

Corporate Parenting Strategy

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Introduction

In July 2018 there were 14,738 Care-Experienced Young People (CEYP), previously known as Looked After Children and Young People, in Scotland.¹ However, in comparison to their non-looked after peers, CEYP are under-represented in higher education, are more likely to leave school sooner and have lower school attainment². They are also more likely to live in poverty, experience homelessness, and have poor mental health including above average rates of suicide and self-harm. Care experienced young people are considered amongst the most vulnerable in society, with only 5% of CEYP progressing to university study in comparison to 41% of school leavers (2017-18 dataError! Bookmark not defined.).

To help improve the outcomes for care experienced young people the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 named a number of organisations as Corporate Parents, which included all post -16 education providers. The outcomes for care-experienced school leavers are improving but remain poorer than their non-looked-after peers. Glasgow Caledonian University had prior to the 2014 Act already declared its commitment to CEYP and had embedded activities in its work with under-represented groups and communities through the University's outreach initiatives. As the University for the Common Good, GCU continues to build on our long-standing commitments to care experienced young people and we are delighted to welcome more care-experienced students each year to the University. We believe that the GCU ethos and corporate strategy, fully align with the duties under the Act. As a proud Corporate Parent, we aim to help create a society where our care experienced young people are given every opportunity to succeed.

¹ [Scottish Government, 2018, Children's Social Work Statistics 2017/18](#)

² [Scottish Government, 2018, Education Outcomes for Scotland's Looked After Children, 2017-18](#)

Corporate Parenting Duties

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 Statutory Guidance, Part 9, defines Corporate Parenting as “an organisation’s performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted.”

As a Corporate Parent, GCU is required to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a CEYP according to the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) indicators as referenced by the Scottish Government². These are often referred to as SHANARRI (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included). These distinct yet overlapping indicators highlight the flexibility of care needed to holistically support each CEYP.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, sets out the following corporate parenting duties:

Duty 1:	To be alert to matters which could adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers
Duty 2:	To assess the needs of care-experienced young people for the services and support provided by the corporate parent
Duty 3:	To promote the interests of looked after children and care leavers
Duty 4:	To seek to provide care-experienced young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing
Duty 5:	To access opportunities provided by the corporate parent To make use of services, and access support, provided by the corporate parent
Duty 6:	To take any other action considered appropriate to improve the way the corporate parent exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people

² GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child) is a practice initiative, enshrined in law by the 2014 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act.

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>: *GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.*

Action Plan

As a Corporate Parent, GCU aims to provide the information, advice and support that a good parent would offer to help CEYP to make the transition to GCU and participate fully in the university community during their studies. To ensure that all aspects of GCU life take into account the needs of CEYP, our Corporate Parenting Steering Group has members from across the University including a care-experienced student from the Students' Association Care-Experienced Student Group. Our Corporate Parenting Steering Group provides a forum for discussion, information sharing and cross-institutional communication regarding the corporate parenting actions, as well as overseeing the monitoring and reporting on the CP plan.

Through consultation and in partnership with our care-experienced students including the Care-Experienced Student Officer within the Students' Association, university staff through our CP group and other CPs from the West of Scotland Care Leaver Forum, we have devised an action plan that is situated within our well-established holistic approach to student support. This aims to provide all students with the support they need whilst offering additional bespoke support to CEYP who declare and or seek additional support at any point in their educational journey.

Support for CEYP is outlined on our website at www.gcu.ac.uk/student/studentlife/studentssupport/careleavers/ covering outreach, application, transition, and on-programme support alongside contact details for our named contact.

List of definitions:

CELSIS – Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland

CEYP – Care Experienced Young Person

CP – Corporate Parent

LEA – Local Education Authority

SDS – Skills Development Scotland

Student Wellbeing – this team includes wellbeing, mental health, counselling and disability services

Student Enquiries, Advice and Events – this team includes the advice/enquiries desk, student events, and funding including the CEYP bursary

