

Care Experienced Students at University 2018-19

Introduction

1. This paper outlines the numbers of Care-Experienced (CE) students in the university¹ sector in AY 2018-19. The data presented in this paper is provided with the aim of helping the understanding and reporting of data of college enrolled CE students.
2. SFC has a deep commitment to improve the life chances of CE students. At the beginning of the calendar year we published our [National Ambition for Care-Experienced Students](#) with a vision of equal outcomes between CE students and their peers by 2030.
3. For clarity we ask our colleges and universities to use this definition for **care-experienced**:
Anyone who has been or is currently in care or from a looked-after background at any stage of their life, no matter how short. Care may have been provided in one of many different settings such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care² or looked after at home with a supervision requirement.
4. We have been collecting the data on CE students for 6 years, since AY 2013-14. During this time data collection and reporting has improved as we see more students self-declare their care-experienced background each year. This is because universities and colleges are creating safer environments for CE students to disclose their care identity. They have been raising awareness, promoting the interests, and making the support more visible for those who have had an experience of the care system.

University data 2018-19

5. Table 1 shows the numbers of CE undergraduate entrants in each year by university in the last four years of data, 2015-16 to 2018-19, of all domiciles. It also looks at Scottish-domiciled only in 2018-19 to show what proportion of entrants that cohort accounts for.
6. The data shows that the numbers of CE undergraduate continue to rise with 505 declared CE entrants, representing 0.7% of all university undergraduate entrants. The number of Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate entrants was 465 which represented 0.9% of all Scottish-domiciled entrants. All HEIs have reported at least one CE entrant in the last two years of data.

¹ University refers to Scotland's university sector or Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of which there are 19 altogether.

² Kinship care is when a child is looked after by their extended family or close friends if they cannot remain with their birth parents. This would involve some sort of involvement by the local authority (as opposed to private family arrangements).

Table 1: Care-Experienced Undergraduate Entrants by HE Institution 2015-16 to 2018-19, all domiciles, including Scottish-domiciled ones in 2018-19

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19		2018-19 Scottish-domiciled only	
Aberdeen, University of	15	30	15	30	1.1%	25	1.6%
Abertay Dundee, University of	*	*	5	10	0.7%	10	0.8%
Dundee, University of	0	0	25	10	0.2%	5	0.3%
Edinburgh Napier University	15	20	25	65	1.7%	65	2.1%
Edinburgh, University of	15	10	15	15	0.2%	5	0.3%
Glasgow Caledonian University	15	15	20	35	0.7%	35	0.7%
Glasgow School of Art	0	0	*	*	0.4%	*	0.8%
Glasgow, University of	20	25	20	30	0.4%	30	0.6%
Heriot-Watt University	*	5	10	20	0.8%	15	0.9%
Highlands & Islands, University of the	35	55	50	50	1.3%	50	1.3%
Open University in Scotland	35	45	45	35	0.5%	35	0.5%
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	10	5	10	15	0.9%	10	1.1%
Robert Gordon University	15	20	20	20	0.7%	20	0.9%
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	*	0	*	*	0.4%	*	0.8%
Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)	*	5	5	*	0.2%	*	0.2%
St Andrews, University of	10	*	5	20	0.6%	15	1.4%
Stirling, University of	40	40	55	65	2.2%	55	2.8%
Strathclyde, University of	15	15	25	20	0.5%	20	0.6%
West of Scotland, University of the	35	40	55	60	0.9%	55	1.0%
Total	280	335	410	505	0.7%	465	0.9%

* Undergraduate is defined as First Degree and all other sub-degree provision unless stated. This differs from definitions used elsewhere in the Report on Widening Access and the Outcome Agreement Process, where First Degree and HN-level provision only are classed as Undergraduate

* All figures in this report have been rounded to the nearest 5. Rows or column totals are rounded independently. The asterisk indicates the number of CE students is lower than 5.

* The proportion of all CE entrants has gone from 0.4% in 2015-16 to 0.5% in 2016-17 to 0.6% in 2017-18.

Level of Study

7. Table 2 shows the number of CE entrants at university by level of study over four years. Other undergraduate includes other HN-level provision. It shows that there was an increase of 80 CE entrants studying at degree level with a total number of 505 undergraduate CE students in 2018-19.

