



Pathways to Further and Higher Education For Care Experienced Young People 2024



Foreword

I am delighted to present the 2024 Pathways Guide for Further and Higher Education for looked after and care experienced young people.

This guide collates useful information to inform young people about opportunities in education and what they need to consider.

We have developed this document in partnership with a range of colleagues to promote fair access, progression and success in Further and Higher Education.

Many thanks to my colleagues Paul Cassidy, Community Outreach Officer, who co-ordinated and created this guide and to our media design placement student, Nicole McCart, who created the design.

Thanks to the contributors including:

- All Further and Higher Education providers across Northern Ireland
- All Higher Education and University College providers across Northern Ireland
- Careers Service NI
- Department of Education
- Health & Social Care Board
- Student Finance NI
- Fostering Network
- Include Youth
- VOYPIC - Voice of Young People in Care

Please note that at time of printing the information contained in this guide was correct but could be subject to change.

Best regards

Claire Mulrone
Head of Widening Access and Participation.



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About This Guide

Chapter One

This guide is written for professionals, carers and those supporting young people who are making choices about their future education and are considering Further and Higher Education. It is aimed at those who have an interest in promoting the well-being and educational attainment of young people in and leaving care in Northern Ireland.

The guide seeks to make explicit the roles and contributions of the various agencies that will be engaged in supporting a young person make plans for and access continued education. In particular it provides information on the various Colleges and Higher Education Institutions (CAFRE) in Northern Ireland and their particular arrangements for supporting looked after and care experienced young people. It also sets out, in an accessible, composite resource, information about pathways into continued education, the supports available, application routes and financial provision. It can be used as a reference guide by foster carers, guardians, kinship carers, social workers,

16+ advisers, careers advisors, and practitioners within the Further and Higher Education Institutions.

The guide is the product of collaborative working across Further Education Colleges, Higher Education Institutions, the Department of Employment and Learning, the Department of Education, Health and Social Care, Voice of Young people in Care and The Fostering Network in Northern Ireland. Supporting young people into Further or Higher Education requires the availability of up-to-date information in order to forward plan and to effectively assist young people to make informed choices. It is best that effective and timely planning takes place at the earliest possible stages. It is therefore hoped that this guide will make a helpful contribution to achieving this goal. Its development has been based on a shared commitment by the agencies involved to provide the highest standard of support to looked after and care experienced young people continuing in education through Further Education Colleges and Higher Educational Institutions.

Why Education?

"I owe a lot to my personal adviser. He believed in me and encouraged me when others just laughed at the notion of ambition. He guided and helped me apply. I'm really glad I'm here today meeting new friends and having some craic as well as studying!"

Ulster University Student

Education is a key driver towards achieving positive employment outcomes in adulthood. There remains a significant gap between the educational achievements of care leavers and their peers. This guide is a reference resource for those working with and supporting looked after and care experienced young people to help them maximise educational opportunities and attain economic independence in adult life through employment.

The guide provides current information on the support available to young people in and leaving care that plan to continue Further Educational studies in Northern Ireland primarily. All Further Education and Higher Education Institutions in Northern Ireland have contributed to the material contained in the guide and have set out the range of supports available.

Where a young person is seeking to undertake studies outside of Northern Ireland it is recommended that support staff and carers, in the first instance, establish the nature of supports available from the selected college or university. The guide contains a list of those that have acquired the Quality Mark (Buttle UK) in **Appendix 3** which is an indicator of additional support being made available to young people leaving care. **The support available and how it can be accessed should be well researched in advance as part of helping a young person to make choices and to prepare for his/her next educational steps. Support specifically available for young people leaving care should be fully maximised so that the young person benefits.**

Key Findings Indicate

There were 320 care leavers aged 16 to 18 in 2021/22

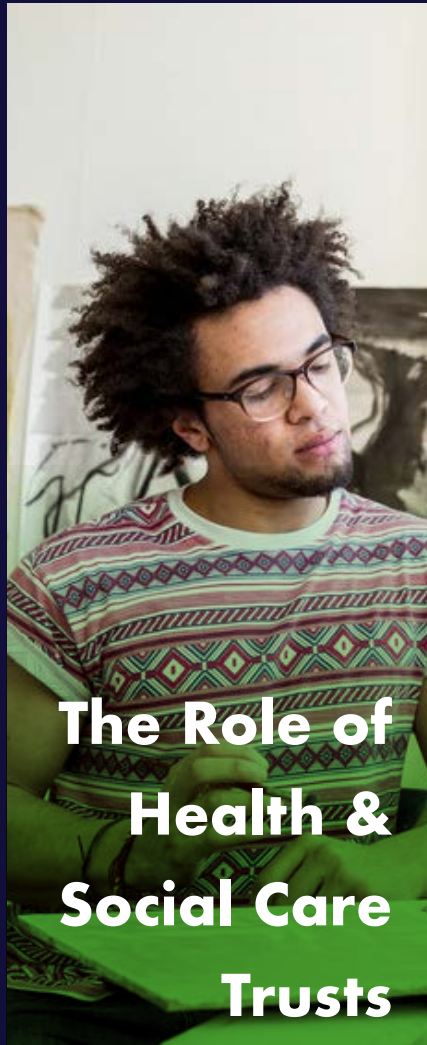
- Some two thirds (65%) of care leavers aged 16 to 18 had GCSEs or other qualifications at the time of leaving care. The proportion of care leavers who had 5 GCSEs A* - C or higher care was 33%.
- Care leavers continue to have a higher proportion of young people with a Statement of Educational Need (23%) compared with the general school population (5%).
- Of the care leavers aged 16 to 18 in 2020/21, for whom information was available, 75% were in full time or part time education, training, or employment. Some 14% were unemployed and 11% were economically inactive because of caring responsibilities or illness/disabilities.

There were 225 care leavers aged 19 in 2021/22

- Some 90% of care leavers aged 19 were in contact with Health and Social Care Trusts; with 65% in contact at least once a month.
- More than three quarters (79%) received some form of ongoing support from social services, including support for Higher Education and accommodation. Of the care leavers for whom information was available, 75% were in education, training or employment – an increase from the previous year.
- In terms of becoming a parent, 13% of care leavers aged 19 were parents, 18 young women and 8 young men.

Chapter Two

Corporate Parenting Responsibility



The Role of Health & Social Care Trusts

Helping children and young people in care to succeed in education, reach their potential and fulfil ambitions will make a major contribution to realising positive outcomes and to promoting their economic well-being in adult life.

The **Children (NI) Order 1995** is the primary legislative framework governing arrangements for children in care. It defines duties and powers of an authority/Health and Social Care Trust to children in care.

Under Article 26 of the Order, Health and Social Care Trusts have a duty to promote the welfare of children in care. This includes their educational achievement.

Under the new **Adoption + Children Act** (Northern Ireland), 2002 provides new duties to extend the age limit for support provided to specified care leavers who are still engaged in education + training from 2024 - 2025.

New provision will also: provide specified care leavers aged between 21+ 25 to pursue a new course of education or training; create a new duty for authorities, to provide specified care leavers between 21+ 25 with advice + support which has been assessed as appropriate; and require an authority to publish. **The Adoption + Children Bill** will introduce extended support to care leavers, and it's hoped the extended support will be introduced during 2024/2025.

The Pathway Plan which is a statutory requirement must be in place for Looked After Young People from aged 16 (post compulsory education) and includes a specific domain on Education, Training and Employment.

Together the PEPs and Pathway Plans focus on ensuring that children and young people in care and care leavers aged 16-21+ are fully supported to take full advantage of learning opportunities within education and throughout their care experience and beyond.