WC – Who Cares? Scotland

Duty 1: To be alert to matters which could adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers					
Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
1. Stay abreast of sector developments in relation to CEYP and respond accordingly	Membership of local and national groups for CEYP, West Forum, Glasgow's CP Forum and the Care Leavers' Covenant Use sector/organisational/individual good practice to inform GCU policy and practice e.g. work of CELSIS, WC	Continue to work in partnership with organisations supporting CEYP e.g. local authorities, SDS, MCR Pathways, schools and colleges and to embed learning and developments in GCU activity where relevant GCU CP Steering Group meets every semester (see Appendix A)	Named contact	On-going throughout each academic year	Through our partnerships and outreach work we now identify more CE applicants at pre-entry stage (see Appendix B)
	CEYP are referenced in our Dignity to Work and Study Policy	Contribute to sector discussions on treating care-experience as a protected characteristic	People Services	On-going	
2. Provide support in critical instances	Student wellbeing team to provide support in critical instances using case conference process	Case conference process is well established. The Head of Student Wellbeing co-ordinates the case conference bringing together both academic, support staff and student to agree a coordinated plan of support. This may include, for example, additional support from Student Wellbeing Services, access to funding, Learning and Development support, housing, mentorship etc	Student wellbeing team	On-going on a case by case basis	

Duty 2: To assess the needs of care-experienced young people for the services and support provided by the corporate parent

Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
<p>1. Identify CEYP</p>	<p>Identify CEYP through UCAS</p> <p>Identify CEYP applicants through outreach work and partnerships</p> <p>Opportunity for CEYP to self-identify at registration and at any point throughout their degree.</p> <p>Question on Student Mentor applications and Common Good applications</p> <p>CEYP directed to information on student services and support available. All students regularly reminded of support available.</p> <p>Opportunity to access other support mechanisms throughout studies, e.g. wellbeing or disability services</p>	<p>Continue to support known CEYP at pre-application stage e.g. with application completion, personal statements or interview preparation</p> <p>Admissions to forward information on care-experienced Postgraduate applicants to Named Contact</p> <p>Contact CEYP at application stage to advise them regarding GCU’s support</p> <p>Transition support into and through GCU available to all CEYP</p>	<p>Named contact/ Admissions/Student Life/People Services/Strategy and Planning (data provision)/Outreach team</p>	<p>On-going throughout each academic year</p>	<p>Increased numbers of CE students self-disclosing at pre stage, application and throughout their course</p>
<p>2. Ensure lines of communication are open</p>	<p>Students contacted at application stage, offer stage and on entry</p> <p>Use of Twitter @GCUCares</p> <p>CEYP students have a named contact</p>	<p>Contact prospective CEYP students at point of offer</p>	<p>Named contact</p>	<p>On-going each academic year</p>	<p>Increased numbers of CE students engaged pre- and post-entry</p>

	<p>Invited to face-to-face meeting before commencing studies</p> <p>Students are allocated a staff mentor if they choose to access one. This can occur at any point in their learner journey.</p> <p>Students' Association communications and dedicated Care-Experienced Student Officer engagement</p>				
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Duty 3: to promote the interests of looked after children and care leavers

Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
1. Involve CEYP in Corporate Parenting	Liaison with named representative within Student Association CEYP consulted on CP planning	Embed and promote the Students' Association's Care-Experienced Student Group	Named contact/ Care-Experienced Student Officer/ Student Association	In place for session 2019/20	Care-Experienced Representation Group established in the Students' Association. First Care-Experienced Student Officer in post in September 2019
2. Raise staff/student awareness of the issues and problems faced by CEYP	Corporate Parenting training delivered by WC to senior managers (April 2016). The Named Contact offers CP training sessions for staff CPD with CE student input GCU is contributing to a national Corporate Parenting training module to be rolled out across the sector	Communication plan in place to inform staff and students about CP and CEYP Roll out training module to student-facing staff and new staff once finalised	Head of Outreach/People Services/ Named Contact/ Line Managers	Plan in place for 2019-20	Staff training sessions delivered e.g. with LDCs and management groups. Cross university Corporate Parenting sessions delivered to mark Care Day on 21 st February 2020
3. Help CEYP access GCU	New contextualised admissions policy published in 2019 which assesses CE applicants against Minimum Entry Requirements	Contextualised admissions working group to take forward sector recommendations Review and assess impact of policy 18/19 & 19/20 intakes	Admissions Team	In place for 2019-20	Implemented for September 2020 entrants
	The named contact can help advise prospective students as early as S3 e.g. with education planning, taster visits, subject shadowing or their application to GCU	Annual campaign to schools and relevant organisations Develop bitesize version of CP plan Evaluate impact of CEYP outreach activities	Named contact	In place for 2019-20	

