus groups with this cohort will provide us with effective feedback; this procedure is very successful with mainstream students. Assistance will be given to the student for the next transition period to ensure a smooth journey on to the next level of study or employment.

The Learner Support Manager acts as the key contact for this student cohort and identifies an appropriate member of staff to attend individual ASN (Additional Support Needs) meetings, reviews and planning meetings in order to establish, build and maintain effective working relationships with appropriate external agencies, key staff members, and potential students and families and also to identify next step provision and support. The Learner Support Manager also attends relevant meetings and transition planning reviews with Highland Council for identified young people as appropriate.

## PRE-ENTRY

The student support section organise visits to the college for individuals or small groups of pupils being supported by external agencies such as Social Work, Skills Development Scotland, The Pulteneytown People's Project, The Calman Trust, Barnardos, and Airport House in Wick, (a facility for school refusers). Pupils have the opportunity to experience the college for a day, meet staff and get information about courses in which they may be interested. They can also participate in some activities, which may be relevant to a course in which they have expressed an interest. This opportunity is available to all young people regardless of circumstances or background.

The North Highland College UHI has courses which are designed specifically for those who may require enhanced transition and support. The Personal Empowerment Programme (PEP), which runs in the Thurso and Invergordon, is designed to give those with a range of support needs a supported start into full time study at college. The course in its first semester concentrates on project work incorporating opportunities to develop core skills, employability skills, enterprise skills, confidence building and team work. Specific issues are identified and dealt with on a one to one basis. In semester two, the candidates have the opportunity to participate in a range of vocational subjects on a weekly basis. There is support available to help candidates apply to a vocational course for the following year. This course is supported by the programme leader and dedicated student support worker who work closely with the young people and key external agencies. Vocational tutors who provide the vocational classes in semester 2 liaise closely with the programme leader to ensure that any issues in vocational classes are identified and dealt with quickly. This course is promoted through support workers in the various external agencies and in addition is advertised in the prospectus, the website and promoted by North Highland College UHI at various events. All students applying for this course are interviewed by the course tutor and are then introduced to the Student Support Team where a member of the team will be assigned to the student and will act as their designated contact for the duration of their period in college. Support provided will be tailored to meet their individual needs but could include help with their course application, funding application, housing benefit, liaison with external agencies and identifying childcare needs. Through the college Staff Development Programme, we plan that all college staff will attend awareness raising sessions on the issues that may affect a looked after child. Students from a looked after background are identified through a number of methods, including disclosure on the application form or at interview, through college staff liaising with external agencies and funding applications. PEP for Employment course in Invergordon provides a progression route from the PEP programme and further develops student employability skills through supported work placement.

The Access to Construction and Engineering (ACE) provide a 'Next Step To Learning' and is aimed at young people between 15-25 who have just left school or may be unemployed and are unsure of the route they would like to follow. The course provides a range of introductory units in the subject areas as well as project based core skills units. This programme provides progression for several PEP students every year as well as being a starting point for young people with little or no school qualifications. Enhanced support in the form of additional staff from the Student Support Team has been put in place for this particular access course. Prospective students from a looked after background are identified and supported as previously stated.

The school liaison team arranges regular taster days and visits from small groups of pupils from our partner schools who are unlikely to have positive destinations. The NHC marketing section liaise with the Student Support Team to ensure that the pupils on these visits are all made fully aware of the range of services the Student Support Team can offer and an opportunity is given at this stage to have a one to one meeting, either after their tour or at a more convenient time and place suitable to them.

The Student Support Team incorporates the Student Funding Operation and the staff providing support are also involved in the assessing and processing of all Student Funding Applications. Funding Clinics are advertised on social media and in the Student Support section of the college website. Individual appointments are available with the funding department to discuss funding options, any concerns of a financial nature and the completion of the online funding application form. Due to the specific issues, for example lack of documentation, which students coming from a looked after background may have, additional time is made available to have a detailed discussion ensuring all concerns are addressed and no financial barriers remain.

A Transitions Pack for school guidance teams and staff is currently being produced in order to provide information on the range of Support and provision available within The North Highland College UHI. This pack will be made available to foster carers, external agencies and Highland Council. The support detailed will make reference to specific challenges relating to students from a care background to show an understanding of their specific needs. This information will be available on the College website alongside general college information.