Target Population

The Guide is primarily focused on Care experienced young people aged 16-21+ years who have entitlement to the provisions of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002.

The Act defines these young people across four categories:



Eligible Young Person

A young person aged 16/17 who has been looked after by a Trust for a period of 13 weeks since the age of 14 and is still looked after.

Relevant Young Person

A young person aged 16/17 who has left care and before leaving care was an eligible young person.

Former Relevant Young Person

A young person aged 18-21 (or beyond if, being helped with education or training) who, before turning 18 was either an eligible or relevant young person, or both.

Qualifying Young Person

A young person aged under 21 who after reaching the age of 16, but whilst still under 18, was looked after by a Trust, accommodated in a voluntary children's home or privately fostered.

For each category specific duties and powers apply which are directed towards supporting the young person to make a positive transition from care and to achieve stability and economic independence in adult life.

The main provisions and entitlements as detailed in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002 are:

1

Each responsible Health and Social Care Trust has a duty to assess and meet the care and support needs of eligible, relevant and former relevant children;

2

The responsible Trust has a duty to keep in touch with all its care leavers who qualify under the Children (Leaving Care) Act;

3

All eligible, relevant and former relevant children must have a personal adviser;

4

The relevant Trust must maintain and accommodate relevant children;

5

The responsible Trust must assist a care leaver in full time Further or Higher Education with vacation accommodation where required;

6

The responsible Trust must assist a former relevant child with costs associated with employment to the extent that his or her welfare requires it;

7

The responsible Trust must assist with the costs of education and training up to the end of the agreed programme;

8

The responsible Trust must assist a former relevant child to the extent that his or her welfare requires it, either in kind or exceptionally in cash.

Role of Health and Social Care Trusts

In Northern Ireland there are five Health and Social Care Trusts who, under the Scheme for Delegated Authority, have the primary responsibility for discharging the duties and powers owed to looked after children and care leavers.

For the 16-21+ group of young people these responsibilities are fulfilled on behalf of a Trust through Family and Childcare 16 Plus Teams. These teams comprise of social workers and personal advisers who undertake the role of supporting young people in preparing for leaving care from age 16 through to after care up to age 21. The role continues beyond 21 where a young person is completing a course of education or a training programme.

The support provided includes:

- Provision of a named social worker/personal adviser to each young person.
- Completion of a holistic needs assessment for each young person at age 16. The assessment addresses a number of prescribed domains including education, training and employment.
- Completion of a Pathway Plan for each young person. Based on the needs assessment, the Plan sets out how needs will be met, future goals and the means and timescales for meeting needs and achieving goals. The Plan includes a specific domain on Education, Training and Employment and where such needs are identified should make explicit the emotional, practical, and financial supports to be provided.
- Arrangements for review of the Pathway Plan which must be undertaken on six monthly intervals or more frequently if required.

In order to effectively complete the needs assessment and fulfil aspects of the Pathway Plan, the social worker/personal adviser will, of necessity, engage with relevant others, for example, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive regarding future accommodation; the Careers Service to assist the young person with future career choices. Multi-agency working is a fundamental component of 16 Plus Transition Services given the range of needs that must be met for looked after children who are transitioning from care.

Establishing positive, constructive, and sustained working relationships between 16 Plus Services, Further Education Colleges and Higher Education Institutions is central to raising the aspirations of young people in care and to assisting them to engage in and maintain continued educational studies. It is therefore expected where a young person is pursuing educational studies that interface discussion will have taken place, involving the young person, student support services and 16 Plus staff or carers. These discussions should be aimed at helping the young person familiarise her/himself with the place of study, establish how best the young person can be supported to make a positive transition to Further or Higher Education, how any barriers can be overcome and any difficulties that might arise will be communicated and resolved in a timely way. An important aspect of preparing for Further or Higher Education is ascertaining the financial means available to a young person. It is the role of the young person's named worker, along with the young person and his/her carer, to set out a financial plan taking account of all sources of financial assistance that is available including the contribution from the Trust. This will make explicit costs, sources of income and assist the young person to understand budgeting implications and to be reassured of the financial resources available to undertake the chosen course of studies. Contact details for each Trust are in Appendix 1.

Chapter Three The DFE Careers Service in Northern Ireland

The Careers Service is here to help.

We provide an all-age, impartial, information, advice and guidance service, to help young people make informed choices about their future career paths.

Our professionally qualified careers advisers are based at Careers Offices + Jobs and Benefits Offices throughout Northern Ireland.

A positive first step is to make contact with the Careers Service



Phone

Call:
0300 200 7820
to speak to a Careers Adviser in your area.



Web

Visit the Careers Service website:
www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/careers
The site also carries extensive information on education, skills and training.



Email

Email a Careers Adviser at:
<https://skills.economy-ni.gov.uk/AskCareers/AskCareersForm>

Chat with a Careers Adviser online

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/chat-careers-adviser>

What is Career Guidance and Who Delivers it?

Careers guidance helps an individual consider their skills, qualifications, and experience, identify opportunities and develop achievable career plans. It can help you to analyse labour market trends and opportunities, make informed, appropriate and achievable decisions in relation to education, training and employment and help achieve personal career goals.

The Careers Service is committed to protecting any information you may share with us. If you would like further information about how your personal information is being processed, you can find it here:

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/privacy-notice-careers-service>

Northern Ireland's Further and Higher Education Sector

Going to college or university is a really exciting opportunity. It enables young people to study an area of interest in a university or college of choice, experience a new place and make a new network of friends. It is also an important step towards increasing independence, where young people have more freedom at college and university and more responsibility for themselves. Further Education provides opportunities to go on to Higher Education at university or even in Further Education colleges as well as pathways directly into employment or training programmes.



What Provisions do Colleges and Universities make for young people in Care?

The focus on the educational progression and attainment of young people from a care background has increased significantly in recent years with greater emphasis placed by Higher and Further Education Institutions on proactively engaging and supporting this cohort of young people.

The Buttle UK Quality Mark for Care Leavers has played a significant part in establishing principles and minimum standards which have shaped university and Further Education provision and support to young people in care.

All of the universities and many of the colleges in Northern Ireland previously attained the UK Buttle Quality Award which resulted in a structured, sustained approach to encourage and promote participation and uptake by care leavers.

Buttle UK ceased operation of the Quality Mark for care leavers in 2015, acknowledging that this cohort of young people were now recognised more properly and were being provided for within bespoke support and through the Widening Participation programmes.

Within Northern Ireland a culture and practice of supporting looked after and care experienced young people is well embedded across universities and Further Education Colleges. A continued focus and emphasis is maintained through the Widening Participation strategy (Department for the Economy) and associated Widening Access

Participation Plans and further strengthened through the forthcoming Programme for Government and through the Social Inclusion Project of the Further Education Strategy, Further Education Means Success.

This work is galvanised and supported through a multi-agency regional approach on "Pathways to Further and Higher Education for Care Experienced Young People". Information is provided by representatives from all colleges and universities in Northern Ireland, Department for the Economy, HSC Trusts, VOYPIC, The Fostering Network and Include Youth and is hosted and facilitated by The Department of Health's Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG).



Access to Success

A key strategic goal of the Department for the Economy is to widen participation in Higher Education among those groups which are currently under-represented including students from a care background.

Access to Success is the Department's regional strategy with a strong focus on the creation of a more accessible sector in which the people who are MOST ABLE but LEAST LIKELY to participate are given every encouragement and support to apply to, and to benefit from, Higher Education.