Duty 3: to promote the interests of looked after children and care leavers (continued)					
Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
4. Provide appropriate support to our CEYP	Signpost student to relevant support from the range of welfare and wellbeing services, available to all GCU students, pre-induction, induction and during studies e.g. GCU's Student Wellbeing Team: Mental Health Adviser, Student Wellbeing Adviser, counselling and disability support	Encourage students to meet named contact at pre-entry stage, to forge introductions with key services including Student Wellbeing Adviser, Personal tutors, Programme leader as requested	Named contact/ Student Wellbeing team	On-going	Increased numbers of CE students engaging with Named Contact/ engaging with personal tutors with or without disclosing
	Provide CEYP students with priority financial assistance, accommodation, an invitation to apply for the Common Good scholarship, a bursary to cover graduation robe hire, and promoting travel opportunities and scholarships	Funding opportunities advertised to eligible (NB *) students at point of offer and before entry to GCU	Student enquiries, advice and events team / Named contact	On-going	Increased numbers of CE scholarship recipients
	The Students' Association Advice Centre offers independent advice and guidance and support on personal and academic issues	University to continue to work in partnership with SA and SA CEYP group to further enhance the student experience	GCU Students' Association	On-going	

*To access this support a CEYP is defined as someone under the age of 26 on the first day of study, who has been looked after, accommodated or fostered:

1 for a period of six months or more at school age until the sixteenth birthday 2 or at least three months from the age of sixteen

This may have been through a local authority, a voluntary or private organisation or social work support at home or in kinship care. To confirm this status we will require verification from the relevant body or local authority.

Duty 3: to promote the interests of looked after children and care leavers (continued)

Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
<p>5. Provide appropriate support to our CEYP</p>	<p>Free, self-catering, accommodation awarded on a needs basis to care experienced students in the University's halls of residence. Accommodation is offered for up to two years and can be provided for 365 days a year (NB *)</p> <p>Additional partnership with Unite Foundation that supports care-experienced and estranged students with free 365-day accommodation for up to three years in Unite halls of residence.</p>	<p>Advertise Unite Foundation scholarships widely at pre-entry stage and to eligible continuing students</p>	<p>Accommodation Office/ Named contact</p>	<p>Applications received by May ahead of September entry annually</p>	<p>Increased number of CE students supported with free accommodation provided by GCU or the Unite Foundation</p>
	<p>CEYP are able to access advice from the Named Contact before commencing and during their studies</p> <p>Staff to student mentoring programme for CEYP to provide additional support. Staff mentor meets student post-registration to commence relationship early</p>	<p>Recruit and train GCU staff each year to act as mentors</p> <p>Commence a support group for staff mentors</p> <p>Ensure students know who their personal tutor is, as well as other key contacts</p>	<p>GCU Outreach department/ Student Wellbeing Team / Staff mentors</p>	<p>Established 2018-19 and ongoing</p>	<p>Increased number of CE students supported with a staff mentor each year</p>

*To access this support a CEYP is defined as someone under the age of 26 on the first day of study, who has been looked after, accommodated or fostered:

1 for a period of six months or more at school age until the sixteenth birthday 2 or at least three months from the age of sixteen

This may have been through a local authority, a voluntary or private organisation or social work support at home or in kinship care. To confirm this status we will require verification from the relevant body or local authority. After the two-year period, GCU will be happy to provide support in finding alternative accommodation.

Duty 3: to promote the interests of looked after children and care leavers (continued)					
Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
6. Provide appropriate support to our CEYP	Each academic school has a Learning Development Centre . The centres provide students with support for their academic development in areas such as academic writing, study skills, time management and ICT Skills	<p>Include a meeting with the LDC to raise awareness of support and encourage engagement</p> <p>Build links between LDC and academic staff to support CEYP</p>	Learning Development Centres	On-going	
	<p>Four laptops available for long-term hire across the academic year specifically for care experienced students.</p> <p>One-to-one library support available by request</p>	Monitor and review uptake, investigate additional funding to increase provision	Library Services/ Named contact	September annually	Provision increased to six laptops for September 2020

Duty 4: to seek to provide care-experienced young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing

Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
1. Increase opportunities for CEYP – early intervention outreach	Partnership with Glasgow City Council programme, MCR Pathways. Support for senior pupils can include subject shadowing experiences and personal statement support. Annual taster day for S2 pupils programme to help raise aspirations and promote various career opportunities. GCU Academic Schools offer subject Talent Tasters at S3/4	Contribute to MCR Pathways staff and mentor training sessions Work with MCR Pathways to identify and support GCU applicants at pre-application stage	Named contact	October each year	Growing numbers of pupils attend taster experiences, shadowing and receive application support
	Outreach activities through GCU’s initiatives. <u>Caledonian Club</u> for pupils 3-18 and families in five Glasgow communities <u>School Connect</u> working with partner West of Scotland schools <u>College Connect</u> working with partner Scottish colleges <u>Routes for All</u> with partner Glasgow FOCUS West schools <u>Advanced Higher Hub</u> working with partner Glasgow City council schools to offer Advanced Higher study to pupils	Work with partners to enhance provision for CEYP	Outreach Department	On-going	
	Information, advice and guidance on options, choices and courses available to CEYP from S3. Wide distribution of support advertised online and through activities		Named contact	On-going	