The North Highland College UHI is represented by a variety of departmental staff on school information open days throughout the academic year at external locations such as schools. Student Support literature is available for staff and pupils where reference is made throughout to the support available at college for care leavers.

The College's standard application form allows potential applicants to disclose their background when applying for their chosen course. The improved application form and the awareness raising sessions to staff should increase the success rate of this disclosure method. If an applicant takes this opportunity, the Admissions Team will send an email to Student Support and a designated member of the team will contact the applicant to arrange a face to face meeting, in order to break down any perceived barriers and so that arrangements can be made for appropriate ongoing support and guidance. This may be as a continuation and development of a relationship which has been established at an earlier point, e.g. a visit to Airport House, transition meeting. Disclosure could also be made pre-entry during the interview with the lecturer or on the enrolment form. Again, the awareness raising sessions for staff should increase the number of students disclosing. The Funding Team work within the Student Support Section and as such, disclosure made inadvertently through a funding application, can be passed to other members of the Section who would act accordingly in offering support.

Following disclosure an initial meeting with the young person and the named contact will be arranged. Relevant external agencies, family members and carers can be invited at the young person's request and the meeting can take place within the College campus or elsewhere to suit the young person.

At this meeting information will be given regarding the personalised support available. This will include financial, welfare, accommodation and academic support. The student will have the opportunity to meet their designated member of staff and other key personnel as appropriate. The young person will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the layout of the college and their learning environment.

Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs) are arranged as appropriate to ensure alternative arrangements, learning strategies, additional equipment and support are in place prior to induction. The PLSP is a communication tool which details the nature of a student's needs and any specific support agreed in order to negate any difficulties and thereby creating a level playing field. In the case of care leavers, additional questions would be raised regarding, e.g. accommodation, registration with a medical practice and benefit entitlements. Appropriate information is then communicated to the relevant teaching staff. PLSPs are reviewed at least once per semester on a one to one basis and for this particular group of students on a monthly basis.

- 1) Information detailing the support arrangements on offer to students is clearly detailed on the College website and in the college prospectus and leaflets advertising the services provided by the Student Support Section. There is a section within these areas where information specific to looked after children is detailed.
- 2) The College's Admissions Team makes considered arrangements for all students applying for more than one course and attempts are made to arrange interviews for all courses on the same day. It is noted that this type of arrangement is particularly important for this group of students and offers and decisions are made a priority due to the impact the decision has on other external factors such as accommodation, finances, carers, transport and so on. There will be continual communication between the designated named person, student, college staff and relevant external agencies to alleviate any concerns, general enquiries or progress updates in terms of application.

The North Highland College UHI has identified the advantages of working closely with this target group in advance of their course in order to support the young person with financial and housing matters. College staff liaise with staff from other agencies to ensure that continual financial advice and housing provision is available to the young person during the transition period.

#### **ON-GOING SUPPORT**

The college has a significant and robust system of ongoing support involving staff, agencies and professionals from across the college and beyond. The Student Support Section offers a wide range of personal and pastoral support on a one to one and group basis. The Student Support Section comprises members who have expertise in funding, additional learning support, mental health and career guidance. They work in partnership with other college staff including those who support students within an academic context such as lecturers and Personal Academic Tutors (PATs). Out with college there is a range of local key agencies who work in partnership with the college, including Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Social Work, DWP and the Highland Council. Student support is promoted at interview stage by meetings with the students, with a summary of what we offer being supported by an information leaflet with contact names and numbers.

Ongoing staff awareness sessions will ensure all academic staff are kept informed of the varying issues affecting care leavers.

A designated named person will make arrangements to meet with all students from this cohort individually on a monthly basis during their time at college; time and place will be mutually agreed. Additional meetings can be requested by the student or via an internal referral from staff as the Section operates an Open Door policy. Meetings may cover a wide range of issues or additional support needs including funding and other support offered through student support. Students from this cohort will be given a list of dates when planned meetings are scheduled and this will be included within their PLSP. In addition, information will be displayed on the plasma screens around the college promoting support services to all students along with a section promoting support available for students from a looked after background.