The Widening Participation Strategy requires each Higher Education Institution to produce a Widening Access and Participation Plan (WAPP) for Departmental approval. The WAPPs, produced and published annually in advance of the proposed fee year, includes a summary of the institution's widening participation strategy and the groups it is targeting for interventions, a review of its past achievement against regional benchmarks and a detailed programme of anticipated progress each year towards the institution's own targets.

ADDRESS:
Widening Participation Branch
Department for the Economy
Adelaide House
39-49 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8FD

PHONE:
028 9041 6716

EMAIL: Wideningparticipation@economy-ni.gov.uk

WEB: www.economy-ni.gov.uk



Colleges and Universities in Northern Ireland should at least aim to provide the following to looked after and care experienced young people as a minimum standard:

A named contact



Every college and university with the Quality Mark has someone who is there to support looked after children and care leavers, both during the application stage and throughout their course.

Money



Specific financial support for students who have been in care - this might be a bursary (money to help students during their course which they don't have to pay back), or advice about what extra funding they might be entitled to as a care leaver.

Accommodation



If students need help with where they are living while at college or university, there is someone they can speak to. At university they will offer accommodation for 365 days of the year to care leavers.

Support



Someone to talk to about any worries or problems. Many universities offer peer mentoring schemes.

Each college and university offers lots more support for students with a care experience. Many will offer support during the application process, as well as advice on how to manage finances during the course. Some also offer taster days and many universities will offer summer schools and other events to get young people thinking about university.

Tick the Box



It is important to remind young people when applying to university or Higher Education Institutions through UCAS or who are making an application to a Further Education College to Tick the Box which asks if he/she has been in care. This will enable universities, Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges to make contact

with the young person at the application stage so that they can provide more information about the support available to the young person. If the young person's application is made through UCAS, the young person should be encouraged to contact the University's dedicated advisor who will guide the young person through any application process. Similarly, the young person with the support of his/her worker or carer should be encouraged to make contact with the relevant FE college and dedicated contact within the college who is there to support the young person through the process.

Chapter Five

Further Education in Northern Ireland

There are six Further Education (FE) Colleges in Northern Ireland located across the region. Details of their location can be accessed through

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/contacts/further-education-fe-colleges>

Each is committed to the promotion of a caring, supportive environment, where students can work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect, so that every student can achieve their full potential. There is a range of services provided to support students including robust safeguarding arrangements.

What is Further Education?

If the young person is aged 16 or over, he or she could consider studying on either a full-time or part-time basis. The range of courses provided by colleges spans essential skills, a wide range of vocational and academic programmes and Higher Education programmes.

More and more students are choosing to go into Further Education and training to undertake an ever increasing range of courses, leading to accredited qualifications recognised in industry and by Higher Education Institutions. As well as the traditional A-level route, the choices available include:

Diplomas

Apprenticeships

Vocational Qualifications

Further Education Colleges are also important providers of Higher Education (HE) courses. The availability of Higher Education provision in local Further Education Colleges means that higher level courses are much more accessible for students throughout Northern Ireland. This work aims to develop distinctive learning programmes, respond to local demand, develop education and training in higher-level skills, widen participation, and increase the accessibility of Higher Education. Students can study a wide range of courses in various formats including Higher National Diplomas and Foundation degrees and full Honours degrees in Social Work.

What are the benefits of Further Education learning?



Employability



Increased self confidence



Enhanced communication, decision making and problem solving skills

Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland and Dedicated Specialists for Care Leavers

Belfast Metropolitan College



Belfast Met is committed to opportunity, choice and excellence in education provision. Provision for the support of care leavers and care experienced young people is integral to the college's widening participation strategy. The strategy aims to support care experienced young people by raising aspirations, by encouraging applications and by ensuring a comprehensive student support provision is available to help students with progression, retention and successful outcomes. We have in place a committed Student Wellbeing Team dedicated to ensuring that young people get a package of support tailored to their needs to be successful in their studies.

Dedicated Specialist for Belfast Met



Paula Irvine



028 9026 5108



**paulairvine
@belfastmet.ac.uk**

Northern Regional College



The **Northern Regional College** welcomes applications from those who are currently in the care system, or who have left it. We work closely with the Health and Social Care Trusts to ensure that any students in this situation have as much support as they want to assist them with their studies. All support packages are tailored to meet individual student needs. This support is monitored and re-assessed throughout the year by an allocated member of staff.

Dedicated Specialist for Northern Regional College



Fiona McDowell



07971824334



**fiona.mcdowell
@nrc.ac.uk**

North West Regional College



The **North West Regional College** welcomes students from all backgrounds. We are committed to supporting students who are care leavers or who are currently in care. We work closely with Health and Social Care Teams within the Trusts to support and offer impartial guidance to care leavers and young people in care who want to attend the North West Regional College (NWRC) and achieve a qualification.

Before a young person attends NWRC we will:

- Offer the young person and his/her Carer/Social Worker a visit to the college to view facilities.
- Help students access additional support services including counselling, learning support, financial advice and careers advice and guidance.
- Give a named contact to support the young person with the application process and throughout his/her time at the college.

Named contacts help facilitate the smooth referral and transition of young people who may be considering Further Education as an option. We encourage Social Workers, Personal Advisors and Employability Workers to meet the college student support team.

Dedicated Specialist for North West Regional College



Shannon Doherty



028 7127 8709



**shannon.doherty
@nwrc.ac.uk**

Southern Regional College



With a proud history of inclusion, the **Southern Regional College (SRC)** continues to ensure that the quality of care and support for looked after children and care leavers offer the best possible opportunities for them to enter and continue on programmes of study at the College and make their aspirations achievable. Southern Regional College demonstrates a robust widening participation strategy to ensure that students from a care background can access a package of support – financial, pastoral, and educational. The Southern Regional College recognises the challenges that young people leaving care face when entering a college environment and are committed to ensuring that we provide the support necessary to ensure they achieve their goals.

Dedicated Specialist for Southern Regional College



Raymond Mallon



028 3025 9677



mallonr@src.ac.uk

South Eastern Regional College



South Eastern Regional College (SERC) recognises that the challenges facing care experienced children and young people can be enormous as they become more independent. SERC welcomes applications from those with experience of the care sector and works closely with the Health and Social Care Trusts and other support organisations to ensure that appropriate and adequate practical support is available to facilitate learning and the achievement of qualifications. Such support for care experienced learners is designed to be as discreet as possible and is made available to complement and enhance the support provided by the teaching teams. In every case, SERC is committed to removing barriers so that care experienced students can focus on achieving their goals, preparing for the career of their choice while having an enjoyable and fulfilling time at College.

Dedicated Specialist for South Eastern Regional College



Paul Walsh



028 4461 1516



pwalsh@serc.ac.uk

South West College



The **South West College** is committed to ensuring that it provides a quality service and support to children in care and young care leavers. Learners have access to a dedicated Student Support team across the South West College including Personal Tutors, Pastoral Support, Financial Support, Learning Support and Careers. The college recognises that looked after children and care leavers are a particularly vulnerable group and is committed to ensuring that the quality of care and support it provides, at both the admission and enrolment stage, will enable them to enter and continue on their chosen career path.

Dedicated Specialist for South West College



Sharon Pritchard



084 5603 1881



**sharon.pritchard
@swrc.ac.uk**

How to Make an Application

Form

Download a form from the Forms and Guides section of

<https://www.eani.org.uk/help-available/further-education-grants/application-forms-and-leaflets>

Further Information

<https://www.eani.org.uk/fegrants>

Each Further Education College produces an annual prospectus which provides information on full-time and part-time courses and course entry requirements. It advises on details of course commencement dates and information about how to make an application which is normally made directly to the relevant college through its college admissions office.

