

Non-disclosable until cleared by Group

Care Experienced Governance Group Minute

The thirteenth meeting of the Care Experienced Governance Group (CEGG) was held on 28th November 2019 at Apex 1, 99 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh.

Present:

- Fiona Burns, SFC (Chair)
- Nick Stansfeld, SFC
- Chloe Dobson, Who Cares? Scotland
- Laurie Goldie, Who Cares? Scotland
- Lizzie Morton, CELCIS
- Lynne Currie, Universities Scotland
- Andrée Curruthers, CDN
- Lorna Jenkins, West Lothian College
- Jen McKenzie, Borders College
- Maggie Murphy, Glasgow Kelvin College
- Patricia Currie, Glasgow Kelvin College
- Dr Peter Tormey, Edinburgh Napier University & CEECEF
- James Dunphy, Robert Gordon University
- Chris Sojka, University of Aberdeen & North Forum
- Claire O'Hara, MCR Pathways
- Joanne Lawrie, SQA
- Lorna Caldwell, SAAS
- Lorraine Moore, Hub for S.U.C.C.E.S.S
- Scott Dunbar, City of Edinburgh Council
- Tony Scally, Action for Children
- Caroline Leburn, SFC
- Steve Riddell, SFC

Apologies:

- Dr Dan Keenan, University of Glasgow & CEESCW
- Sam Turner, Become Charity
- Karen McGuire, Skills Development Scotland
- Carolyn Younie, Scottish Government
- Monica Hoenigmann, Edinburgh College
- Thomas Timlin, Independent Care Review

Welcome

1. Introductions were made. The Chair welcomed Laurie Goldie, Lynne Currie, Joanne Lawrie, Scott Dunbar and Tony Scally to their first meeting of the Group.

Minutes from the last meeting (GG/19/Min 2)

2. The minutes were agreed as an accurate note.

Matters arising

3. The three actions from the last meeting were complete, including data on success rates of care-experienced students who are also carers, those with a disability, and those with a mental health condition which featured in GG/19/16. We will include this analysis in next year's care-experienced data.

Care experienced news update (GG/19/16)

4. Nick introduced this paper. The Group noted the College Leaver Destination (CLD) care-experienced 2017-18 data will feature in SFC's Report on Widening Access 2020. The data shows 93.5% of care-experienced qualifiers moved to a positive destination (further study/training or work) compared to the national figure of 95.4%. Encouragingly those CE students studying SCQF level 7+, or at HE level, then positive destinations percentage was 97.2% compared to national rate of 95.9%. There was a request for breakdown of positive destination by part-time and full-time study and by age. SFC will discuss this with analytical colleagues and if possible will seek to share this data in due course.

Action: SFC to share the additional CLD data, hopefully, before the next meeting.

Who Cares? Scotland Outcomes project (GG/19/17)

5. Chloe told us Who Cares? Scotland has been delivering collaborative training and education sessions involving numerous corporate parents together. The focus has been on corporate parenting responsibilities and careers support. Attendees asked for tangible actions they can take as responsible corporate parents so examples of good practice will be included in future sessions. We heard some corporate parents, like Skills Development Scotland, have two Corporate Parenting Plans; one internal which is an action plan, the other outward-facing aimed at CE people.
6. Who Cares? Scotland has been working on improved understanding of and access to employment opportunities following graduation. They have been targeting employers so they understand the barriers faced by those with care-experience and suggesting to organisations that they ring-fence jobs for CE.
7. We also heard of Who Cares? Scotland's work with the Edinburgh Champions Board who made an impressive presentation to City of Edinburgh Council recently articulating what it means to be care-experienced in a practical sense.

SAAS Care-Experienced Bursary data 2018-19 (GG/19/18)

8. Lorna presented this paper which said that 840 HE students successfully claimed the CE Student Bursary in 2018-19, 42% of whom were studying at college. This is a rise of almost 300 students from 2017-18. The institutions with the highest number of successful applicants were, in order: City of Glasgow College, UWS, University of Strathclyde, UHI and West College Scotland.

