

## Ayrshire College - Student Carers Action Plan 2019-2021

### Introduction

The Carers (Scotland) Act 2016 came into effect on 1st April 2018.<sup>1</sup> The Act extends and enhances the rights of carers. The legislation helps ensure better and more consistent support for both adult carers and young carers. Education and training for carers is one of the areas included under part 6 of the Act.

As of August 2018, there are an estimated 788,000 people in Scotland who have caring responsibilities. This includes 44,000 who are under the age of 18.

Ayrshire College aims to provide an inclusive learning environment that is responsive to the needs of all students. We recognise that many of our students have to deal with the demands of caring for a friend or relative whilst studying, and we are committed to removing barriers to learning for students who have caring responsibilities.

This Action Plan outlines the steps we will take from AY 2019-20 to AY 2020-21 to improve how we identify, support and report on the achievements of Student Carers at Ayrshire College.

### Principle 1: Identify

Carers are being proactively identified and awareness is being raised throughout the College

Key Action(s)	Responsible	Timescale	Outcomes	Progress to Date
Complete the pre-baseline survey for <i>Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award</i>	Student Carers Working Group	February 2020	Student Carers Working Group has a better understanding of Student Carer issues and current support provision.	Pre-baseline survey completed and confirmation email sent to Carers Trust Scotland.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/9/contents/enacted>

Establish Student Carers Working Group, ensuring representation from staff, students and external partners	Head of Student Experience	December 2019	<p>Group is in place to lead the development of policies, systems, processes and activities to support Student Carers.</p> <p>Support for Student Carers is more focused.</p> <p>Clear accountability.</p>	Student Carers Working Group set up in Jan 2020. Members include staff from across the College, the Student Association and representatives from local Carers Centres. The Group has two meetings before Covid 19 lockdown in March 2020.
Establish Student Carers Forum	Student Association	March 2021	<p>Student Carers have a collective voice in the College and can proactively contribute the development of systems and processes.</p> <p>Student Carers can access peer support.</p>	Student Carers Forum has been established.
Adopt and promote Carers Trust Scotland's definition of a Carer	Student Experience Coordinator	March 2020	Staff, students and external stakeholders have a shared understanding of the definition of Carer.	Carers Trust Scotland's definition of a Carer is available on the website and is included in the College's Student Carers Support Procedure.
Develop and promote a Statement of Intent for Student Carers	Student Experience Coordinator	March 2020	Staff, students and external stakeholders are aware of College's commitment to supporting Student Carers.	Statement of Intent developed and agreed. Available to staff and students through the

				Staff Intranet and website.
Ensure Student Carers are identified as a priority group in the College's Access and Inclusion Plan and Regional Outcome Agreement	Head of Student Experience	March 2020	The College's commitment to Student Carers is outlined at a strategic level.  Student Carers are identified as a priority group.  Clear accountability.	Student Carers are identified as a priority group in the Access and Inclusion Plan and Outcome Agreement.
Review existing pre-entry systems and processes and take steps to ensure that measures are in place to provide effective pre-entry support and positive transitions for Student Carers	Student Carers Working Group	June 2021	Transition processes are effective and Student Carers have adequate pre-entry support.  Support is in place for Student Carers as early as possible in their learner journey.	Dedicated Student Carers website page has been developed. Students have opportunity to declare Carer status through online application form. Robust internal processes ensure that all students who declare carer status are offered support as early as possible. College regularly staff attend transition meetings with schools and SDS.
Ensure systems and processes are in place to encourage and support students to declare their Carer status at any point in in their learner journey	Student Carers Working Group	June 2021	Student Carers have access to personalised and relevant support throughout their learner journey.	Dedicated Student Carers website page has been developed. Students can declare



supporting  
student carers in  
further education



				<p>Carer status at any point in learner journey including enrolment and interview stages. Student Experience and Business Intelligence and Information Systems Team analyse data and trends to improve internal systems and processes.</p>
<p>Ensure flexible processes are in place to allow Student Carers to declare and confirm their Carer status</p>	<p>Student Experience Coordinator</p>	<p>June 2021</p>	<p>Student Carers are encouraged to declare their Carer status.</p> <p>An increased number of Student Carers declare their Carer status.</p> <p>KPIs in relation to Student Carer numbers are more accurate.</p>	<p>The College has adopted the Carers Trust's definition of a Carer and has promoted this on the College website and in the Student Carers Support Procedure. Student Experience Team contact all students who declare their Carer status to offer support. Support is discussed with Curriculum Teams at Retention Meetings. Students no longer identified as Carers are unflagged on Unit-e.</p>

## Principle 2: Support

Carers are being supported to give them a fair chance to be successful in their studies

Key Action(s)	Responsible	Timescale	Outcomes	Progress to Date
Identify Named Staff Contacts for Student Carers	Head of Student Experience	In place since 2018	Student Carers know who to contact for information, advice and support.	Student Experience Team Leaders are Named Contacts for Student Carers on each campus.
Develop a Student Carers Policy and Student Carers Support Procedure.  Promote Student Carers Policy and Student Carers Support Procedure to staff, students and external partners.	Head of Student Experience and Student Association	June 2021	Staff, students and external partners are aware of the College's commitment to supporting Student Carers.  Student Carers are identified as a priority group.  Clear accountability.	Student Carers Support Procedure has been developed. Procedure has been shared with students and staff through the website, Staff Intranet and all staff and student emails.
Develop Student Carers Action Plan.  Carry out ongoing evaluation of the progress and impact of the Student Carers Action Plan.	Student Carers Working Group	March 2020  June 2021	Actions to review and develop systems and processes to support Student Carers are clearly detailed.  Clear accountability and timescales.  Progress is reviewed and shared with staff, students and external partners.	Student Carers Action Plan has been developed. Progress is monitored by Student Carers Working Group. Ongoing analysis of KPIs.  Feedback provided by Student Carers Forum