Application forms can be accessed through the relevant college website.



Student Money Matters

There is a range of financial provisions available depending on the course of study, for example:

- Student Loans
- Student Grants
- Educational Maintenance Allowance
- Tuition Fees

Students do not have to pay fees if studying a Further Education (FE) course.

The course levels are:

Level 2 Diploma

Level 3 Diploma/Extended Diploma

Foundation Art & Design

NVQ Levels 1, 2 & 3

City & Guilds Level 3

NCTJ Level 3 Diploma in Journalism

If selecting to study a Higher Education (HE) course the payment of fees does apply in respect of:

OCR Level 4 Diploma in Administration (Business Professional)

Higher National Diploma (HND) & Foundation Degree

Support Available

Where tuition fees do apply as in Full-Time Higher Education (HE) Courses (e.g. HND or Foundation Degree) the Student Loan Company will provide a Tuition Fee Loan. Course Fees are listed in the course timetable provided. Education Authority (EA) grants include:

One : Education Maintenance Award (EMA)

If the young person is a UK resident and under 20 years old on 30 June 2024, he/she can apply for an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Depending on entitlements a young person could receive up to £30 per week plus 2 bonus payments of £100 per year, for coming to college.

Visit www.emani.gov.uk for further information.

Two : Bus Pass

UK Residents Only

If a student (on a full-time course) under 19 years of age on 1st July 2024 and lives more than 3 miles from the nearest College, he/she can apply for a Bus Pass.

Three : Free School Meal Allowances

If a student (on a full-time course) has not attained the age of 18 years before the 31st of July in the year the course commences and who fall into one of the prescribed categories, he/she can apply for free meals and a clothing allowance. Details and application forms are available from the Education Authority Regional Offices and Student Offices in local colleges.

Four : Further Education Grants

The Education Authority offers a limited number of Further Education Grants each year for full and part-time courses for students undertaking courses up to and including Level 3.

Are you aged 19 or over? Not sure how you will support yourself in College? Further Education Grants are available for full time and part time Level 1, 2 & 3 courses.

Contact our FE Grants team on 028 8225 4546 or by email to fegrants@eani.org.uk for advice on grants for living costs, fees & childcare costs.

Applications for 2024/25 academic session are now available.

Five : Hardship Fund

* A non-repayable means tested fund

The Colleges may provide help to students with evidence of financial hardship via the College Hardship Fund. UK Students who are aged 18+ may be eligible to get help with costs such as fees, maintenance, travel, accommodation, books, and materials.

An application form can be picked up from the College Students Service/ Support Offices.

Six : Childcare

Full-time students may be eligible for assistance with childcare costs. Applications can be made through the FE Awards or Hardship Fund. Details and application forms are available from the Education Authority Regional Offices and Student Support Offices in local colleges.

Applications can be made directly to: www.studentfinanceni.co.uk

Seven : Care to Learn

If you're a young parent over 16 and under 20 at the start of your study at an education college, the Care to Learn (NI) Scheme could help towards your childcare costs. You can apply for financial help if you expect to become a parent during your course.

To be eligible, you must during your course of study be or become:

The main carer of your child/children at least 16 years old under 20 years of age at the start of your course of study and meet residency requirements under the Education (Student Support) Regulations (Northern Ireland). Your local college can advise you on all these eligibility conditions.

Further Education (FE) Colleges

If you are under 16 and a parent studying at a Further Education (FE) college, the college will refer you to the Education Welfare Service of Education Authority.

If you become 20 years during your course of study, you may choose to stay on the scheme or to apply for help under the FE Support Funds (discretionary).

If you get or are eligible for childcare support from other sources, such as Tax Credits, Childcare Grant Support Funds or any other DFE or EU-funded programmes, you are not eligible for support under Care to Learn (NI) Scheme.

If you are expecting a baby during your course of study, you may apply to find out if you're eligible for support.

Eight : Additional Support Fund (ASF)

This fund is to help support those with learning difficulties or disabilities enrolling on Further Education provision. Support can be provided based on individual needs and can be either providing technical equipment or personal support. Those declaring a learning difficulty or disability will be assessed upon enrolment to determine the level and type of support required to participate in their course of study.

Colleges also receive funding to facilitate the provision of discrete classes specifically for students who, as a result of the nature or degree of their disability/learning difficulty, are unable to participate in mainstream provision. These classes would typically have fewer students and also permanent classroom assistants to provide the extra support needed.

Nine : Further Education Award Application

If applying for a FE course, please apply, using the FE Award Application and Assessment Form, to:

**Education Authority Further Education
Section 1
Hospital Road Omagh
Co. Tyrone BT79 0AW**

Ten : HSC Financial Support

In line with Trust responsibilities to support young people in education the responsible Trust is required to undertake a financial needs assessment with the young person well in advance of embarking on his/her course of study. The financial assessment should clearly set out the expenditure and associated costs that will be incurred and the sources of funding available that will enable the young person to embark on and sustain the course of study. The cost calculator should take account of accommodation/rent, living allowance for food, service charges relating to accommodation, clothing, equipment/materials necessary for study, travel, field trips that may be associated with the course etc.

Where sources of funding external to the Trust do not meet the full costs of studies, the Trust should make a grant payable to the young person to ensure that full costs are met and that there is no financial disincentive to the young person pursuing studies in Further Education. The Trust should maintain contact with the young person and have an understanding of the young person's ongoing progress. Student Support Services within the FE colleges are a primary source for young person and equally for staff and carers who are seeking to identify sources of financial and other forms of support for young people.

Such support should be maximised. Trusts should undertake to review the financial arrangements put in place for the young person on a regular basis.

Guidance on the Financial Arrangements to Support Looked After or Care Experienced Young People Undertaking Studies in Further Education Colleges 2023/2024

Central Applications Office Handbook

This CAO Handbook gives information on application and admission procedures only.
<http://www.cao.ie/index.php?page=downloads>
Application should not be made for any course without first consulting the information literature of the institution offering that course.

Studying in the Republic of Ireland

Applying to Study in the South of Ireland

Empowering People in Care (EPIC) is an independent association that works throughout the Republic of Ireland, with and for children and young people who are currently living in care or who have had an experience of living in care. This includes those in residential care, foster care, hostel, high support & special care. EPIC also works with young people preparing to leave care and in aftercare. If a young person is planning to study in the Republic of Ireland, it is recommended that contact is made with EPIC's advocacy advisors.
<http://www.epiconline.ie>

How to apply for an Undergraduate Course in Ireland

If a young person is applying to study in Ireland as an EU citizen, application for all undergraduate courses is through the Central Applications Office (CAO), unless otherwise stated. The CAO provides an application pack with a handbook, which lists all the courses on offer and information on how to apply to each one. Applications must be submitted online, which makes the process even easier.

Where does CAO operate from?

Address
Tower House,
Eglinton Street,
Galway

Phone
(091) 509800

Fax
(091) 562344

Website
www.cao.ie
Application may be made online on this website.

The CAO Application System operates from the CAO premises at:

Office Contact Times

Office:
09:00 - 13:00 & 14:00 - 17:00

Telephone:
09:00 - 13:00 & 14:00 - 17:00

Monday - Friday

Chapter SEVEN

College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE)



The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) has three campuses located at Enniskillen, Antrim (Greenmount) and Cookstown (Loughry). As Northern Ireland's specialist agri-food and land-based college, the college offers vocational courses and has specialist facilities to support the delivery of its courses. For those leaving school with GCSE or equivalent qualifications study Agriculture, Equine, Food, Horticulture, Land-based Engineering, Floristry and Veterinary Nursing courses.