If a student is in need of Additional Learning Support to aid their chances of success, they are referred to one of our learning support staff who will work with the student to put in place a PLSP as described previously. If learners have additional support needs which are not disclosed prior to the start of the course, they can still be referred for assessment to receive this type of support during their course. Referrals can be made by PATs, teaching staff or by students themselves. Staff share information (where appropriate) and work regularly together on behalf of individual students. Personal information is

confidential and only shared on a need to know basis. The College has published policies and procedures for Data Protection; Acceptable ICT Use; Positive Behaviour Management; and Safeguarding Children, Young People, Vulnerable Adults and Staff. These documents are regularly reviewed. Students are informed of funding information and the different aspects of support on offer both at the pre-entry stage and as part of student induction. Information on individual students is gathered through the application process and during information days and advice is given to students throughout the pre-entry and induction stages, in advance of the student starting their course. Information is available in different formats including hardcopy and online. All students have access to one to one advice and support on financial matters. The College recognises that waiting to hear if a college offer is confirmed can be a very stressful time for this particular group and we maintain close contact with the student during this time. During the induction period, all students identified as being from a looked after background will be offered a further one to one meeting. This will be carried out by a member of the Student Support Section. These meetings will be used to clarify the student's understanding of how things work in college and the support on offer. The staff member will fill in any gaps in knowledge and understanding and deal with any concerns the student may have. The Student Support Section, through liaison with the UHI Careers team and Skills Development Scotland, can provide careers guidance to any student (FE or HE level). There is also careers information and resources available in the main library for all students and sign posting to local opportunities.

The Student Support Section have a member of staff who trained and qualified through The BRITE Initiative, and another member of the team is undergoing similar training at the moment. This organisation provides training and professional development allowing participants to create inclusive learning environments. All staff within the Section take part in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training in topics such as managing positive behaviour; mental health; and benefit and funding issues. Awareness raising sessions on the issues affecting students from a care background are now planned in the college staff development programme. These sessions allow our staff to remain up to date with new procedures and the contacts made there provide opportunities for support and information networks.

The college has staff with experience of working with child protection agencies and other areas related to vulnerable young people. We offer and attend sector CPD sessions on an annual basis to aid the support of staff working with young people from a care background. There is a wide range of events which are relevant to staff who work with those from a looked after background and college support staff attend these events on a regular basis.

### **Monitoring the Commitment**

The North Highland College UHI has in place a comprehensive framework to manage quality assurance at both a strategic and operational level. We work within a framework for all levels of education from Access level FE through to PhD level HE. All key areas within the College are involved in operational planning and undertake a self-evaluation exercise on an annual basis. Additionally, we have a comprehensive programme of staff development. All activities which relate to looked after young people will be included in these areas to ensure adequate monitoring and evaluation.

The North Highland College's Director of Learning and Teaching will take strategic responsibility for the implementation of the commitment throughout the institution with support from the Student Support Section, with a named person within the team dealing with all operational matters and being the main point of contact. There is a variety of staff from admissions, registration, student support and the academic team who are involved in ensuring a fair and consistent approach to our commitment.

All identified care experienced students will undertake an initial interview with a member of staff from the Student Support Section. The Student Support team, as well as admission and academic staff, all have a very close working relationship with external agencies to ensure a smooth transition into college life with appropriate support.

The Student Support team members will provide support coordinated through the team's named person throughout the period of study. Required team members will continue to liaise with academic staff through course team meetings and informal discussion to monitor progress. This ensures that any changes required are dealt with in a seamless and professional manner.

The North Highland College provides a box within the application which allows a care experienced person to disclose to us in advance of joining the college. The admissions team would then pass this information on to Student Support who would make the appropriate arrangements for engagement.

The Student Support team can offer a wide range of support services which include accommodation, travel and meeting with potential students in a setting most appropriate to ensure their comfort.

The College, working with our key agencies, has designed an online transition guide for students to support them from school to college. This can be adapted as required, e.g. for those transitioning from further to higher education.

As part of the application process for the Buttle UK Quality Mark the College put together a team of staff who meet regularly to discuss key issues and difficulties that arise from care experienced individuals. This team will be expanded to meet the challenges of the Corporate Parenting initiative.

The College undertakes several student surveys throughout the year from module level upwards to ensure that students are able to share their experiences from their programme of study from admissions through to completion. This coupled with regular course team meetings, LearnerCouncil and student representation on key college committees ensures we have a clear picture of student life and provides us with a wealth of examples of good practice as well as areas for improvement.

Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) interviews throughout the year also provide valuable insight about students and inform the evaluation and action required, particularly for key support requirements which may involve support from external agencies.

Student Support staff have been involved in specific training to support care experienced individuals and this will continue as part of their CPD programme. This will be disseminated on an annual basis, as a minimum, to all staff at internal staff training, ensuring all staff are kept informed and good practice is shared. They will also take responsibility for sharing information through the wider UHI network. Additionally the team set up will disseminate information and share good practice at their regular section meetings within the College.



## Appendix 1

### North Highland College UHI: Development Action Plan of Support for Care Experienced Individuals

PRE – ENTRY					
Stage	Present Provision	Areas for improvement / development	Actions	Staff responsible for actions	Date for Completion
1. Develop effective links with local authorities / Health and Social Care Trusts, schools, colleges and other partners in order to make available relevant information, advice and guidance (including financial support) about progression to and study options at FE/HE	North Highland College UHI has strong, well established links with a broad range of external agencies, e.g. Skills Development Scotland, Highland and Barnardos. The college also has a named school liaison contact who coordinates school/college provision. They attend transition meetings at high schools within our catchment area and liaise with school partners and the local council, e.g. at regional schools group in the North Highlands and Easter Ross area  Funding Clinics and one-to-one assistance also provided.	College staff have good knowledge of care experienced individual backgrounds through current links, but there is a need to develop these links to highlight the college's commitment to care experienced individuals and ensure that all links are current. We aim to further improve services for care experienced individuals through the implementation of a comprehensive Corporate Parenting Plan. This will involve reviewing and enhancing processes across the college.  Review staff hours of team member responsible for looked after young people.	Ensure all contacts are up to date and cover all appropriate agencies.	Learner Support Manager	December 2017
			Include care experienced individuals as a priority group in strategic and operational planning.		
			Establish an extended corporate parenting team to include care experienced student representatives and staff from key areas across the college with a clear purpose and remit to implement all areas of the Corporate Parenting Plan.		
			Develop these relationships by identifying opportunities to attend local agencies and organisations to promote the college's commitment to care experienced individuals e.g. Health Improvement Forum Meetings, visits to Children's Homes.	Learner Support Manager/Named Person	July 2017
			Invite appropriate agencies to a college event to consider future networking opportunities and raise awareness of college facilities and services.		
			Sign College up to the Care Leavers Covenant	Marketing Team	July 2017
2. Ensure outreach activities are accessible for those in looked after young people - such as taster days, open days, summer schools – and their carers, and that costs are not a barrier to participation	Invitations for outreach activities are sent to support workers based in our feeder schools; children's homes; Skills Development Scotland and other agencies who work with care experienced individuals. The college organises targeted information events for this group. The college will work with appropriate agencies to ensure that costs are not a barrier to participation.	There is a need to coordinate all types of engagement with care experienced individuals and those who work with them to ensure a consistent and planned approach is adopted in promoting events. Although successful some find there is still a barrier to coming to college for such events. The college would like to increase the number of these opportunities across all campuses and improve the marketing of these events	Develop an activity and marketing engagement plan e.g. use of social media, presentations to appropriate groups, more face to face opportunities, to allow college staff to promote the support available at college for care leavers directly to young people from a care background; identify a member of staff in each of our satellite campuses who will be available to speak to care experienced individuals.	Marketing/Schools Liaison/Support Team	July 2017
			Consider membership and remit of a college care leaver working group		
				Learner Support Manager	July 2018

