



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Shetland

Corporate Parenting Plan

2021-2024

Introduction

Shetland UHI, as part of the University of the Highlands and Islands, is identified as a corporate parent under Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. At present, many looked after children and care leavers experience some of the poorest personal outcomes of any group in Scotland. Low levels of educational engagement and achievement feed into high levels of poverty, homelessness and poor mental health.

Barriers to education which care experienced young people face include lack of funding, disrupted schooling, an unstable home environment, and accessing further and higher education at a later age than their non-looked after peers.

Shetland UHI

Shetland UHI has been formed by the merging of three established institutes in Shetland: Shetland College, NAFC and Train Shetland. Shetland UHI is now the lead in tertiary education in Shetland and is committed to delivering quality education for learners across Shetland and beyond.

Shetland UHI offers a wide range of courses and subjects, from foundation level to degree programmes. Vocational training and apprenticeships are highly valued. Shetland UHI will strive to meet the needs of the people of Shetland, nationally and internationally, and achieve the best possible student experience, which includes any care experienced learners.

Building on our relationships with Shetland schools, communities and employers, Shetland UHI is excellently placed to support care experienced individuals achieve their educational ambitions.

Corporate Parenting Responsibilities

Corporate Parenting is defined by the Scottish Government 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.

(Scottish Government, August 2015)

As a Corporate Parent we will support every care leaver who is under the age of 26 (and was on their 16th birthday or at any subsequent time) but is no longer looked after by a local authority. It is our duty as a Corporate Parent to:

1. Be alert of issues which might adversely affect the wellbeing of the care experienced learner
2. Assess the needs of care experienced learners for services and support provided
3. Promote the interests of those care experienced learners and provide opportunities and activities designed to promote their wellbeing
4. Take action and support care experienced learners in accessing opportunities, making use of services and receiving support
5. Take action to improve and review our performance as a corporate parent

We are committed to widening access to further education in relation to supporting care leavers (only 4% of care leavers in Scotland go from school to university compared with 37% of all school leavers).

Our guiding principles

Care leavers can struggle on their journey into adulthood. Growing up, moving out and becoming independent often happens gradually with ongoing family support. Care leavers should expect nothing less. At Shetland College UHI we believe that it is important for us to:

- Recognise the vulnerability of care leavers and prioritise and reference them in policy documents
- Assume all care leavers are entitled to services, support and opportunities. This includes access to bursaries and grants (including Discretionary funds), learning support, support with housing and accommodation options and access to cultural and recreational opportunities
- Demonstrate to care leavers that they are encouraged, enabled and empowered especially with transitions into and out of learning
- Relax age restrictions especially in relation to supporting transitions
- Improve employment transition planning alongside public and third sector bodies
- Give priority to relationship-based practice support

Our commitment

We signed the Who Cares Pledge and we will be proactive in ensuring we deliver the best support that we can to our care experienced learners

Shetland UHI signed up to the Scottish Care Leavers' Covenant, which outlines a cross-sector approach to supporting and implementing Part 9, 10 and 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model is a national approach to supporting the wellbeing and outcomes of all children and young people and is at the source of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Where support cannot be met by family, the GIRFEC approach ensures that all of the child's needs are identified, appropriate support is available, and its accessibility is effective. The eight wellbeing indicators which form the basis of GIRFEC: safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, respected, responsible and included (SHANARRI); were taken into account when forming Shetland UHI's Corporate Parenting Plan and will be used to review and monitor the effective delivery of our duties.

There are five key duties of corporate parenting which are to be considered in all aspects of management and support of care experienced students. These are:

- **Be alert of issues which might adversely affect the wellbeing of the care experienced learner**
- **Assess the needs of care experienced learners for services and support provided**
- **Promote the interests of care experienced learners and provide activities and opportunities to promote their wellbeing**
- **Take action and support care experienced learners in accessing opportunities, making use of services and receiving support**
- **Take action to improve and review our performance as a corporate parent**

Reviewing and Publishing the Plan

Corporate Parents are required to report to Scottish Ministers every three years on how they are carrying out their responsibilities.

Systems are in place to monitor and analyse data in relation to trends in applications, retention and success of care experienced students.

A dashboard has been created within the UHI which allows the analysis of outcome trends down to course level. The data can also be broken down to protected characteristics which enables us to identify particular groups who may require more support.

This annual report is our baseline for measuring the progress of our Corporate Parenting Action Plan over time. Regular internal review and revision of our progress will ensure that we are successfully delivering on our plan.

