

A guide to support universities to build a safe and stable home for care experienced and estranged students, improving retention and attainment outcomes.

Care experienced and estranged students face multiple barriers to higher education. The gaps in their educational outcomes are stark. 13% of statutory care leavers are in university at 19 compared to 46% of their peers. Once at university, care experienced students are nearly twice as likely to drop out during their first year.

What are the outcomes gaps at your university?

Unite

Foundation

Blueprint for a #HomeAtUniversity.



Guaranteed safe and stable accommodation year-round, including summers.



A personal housing plan for each care experienced and estranged student.



Record keeping that allows you to know how care experienced and estranged students are progressing and achieving.



Remove the rent guarantor barrier.



Optional early check-in and additional support when first arriving.



Accommodation scholarships.

Visit unitefoundation.org.uk/blueprint to find #HomeAtUniversity examples from UK universities to fit your context. The Unite Foundation Blueprint can support your Care Leaver Covenant pledge and your holistic approach to supporting students through the NNECL Quality Mark.

The Unite Foundation

The [Unite Foundation](#) is a national charity providing care experienced and estranged students with a free, year-round #HomeAtUniversity. We work in close partnership with our founder and champion Unite Students.

Student outcomes

[Independent research](#) shows that scholarship students are as likely as their non-care experienced peers to complete their studies and attain a good degree. Our scholarship is currently the only intervention evidenced at Office for Students Tier 2 level to impact on progression, completion and attainment of care experienced students.

We believe that data drives learning and advocate for the routine availability of quality, visible data on care experienced and estranged student retention, progression and attainment.

Advocacy for policy change

Supporting universities to build a #HomeAtUniversity for care experienced and estranged students is rooted in a wider policy landscape. This includes central government recognition of these students' distinct needs, the statutory duties of local authorities towards care leavers, and the frameworks that shape student finance. We work in partnership across the sector to strengthen advocacy on these issues – amplifying the voices of those driving change and highlighting the pivotal role that a stable, supportive #HomeAtUniversity plays in student success.

How can the Unite Foundation help?



1

Free access for all care experienced and estranged students to [All of Us](#), the community for estranged and care experienced students across the UK, supported by the Unite Foundation.

2

Free online knowledge-sharing for higher education staff – sign up for Blueprint sessions and for the peer network for professionals supporting a local All of Us community.

3

Free case studies and other resources for each element of the Blueprint.

4

Free templates to support philanthropic fundraising for accommodation scholarships and bespoke support to set up and run your own scholarship.

Why build a safe and stable #HomeAtUniversity for care experienced and estranged students?

- Attract care experienced and estranged students to your institution.
- Improve student retention and attainment outcomes, improving students' lives.
- Strengthen your approach to widening participation and address actions within your APP.
- Contribute to your NNECL Quality Mark and Care Leaver Covenant pledge.
- Protect latter-year tuition fee income through retention.



Scan the QR code to find out more