9. SAAS said that for next year they would include the previous year's data so trend analysis was possible. Also that they would include the split between those continuing students and new applicants, together with the number/proportion of unsuccessful applicants.
10. SAAS do a lot of raising awareness in schools where there is a targeted S5 and S6 programme. In 2020-21 they will also target pupils in S3 and S4 with the aim of raising attainment, the possibility of going to university. They are actively promoting a positive narrative around the importance of disclosing CE status. SAAS is also raising awareness with parents and carers. In a discussion later SAAS was asked to also include promotion of the FE CE bursary.
11. SAAS has been working with CELCIS and Who Cares? Scotland to improve evidence of CE. We heard that proving CE can be resource-intensive for local authorities which could be amplified further next year with the removal of the age cap.
12. SAAS has a data sharing agreement with the University of Edinburgh whereby if a UoE student applies successfully then they will be informed. CEGG agreed this was an excellent approach. The Group further agreed that it would be a step forward if something similar to a CE passport is created though this would require another data sharing agreement. A discussion about GDPR followed and it was agreed that it would be helpful to have some form of official guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office or suchlike at the next meeting.

Action: GDPR advice to be an agenda item at the next meeting.

13. There was a question about there not being a care-experienced tick-box on the Nursing/Midwifery SAAS bursary application. SAAS will look into this though it isn't straightforward due to GDPR (why collect CE data on the nursing application when SAAS don't do anything with it... except record numbers). The earliest for implementation, if it is possible, is AY 2021-22.

Care-Experienced Students Bursary: issues and good practice (GG/19/19)

14. The paper outlined the brief history of the bursary together with SFC FE funding guidance and some areas of good practice which included separate webpages on the bursary on an institution's website, and the offering of personalised financial advice. Lorraine outlined the issues raised from the Hub's feedback from care-experienced learners which appeared as Annex A of the paper.
15. We heard that with the bursary, students find themselves caught up in another process. Examples given include the proof of CE identity, the application and/or first payment delay, and if they don't receive full payment then this can impact their motivation levels. We heard some students can get 'lost in the system' for example if they are not attending their course the bursary can stop, but these students should have increased flexibility with regards to their attendance.

16. Continuing the absence theme SAAS confirmed the bursary is repaid from the point at which the student stops attending their course (HE). SAAS also confirmed that the maximum the HE bursary can be claimed is for 4 years plus 2 years. The FE bursary can be claimed for up to 3 years in 6 years, there are [additional allowances for extenuating circumstances](#) (para 7, pages 2-3).
17. We heard SFC is holding an attendance workshop in December with College FE Student Support teams. They will be discussing equity with those students on Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), and CE student considerations.
18. CEGG outlined that funding guidance is a technical document. We agreed that when decisions are made, particularly if the applicant might be disappointed, then the message must be communicated appropriately with thought and kindness.
19. We heard that best practice occurs when there is a close relationship between student support teams and funding teams, and where there is mutual trust and understanding with the student too. Examples were given at Ayrshire College and Glasgow Kelvin College. Also where there are good relationships with social workers and other third partner stakeholders like MCR Pathways and Action for Children. The HUB for SUCCESS was described as a 'game changer' by the City of Edinburgh Council.
20. CEGG agreed that more should be done to support the hard to reach groups within care-experienced. These include those who have left school before 16 years, those over 26 years, and those who are Looked-After at home who may not realise that they are care-experienced and entitled to increased funding and corporate parenting support. We spoke about how corporate parents should do more to promote access to opportunities.