Table 2: CE Undergraduate Entrants by Level of Study (all domicile) 2015-16 to 2018-19

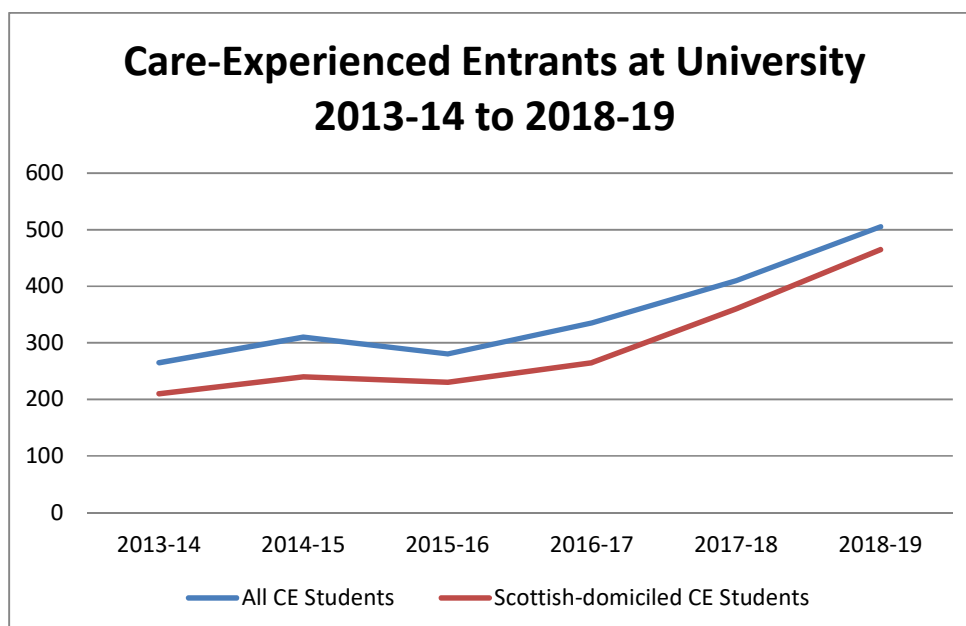
University Care-Experienced Entrants: All				
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
First Degree	210	250	335	415
Other UGRD	75	85	75	90
All	285	335	410	505

8. Table 3 shows the level of study split for Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate entrants at university for the past six years. There has been an increase of around 100 CE students each year in the last three years from 265 CE entrants in 2016-17 to 360 in 2017-18 to 465 in 2018-19. The numbers are in our National Ambition target for 2018-19. Table 1 shows the HEIs where the 465 Scottish-domiciled CE entrants are studying.

Table 3: Level of Study in University 2013-14 to 2018-19 for Scottish-domiciled CE Undergraduate entrants

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled						
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
First Degree	175	200	190	210	295	375
Other UGRD	35	40	40	55	65	90
All	210	240	230	265	360	465

9. The chart below illustrates the growing numbers of CE students in the university sector and the narrowing gap between Scottish-domiciled CE students and all CE students. There will always be a gap but a reduced gap indicates growing data quality and reflects the impact of the Commission on Widening Access final report with the development of contextualised and guaranteed offers.



Age

10. Table 4 shows the number of undergraduate Scottish-domiciled CE entrants by age group. All age categories have seen a steady rise in 2018-19. The largest group are those aged 25 and over (145 students) who represent 31.5% of the total. It is worth noting that undergraduate students up to the age of their 26th birthday in the first year of their course are eligible to claim the [SAAS Care-Experienced Students Bursary](#). This age cap is being removed from AY 2020-21.

Table 4: Scottish-domiciled CE Undergraduate Entrants by Age Group 2015-16 to 2018-19

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled					
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	
Age 16-17	40	30	50	70	15.2%
Age 18-19	105	100	115	140	30.4%
Age 20-24	55	75	75	105	22.8%
25 and over	90	130	120	145	31.5%
All	285	335	360	465	100%

Gender

11. Table 5 shows that during 2018-19 there is a relatively balanced gender split except in those 25 years and over where over three quarters are female. However, the overall the number of Scottish-domiciled CE male entrants is continuing to rise; 135 in 2017-18 to 175 in 2018-19.

Table 5: Scottish-domiciled Care-Experienced Undergraduate Entrants by Gender 2018-19

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled				
	Male	Female	Total	% Female
Age 16-17	30	40	70	57%
Age 18-19	55	80	140	57%
Age 20-24	50	55	105	52%
25 and over	35	110	145	76%
All	175	290	465	62%

Ethnicity

12. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) is widely recognised as an appropriate way to report and analyse ethnicity. Table 6 shows that during 2018-19 there were 60 Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate entrants from a BME background or approximately 13% of the care-experienced undergraduate entrants. The BME proportion rises to almost 16% when we look at the overall number of CE entrants (80 BME entrants out of 505 CE entrants). As a comparison the BME proportion for non-CE undergraduate entrants in 2018-19 was 11%.