Stage	Present Provision	Areas for Development	Actions	Staff Responsible for actions	
3. Provide impartial pre-entry guidance on FE/HE study	<p>The school liaison contact or members of the student support team attend transition meetings relating to individual students. Information is personalised on an individual level. College staff also attend information days in high schools where a more general approach to advice is taken.</p> <p>Well established pre-entry guidance is also given to all prospective students at college information days.</p>	<p>There is a need to make more detailed reference to the support which is available at North Highland College UHI for looked after young people during these events.</p> <p>Ensure this is promoted widely across all schools and agencies within our catchment area, including those in Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross.</p>	<p>Involve support workers in satellite campuses covering Sutherland and Easter Ross schools</p> <p>Create a mailing list for agencies to send out updates/any relevant information regarding the support of care experienced individuals; include in prospectus; more face to face opportunities, use of social media, posters and flyers</p> <p>Review school-college information booklet to ensure information for care leavers is included.</p>	<p>Learner Support Team</p> <p>Marketing Department</p> <p>AD Schools Liaison</p>	<p>Transition Meetings in operation July 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p>
4. Provide impartial pre-entry financial advice and information on support services available	<p>At the above meetings financial advice and support services are also promoted. At present there are no funds available specifically for care leavers and any funding given would come from the Discretionary Fund.</p>	As above	As above	As above	Ongoing
5. Effectively publicise the support your institution offers to potential students with care experience and those colleagues in local authorities / Health and Social Care Trusts, colleges, etc. who are supporting them in their educational progression	<p>Details of support which is specific to care leavers is detailed on the college website. We also have an entry in the "Who Cares?" Scotland handbook</p>	<p>The college needs to develop its strategy to publicise the support available at all stages of the student's college journey. See above.</p>	As 2. above	Marketing Department/ Learner Support Team	July 2017

<b>APPLICATION, ENTRY AND INDUCTION</b>					
<b>Area</b>	<b>Current provision</b>	<b>Areas for improvement / development</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff responsible for actions</b>	<b>Date for Completion</b>
1. Identify a designated member of staff to act as a key point of contact and advisor for care experienced individuals to provide support prior to and on entry.	A member of the college student support team has been identified as the named person and this has been communicated to the external agencies and partners who work with care leavers. As the college has 3 geographically dispersed campuses across the North Highlands, additional support staff have been identified to support the designated college contact.	There is a need to disseminate the details of this designated college contact more widely across all college campuses.	Email notification to be sent to all college staff	Jackie Manderson	July 2017
2. Have in place methods of identifying applicants from care and establish contact with them as appropriate.	Care experienced individuals are identified through a question on the application and enrolment forms, both online and paper based. Reports detailing all students identified in this category are extracted from the student information system and passed to the named college contact who then contacts the student. Subsequently, a PLSP is created detailing their individual support needs. Permission is obtained from the student to share specific details with tutors and other appropriate parties such as the Bursary Officer. In addition, the Admissions Department notifies the named contact when any student discloses their care background on the application form. This is followed up as above.	This system was newly introduced in 2014/15 academic year; hence there was a delay in initial contact being made. As the process becomes more systematically embedded in the application process, this will improve. Required timescales for contact will be built into college procedures.	Identify timescale for initial contact with student to be made following notification of disclosure within the college procedure for managing student support.	Learner Support Team	June 2017  Cross Ref Access and Inclusion strategy
3. Offer identified personal support before the course starts and identify arrangements for any continuing support post enrolment if required.	Once the need has been identified one to one support is provided and the PLSP used to identify individual student support requirements. This is reviewed with the student at key points throughout the year.	The timing and frequency of review meetings will need to be reviewed to better meet the specific and challenging needs of students from a care background.	Identify timing and frequency of the PLSP reviews and include within the college procedure for managing student support.	Learner Support Team	April 2017
4. Where required, support students	There are well established systems currently in place to	Arrangements will need to be monitored to ensure needs are	Ensure interim arrangements for longer term accommodation needs are identified.	Learner Support Team	Ongoing

seeking accommodation (FE) or to secure 365-day accommodation over the full life of their course (HE).	support students with accommodation enquiries. Student support staff often act as advocates with the student's dealings with external agencies such as the local authority housing office. In addition support staff will work with external support agencies to assist care leavers in securing accommodation.  The same support is currently given to HE students.	met in a timely manner. There are student residences in Dornoch which are now available to students, both within and out with the academic year.			
5. Where appropriate offer flexible application arrangements e.g. interview guarantees.	The college makes every effort to ensure special arrangements are made to meet specific individual needs, where required, e.g. locating interviews closer to the student's home address.	There is a need to re-iterate the requirement to be flexible across all staff undertaking interviews. The college should also consider interview guarantees for all care leavers.	Incorporate this expectation within dedicated staff development for programme leaders.  Assistant Directors to consider interview guarantees for all care leaver applications.	Jackie Manderson  Assistant Directors Group	Ongoing  July 2018
6. Offer identified personal support before the course starts and identify arrangements for any continuing support post enrolment if required.	Once the need has been identified one to one support is provided and the PLSP used to identify individual student support requirements. This is reviewed with the student at key points throughout the year.	The timing and frequency of review meetings will need to be reviewed to better meet the specific and challenging needs of students from a care background.	Identify timing and frequency of the PLSP reviews and include within the college procedure for managing student support.	Learner Support Team	April 2017  Meetings set up with Programme Teams