Action for Children STAY project (GG/19/20)

21. Tony gave us an overview of the STAY project which involves tailored flexible care-experienced student support at the Glasgow colleges and West College Scotland. The aim of the project, currently a pilot, is improvement to retention and attainment rates. They do this by offering personalised support at any point during their course at the point of need. The support elements include a 'warm' introduction to the project which is a part of their admission and induction to the college, retention 1-1 support in all manner of interventions, and additional support into positive destinations like employment.
22. The project, where support is available 24/7, started in September 2019 but there has been some success. We heard they have helped 95 students, of which 22 have required intensive support. Their target this AY is supporting 150 care-experienced students a figure likely to be exceeded. At Glasgow Kelvin College the project team is co-located with the student learner team which is ideal.
23. We heard MCR Pathways refer their young people or former mentees to the STAY project if they are studying at one of the four colleges and in need of additional

support. They find the project reassuring as they know their young people in crisis will have access to additional intensive support.

24. There are talks of the project being expanded to Edinburgh College. There have been discussions involving the Principal and these could develop further in 2020.

Update from North, East and West Forums (GG/19/21)

25. Chris told us that the first meeting of the North Forum took place in October. The institutions involved are University of Aberdeen, RGU, North East Scotland College, UHI and SRUC. Inverness College and Moray College are likely to be involved in forthcoming meetings. The two Aberdeen local authorities are also members together with other stakeholders like Aspire North and Who Cares?. Similar to the other forums, North is also focussing on support to student carers and estranged students, and is also considering other groups like veterans.
26. The East Forum or CEECEF now has in excess of 40 members representing over 25 organisations including 15 colleges and universities. The aims of CEECEF include sharing of best practice, co-ordinating efforts to develop change e.g. contextualised admissions, institutional funding and bursaries, dedicated initiatives and student accommodation. We heard Edinburgh College has now scrapped graduation fees for care-experienced students; it is hoped others might follow. Institutions have also been updating their Corporate Parenting Plans.
27. The West Forum or CEESCW update was given by Maggie. Their membership includes 18 colleges and universities, with aims similar to the other Forums. West like to invite guest speakers to enhance their work; recent speakers include Carers Trust Scotland on Going Higher/Further award, SDS on their Young Talent Programme, OU on the Corporate Parenting e-module; and Kibble on their Care Leavers' Advisory Support Service (CLASS). There has also been work on strengthening partnerships to supporting articulation, and enhanced support to students who are in multiple disadvantaged groups (an intersectional approach), for example CE students who also have a disability.

College Development Network update

28. Andrée wanted to update CEGG on discussions from the college's Access and Inclusion/Guidance Steering Group meetings on the offering of more flexible provision for disadvantaged students. We heard that fully funded shorter learning opportunities might be better for those who have had a disrupted education. She is going to discuss further with SFC funding colleagues away from this meeting.

CEGG forward agenda (GG/19/22)

29. Agenda items for future discussion
 - GDPR advice and guidance on data sharing (March meeting)
 - HEI access thresholds and contextualised admissions (June meeting)

AOB

30. SFC is reviewing its Committee structures which include its WA policy areas. CEGG will be updated of any developments at the next meeting.
31. MCR Pathways reported they have now introduced their programme in Edinburgh (8 schools), West Dunbartonshire, South Lanarkshire, Clackmannanshire, North Ayrshire, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire which makes them supporting young people across 8 local authorities including Glasgow. They have also been reviewing their systems to build on good practice.
32. Universities Scotland reported that all universities in Scotland now offered guaranteed places for care-experienced learners who meet the new minimum entry requirements. The guarantee was launched at an event at GCU in July attended by care-experienced people and the First Minister. Lynne reported US were surveying HEIs on the promotion and monitoring of the guaranteed offer; they will share the results with CEGG at the next meeting.
Action: Universities Scotland to share the HEI survey results.
33. Following on, Who Cares? Scotland said that they were aware of instances where for interviews or auditions, in some case written applications that go to a department for consideration, that all of the applicant's characteristics were removed including if they are care-experienced which went against the spirit of the guaranteed offer. Institutions say it is to alleviate unconscious bias in the same way that other characteristics are removed. They pleaded that institutions take in the full context of a person's application.

Next meeting

34. The next meeting is 10.30-13.00, Thursday 26th March 2020, same venue.