

Care Leavers and Looked After Children Policy

This policy is of relevance to students / staff / applicants

Version No.	1
Approved on	November 2014
Approved by	Operations Board
Written by	Student Affairs
Last Reviewed	June 2020
Date of last amendment	March 2017
Last Amendment	Major amendment: Information about the Access Bursary added, clarification about students progressing from UG to PG study and their eligibility to live at Sundial Court (the School's Halls of Residence)

Definition

The School defines a care leaver as a young person who has been in the care of a local authority for at least 13 weeks including at the time of their 16th birthday.

The School is committed to doing its best to ensure that students from all backgrounds feel able to apply and take up a place at the School. Students from a care background may face particular challenges in progressing to higher education so the School has put in place two contacts who can help care leavers navigate the application process and the start of their Higher Education experience (Student Funding Officer and Student Life Officer). This support will continue all the way through to graduation.

Confidentiality

All information provided by care leavers will be held in the strictest confidence, and only shared when required.

Applicants identifying themselves as care leavers on their application form who are subsequently offered a place will be required to confirm eligibility by providing a letter from their local authority. No additional information will be required about an applicant or their family.

Application Support

- Help with completing the application form.
- External and internal funding advice.
- Audition/Interview day: If students are attending on their own and would like support during any waiting times then either the SFO or SLO will try to make themselves available.
- Pre-enrolment Support (for applicants who have accepted a place at the School)

Financial Support from the School

The School has established an Access Bursary to assist UK undergraduate students who are not financially supported by their family with priority given for Care Leavers. The School also offers a range of scholarships for both maintenance and tuition fees in order to try and ensure that no student is prevented from taking up a place at the School because of financial hardship.

In order to be eligible for the Access Bursary, applicants and enrolled students who are care leavers should first apply for scholarship support through the School (this does not necessarily guarantee an award) and also apply for a full maintenance loan from their funding body. Scholarships and the Access Bursary have to be applied for on an annual basis. Please see the Access Bursary policy for further information and requirements.

When care leavers are offered and accept a place: They will be invited to meet with the SFO and SLO for help filling in the required forms to access funding, scholarship support, accommodation and for general assistance with pre-enrolment preparations. The enrolment requirements will be explained to ensure that they have all the required documents ready in good time for the start of term.

On-going support

- Enrolment Week: Students will be invited to events to help them settle in and ensure they make the most of their time at the School and access opportunities available to students. If needed the SFO or SLO will help these students prioritise their timetable during this week to balance the necessary with the 'extra curricula' activities provided.

Accommodation

Sundial Court Halls of Residence is owned and run by the School, offering accommodation to students from the start to the end of the academic year for the duration of their course. If requested, Student Affairs will liaise with the care leavers' respective local borough to ensure they have arranged alternative accommodation for them during the summer holidays. Care Leavers who chose to leave Sundial Court in their second year, could return in a subsequent year of undergraduate study subject to application. Care leavers continuing onto postgraduate study may be eligible for accommodation in Sundial Court, please see the Sundial Court Selection Process for eligibility and list of priorities.

- After enrolment week: The SFO and SLO will be available for regular meetings on request to address any concerns. Support from the SFO and SLO will be ongoing until you graduate and can be accessed at any time during the calendar year subject to School closure times.