<b>ON-GOING SUPPORT</b>					
<b>Area</b>	<b>Current provision</b>	<b>Areas for improvement / development</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff responsible for actions</b>	<b>Date for Completion</b>
1. A designated member of staff to act as a key point of contact and advisor throughout the duration of the student's course.	The named contact meets with each student and relationship is developed. In addition the student will have a programme leader (Personal Academic Tutor), as a main contact on their programme. This tutor will liaise with named contact regarding support needs and to monitor progress.	There is a need to raise awareness of the college procedure for managing student support for young people from a care background across all college campuses, particularly the responsibilities of key members of staff.	Provide staff development sessions for programme leaders regarding college processes for supporting care experienced individuals	Learner support manager	August 2018
2. Ensure that the individual's circumstances are reflected in the support offered and accommodated within processes related to application, bursary and other funding provision.	Using the needs assessment detailed within the PLSP, the college tailors the support we provide to any student with identified support needs, including specific arrangements for care experienced individuals	Improve the awareness of how relevant college processes have been adapted to meet the specific needs of care experienced leavers with all members of college staff.	Provide staff development sessions for key college staff regarding college processes for supporting young people from a care background.	Learner support manager/Staff development officer	August 2018
3. Within the consent of the learner, agree a protocol for the sharing of information with the learner and the responsible local authority / Health and Social Care Trust, including continuing contribution to the Pathway Plan.	With the consent of the learner, an informal process currently exists for sharing information with appropriate external agencies to best inform the development of appropriate support arrangements to meet individual learner needs at college.	It would be beneficial if a formal protocol, allowing schools and other agencies to pass on information to college staff, was devised. This would improve communication about specific and challenging needs of these young people, subsequently enhancing the support they receive.	Contact other academic partners in UHI to enquire what protocols they have in place with their local authority.  Develop college protocol for communicating with external agencies in relation to care leavers.	Jackie Manderson  Jackie Manderson	April 2017  June 2018
4. Ensure that sources of financial support for the learner are in place through working with the local authority and appropriate partners and ensure that individuals are aware of any additional financial support offered by the institution and how to access it (e.g. Bursaries, Access to Learning Fund, Hardship Fund, benefits).	We work with local authorities and other partners to ensure continuous financial support for students who are care leavers. This often entails working with more than one external agency. Discussions take place at an early stage to ensure both students and relevant external agencies are made aware of all types of financial support available.	Funding allocations are made to colleges on a block basis, with all applications having to be made from this resource, in accordance with funding council guidelines. The college would like to consider ring-fencing some of the bursary fund for care leavers.	Consult with West Highland and Argyll College regarding proposals to introduce ring fenced bursary for care experienced individuals and jointly develop policy and guidelines for eligibility subject to available funding	Learner Support Manager and Partner Colleges	July 2018 Ongoing
5. Provide impartial progression guidance relating to further study (e.g. FE to HE), or progression routes into employment and where relevant to support transition to higher education or employment.	Guidance is given to all students by their programme leader (personal academic tutor) regarding progression to further study; with careers advice also being provided by the student support team and relevant careers agencies.	At present there are no special arrangements for students who are care experienced. College processes for managing the student journey will be reviewed to identify and specific arrangements required for students who are care	Review college guidance arrangements and add any specific requirements for care experienced students.	Learner Support Manager/Jackie Manderson	August 2018