Duty 4: to seek to provide care-experienced young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing (continued)

Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
<p>2. Opportunity to engage with and give back to GCU community through paid outreach employment</p>	<p>Encourage students to participate in opportunities such as the Student Leaders Programme, clubs and societies or the new Common Good Award</p> <p>Guaranteed interview for Student Mentor position within GCU Outreach department</p>	<p>Share information about new opportunities with CEYP as and when they arise</p>	<p>Outreach Department</p>	<p>September annually</p>	<p>Increased numbers of employed CE student mentors</p>

Duty 5: to take appropriate actions to help those children and young people					
i) to access opportunities provided by the corporate parent					
ii) to make use of services, and access support, provided by the corporate parent					
Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
1. Advertise the support we offer to a wider audience to inform CEYP	Promote our support through the university and CP network Member of MCR Pathways' HE group to inform their mentors and pupils	Promote support at collaborative events to inform social workers, foster carers and residential staff on the support we can offer	Named contact	On-going	
2. Forge introductions with key contacts at GCU	As care experienced students apply we encourage a face-to-face meeting with named contact and other key staff Outline support available to all CEYP when they apply or contact GCU		Named contact	On-going	
3. Support care-experienced staff	Signpost identified staff to support services and encourage take-up of professional development opportunities through Named Contact and Line Managers	Implement opportunity for staff to disclose care experience Consult care-experienced staff to inform our Corporate Parenting Action Plan	Named Contact/ People Services/ Line Managers	In place for 2020-21	

Duty 6: to take any other action considered appropriate to improve the way the corporate parent exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people.					
Aim	Current Activity	Actions	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress
1. Continue to reappraise and evolve our support in collaboration with other CPs and CEYP	Corporate Parenting group within GCU established to stay abreast of best practice from across the sector and monitor progress Raise awareness throughout GCU through cross-institutional membership	Revise membership to include CEYP representative and include academic schools	CP Steering Group	On-going	Students' Association Care-Experienced Student Officer on Corporate Parenting Steering Group for 2019-20

Monitoring and review

GCU's Action Plan will be reviewed by its Corporate Parenting Steering Group (see Appendix A) each semester so we can consider impact of actions and to ensure we continue to deliver the best support for CEYP as we can. The strategy will be reviewed in April 2021. GCU's report to the SFC from the first three-year period covering 2015-2018 is available online.

Appendix A: Corporate Parenting Steering Group – Terms of Reference

The primary function of the Group is to oversee the development, implementation, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the University's Corporate Parenting Plan. It is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all aspects of GCU life take into account the needs of Care Experienced Young People (CEYP)
- Providing a forum for discussion, information sharing and cross institutional communication regarding GCU's corporate parenting actions and responsibilities
- Overseeing the regular monitoring, appraisal and reporting on the Corporate Parenting Plan
- Acting as a forum to support the sharing and dissemination of good practice in relation to CEYP across the University

Composition of the Group

The group will be chaired by the Head of GCU Outreach (Eleanor Wilson), with the following membership:

- School Connect Manager and Named Contact for CEYP *Rachel Hyslop*
- Student Wellbeing Manager *Avril Williams*
- Student Engagement, Enquiries and Advice Manager *Kirsty MacInnes*
- Widening Participation Managers from GSBS, SCEBE and SHLS, *Karen Ray, Yvonne Wayne and Joanna Marshall*
- Equality and Diversity Advisor *Adrian Lui*
- Admissions Team Lead (Undergraduate) *Catriona Robinson*
- Representative from Academic Quality and Development – *Karen Campbell*
- Representative from Accommodation Office *Lynn Ferrier*
- Representative from Governance *Deborah Donnet*
- Representative from Strategy and Planning *Susan Whittaker*
- Representative from the Students' Association
- Students' Association Care-Experienced Student Officer

The group will be clerked by the GCU Outreach Administrator.

The group will report to the Executive Board.