If you are leaving school with A-level or equivalent qualifications you can study for Honours or Foundation Degree courses in Agriculture, Equine, Food and Horticulture. For information on courses follow this link: <https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-courses/>

CAFRE courses are designed to prepare young people for future employment. Lectures and tutorials are combined with practical sessions to allow application of learning to real situations. For information follow this link: <https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-courses/>

CAFRE offers a range of student support services including a Student Services Manager and Student Support Officers. For information on the services offered follow this link: <https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/>

"You are treated as an individual at CAFRE. Staff are friendly and approachable and make sure that you are supported both personally and academically to achieve your potential".

Dedicated Contact for CAFRE



Lesley-Anne Beacom



028 9442 6911



**Lesley-Anne.
Beacom@daera-
ni.gov.uk**

Accommodation



College of Agriculture,
Food & Rural Enterprise

Not all students live on campus, but those who do enjoy accommodation providing a friendly, caring environment, where you can mix with other students and enjoy cultural and sporting interests. We are committed to ensuring that your transition into college life is as smooth as possible. For details of accommodation follow this link:

<https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation/>

Financial Support at CAFRE

CAFRE is part of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and students enrolled on Further Education courses at CAFRE are eligible to apply for means tested funding through DAERA. Tuition fees for students on Further Education courses at CAFRE will be paid in full by DAERA.

Further Education Grants are administered by the Education Authority on behalf of DAERA. Students applying to study on a full-time or part-time Further Education course at CAFRE should therefore apply to the Education Authority for financial support. For details of support available follow this link: <https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-life/funding-support/further-education-funding-support/>

Applications from students who have been looked after by a Trust or Local Authority in foster or residential care may be eligible for financial support through a £1,000 Care Leavers Bursary paid annually, whilst studying at CAFRE. Student Support Officers will provide advice and arrange access to counselling, careers and study skills support if required whilst studying at CAFRE.

When studying for a Higher Education qualification you'll have two costs: tuition fees and living costs. For more information visit: <https://www.cafre.ac.uk/student-life/funding-support/>



Chapter SEVEN

Higher Education in Northern Ireland

Higher Education in Northern Ireland

Higher Education (HE) is where a young person can study at an advanced level normally after turning 18 years old. In Northern Ireland there are five Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Details of the specific institutions and respective locations can be sourced through

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/universities-and-colleges-northern-ireland>

<https://discoveruni.gov.uk/>

Discover Uni is the official source of information and guidance on Higher Education in the UK to help you decide whether, where and what to study.

Higher Education courses are usually studied at universities, university colleges and Further Education Regional Colleges. However, some courses can be studied at specialist colleges, for example, agriculture, horticulture, food, or equine studies.

Remember

If a young person does not think Higher Education is for him/her at the moment, it is not a problem, and it doesn't mean he/she won't be able to reapply at a later stage.

MEANS:
Continuing to study at a university, university college or FE Regional College to an even higher level.
STUDY FOR:
Masters Degree or PhD
(i.e. become a Dr of your chosen subject).

MEANS: Studying at a university, university college or Higher Education Institution or Further Education College.
STUDY FOR:
Degree, Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degree etc (full-time for two to three years, or part-time for up to five or six years).

MEANS: Studying at a sixth form or Further Education College.
STUDY FOR:
AS, A2, ACCESS COURSES, BTEC or Diploma (normally for two years).

MEANS: Secondary School up to 18 years old.
STUDY FOR: GCSEs, AS, A2.



What are the benefits of Higher Education?

Higher Education helps young people to develop qualities and skills that employers value. For this reason, a Higher Education qualification can lead to better jobs, a wider range of employment opportunities, a more rewarding career and increased earning potential.

Higher Education also allows people to experience a rich cultural and social scene, meet different people and study something that people are really interested in.

Higher Education Institutions

St Mary's University College




St Mary's University College welcomes applications from students who have been looked after by their Trust/local authority in foster or residential care. We offer a range of support for those leaving care or who have previously spent time in care.

This support includes financial help, assistance with accommodation, access to counselling, careers and study skills support and the advice and guidance of a dedicated student support team.

Dedicated Contact for St Mary's University College

 **Damien Ball**

 **028 9026 8250**

 **d.ball@stmarys-belfast.ac.uk**

Dedicated Contacts for Care Leavers


Stranmillis University College



Stranmillis University College currently offers care experience applicants and students a range of financial, pastoral, and academic support for the duration of any of our 4 undergraduate degree programmes. These supports include, for example, an overall cash bursary of between £2,400 and £3,400 (depending on whether it is a 3-year or 4-year degree pathway); a full non-means tested year round free Halls Accommodation or equivalent; assistance with moving and transport between accommodation; pre-interview support; a pre-entry preparation course; and a dedicated care leaver co-ordinator available for confidential one-to-one support for the duration of the degree.

Dedicated Contact for Stranmillis University College

 **Dr Ken Gibson**

 **028 9038 4401**

 **k.gibson@stran.ac.uk**

Ulster University



Ulster University encourages applications from students and will advise young people who have been looked after by their Trust/local Authority in foster or residential care. If a young person is leaving care or has previously spent time in care for three months or more and is thinking of applying to the University, there is a range of services and provision that Ulster University can offer. For example, we may be able to provide financial support, year-round accommodation and advice and guidance from our Community Engagement Outreach Officer.

Those full time undergraduates who meet this criterion are eligible for £1000 Care Leavers Bursary per year whilst studying at Ulster University.

Dedicated Contact for Ulster University



Paul Cassidy



028 7167 5233



p.cassidy@ulster.ac.uk

Queen's University, Belfast



Queen's University, Belfast welcomes applications from prospective students who have experience of care and can provide a range of support as well as access to a dedicated contact during the pre and post entry stages.

The University provides a range of services to a young person who has been in Social Services or local authority care including; access to independent financial advice, accommodation options with priority placements and 52 week contracts; a dedicated contact person who can liaise with University Schools on students behalf if they are experiencing any difficulties with their studies and access to counselling, careers and study skills support throughout their time at University.

Dedicated Contact for Queen's University



Sinead O'Kane



028 9097 5020



s.okane@qub.ac.uk



Dedicated Contact for Open University:

Maggie Bates
028 902 45025
maggie.bates@open.ac.uk

**ireland-widening -
access@open.ac.uk**

As an open Higher Education Institution in every sense of the word, The Open University welcomes applications from care experienced young people. The UCAS process does not apply to The Open University. Instead, candidates simply enrol on our website - www.open.ac.uk/courses

For most undergraduate degree programmes there are no academic entry requirements. However, there are diagnostic tasters which offer an opportunity for candidates to check their readiness for study at a Higher Education level. Candidates may initially register for an Access Module to "test the water" and see if distance learning suits them. Students on a low income or certain benefits may be able to study an Access module for free. Distance learning means that there is no need to move close to a university or college - students study at a time and place that suits them. Our Student Registration Team will guide applicants through the application process.

Our dedicated Student Support Team provides support throughout the educational journey, including guidance on choosing study pathways. Registered students can also access advice from our Careers and Employability team.