Our Operations and Estates Committee is responsible for driving the implementation of the Corporate Parenting Plan and for reviewing progress. Progress will be reviewed by the committee on a regular basis. This will include an annual statistical report which will identify actions required for improvement.

This annual report will include consultation with care experienced students to ensure their views inform improvements to the support they receive. Every three years, prior to reporting to Scottish Ministers, our Operations and Estates Committee will report on the implementation of the Plan to the College's Academic Board and the Board of Shetland UHI.

Publishing the plan Our Corporate Parenting Plan will be published on our website to ensure it is openly accessible. It will be published alongside our main college publications and with the information that is currently available on support for all students. Alternative formats of the report will be made available, including a large print copy which will be made available in our libraries.

Shetland UHI Corporate Parenting Action Plan Specific Objectives

1. Be alert of issues which might adversely affect the wellbeing of the care experienced learner				
How will we achieve this?	Outcome to be achieved by	Lead responsibility	How will we evaluate our progress?	Expected Outcomes
Awareness Training (by training providers) to be made available to all College staff	Annually	Senior Management	Submission of training records Number of sessions delivered to staff Review discussions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At all stages in the process of change, what matters to children and families must be the focus. • Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive • support will be in place to ensure people involved in the care of care experienced children and young people feel valued, encouraged and have supportive relationships
Regular attendance at UHI Safeguarding and Care Leaver group	Ongoing	Student Support Team	Minutes of meetings Relevant actions shared in college communications. Decisions taken to Senior Management for approval.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At all stages in the process of change, what matters to children and families must be the focus. • Investment in the lives of children and families will be considered strategically and holistically in the context of their experiences. • All care experienced children, wherever they live, will be protected from violence and

				experience the safeguard of equal protection legislation.
All staff to undertake short Corporate Parenting training on Brightspace as part of induction	Ongoing	Management team	Training records Development policy Review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care experienced children and young people will receive all they need to thrive at college. There will be no barriers to their engagement with education and college will know and cherish their care experienced pupils.
Share the promising practice newsletter in our college and HISA newsletters	Ongoing	Student Support Team	Regular additions to the newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every child that is 'in care' in Scotland will have access to intensive support that ensures their educational and health needs are fully met.
Make staff time available to do local schemes such as MCR.	Ongoing	Management Team	Promotion of initiatives Sharing of information such as bulletins Minutes of staff meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each young care experienced adult will experience their transition as consistent, caring, integrated and focussed on their needs, not on 'age of services' criteria.

2. Assess the needs of care experienced learners for services and support provided

How will we achieve this?	Outcome to be achieved by	Lead responsibility	How will we evaluate our progress?	Expected Outcomes
<p>Establish support connections (including finance) with students who are care experienced learners at pre-entry stage when we have received the disclosure prior to enrolment.</p> <p>This will also happen when the person has decided to enrol.</p>	Ongoing	Operations Manager/Student Support Team	Annual learning and support evaluations from care experienced students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Ensure all care leavers are entitled to services, support and opportunities. ○ Care experienced students are aware of funding options ○ Care experienced students are empowered and form trusting relationships ○ Demonstrate to care leavers that they are encouraged, enabled and empowered especially with transitions into and out of learning
<p>We would draw up a coordinated plan tailored to the individual need, which may include a Personal Learning Support Plan.</p>	Ongoing	Student Support inc Learning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information gathered shared and discussed with Estates and Operations Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Give priority to relationship-based practice support ○ Clearer identification of emerging needs <p>Increase in retention and success rates for care leavers</p>
<p>Regular attendance at the local inter-agency Employability Working Group (EWG) and other relevant meetings/groups as identified</p>	Ongoing	Principal/Senior Management	<p>Information gathered shared and discussed with Estates and Operations Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Enhancement of support services for care experienced students

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of positive relationship with partners ○ Improved inter-agency working
Attendance at local Corporate Parenting Board	July 2021	Senior Management	Information gathered shared and discussed with Estates and Operations Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Enhancement of support services for care experienced students ○ Development of positive relationship with partners
University establishes baseline data and use the information to inform.	Ongoing	UHI Support Team/UHI Partner safeguarding group	Survey to become an annual survey that will help create a baseline from which evaluation can take place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Development of UHI wide policies and procedures to support care experienced learners
Shetland UHI should have a named person for students who are care experienced.	August 2021	Senior Management	Named person can develop links with other agencies and be named person to be the support for care experienced students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○