Appendix B: Care-Experienced Student Enrolments

CE student numbers have been markedly increasing in the last few years. Whilst we only have Corporate Parenting responsibility for those who are under 26 when they commence their studies; we are proud to recognise care experience in students of any ages.

Whilst we encourage self-disclosure, students have the choice whether to indicate care experience at application or registration stage. However, students can access additional support at any point, should they wish to identify.

**Please note that we are still verifying 2020 entrants so this number is not yet final.*

Year	26 and Over	Under 26	Total
2014-15	4	12	16
2015-16	3	13	16
2016-17	4	12	16
2017-18	6	13	19
2018-19	16	18	34
2019-20	23	11	34
2020-21	31*	53*	84*
Total	87	132	219

Appendix C: Equality Impact Assessment Form

1. DESCRIBE
1.1. Name of policy/strategy/decision
<i>Corporate Parenting Strategy</i>
1.2. Owner
<i>GCU Outreach, Directorate of Student Life</i>
1.3. Date
<i>26th May 2017</i>
1.4. Aims of policy/strategy/decision
<i>The Corporate Parenting (CP) Strategy presents the background and Corporate Parenting plan of actions, created to comply with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. This Act has named GCU, alongside all post-16 education providers, as Corporate Parents to Care-Experienced Young People and Care Leavers. Under this Act we are required to fulfil the six named duties. The plan outlines current provision and planned actions for staff and students to meet these requirements.</i>
<i>Compliance with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; and ensuring we are supporting care-experienced young people and care leavers appropriately.</i>
1.5. Who does the policy/strategy/decision affect?
<i>Staff, students, applicants, visitors and all care-experienced young people and care leavers.</i>
1.6. Could there be any potential implications for equality, or people with protected characteristics?
<i>This policy aims to support the principles of Equality & Diversity, and ensure that students are not discriminated against. This applies to all aspects of the student experience, including applications and admissions. Our contextualised admissions policy takes the proactive approach of viewing care experienced students as a protected characteristic.</i>
<i>This policy applies to all care-experienced young people and care leavers, regardless of personal characteristics or circumstances.</i>

2. ASSESS

What are the implications, positive or negative (and evidence for this) of the policy/strategy/decision in relation to GCU's duty to have due regard to the need to:

2.1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation?

There is likely to be a positive impact on this duty as it will allow care-experienced young people and care leavers with additional support regarding their situation. For example, in addition to a named contact, GCU has in place specialist support to address specific challenges faced by CEYP such as poor mental health (i.e. Student Wellbeing/Mental Health Adviser), as well as wider support around disability (i.e. Disability Team and Faith and Belief Centre)

2.2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it?

There is likely to be a positive impact on this duty as the policy is based on flexibility for a group who could be viewed as at a disadvantage.

2.3. Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it?

There is likely to be a positive impact on this duty as the strategy includes raising awareness to staff and students to remove prejudice, thereby breaking down barriers.

3. ACTION

3.1. If a negative impact has been identified, how will this be addressed?

No negative impact is currently envisaged from the Corporate Parenting Strategy; however, once it is operationalised, the Corporate Parenting Group will monitor the implementation and application of actions to inform future appraisal to the strategy.

There should be no direct negative impact on the protected characteristics, as this applies to all students and the principles of the strategy support equality and diversity. Although the strategy is free from discrimination, its application may allow scope for discrimination e.g. prejudices or attitudes of staff supporting their students. Therefore, a development need may arise for staff, mitigated by appropriate information sharing to staff through a communications plan and training opportunities.

3.2. If changes have been made to the policy/strategy/decision as a result of this assessment, outline the changes

No changes.

4. MONITOR AND REVIEW

4.1. How will the implementation of the policy/strategy/decision and its impact on equality be monitored and reviewed?

This strategy will be reviewed by the Corporate Parenting Steering Group each semester so we can reappraise to deliver the best support for care-experienced young people and care leavers. The strategy will be reviewed in April 2018 and a monitoring report will be made available on the University's website in line with the Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014.

5. PUBLISH

Please email this completed form, along with the policy/strategy and any other relevant information³ to equality@gcu.ac.uk for publishing on the Equality and Diversity website and annual reporting in line with Equality Act 2010 requirements.

6. SIGN OFF

6.1. EIA Owner	Date
Rachel Hyslop	January 2020
6.2. Equality and Diversity Advisor	Date
Adrian Lui	January 2020

³ Information or evidence may be removed if it is commercially sensitive or personal information