For Open University students there are grants and loans to help towards the cost of tuition fees. There are two types of grants available which may cover some or all of the costs of studying:

- Fee grant – a means-tested grant of up to £1230 to help towards the cost of module fees. The amount awarded depends on income and the number of credits you are studying.
- Course grant – help towards study costs, like a laptop, internet access or travel to tutorials. Candidates can view their funding options on the OU website:
www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding

How Do I Apply to Higher Education?

- Application to Higher Education is usually through UCAS (<http://www.ucas.com>)
- UCAS stands for the 'Universities and Colleges Admissions Service'.
- UCAS aim is to help students make informed choices that are right for them, guiding them, as well as their parents and advisers, through the entire Higher Education application process.
- UCAS processes over 2.5 million applications every year, for some 650,000 prospective students across the UK and beyond: helping them gain access to more than 340 UK universities and colleges.

We also run several specialist application services – GTTR (Graduate Teacher Training Registry), UKPASS (UK Postgraduate Application and Statistical Service) and CUKAS (Conservatoires UK Admissions Service).

UCAS is at the heart of connecting people to Higher Education with a mission to:

"Create value for members through shared services; and deliver admissions services that help applicants make the right choices, for the right reasons and with the right outcomes".

The exceptions are:

- St Mary's University College
- The Open University
- The FE Regional College

In the case of St Mary's and the Open University, applications for all courses must be made directly to the institution. In the case of the FE Regional Colleges a small number of courses are applied to through UCAS but for the majority of Higher Education courses application is made directly to the college. Application information can be obtained from each Regional College website.

Entry Requirements

Entry requirements are a guideline of the recommended academic ability the course provider expects the young person to have.

Each course has different requirements – usually a mix of qualifications, subjects or exam grades they recommend the applicant to have or to be working towards. It is good advice to check when searching for courses. There is plenty of support in Higher Education for care leavers – with finances and accommodation - as well as supporting the young person in new surroundings.

How Can a Young Person get Higher Education Funding in Northern Ireland?

Eligibility

A care experienced young person may be eligible for a Special Support Grant if he/she:

is a lone parent;	has a partner who is also a student; one or both of you is responsible for a child or young person under 20 who is in full-time non-advanced education;	has a disability and qualifies for the disability premium or severe disability premium;	is deaf and qualifies for Disabled Students' Allowances;	has been treated as incapable of work for a continuous period of at least 28 weeks;	is from abroad and is entitled to an Income Support Urgent Cases Payment because he/she is temporarily without funds for a period of up to six weeks;	is waiting to go back to a course having taken agreed time out from that course due to an illness or caring responsibility that has now ended.
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To apply, print off the **Application Letter for Special Support Grant** on Student Finance NI's website or phone **0300 100 0077** requesting the form and send it to the local Education and Library Board (ELB) along with evidence.

A care experienced young person will be entitled to apply online for:

- A Tuition Fee Loan
- A Maintenance Loan
- A Maintenance Grant or Special Support Grant*

If a young person normally lives in Northern Ireland, he/she may be eligible for funding from Student Finance NI – a partnership between the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland, the Student Loans Company and the Education Authority in Northern Ireland. To get the funding, the young person and the course of study must be eligible for it.

* Special Support Grant

The Special Support Grant currently pays up to £3,475 depending on household income and is intended to help with additional course related costs such as books, equipment, travel, or childcare. In the main a care experienced young person will not need to be concerned with household income.

Entitlement is calculated in the same way as the Maintenance Grant but will not affect the amount of Maintenance Loan that a young person may be entitled to receive.

Jobcentre Plus or the local authority's Housing Benefit section will not take account of the Special Support Grant when assessing any claim made for income related benefits.

Evidence

- a passport or birth certificate to prove age;
- a letter from the college or university;
- a copy of tax credit award;
- a copy of a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions which show receipt of benefit as a lone parent;
- a letter, on company header paper, from a professional person who knows the young person's circumstances and can confirm that the young person is a lone parent. A professional person can be, for example, a doctor, lawyer, teacher, police officer or minister of religion.

Please note: if the young person is eligible to receive a Special Support Grant he/she will not be eligible for a Maintenance Grant.

HSC TRUST FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

In line with Trust responsibilities to support young people in education, the responsible Trust is required to undertake a financial needs assessment with the young person well in advance of embarking on his/her course of study. The financial assessment should clearly set out the expenditure and associated costs incurred and the sources of funding available that will enable the young person to embark on and sustain the course of study. Where sources of funding external to the Trust do not meet the full costs of studies the Trust should make a grant payable to the young person to ensure that full costs are met and that there is no financial disincentive to the young person pursuing studies in Further Education. The Trust should maintain contact with the young person and have an understanding of the young person's ongoing progress. Student Support Services within the HEIs are a primary source of support for the young person and equally for staff and carers who are seeking to identify sources of financial and other forms of support for young people. Such support should be maximised.

Chapter EIGHT

Student Finance NI

Students leaving the care of the Health and Social Care Trusts or local authority are classed as independent by Student Finance NI providing that they have not returned to the care of their parent(s). This means that their assessment of student support will not be based on the household income of their parent(s). As household income is not taken into account, single independent students will be entitled to the maximum Maintenance Grant. This is in addition to the other support available, such as loans for fees and living costs. The Grant does not have to be repaid.

How Much Will University Cost?

Thinking about and clarifying financial options, such as tuition fees and living costs, are essential to assisting a young person to make a decision to go to university or college. There is a range of expenses associated with going to university, for example, tuition fees, accommodation and living costs. Each young person needs to know about the overall cost of being at university, sources of income, repayment implications and be assisted to work out a budget plan to fully understand how expenses will be covered.

Universities and colleges in England, Scotland and Wales can charge up to £9,250 for tuition fees in academic year 2023/24. If the young person is studying in one of these countries, he/she can get a Tuition Fee Loan to cover the full amount of tuition fees the university or college is charging, up to a maximum of £9,250.

The amount the young person is charged may vary depending on the course or the university or college chosen to attend. Contact should be made with the university or college directly for more information.

Student finance includes:

- A Tuition Fee loan
- A Maintenance Grant
- A Maintenance Loan

Students who live in Northern Ireland and choose to study in:

Tuition Fee 2023/24
Northern Ireland up to £4,710
England up to £9,250
Wales up to £9,250
Scotland up to £9,250
Republic of Ireland Student Contribution Charge €3,000

How Much Can a Young Person Get?

This will depend on where in the United Kingdom the young person decides to study. Universities and colleges in Northern Ireland can charge up to £4,710 for tuition fees in academic year 2023/24. The young person can get a Tuition Fee Loan to cover the full amount of tuition fees the university or college is charging, up to a maximum of £4,710 in academic year 2023/24.

Tuition Fees - Facts

- A young person can get a Tuition Fee Loan to cover all or part of the tuition fees.
- The young person needs to pay it back after he/she has finished the course.
- The young person will be charged interest on any amount borrowed.
- The money is paid directly to the university or college, not to the young person.

Living Costs

To help with the cost of accommodation, food, clothing, books, and travel expenses the young person may be eligible for a Maintenance Grant or a Special Support Grant*, which does not require repayment and a Maintenance Loan, which must be paid back when the young person reaches a certain income bracket when in employment.

Maintenance Grant and Special Support Grant

- These grants are to help with living costs.
- They do not need to be repaid.
- A young person can get either the Maintenance Grant or the Special Support Grant, not both.

Maintenance Loan

- The Maintenance Loan is to assist with living costs.
- It must be paid back after completion of the course.
- Interest will be charged on the amount borrowed.

