

Support for care leavers at university

What support is available at university?

Universities provide support to their students. This support can be specific to care experienced individuals, or may be extended to a wider range of students. The support is in place to ensure that barriers to learning are removed for those with a care experienced background.

Access to support and services at university can be sought through various departments. It is important to note, that when supporting a young person to access this support, the name of the service and department may vary between universities. If a young person is in doubt who to contact to access support, encourage them to speak to Student Services who will be able to signpost to the most appropriate team.

Types of support available include:

A named person for care experienced students

Universities should have a named person available to support care experienced students. This person may be based within the Widening Participation team or another team. Students should contact their Student Services who will be able to sign-post them to the correct member of staff.

When applying through UCAS, it is beneficial to tick the box in the care question so that a person's chosen university can inform the young person of the support available.

Wellbeing and mental health services

Universities offer a wellbeing and mental health service. Support may include short-term counselling, access to a mental health advisor or workshops. The Propel website includes information on all types of support available at each HEI as well as linking each HEI's webpages.

More information on wellbeing and mental health can be found in the *Mental Health and wellbeing Practitioner Guide*.

Financial support

Some universities offer financial support in the form of a bursary and grant. These may be dependent on meeting certain criteria. To find out what the criteria is, support your young person to visit a university's website directly, or [Propel - Become](#) (becomecharity.org.uk) where you can research into all universities' offerings.

In addition to bursaries and grants, a hardship fund is available to all students who are experiencing financial difficulty. Each university will have different criteria regarding the amount of money they give and whether the amount needs to be paid back. Usually, this money does not need to be paid back.

Accommodation

Students from a care background, often worry about accommodation, for example they may be anxious about where they will live during a holiday period. Some universities will offer, for example year round accommodation and/or a guaranteed room in university accommodation and welcome packs. Students should speak to their chosen university about what support they offer. They should also speak to their local authority about the support they can offer in relation to accommodation.

Social Support

University is a great place for young people to meet other people and socialise and there are a range of options available, for example a variety of sports clubs and societies are available. Also, the Students' Union usually offers free independent advice for those who need help related to their academic studies and non-academic related issues.

Academic Support/Study Skills

It is not uncommon for students at university to access academic support, for example improving study skills, support with writing essays and reports and help with grammar and punctuation. Universities understand that students will not start their course with all the skills they need. They offer academic support usually via a blended approach of online meetings and face to face. To access this service, students will need to contact their academic support team directly.

Useful links

[Supporting care experienced students through university](#)

Support offered at university and named contact
[Propel - Become](#)

Finance

[Home - Buttle UK](#)

[Tackling Financial Insecurity Together | Turn2us](#)

General support, guidance and signposting

[Rees Foundation | Support and guidance for care leavers](#)

Accommodation scholarships

[Unite Foundation + our scholarship = This is us. \(thisisusatuni.org\)](#)