		experienced and disseminated to staff			
6. Provide staff training across the college in relation to corporate parenting	The named college contact has attended various external events relating to issues affecting children and young people in care/leaving care e.g. College Development Network event. Initial introductory staff development sessions have been delivered to raise awareness of issues related to care experienced individuals to staff.	Follow up training is required across all college campuses and key staff, particularly to include more detail on the revised arrangements that are currently being developed. Support staff from all 3 college campuses will continue to attend external staff development events to allow them to disseminate knowledge to other members of college staff and to continue to provide the best support to care experienced individuals.	<p>Session on corporate parenting for all staff</p> <p>Level 1 online corporate parenting course developed by "Who Cares Scotland" to become available for all staff and introduced to new staff at time of induction.</p> <p>Arrange more detailed staff development sessions for key college staff regarding college processes for supporting young people from a care background, including where relevant, outside agencies.</p> <p>Appropriate support staff to attend sector development events regarding support of care experienced students. Continue to share good practice within colleges across the Highlands and Islands region at the relevant groups</p>	<p>Staff Development Officer</p> <p>Learner Support Manager/Jackie Manderson/Staff development officer</p> <p>Anna Swanson/Jackie Manderson</p> <p>Anna Swanson/Jackie Manderson</p>	<p>September 2018</p> <p>December 2018</p> <p>Ongoing throughout year</p> <p>Ongoing throughout year</p>

<b>MONITORING THE COMMITMENT</b>					
<b>Area</b>	<b>Current provision</b>	<b>Areas for improvement / development</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Staff responsible for actions</b>	<b>Date for Completion</b>
1. Nominate a senior member of staff to ensure the implementation of the Commitment across the institution and specify how it will be monitored and evaluated.	The Director of Learning and Teaching, who has line management responsibility for the Support for Learners function, has been appointed to this role. Objective(s) relating to the implementation and monitoring of the Commitment will be included in the Student Support section operational plan. Progress on the objective set will be assessed with the student support manager at annual performance review and throughout the year. In addition, the plan for the Commitment will be presented to the college Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee as part of a standing item on student support and progress reported at each meeting.	As this is a relatively new initiative for the college, the monitoring process will require to be embedded within future agendas for the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee.	Assess progress on operational plan objectives at review meetings between Learner Support Manager and Director for Learning and Teaching	Director Learning and Teaching	February 2018 and at regular intervals after
2. Ensure application, enrolment and progression data for this group is collected and monitored	All application, enrolment and progression data is captured on the college management information system, SITS. Reports have been developed across all partner colleges in UHI to provide named contacts with student details. Enrolment, retention and attainment data is monitored during annual course monitoring processes and actions for improvement identified where appropriate. This includes equalities data. Student representatives are involved in this process.	There will be a need to check that an appropriate report is produced to meet annual reporting requirements	Review current report format to assess suitability for annual reporting requirements  Review college course monitoring template to include care leaver data as well as equalities data	Registry  QLEC	October 2017  June 2018
3. Collect and collate feedback from learners to engage them in evaluating the quality of their experience and assist in facilitating feedback to SMT	Evaluation of the student's college experience is captured during the PLSP review meeting with the learner and recorded in their plan; however, this does not currently capture specific data relating to care leavers. All learners also participate in college wide course quality monitoring processes. This includes an early experience survey. Whilst general course and equalities data is captured to assist in the analysis and evaluation, it does not capture if the student is a care leaver.	The college will need to review and develop its current mechanisms to ensure that specific data for care experienced leavers can be more easily evaluated and that opportunities for involving this group in the process is optimised.	Review PLSP proforma  Review structure of early experience survey questions  Speak to Partners re Report to identify more detailed analysis	Jackie Manderson  Lindsay Henderson QLEC  Anna Swanson Learner Support Manager	February 2018  August 2018  July 2018

<p>4. Contribute to sharing of best practice via colleagues in local authorities / Health and Social Care Trusts, FE and HE.</p>	<p>UHI have a formal Care Leavers Group which meets twice yearly to discuss and share concerns and best practices. This involves all named contacts from across all UHI partner colleges. Student support has an excellent relationship with similar colleagues in our academic partner colleges</p>	<p>The college needs to be more involved in sharing this practice with external agencies and local authorities e.g. through attendance and contribution at suitable events where colleagues in local authorities and other agencies meet.</p>	<p>UHI to extend membership of the Care Leavers Group</p> <p>Attend local Health Improvement forum meetings</p>	<p>Anna Swanson</p> <p>Anna Swanson</p>	<p>Throughout year</p> <p>June 2017</p>
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