Maintenance Grant Amount And Maintenance Loan Amount*

Household income will not be applicable for care leavers, but may be included if the young person has a partner

If the total annual household income is:

£19,203 or less

The amount available is:

Full grant (£3,475)

* Which can a young person get?

The Special Support Grant is based on your eligibility for income support or other means-tested benefits, such as, Housing Benefit. For example, if the young person:

- is a single parent
- has a partner who is also a student
- has certain disabilities

With the Special Support Grant (unlike the Maintenance Grant) the Maintenance Loan will not be reduced. Additionally, it does not count as income when working out income related benefits or tax credits.

Bursaries From Universities and Colleges

Some universities and colleges offer bursaries depending on household income, the course of study or the tuition fee being charged. The amount a young person is entitled to receive can be different depending on the university or college.

Information on bursaries can be obtained from the institution's Widening Access and Participation Plan for 2023/2024 which is available on the university/college website. Alternatively, you can make contact with the university or college to find out more about the bursaries they offer.

Extra Help

There is also extra help available for students with children or adults who depend on them financially and students who have disabilities.

Students with Children or Adult Dependants

There are extra grants available if the young person has children or if there are any adults who depend on the young person financially. The young person would not have to pay any of these back.

Students with Disabilities

1. Disabled Students Allowances (Higher Education)

When a student with learning difficulties and/or disabilities applies for a Higher Education course they are encouraged to apply for Disabled Students Allowances (DSAs) to help cover the extra costs of any support they may require throughout their course as a direct result of their disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty. DSAs can help with the cost of non-medical support providers, major items of specialist equipment, travel and other costs. A student can apply at any time before or during their course, and the amount they can get does not depend on their income or their family income. This allowance does not have to be repaid.

2. Disability Needs Assessment

Through DSAs, the Department for the Economy provides funding to meet the costs of a Disability Needs Assessment for each student who presents at the HE Institution with a disability. This is an assessment of the support needs of the student including their specialist equipment requirements and non-medical support provider needs.

3. Register of Support Providers

Through DSAs the DfE also provides funding to meet the administration costs of a Register of Support Providers in each of the two Northern Ireland universities. The Register of Support Providers is a unique service which provides one to one personal support to disabled students registered on recognised Higher Education courses at any of the colleges or universities in Northern Ireland. The Register maintains and develops a resource of freelance professional and non-professional support providers, who act in specialist roles to support disabled students. The student's support needs are assessed, and the student is "matched" with the appropriate support provider(s). Support providers include audio-typists, note-takers, dyslexia coaches, study skills mentors, sign language interpreters and campus assistants. The Register offers support, guidance and training to those who deliver the non-medical helper support. The Register supports colleges and universities in meeting their duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (2005) (SENDO). SENDO means that colleges and universities have both anticipatory and reactive duties to accommodate the needs of disabled students by making reasonable adjustments. Where necessary these adjustments will include essential adaptations to student accommodation to meet the needs of disabled students.

Student Loan Repayment

How and When the Young Person Repays

The young person will start to repay the loan from the April following the date the young person graduates or leaves the course.

Yearly income before tax:	Monthly salary:	Monthly Repayment:
Up to £22,015	£1,835	£0
£25,000	£2,083	£22
£28,000	£2,333	£44
£30,000	£2,500	£59
£35,000	£2,917	£97

If the young person has an employer, repayment deductions will be taken directly from the young person's pay slip. For more information refer to the section Repaying through Pay As You Earn (PAYE).

If the young person is self-employed, the young person will need to complete a self-assessment form and return it with any payment by 31 January following the relevant tax year.

What Happens If The Young Person Leaves A Course During The Year

If a young person leaves the course during the year, the young person will pay back the following amount of the Tuition Fee Loan.

If you leave:	Tuition Fee Loan young person has to repay:
Before you register for the course:	Nothing
Before the end of term 1:	25%
Before the end of term 2:	50%
Before the end of term 3:	100%

Organisations who support Care Leavers

What We Do

Deliver services to children and young people that benefit them, make their voices heard and enable them to reach their potential

Promote foster care to ensure society understands, values and recognises how foster carers transform children's lives

Influence policy and legislative framework so it supports and promotes excellence in foster care

Support fostering families and the services that work with them to provide the best possible care for children and young people

The Fostering Network gives advice to approved foster and kinship foster carers on practical and legal matters, finance and welfare benefits

Provides a 24 hour legal and stress counselling helpline



The Fostering Network

Our Vision

All children in foster care enjoy the very best life chances and have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Our Mission

To improve the lives and life chances of children in foster care. We work with children and young people, fostering families and the services that support them.

Fostering Achievement Scheme

The Fostering Network Northern Ireland delivers the **Fostering Achievement Scheme** which aims to improve educational attainment among children in care. Fostering Achievement has produced significant improvements in educational outcomes for children in care and shows that with the right support all young people can achieve their full potential.

The Fostering Achievement scheme funded by the Health and Social Care Board, makes direct educational provision to children and young people in foster care and provides **tailored support** to at least 1300 children and young people in foster care each year.

Examples of Fostering Achievement provision includes:

- **One to one Tuition**
- **Driving lessons**
- **Sports lessons or equipment**
- **Educational materials**
- **Computer equipment**

In addition to direct educational provision the Fostering Achievement scheme delivers a summer programme of activities to 200 young people, organises Achievement Awards in each of the Health and Social Care Trust areas as well as delivering the award winning Letterbox Club to all children in foster care and adopted children aged from 5 to 13 years.



Tick the Box



The Fostering Network leads the "Tick the Box" awareness campaign which encourages young people who have spent time in care to tick the box on the UCAS form or on the FE application form stating that they have been in or are currently in care. This will enable them to get the extra support they are entitled to and may need while at university or in Further Education.

Pathways to University Residential Schemes

The Fostering Network work in partnership with **Ulster University** to deliver the **Pathways to University Residential Schemes** during the summer. These schemes are targeted at young people aged 15 – 17 years of age and the aim is to raise young people's aspirations by giving them an opportunity to experience university life and encourage them to apply in the future. All young people who participate receive an OCN qualification on Understanding Higher Education. This scheme includes a range of activities to give young people an opportunity to learn about university and gather information to enable them to make informed decisions in the future. They experience student life for real, living in the halls of residence where they are responsible for their own budgeting and cooking during their stay and they can explore the social side of university with activities such as bowling and a movie night.

Address
The Fostering Network,
Unit 10,
40 Montgomery Road,
Belfast,
BT6 9HL

Phone
028 9070 5056

Email
ni@fostering.net

Department for Economy Training For Success

The Department for Economy provides a guarantee of a training place to all school-leavers in the 16 and 17 year old age group through its Training for Success programme, who have attained minimum school leaving age as of 30 June in any academic year through its Training for Success (TfS) programme. Eligibility is extended up to age 24 for young people from an In-Care background. This is defined as a person in the category of "young people who qualify under the Children (Leaving Care) Act (NI) (2002)", and being under 24 years of age.

The programme provides training for young people who have not yet found full time employment with the opportunity to gain experience and qualifications relevant to their chosen career choice. It is delivered through four strands:-

- Skills for Your Life;
- Skills for Work Level 1;
- Skills for Work Level 2; and
- Skills for Work Level 3.

Participants receive a non means-tested Educational Maintenance Allowance of £40 per week and may qualify for additional support towards the costs of travel and/or Childcare if required. Further support may be available to participants with a disability.

The programme is delivered through a network of contracted training providers across Northern Ireland including the six Further Education Colleges. Entry to the programme is via the presentation of a training credit issued from the Department's Careers Service.

