

Understanding and supporting the progression needs of care experienced learners

[Aimhigher London](#) is a partnership of state-funded schools, colleges, local authorities, higher education providers and employers working collaboratively. We are committed to creating opportunities for young people from all backgrounds to stay in education and progress onto higher level skills (including Higher Education and apprenticeships). We work together to engage young people who have little knowledge or experience of higher level skills, in outreach activities. These activities are designed to increase aspirations, raise awareness and equip young people with the tools to make informed choices about their future. We work with young people, their families/ carers and key support personnel from Key Stage 3 to post 16.

Further reading

[DfE – outcomes for children in need, including children looked-after by local authorities in England](#)

Government published statistics about a range of outcomes for children looked-after, including education, SEN, and destinations from school.

[Office for Students topic briefing on care-experienced students](#)

Information about access, continuation and success of care-experienced university students and examples of university initiatives to support them.

[Rees Centre slideshow – Supporting higher education progression for care leavers](#)

Short youtube video from Rees Centre at the University of Oxford summarising the steps needed to increase the number of care leavers entering higher education in England.

[Office for Students coronavirus briefing note – students without family support](#)

Shares examples of support made available to care experienced university students. Also signposts to further information and support.

[University of Sheffield Pathways Project research](#)

Two reports based on the views and experiences of care-experienced university students in England and Wales. One report discusses their journey through care, and the other focuses on their experiences of progressing to higher education.

[Positive impact? What factors affect access, retention, and graduate outcomes for university students with a background of care or family estrangement?](#)

A report to the Unite Foundation, that brings together available data on access, retention and graduate outcomes.

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[Coram Voice Bright Spots research reports](#)

Bright Spots is a partnership between Coram Voice and the University of Oxford. It supports local authorities to systematically listen to their children in care and care leavers, about the things that are important to them.

[Moving on up: Pathways of care leavers and care-experienced students into and through higher education](#)

Report to the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) published in 2017. Summary video available [here](#).

[Consistency needed: care experienced students and higher education](#)

Office for Students insight brief, giving an overview of current issues and developments in higher education, drawing on data and understanding about care-experienced students.

[Supporting care-experienced students in English higher education: towards a more consistent approach](#)

A report to the Office for Students by the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers

Further support:

[Sussex Learning Network toolkit and film](#)

The Sussex Learning Network have created a short film featuring students from different universities, offering advice and insight for younger care-experienced people who are considering their future study options and opportunities. There is also a toolkit resource for professionals who are supporting care-experienced young people to progress to HE.

[UCAS toolkit for advisers](#)

Guidance for supporting care experienced students through the university application process and preparing them for the transition to higher education.

[UCAS advice for care-experienced students](#)

Guidance for care-experienced students including the support they may be able to access and ticking the box on their UCAS form to inform universities that they are care-experienced.

[EaCES \(Estranged and care experienced students\)](#)

Brings together information and advice from estranged and care experienced students in the UK and Ireland, to support students from similar backgrounds pre-entry, throughout education / training, and post-graduation.

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[Care Leaver Local Offer](#)

A website where professionals and young people can find out about a local authority's provision for their care leavers including job opportunities, finance, apprenticeships, and access to free leisure activities.

[Student Finance England](#)

Key information for practitioners about students who qualify as care leavers and what this means for their student finance application.

[National Network for the Education of Care Leavers \(NNECL\)](#)

A network of organisations including further and higher education, local authorities, virtual schools and charities. Supports professionals working with care-experienced people in different sectors, with the goal of enabling more care experienced people to access and progress successfully through further and higher education.

[Propel \(part of Become\)](#)

A website containing information and advice about the support available for care leavers at further and higher education institutions across the country. Part of [Become](#), a charity that supports care-experienced young people and advocates to improve the care system.

[Care Leaver Covenant](#)

A national inclusion programme that supports care leavers aged 16-25 to live independently. Signatory organisations commit to providing support for young people leaving care, that is additional to the statutory support provided by local authorities, for example apprenticeships and mentoring support.

[Stand Alone](#)

A charity that supports adults who are estranged from their families, including advice about evidencing estrangement when applying for student finance.

[Unite Foundation](#)

A charity that offers an accommodation scholarship for care leavers and estranged young people at university. The scholarship supports the costs of accommodation and bills for eligible students at the Unite Foundation's partner universities.

[Complete university guide](#)

Webpage with advice about applying to university as a care leaver and the support available.

[Article 26](#)

A project run by the Helena Kennedy Foundation to promote access to higher education for people who have sought asylum in the UK.

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[Learning and Work Institute](#)

Resources for colleges, employers, carers, professionals and young people about enabling access to good quality education, training, and employment.

[Disabled Students Allowance](#)

Information on the government website about Disabled Students' Allowance that eligible students can apply for to help cover study-related costs because of a mental health need, long term illness, or disability.

[Disabled Students' Allowance video](#)

A short video created by Student Finance England about the extra support available to students who have a disability, specific learning difficulty, mental health condition, or long-term health condition.

[Supporting looked-after young people and care-leavers in further education](#)

Guide and resource pack for colleges developed by the Learning and Work Institute.

University widening access examples and opportunities

Many universities offer 1:1 bespoke support for care-leavers applying to their university. In addition to this, most universities offer widening participation activities for learners from under-represented groups, including those who are care-experienced.

[Office for Students website](#)

Examples of how specific higher education providers have supported access and outcomes for care-leavers.

[Kingston University](#)

Kingston University's free Fast Track programme provides targeted support for post-16 students from Kingston's partner schools.

[Realising opportunities](#)

A collaboration of universities supporting eligible 16-19 year olds, to promote fair access to university and professions.

[The Sutton Trust](#)

Run several programmes in partnership with universities to support eligible students to progress.

[University of West London](#)

Year 10 work experience opportunities for looked-after young people. Specialist careers days for learners in years 7-13 who are care-experienced.