Table 6: Care-Experienced Scottish-Domiciled Undergraduate Entrants by Age Group and Ethnic Group 2018-19

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled					
	White	BME	Not Known	All	% BME
Age 16-17	60	10	0	70	14%
Age 18-19	115	20	0	140	14%
Age 20-24	95	10	0	105	10%
25 and over	130	15	5	145	10%
All	400	60	5	465	13%

Subject Studied

13. In 2018-19 the most popular subject areas for Scottish-domiciled CE entrants were Social Studies, Subjects allied to Medicine which includes nursing, Biological Sciences and Business and Administrative studies. Combined these four subject areas account for 54% of the CE entrants total and have been the favoured subject areas for CE entrants in the last three years of data.
14. The subject area with the largest rise was Subjects allied to Medicine with a leap from 55 in 2017-18 to 70 in 2018-19. Engineering has been a subject area identified in the past where CE entrants may be under-represented but numbers increased from 15 in 2017-18 to 25 in 2018-19.

Table 7: Scottish-domiciled Care-Experienced Undergraduate Entrants by Subject Area 2018-19

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled			
Subject	CE Students	% All	% CE
Social studies	75	17.8%	1.8%
Subjects allied to Medicine	70	15.3%	0.9%
Biological Sciences	55	12.5%	1.1%
Business and Administrative studies	50	11.7%	0.8%
Education	35	5.6%	1.2%
Computer Sciences	30	4.7%	1.0%
Creative Arts and Design	25	7.0%	1.0%
Engineering	25	4.7%	0.8%
Law	15	5.0%	1.2%
Physical Sciences	15	2.5%	1.0%
Linguistics, Classics and related subjects	10	1.4%	1.1%
Architecture, Building and Planning	10	1.1%	0.9%
Historical and Philosophical studies	10	2.5%	0.8%
European Languages, Literature and related subjects	10	0.6%	0.4%
Mass Communications and Documentation	5	1.4%	1.0%
Mathematical and Computer Sciences	5	1.1%	0.8%
Medicine and Dentistry	5	1.7%	0.6%
Combined	5	1.1%	0.2%
Technologies	0	1.4%	0
Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects	0	0.6%	0
Languages	0	0.3%	0
All	465	100%	0.92%

Disability

15. Table 8 shows that at Scottish HEIs 25.8% of Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate entrants declared having a disability, compared to 14.4% of Scottish-domiciled undergraduate entrants who did not declare care-experience. This means that in 2018-19 CE entrants were 11.4 percentage points more likely to have a disability than non-care-experienced students. Similar to the college data, CE students were also more likely to declare specific learning difficulties like dyslexia or a mental health condition.

Table 8: Scottish-domiciled Undergraduate Care Experienced Entrants at University by Disability 2018-19

University Care-Experienced Entrants: Scottish-domiciled			Not CE students	
Disability	Number	%	Number	%
No known disability	345	74.2%	42,725	85.6%
A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	35	7.5%	2,295	4.6%
Mental health difficulties	35	7.5%	1,815	3.6%
Multiple disabilities	20	4.3%		1.7%
Social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder	10	2.2%	410	0.8%
Long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	10	2.2%	650	1.3%
Wheelchair user/have mobility difficulties	5	1.1%	185	0.4%
A disability not listed above	5	2.2%	755	1.1%
Deaf/have a hearing impairment	0	0.0%	170	1.5%
Blind/are partially sighted	0	0.0%	70	0.1%
Total	465	100%	49,920	100%

Continuation / Retention

- The Office for Students in its report [Differences in student outcomes: further characteristics](#) included the HESA data on UK-domiciled full-time undergraduate care-experienced entrants at English higher education institutions³ which was published on 4 June 2020.
- Table 9 shows the number of care-experienced entrants at English HEIs with the representation, and continuation or retention rate - the proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants progressing from their first to their second year. This Performance Indicator is accepted as the time when undergraduate students are more likely to drop out during any other point of their studies.

Table 9: Care-Experienced Entrants at English HEIs (UK domiciles) 2014-15 to 2017-18

	Number of CE entrants	CE % of all entrants	CE Continuation rate (%)	Not CE Continuation Rate (%)	Difference in continuation rates (pp)
2014-15	2,245	0.8%	84.9	92.4%	-7.5
2015-16	2,345	0.8%	86.0	92.4%	-6.4
2016-17	2,380	0.9%	86.4	92.5%	-6.1
2017-18	2,920	1.0%	86.7	92.3%	-5.6

* Office for Students/HESA: [Link to data source](#)

³ The number of HE providers in England included in the care-experience calculations varies between 119 and 122 providers depending on the year and outcome measure.

