

Supporting students with care experience

What is care experience?

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. This care may have been provided in one of many different settings, such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care or looked after at home with a supervision requirement.

Find out what support is available to help students with care experience succeed at Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt University is committed to offering the opportunity for university study to students from a diverse range of backgrounds who have the potential to succeed. We recognise that students with care experience may face obstacles to university participation and success, and we are committed to supporting students with care experience from the pre-application stage to graduation and beyond.

Support for students with care experience

- **Applying to University:** Where possible, the University aims to make an offer to any care experienced applicant who meets the minimum entry requirements for the course to which they have applied.

When you apply you will be asked on your UCAS form to indicate if you have spent time in care by ticking a check-box on your application form. If you are care experienced, please tick this box when completing your UCAS application.

Students with care experience are also considered under Heriot-Watt University's Fair Access Policy.

- **The Active Student Programme:** During your time at Heriot-Watt you might want to de-stress by engaging in sport and exercise. The Active Student Programme is an option available to you to help you get started, where you are entitled to a free 12-week exercise programme with support from an exercise professional.

For more information regarding referral to this programme please email Emma Smail (Edinburgh Campus) or Gillian McLaughlin (Scottish Borders Campus), you can find their contact details under 'Who to contact'.

- **Accommodation:** The University guarantees to make an offer for accommodation to all eligible students in their first year of study. Please see our Accommodation guarantee ([bit.ly/HWaccommodationguarantee](https://www.hw.ac.uk/care-experience/accommodation-guarantee)) for full details. Students with care experience are also eligible for year-round access to University accommodation for the duration of their studies. Please contact us when you apply for accommodation so we can discuss the options available to you.
- **Get Ready for Success at HWU** is a three day event that takes place prior to Welcome Week. It is an opportunity for students to get a head start at university and develop key academic skills, and begin to explore the University and its resources. Contact studentsuccess@hw.ac.uk for more details.

- **Financial Support:** If you are care experienced, you can apply for the Heriot-Watt Access Bursary, which is worth £1,000 for each year of undergraduate study.

Students with care experience are eligible for support towards travel costs for each year of their undergraduate studies.

The Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) currently provide a Care Experienced Students Bursary. The Care Experienced Students Bursary is available to eligible full-time Scottish domiciled students undertaking an eligible undergraduate course. You can find more information and check your eligibility by visiting: bit.ly/SAAScareexperience

Other finance agencies also have support specifically for students with care experience. Make sure you check what you are entitled to.

- **Corporate Parenting:** We take our responsibility as a Corporate Parent seriously. You can find out what we have been doing and access our Corporate Parenting policy by visiting: bit.ly/HWcorporateparentplan

Who to contact

If you would like to speak to someone about applying or would like to arrange a visit to the University, please contact:

Pat Reid, Colleges and Wider Access Officer,
P.Reid@hw.ac.uk

If you are an enrolled student and would like to access support please contact:

Edinburgh Campus: Emma Smail, Student Wellbeing and Transition Advisor, E.Smail@hw.ac.uk

Scottish Borders Campus: Gillian McLaughlin, Student Advisor, G.McLaughlin@hw.ac.uk

More information on support

If you would like more information on the support Heriot-Watt currently provides for students with care experience, visit our webpage:

www.hw.ac.uk/care-experience

For more information on the support offered by care experience support organisations visit:

Who Cares? Scotland: whocares.scotland.org
Hub for Success: hubforsuccess.org