				and Student Association.
Review existing policies and ensure Student Carers are considered in the ongoing development of policies and procedures.	Head of Student Experience & Equality and Inclusion Advisor	June 2021	Impact on Student Carers is considered in the development of all policies and procedures.	Student Carers to be included as a priority category in EqIA Toolkit
Review and update existing publications and information for Student Carers and develop new resources as required to highlight support available.  Promote information to students, staff and external partners.	Student Experience Coordinator, Head of Marketing and Student Association	June 2021	Student Carers are aware of the support available.  Students are encouraged to declare their Carer status.  KPIs show an increase in the number of Student Carers who declare their Carer status.	Created a dedicated Student Carers page on website. Updated Welcome Book. Created Student Carers flyer. Information has been promoted through College plasma screens, email and Induction.
Create a dedicated website page for Student Carers.	Student Experience Coordinator	March 2020	Increased awareness of the support available for Student Carers.	Dedicated webpage created to highlight support available to Student Carers.
Organise and deliver a range of activities and events to support and recognise the achievements of Student Carers.	Student Carers Working Group and Student Association	June 2021	The contribution and achievements of Student Carers is acknowledged.  Student Carers feel welcomed and supported at Ayrshire College.	College event was planned to coincide with Carers Rights Day in Nov 2020. Event was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. Student Association has established an

			Staff and students across the College are more aware of Student Carers.	Student Carers Forum. Local Carers Centres have agreed to provide regular on campus information stall once Covid-19 restrictions allow.
Review and develop procedures for referring or signposting Student Carers to relevant support services.	Student Carers Working Group	June 2021	Student Carers have access to relevant and individualised support.	Robust internal referral processes are well established. Students can be referred to Student Services, Inclusive Learning, College Liaison Officers and Student Counselling. Excellent links with a wide range of external partner agencies. Students are referred and signposted to external organisations as appropriate.
Ensure Student Association has a key role in developing and evaluating systems and processes to support Student Carers.	Head of Student Experience and Student Association	June 2021	Student Carers are involved in developing systems and process.  Systems and processes to support Student Carers are relevant and reflect the experiences of students.	Student Association part of wider Student Experience Team. Student Association representation on student Carers Working Group and Promoting Wellbeing Group. Student

				Association has established a Student Carers Forum. Student Association's Partnership Agreement has been updated to include Student Carers.
Organise Student Carer training for staff including Senior Leadership Team.  Monitor completion of staff training and promote as required.	Head of Student Experience & Staff Learning & Development Advisor	January 2021	Staff have an increased awareness and understanding of how to effectively identify and support Student Carers.  Key members of staff across the College has completed training in relation to Student Carers.	Carers Trust Scotland delivered initial awareness raising presentation for ELT, SLT and Heads. CDN & Carers Trust Scotland e-learning course available to all staff through Staff Learning Portal. Course has been promoted through Staff Learning and Development Newsletter.



### Principle 3: Report

Student Carer progression is showcased and evaluation tools are used to celebrate achievements and make improvements

Key Action(s)	Responsible	Timescale	Outcomes	Progress to Date
<p>Monitor and analyse Student Carer KPIs.</p> <p>Ensure data is shared with staff and Student Association.</p> <p>Ensure KPI information is presented to College Leadership Team, VIEW Group and Promoting Wellbeing Group.</p>	<p>Student Carers Working Group &amp; Head of BIIS</p>	<p>Annually to June 2021</p>	<p>College staff have a clear understanding of KPIs in relation to Student Carers.</p> <p>Curriculum teams and cross-college groups can identify actions to improve support for Student Carers.</p>	<p>Student Carer Information is submitted to the SFC as part of the annual Further Education Statistics Return. Information is available to staff teams through Qlikview Dashboard. KPIs are analysed as part of the team evaluation process.</p>
<p>Outline support for Student Carers as a priority group in the College's Regional Outcome Agreement (ROA).</p>	<p>Student Carers Working Group</p>	<p>June 2021</p>	<p>The College outlines its commitment to supporting Student Carers.</p> <p>The College achieves the <i>Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award</i>.</p>	<p>Student Carers are identified as a priority group in ROA. Regular updates on ROA progress are provided to Regional Outcome Agreement Manager and Ayrshire College Board.</p>
<p>Ensure Supporting Student Carers Procedure and Student Carers Action Plan are shared with staff, students and external partners.</p>	<p>Student Carers Working Group &amp;</p>	<p>June 2021</p>	<p>Students, staff and external partners are aware of the college's commitment to Student Carers.</p>	<p>Supporting Student Carers Procedure emailed to all staff. Student Carers Action</p>

	Student Association		<p>Engagement with Student Carers and Carers organisations is enhanced.</p> <p>The College's reputation as an inclusive organisation is enhanced.</p>	<p>Plan emailed to SLT, Heads &amp; CMs for dissemination. Procedure and Action Plan shared with students through the Student Association. Procedure and Action Plan available on Student Carers webpage and Staff Intranet.</p>
<p>Evaluate remit and impact of Student Carers Working Group.</p> <p>Share information on impact of the work of the Group with staff and students.</p>	Head of Student Experience	Annually to June 2021	<p>The Student Carers Working Group remains relevant.</p> <p>Staff, students and external partners are aware of the impact of the Student Carers Working Group.</p>	
<p>Complete the post-baseline survey for <i>Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award</i>.</p>	Head of Student Experience	January 2021	<p>The College has an opportunity to reflect on the impact of working towards the <i>Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award</i>.</p> <p>Achievements and areas for improvement are identified.</p>	<p>Post-baseline survey completed. Email confirmation of completion sent to Carers Trust Scotland.</p>