18. Table 10 shows the retention⁴ of Scottish-domiciled CE full-time undergraduate entrants at Scottish HEIs in the same format at the previous table. SFC National Ambition only includes Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate students. The target set for retention in 2018-19 is that the performance gap is within 5 percentage points of non-CE students. The data shows that in 2018-19 Scottish-domiciled CE students performed *better* than peers by 0.5 percentage points. However it must be noted that the CE retention % is based on relatively low numbers (259 Scottish-domiciled CE students moving from first to second year out of 285).

Table 10: Scottish-domiciled Care-Experienced Entrants at Scottish HEIs 2014-15 to 2018-19

	Number of CE entrants	CE % of all entrants	CE Retention rate (%)	Overall Retention%	Difference in retention rates (pp)
2014-15	240	0.6%	82.7%	90.5%	-7.8
2015-16	230	0.6%	84.3%	90.6%	-6.3
2016-17	265	0.7%	83.7%	91.0%	-7.3
2017-18	360	0.9%	85.6%	91.6%	-6.0
2018-19	465	0.9%	90.9%	90.4%	+0.5

19. Table 11 breaks down the CE student retention rate by Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) which is the Scottish Government’s official tool for identifying concentrations of deprivation in Scotland.

Table 11: Scottish-domiciled full-time CE Entrants by Deprivation Quintile 2018-19, and Retention by Deprivation Quintile 2017-18 for Scottish-domiciled, all domiciles, and comparison with Scottish-domiciled Non Care-Experienced Students

SIMD Quintile	S-D CE Enrolments	% CE in Quintile	Retention of S-D CE students	Retention of all CE students	Not-CE students
Unknown	25	2.7%	n/a	91.4%	91.3%
MD 0-20	105	1.4%	92.8%	86.2%	86.1%
MD 20-40	75	0.9%	88.6%	88.4%	88.4%
MD 40-60	100	1.0%	92.6%	90.3%	90.3%
MD 60-80	90	0.8%	88.1%	91.4%	91.4%
MD 80-100	65	0.5%	91.7%	93.4%	93.4%
Total	465	0.9%	90.9%	90.4%	90.4%

Attainment

20. The Office for Students report [Differences in student outcomes: further characteristics](#) also published the attainment of UK-domiciled full-time undergraduate care-experienced students at English higher education institutions. Table 12 shows the numbers of attainment of care-experienced qualifiers from 2016-17 to 2018-19. The data shows that CE students have lower rates of achieving a first or upper-second degree when compared to students who have not

⁴ Retention rates are effectively a year behind, for example the 2018-19 retention is the proportion of full-time only entrants from 2017-18 returning in 2018-19.

been in care. For qualifiers in 2018-19 the attainment of CE qualifiers was 12.1 percentage points lower than the attainment of students who have not been in care.

Table 12: Care-Experienced Entrants at English HEIs (UK domiciles) 2016-17 to 2018-19

	Care experienced			Not-Care-Experienced	
	CE Number of qualifiers	CE Number of first or upper second class degree	CE Attainment rate (%)	Not-CE Attainment Rate (%)	Difference in Attainment Rates (pp)
2016-17	855	590	68.9	79.0%	-10.0
2017-18	1,190	810	68.2	80.8%	-12.6
2018-19	1,350	920	68.2	80.3%	-12.1

21. Table 13 shows the attainment of Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate qualifiers at Scottish HEIs in the same format at the previous table. The data should be treated with caution due to the low numbers. In 2018-19 it shows CE qualifiers were 2.8 percentage points less likely to achieve a degree classification of 3rd or above (a pass) than non-CE qualifiers.

Table 13: Scottish-domiciled Care-Experienced Qualifiers at Scottish HEIs 2016-17 to 2018-19

	Care-Experienced Qualifiers: Scottish-domiciled			Not Care-Experienced	
	CE Number of qualifiers	CE Number of first or upper second class degree	CE Attainment rate (%)	Not-CE Attainment Rate (%)	Difference in Attainment Rates (pp)
2016-17	85	45	77.0%	70.0%	+7.0
2017-18	135	65	69.2%	70.5%	-1.3
2018-19	135	65	66.7%	69.5%	-2.8%

22. Finally Table 14 gives the full breakdown of the attainment of Scottish-domiciled CE undergraduate students in the last three years of data.

Table 14: Scottish-domiciled Care-Experienced Qualifiers at Scottish HEIs 2016-17 to 2018-19

	Care-Experienced Qualifiers: Scottish-domiciled					
	First Class Honours	Upper Second Class Honours	Lower Second Class Honours	Third Class Honours/Pass	Unclassified	Overall Attainment
2016-17	10.3%	39.1%	21.8%	5.7%	23.0%	77.0%
2017-18	7.5%	42.9%	15.0%	3.8%	30.8%	69.2%
2018-19	16.3%	33.3%	12.6%	4.4%	33.3%	66.7%

Further information

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