



Corporate Parenting Policy

June 2018

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HERIOT-WATT UNIVERSITY

Corporate Parenting Policy

CONTENT

Section		Page
1	Introduction	3
2	Purpose	3
3	Legal Definition	3
4	Scope	4
5	Lines of responsibility	5
6	Monitoring and Evaluation	5
7	Implementation	5
8	Related Policies, procedures and further reference	5
9	Further help and advice	6
10	Policy Version and History	6

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 ('the Act') requires public bodies, including a "post-16 education body", to act as a Corporate Parent to meet the needs of looked after young people between the ages of 16 and 25 years as defined in the Act.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Heriot-Watt University's responsibility as a Corporate Parent under the Act deliver improved outcomes for looked after children and young people.

3. LEGAL DEFINITION

Corporate Parenting is defined in the Act as: "the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working together to meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers".

The University is required to comply with the Statutory Guidance on Part 9 (Corporate Parenting) of the Act.

Corporate Parenting refers to "A public bodies' performance of actions necessary to promote and support the physical, emotional, spiritual, social and cognitive development of a looked after child or care leaver, from infancy through to adulthood."

Under section 58 the corporate parenting responsibilities are set out as:

- (1) It is the duty of every corporate parent, in so far as consistent with the proper exercise of its other functions -
 - (a) to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people to whom this Part applies,
 - (b) to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides,
 - (c) to promote the interests of those children and young people,
 - (d) to seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,
 - (e) to take such action as it considers appropriate to help those children and young people-
 - (i) to access opportunities it provides in pursuance of paragraph (d),
 - (ii) to make use of services, and access support, which it provides, and
 - (f) to take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people.

The University uses the following definitions:

Looked after - a child or young person who is looked after by a local authority, whether at home under a care order, in foster care, in local authority accommodation, or under kinship care, and including a young person in continuing care after the age of 16.

Care experienced - anyone who has been in the care of a local authority, whether away from home or in the home, will be considered to have a background in care, and therefore be eligible for support.

Care leaver - a person aged 25 or under who ceased to be looked after by a local authority on, or at any time after, their sixteenth birthday (Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014). All looked after children can become care leavers, including young people who were classified as looked after at home and in formal kinship care.

Heriot-Watt recognises that care leavers from outside Scotland will have faced similar difficulties and is committed to providing the same framework of support to all care-experienced students, no matter where a care leaver comes from.

4. SCOPE

The University considers that Corporate Parenting is not just a responsibility. It is also a real opportunity to improve the futures of looked after children and young people. The University will:

- Through the Contextual Admissions policy, provide opportunities for looked after children and young people to access Higher Education
- Ensure adequate resources for the recruitment and retention of looked after children and young people
- Ensure equitable access to support services and learning opportunities for looked after children and young people
- Assess the needs of looked after children and young people for the services and support it provides, and develops an individual support plan jointly with the young person
- Provide professional and flexible services to ensure the best possible outcomes in terms of progression and employability
- Be alert to matters which may adversely affect the wellbeing and outcomes for looked after children and young people
- Review each young person's support plan annually or as required

- Take such action as it considers appropriate to help looked after children and young people to make use of services, and access support services

The University will, in so far as reasonably practicable, collaborate with other corporate parents when exercising their corporate parenting responsibilities or any other functions related to this where they consider that doing so would safeguard or promote the wellbeing of the young people.

Such collaboration may, as required, include:

- Sharing information,
- Providing advice or assistance
- Co-ordinating activities (and seeking to prevent unnecessary duplication)
- Sharing responsibility for action
- Funding activities jointly
- Exercising functions jointly (for example, by publishing a joint plan or joint report)

5. LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY

The Secretary of the University has the lead responsibility for implementation of the Policy and Corporate Parenting Plan.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Secretary of the University will report on how the University has exercised its Corporate Parenting responsibilities, planning and collaborating functions in pursuance of the Act.

As mandated in the Act, the University will provide the Scottish Ministers with such information as they may reasonably require about how it is:

- Exercising its corporate parenting responsibilities
- Planning, collaborating or reporting in pursuance of the Act or otherwise exercising functions in relation to this
- Information which is required may, in particular, include information about standards of performance and the outcomes achieved

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The Policy will be implemented via the Corporate Parenting Plan.

8. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND FURTHER REFERENCE

Policies

Relevant student policies can be found on our website at www.hw.ac.uk/students/student-policies.htm

Further reference

The Scottish Governmnet website providers further reference at <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/looked-after-children/>

9. FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

Further help and guidance can be found on the Corpotate Parenting website at www.corporateparenting.org.uk/corporate-parenting/corporate-parents

10. POLICY VERSION AND HISTORY

Version No	Date of Approval	Approving Authority	Brief Description of Amendment
V. XX	xx.xx.xxxx	e.g. UE	(include a broad summary of changes and detail any policies that have been superceded by the new document)