3. Promote the interests of care experienced learners and provide activities and opportunities to promote their wellbeing

How will we achieve this?	Outcome to be achieved by	Lead responsibility	How will we evaluate our progress?	Expected Outcomes
Encourage students to disclose at induction.	August 2021	Guidance	Reports from dashboard. Set baseline data and monitor from there.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Care experienced students are aware of support available

Link with named person.	August 2021	Student Support Officer	Statistical data shared and monitored with relevant committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved wellbeing for care experienced students, in terms of early intervention if required. ○ Care experienced students are empowered and form trusting relationships
Create improved internal processes whereby declarations can be made at any stage of the student journey	July 2021	Guidance / PATs	<p>Reports from Dashboard</p> <p>Statistical data shared and monitored with relevant committee</p>	More accurate recording of care experienced students/applicants
Ensure lecturing staff are aware of the additional support that can be provided by Shetland UHI to care experienced student.	On-going	Guidance	Monitor and review at 6-month meeting with lecturing staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Care experienced students are aware of support available ○ Improved wellbeing for care experienced students, in terms of early intervention if required.
Ensure information sharing and promotion of HISA activities specific to care experienced.	On-going	Student Engagement	Monitor & review as part of student journey with care experienced students, with annual reporting to Equalities Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhancement of support services for care experienced students ○ Improve wellbeing for care experienced students ○ Improved social connections and increased confidence for care leavers
Specific area on website detailing support for care experienced students.	August 2021	Student Engagement	Monitor & review as part of student journey with care experienced students, with annual reporting to Equalities Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved awareness of available support ○ Demonstrate to care leavers that they are encouraged, enabled and empowered especially with transitions into and out of learning

Promote new and established events run by Shetland UHI and partners.	Ongoing	Student Engagement	Record output student engagement planner Student engagement annual survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ○ Improved awareness of amongst student population of challenges facing care leavers
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4. Take action and support care experienced learners in accessing opportunities, making use of services and receiving support

How will we achieve this?	Outcome to be achieved by	Lead responsibility	How will we evaluate our progress?	Expected Outcomes
Monitor attendance and progression. Usually by PATs with any variances discussed with guidance. Include guidance/named person ensuring appropriate permissions in place.	Ongoing	Senior Lecturers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitor attendance records and initiate support if attendance or progression drops ○ Monitor & review as part of student journey ○ Report and discuss in appropriate Committee structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improved retention and progression of student ○ Early intervention and support ○ Improved support mechanisms implemented where necessary ○ Improved information for staff and students on support needs
Work closely with local partners to ensure care experienced students have access to appropriate accommodation 365 days a year	Ongoing	Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guidance records (funding support for accommodation) ○ Student journey records with care experienced students <p>Review meetings with Throughcare & Aftercare (SIC) and other relevant agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhancement of support services for care experienced students ○ Improved knowledge of actions that can be taken to support care experienced students ○ Improve wellbeing for care experienced students <p>Demonstrate to care leavers that they are encouraged, enabled, and empowered</p>

				especially with transitions into and out of learning
Provide academic and counselling support for care experienced students where necessary, ensuring care experienced students are signposted at pre-entry stage.	Ongoing	Counsellor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistical data of service usage by care experienced students recorded monitored and shared with relevant groups, committees, and agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care experienced students supported in asking for and receiving help in relation to their learning and wellbeing More accurate recording of care experienced students learning support needs and provision
Every Young Carer has the right to a Young Carer Statement. Carers over the age of 18 have the right to an Adult Care Support Plan	September 2023	Student Support Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Template will be delivered through the UHI SSG. Relevant students will be provided with a plan as befits their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Care experienced children and young people will be able to easily access child centred legal advice and representation.

5. Take action to improve and review our performance as a corporate parent

How will we achieve this?	Outcome to be achieved by	Lead responsibility	How will we evaluate our progress?	Expected Outcomes
Maintain strong links with local corporate parent strategic leads	Ongoing	Operations Manager/Senior Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Operations and Estates Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved collaboration and communications
Ensure Shetland UHI's Policies & Procedures to include care experienced students are considered	Ongoing	Senior Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to Operations and Estates Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the vulnerability of care leavers and prioritise and reference them in policy documents
Ensure we provide statutory reports in a timely matter.	As and when statutory reporting and	Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reports to senior management group and Operations and Estates Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to requirements in relation to Corporate Parenting

The UHI produce reports through the priority groups and will inform our practice. Have access to reports.	progress reports are due			
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