

## College Outcome Agreement Guidance AY 2016-17

### Annex H: National ambition for care experienced students

1. This is a national ambition for SFC, the sectors and our partners for potential and existing students from a care experienced background. We use the term care experienced to include anyone who has been in care or from a looked after background, and young people in care. This includes people who have been in foster care, kinship care, and those who are looked after at home with a supervision requirement. This area of work contributes towards SG's DYW ambitions for those in or with a care experienced background – 'SG aim to increase the positive destinations for looked after children by 4% points per annum resulting in parity by 2021.

#### Why have we set this ambition?

2. Research evidences that those with a care experienced background are more likely:
  - To have lower attainment and poorer school attendance
  - To be excluded and/or leave school younger
  - To enter a negative post school destination.
3. Research by CELCIS, the Centre for Social Justice and others also outlines that they are also more likely to experience mental health problems, go to prison, and have the worst outcomes compared to children who have not been in care.
4. They are also least likely to leave school and progress to college or university. This is particularly the case for university. Currently, 4% of young people brought up in care go from school to University compared to 36% of young people not brought up in care. However, there are issues in relation to the

college sector too as those that do attend college are significantly less likely to complete their qualification than their peers. For both sectors, those with declared care experience are significantly more likely to also declare a disability. They are also more likely to be younger students.

5. In addition to the statistical evidence our stakeholders are very clear in their desire for us to be ambitious and set a national ambition for this group. We have already received very positive feedback on our direction of travel from Buttle UK, CELCIS, Who Cares? Scotland and MCR Pathways. This is summarised below.
  - Buttle UK feels that the national ambition creates a solid platform for the new legacy model.
  - CELCIS state that they support the setting of a national ambition by SFC (and partners). They feel it provides both the vision and leadership Scotland needs if it is to really deliver progress for care leavers.
  - Who Cares? Scotland agree with the approach and state that: "the poor educational outcomes that care experienced young people face have not changed for decades. Years of academic writing and legislation have not provided a solution. It is clear that in order to achieve real change, action must be taken." They also state that they wholeheartedly support the efforts of SFC to show leadership with this national ambition. They believe that it is precisely this kind of action that will give young people hope, self-belief and ultimately, lead to them beginning and completing a positive education journey.
  - MCR Pathways<sup>1</sup> state that they are very passionately of the view that there is no difference in the talents and potential of care experienced young people relative to any others, yet their education outcomes and life chances are drastically and unacceptably different. They welcome SFC's lead in setting a clear vision and the milestones towards achieving it.
6. We have set this national ambition to allow us to influence the statistics for this group and respond to the challenges outlined by our stakeholders. College or university education makes such a difference to the likely outcomes of someone with a care experience background. This national ambition will allow

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<sup>1</sup> MCR Pathways is a schools based mentoring programme to support and inspire young people disadvantaged through no fault of their own, to realise their full potential through education. Founded by Iain MacRitchie in 2007 and developed in one school in the East End of Glasgow over 5 years, the programme now supports 200 young people in 6 schools, with a Glasgow wide plan and national ambition. It is a pioneering cross institutional partnership of the MCR Foundation and Glasgow City Council with support from CELCIS and Strathclyde University. All are committed to positive change and radical improvement in the outcomes for disadvantaged young people especially those in or on the edges of the care system. The pathways created support effective and positive school transitions to higher education, further education, employment and re-engage those disillusioned. At the present time, SFC, University of Strathclyde and Glasgow Kelvin College are all partners of MCR Pathways.

us to improve the statistics for this group and to co-ordinate action and challenge ourselves to improve outcomes for people with care experience.

7. In addition to the statistical, legal, moral and social arguments to set an ambition, we also feel that this is the right time to support such an ambition as:
  - The Outcome Agreement process is more embedded
  - Our data sets are more developed in this area enabling us to collect statistics from AY 2013-14 which means we can evidence our achievements
  - The expectations of Corporate Parenting reporting which means that from April 2015 all colleges and universities need to evidence their commitments and outcomes for this group of students.

### **How will this national ambition work alongside the Buttle UK Quality Mark?**

8. The Buttle UK Quality Mark for Care Leavers will no longer be awarded to institutions in Scotland from July 2015<sup>2</sup>. Buttle UK have helped the sectors to make excellent progress, and we need to make sure that we embed and enhance the progress that has been made. This will be achieved through this national ambition.
9. To ensure further progress can be made we recognise that in conjunction with this ambition there needs to be access to a support network and a system that can assist colleges and universities to:
  - Develop their culture e.g. a positive environment in which to disclose your background and access support
  - Enhance and introduce systems e.g. admissions, student support etc
  - Support CPD that maximises the awareness of barriers faced by those with a care experience background and the role that everyone has to play in eliminating those barriers and maximising the outcome of successfully completing their qualification and securing a positive destination.
10. We are keen to support such a system that can work alongside this national ambition and we are working with specialist agencies to assist in the development of such a supportive system that can work as a legacy to the Buttle UK Quality Mark.

### **What are the ambitions and what will they achieve?**

11. Our vision is for there to be **no difference in the outcomes** of care experienced learners comparative to their peers. However, to achieve that vision we need to focus our ambitions over the next three years to bring us closer to achieving that.

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<sup>2</sup> In the rest of the UK, the Buttle UK Quality Mark finished in July 2014.

12. The ambitions outlined are national ones for Scotland. Longer term we are keen to consider developing institutional measures in the same way that we have institutional measures for deprivation and articulation but feel we need to focus on enhancing our data collections in this area and on supporting colleges and universities to enhance their declaration environments first before that can be achieved.
13. The ambitions are medium term up to AY 2018-19 with milestones set in the intervening years. These ambitions will be reviewed and updated as we near the completion date. At this stage we will also consider institutional measures. The ambitions are displayed in two ways below, once chronologically and once as a set of overall ambitions.

