Looked after Children & Care Leavers

Raising aspirations to Higher Education
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Raising Aspirations

• Only 6% of this group in England and 2% in Scotland are in Higher Education (2013) compared to approximately 40% of the general population

• Around 15% achieve 5 GCSE’s grade A*- C (70% across the general population)

• Lack of information about available support, possible options and low encouragement from advisers are key barriers to potential applicants
Who counts as being in/having been in Care?

There may be some differences between definitions of being in public care across the four UK countries

If unsure, applicants should check:

- in the Who Cares Trust HE Handbook for Care Leavers


- with Voices from Care Cymru (Wales) [http://www.voicesfromcarecymru.org.uk/](http://www.voicesfromcarecymru.org.uk/)

- with Voices of Young People in Care (NI) [http://www.voypic.org/](http://www.voypic.org/)

- with Care teams at HE providers they are interested in
Recent UCAS application statistics

**REMEMBER:** currently many applicants **do not** tick the box in Apply to identify that they have experience of being in public care; others tick the box **incorrectly.** These statistics may reflect this...

- In 2013, of the 561,985 UK domiciled applicants, only 4,925 ticked the box to indicate that they were in or had been in care.

- In 2013, of the 433,610 UK domiciled applicants placed with a HE provider, 3,085 had ticked the box.

- In 2013, 3/4 of UK domiciled applicants who ticked the box and were placed with a HE provider, were placed with their firm choice (preferred) provider.

In the 2013 cycle of those UK domiciled applicants who ticked the box and were placed, 83% were placed in the main scheme; and 14% were accepted through Clearing.
Financial support

This is often a major concern for prospective applicants

Where they can find out what is available for them:

- Links to the relevant funding agencies for England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man and to information for those applying from outside the UK can be found on the UCAS website http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/student-finance/undergraduate-student-finance#help

- The Care teams of the HE providers they are interested in (including for information on their scholarships, bursaries, waivers etc)

- The HE Handbook for Care Leavers

- Their Local Authority
Did you know?

- **Local Authorities** provide additional financial support to young people in care and care leavers who want to go to university.

- The amount and details differ between authorities but can cover tuition fees, accommodation costs and general grants.

- Travel costs to open days and interviews as well as support in HE holidays possibly covered.

- **Higher Education Providers** have dedicated people to provide information and support.

- Year round accommodation and/or summer storage is often available.

- Students can apply for further additional financial support and bursaries or be considered for waivers.

- Dedicated taster days and summer schools may be available.
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Why it’s important to ‘Tick the Box’

• HE Providers can appropriately contact and support applicants from an early stage in the application (they want to ensure applicants know what support is available. for them: it is then entirely up to the applicant if and when they choose to take advantage of this)

• Applicants can receive a dedicated named contact for queries at their chosen HE providers

• It will NOT negatively impact the application – equality legislation protects against discrimination (the information is treated in confidence and only those who need to know will be informed)
The UCAS Application – Additional Information

Have you been in care?
- Yes
- ?

Duration in care
If you have answered 'Yes' to the question above, please indicate the total length of time you have been in care*
- 3 years or more
- ?

Parental education
Do any of your parents, step-parents or guardians have any higher education qualifications, such as a degree, diploma or certificate of higher education?
- No
- ?

Occupational background*
If you are under 21, please give the job title of your parent, step-parent or guardian who earns the most. If she or he is retired or unemployed, give their most recent job title. If you are 21 or over, please give your own job title. Click 'find...' and enter the job title.
- Tool Making Engineer
- find...
- ?

I would like correspondence from Welsh universities, colleges and UCAS to be in Welsh
- Yes
- No
- ?

Section completed
- ?

Save Cancel
The UCAS Application – Help text

Care

• If you have spent any time living in public care as a looked after child, including: in local authority care and living with foster carers or in a children's home
• being 'looked after' at home under a home supervision order in Scotland...

please select Yes from the drop-down list. If you have not spent time in care, please select No. Please note this does not refer to time spent working in a care or healthcare setting or if you are or have been a carer for a relative.

Many universities and colleges have support available specifically for students who have previously been looked after or been in care. If you select Yes, universities and colleges will treat this information in confidence. They may use this information to ensure you receive all the resources and support you may be entitled to. They may contact you to inform you of this support and to discuss whether you want to access it.

The only people who are made aware of this declaration are those who are in a position to provide additional support or guidance that may be of benefit to you. The information may also be used for monitoring purposes that often seek to inform and improve support for students who have been looked after. The information is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act and your permission will be sought before the information is passed on to anyone else.

One aspect of this support might be additional financial support that colleges and universities may provide to students who have been in care, subject to eligibility criteria. Students previously looked after may also have access to pre-entry support, for example with the admissions process and events helping you in the transition to higher education, as well as priority access to all year-round accommodation and welfare services.
What else is happening at this time?

- Separation from family
- Access to personal info at 18
- No sense of belonging
- Choose foster care or independent living as young as 16
- Depression or behavioural problems from previous experiences
- Average of 3 foster placements
- Lack of self confidence
- May have been separated from siblings
- Wanting to find biological family
- Fear
Higher Education is not just for an elite few...

...it is an option for EVERYONE with the ability and determination to achieve to aspire to.

A university is a community of people, not a collection of buildings. The more diverse that community, the greater the opportunities to share and to learn from one another, to the potential benefit of all