### **Ambition 1**

- To increase intake from 613 to 800 in the college sector (an increase of 31%) and from 266 to 400 in the university sector (an increase of 50%) by AY 2018-19. For AY 2016-17 we are aiming for an increase of 60 additional college students and 50 additional university students from a care experienced background.

### **Ambition 2a for colleges**

- To increase the FTHE numbers who successfully complete their course from 54% to 71% by 2018-19. For AY 2016-17 we are aiming for 60%. Please note that the current FTHE student numbers are small and as such these figures will be prone to fluctuation.
- To increase the FTFE numbers who successfully complete their course from 53% to 66% by 2018-19. For AY 2016-17 we are aiming for 57%.

### **Ambition 2b for universities**

- To increase the numbers (Scottish domiciled under-graduate) who progress to year 2 of their course. AY 2013-14 is the first time we have data so we do not know what the current retention rate is. This will be updated once the data is available but our expectation for AY 2018-19 is that retention should be within 5% of the sector average.

14. This means in 2015-16 our ambition was for:

- Each Outcome Agreement in every college region and university to state the numbers of care leavers and where under-represented make a commitment to increase intake
- Each Outcome Agreement states how it will support care leavers.

15. This means in 2016-17 our ambition is to:

- Increase intake from 266 in AY 2013-14 for Scottish domiciled under-graduate entrants in the University sector to 316
- Increase intake from 613 in AY 2013-14 in the College sector to 673
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 54% to 60%. The sector average is currently 71%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 53% to 57%. The sector average is currently 66%.

16. This means in 2017-18 our ambition is to:

- Increase intake from 316 for Scottish domiciled under-graduate entrants in the University sector to 366
- Increase intake from 673 in the College sector to 733
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 60% to within 66%. The sector average is currently 71%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 57% to 61%. The sector average is currently 66%.

17. This means in 2018-19 our ambition is to:

- Increase intake from 366 for Scottish domiciled under-graduate entrants in the University sector to 400
- Increase intake from 733 in the College sector to 800
- Increase the FTHE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 66% to 71%. The sector average is currently 71%.
- Increase the FTFE college numbers who successfully complete their course from 61% to 66%. The sector average is currently 66%.
- Retention to be within 5% of the university Scottish domiciled undergraduate sector average. The sector average is currently 91%

**What will we and our stakeholders do to assist the college and university sectors in achieving these national ambitions?**

18. We feel that these ambitions are achievable as they can be achieved three ways, by:

- Improved data quality
- Encouraging, fostering and supporting positive declaration environments and cultures. These processes should support multiple ways and opportunities to declare pre and during education. Please note that our vision is to support and encourage positive environments for people to disclose their care experienced

backgrounds. As a point of principle we would like to stress that **no student should ever feel that they have to disclose a care experienced background.**

- Increasing numbers – promoting the opportunities and benefits to potential students.

19. We also intend to increase the likelihood of us achieving these ambitions by:

- Proactively seeking Impact for Access fund applications in this area. Particularly in relation to:
  - Raising the aspirations and awareness of the range of college and university opportunities available for young care experienced people
  - Promoting a positive culture in which young people can and want to self-declare
  - developing a supportive student “peer/buddy” systems amongst the student cohort
- Considering changes to our (college based) student support funding to best support both emotionally and financially this group from the limited resources available
- Working and supporting others such as the Who Cares? Trust to provide accessible up to date information on what provision and what support is on offer
- Raising the profile of care experienced learners within our access policy work and our work with stakeholders
- Continuing to consider care experienced as a protected characteristic group and encourage others to do so
- Assisting in the development, collection and assessment of corporate parenting reports

### **What will our stakeholders do to increase the likelihood of us achieving these ambitions?**

20. We intend on seeking statements from our partners to outline how they will help us deliver these ambitions. Who Cares? Scotland and MCR Pathways have already responded to this request and have stated that as part of this national ambition they will do the following.

21. "Who Cares? Scotland will continue to speak up for and with care experienced young people and their right to access education. We will work to create a Scotland where care experienced young people are understood, positive about their care identity and given every opportunity to thrive.

We will continue to share our research and policy work widely and we will continue to share the better practice identified through our Corporate Parenting work with local authorities and those directly delivering care services."

28. MCR Pathways states that *“with SFC's determination to take on all forms of education inequality, we are convinced that we will build and sustain the many positive changes required to ensure that there are no differences in education outcomes. It is a privilege to have SFC as an MCR Pathways Pioneering partner and not only to be driving policy change but working directly with and mentoring the young people. The long term committed relationships being built will help transform the prospects for a generation of Scotland's care experienced young people and also give all corporate parents a way to demonstrate their commitment in practice.”*

### **How will we know we have achieved it?**

22. We intend on setting up a governance group to hold us to account for these ambitions and to help us achieve them. Invitations to become members of this group will be sent to representatives from (at least):
- SFC
  - Who Cares? Scotland
  - CELCIS
  - STAF
  - Colleges Scotland
  - Universities Scotland

We are also considering SAAS, Education Scotland, QAA and the Children's Information Commissioner.

23. The meeting dates of the group for the first year of the ambitions will correspond with:
- Post publication of the ambitions in our 2016-17 OA guidance - Sept/Oct 2015
  - The submission of OAs early 2016 to report on outcomes and reports from colleges and universities - Late Feb 2016
  - The Learning for All report, which includes care leavers statistics, which is due to be published in March 2016 – April 2016
24. There will be a final meeting to discuss the need to revise the ambitions or the approach, and progress on the ambitions will be reported to both our Access and Inclusion Committee in May 2016 and Council Board in June 2016.

### **Further information**

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