VOYPIC VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) is an independent Northern charity that promotes the rights and improves the lives of children and young people in care. We listen and learn from what children and young people tell us about their experience in care to facilitate positive change in legislation, policy and practice.

We work in partnership with children, young people, staff, managers, agencies and government.

Our core services include advocacy, group work, personal support and coaching, policy and research.

LONDONDERRY VOYPIC

9 Queen Street,
Londonderry,
BT48 7EG

Tel.: 028 7137 8980

LURGAN VOYPIC

Flat 12, Mount Zion House,
Edward Street, Lurgan,
BT66 6DB

Tel.: 028 3831 3380

WEBSITE

www.voypic.org

BELFAST AND SOUTH-EASTERN VOYPIC

100 Great Patrick Street,
Belfast,
BT1 2LY

Tel.: 028 9024 4888

BALLYMENA VOYPIC

1st Floor, 6 Garfield,
Ballymena,
BT43 6EH

Tel.: 028 2563 2641

FOLLOW US ON

Facebook and Twitter

VOYPIC works across Northern Ireland promoting the rights and improving the lives of children and young people in care.

Below is VOYPIC's manifesto for children and young people in care and care leavers.

VOYPIC VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE

1. Voice their views and wishes in the planning and decision making for their lives

2. Have a statutory right to independent advocacy

3. Are supported to keep in touch and enjoy contact with family and friends

4. Enjoy appropriate, settled and secure placements

5. Are protected, safe and never exploited

6. Are reflected in positive images and news stories that challenge and correct stereotypes

7. Are supported to succeed in education, training and employment

8. Are supported to make successful transitions to independence, adulthood and economic stability

9. Are supported to address risky behaviour and minimise contact with the justice system

10. Enjoy good health and well-being while living in and after leaving care.

include YOUTH

Include Youth was established in 1979 and is an independent non-governmental organisation that actively promotes the rights, best interests of and best practice with disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people.

Include Youth works primarily with and for young people not in education, training, or employment (NEET) and the organisation is focused upon three core areas of work:

one: influencing policy – particularly in the areas of youth justice and youth employability.

two: supporting other practitioners to develop more rights based policies and practice.

three: enhancing the employability of young people who are not in education, training, or employment through the provision of employability training and support programmes

The Give and Take scheme works predominantly (but not exclusively) with young people from a care background aged 16 to 21.

It is a pre-vocational employability programme which aims to improve the employability and increase the self-esteem and confidence of vulnerable young people who are not ready to participate in mainstream training and education.

These complex issues reflect the barriers articulated in DEL's Pathways to Success Strategy and demonstrate that the young people engaged on Give and Take are amongst the most vulnerable and needy group of NEET young people. These barriers make it difficult for this group of young people to engage with mainstream education or training or to find employment. The complexity of issues and needs has implications on the model of support that can effectively be delivered to such young people. Include Youth has developed a flexible, highly supportive programme which not only allows young people to remain engaged but sees them achieve qualifications, experience the world of work, and begin to address some of the personal barriers that prevent progression.

The model of delivery is a flexible and young person centred, and is delivered by a dedicated and committed staff team of workers who adopt a Youth Work approach in their engagement with young people.

The service consists of five core components:

- **Training and Qualifications**
- **Personal Development**
- **Work Experiences**
- **Volunteer Mentors**
- **Transitional Support**

The Transitional support component is a recent development coming from the recognition that sustaining a positive move on to the next stage of a young person's employability journey depends on support structures, available resources, and the individual themselves. Young people who have been 'NEET' frequently do not have protective factors such as a stable home, adequate income, supportive relationships, or confidence.

Often transitions to mainstream providers are difficult for young people, who succeed at a pre-vocational scheme such as the Give and Take Scheme, only to experience a breakdown in their move on placement. In response to this Include Youth has decided to pilot a Transition Support Service.

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100 Great
Patrick Street,
Belfast,
BT12LU**

**Phone:
028 9031 1007**

**Web:
www.includeyouth.org**

**Twitter:
[@includeyouth](https://twitter.com/includeyouth)**

Chapter TEN Appendix One

Contact for Health and Social Care Trust Services

Belfast Trust

Hilary Walker

Trust Headquarters,
Administration Floor,
Belfast City Hospital,
Lisburn Road, Belfast,
BT9 7AB

028 95041279

hilary.walker
@belfasttrust.hscni.net

Southern Trust

Ruth Pearson

Bocombra Lodge,
2 old Lurgan Road,
Portadown,
BT65 5SG

028 37561091
07557808328

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@southerntrust.hscni.net

Northern Trust

Ursula Crickard

Alder House,
Antrim Area Hospital Site,
Antrim,
BT41 2QB

028 94424600
07717782750

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@northerntrust.hscni.net

Western Trust

Natasha Duddy

Glendermott Valley Business
Park,
Tullyalley Road,
Londonderry,
BT47 3LR

028 713121103

natasha.duddy
@westerntrust.hscni.net

Southern Eastern Trust - The H.O.P.E Service

H.O.P.E Team
Hilden Resource Centre 1a Glenmore Park Lisburn
BT27 4RT

Susanne McCorry: H.O.P.E Service Manager
Susanne.mccorry@setrust.hscni.net
07718668920

Appendix Two

Contact Details for Education and Library Boards

South Eastern (Northern Ireland)

Student Awards Section South
Eastern Education and Library
Board, Grahamsbridge Road,
Dundonald,
BELFAST, BT16 2HS
Email: info@seelb.org.uk

Belfast

Student Awards Section Belfast
Education and Library Board,
40 Academy Street,
BELFAST, BT1 2NQ
Email: info.belb@belb.co.uk

Education Authority

Forestview,
Purdy's Lane,
BELFAST, BT8 7AR
Email: info@eani.org.uk

North Eastern (Northern Ireland)

Student Finance Section,
North Eastern Education and
Library
Ballycentre Ballee,
Ballymena
County Antrim, BT4 22HS
Email: student.finance-ballymena.
eani.org.uk

Southern (Northern Ireland)

Student Awards Section,
Southern Education and Library
Board, 3 Charlemont Place,
The Mall,
ARMAGH, BT61 9AX
Email: selb.hq@selb.org

Western (Northern Ireland)

Student Awards Section Western
Education and Library Board,
1 Hospital Road,
OMAGH,
County Tyrone, BT79 0AW
Email: info@welbni.org



Appendix Three Colleges and Universities with Quality Award Status in England, Scotland and Wales

Committed
providers
for care
leavers

University of Abertay Dundee
Aberystwyth University
Aston University
Bangor University
University of Bath
Bath Spa University
University of Bedfordshire
University of Birmingham
Birmingham City University
Blackpool and the Fylde College
University of Bradford
Brighton University
University of Bristol
Brooklands College
Brunel University
Bucks New University
University of Cambridge
Canterbury Christ Church University
Cardiff University
University Of Chester
De Montfort University
University of East Anglia
University of East London
Edge Hill University
Edinburgh Napier University
University of Exeter
Exeter College
University College Falmouth
University of Glamorgan
University of Glasgow
Glasgow Caledonian University
Glyndwr University
Goldsmiths, University of London

University of Greenwich
University of Huddersfield
Hugh Baird College
Keele University
University of Kent
Kingston University
University of Leeds
Leeds Metropolitan University
University of Leicester
University of Lincoln
University of Liverpool
Liverpool John Moores University
University College London
London South Bank University
Loughborough University
The University of Manchester
Neath Port Talbot College
New College Durham
Newcastle University
Newman University College
The University of Northampton
University of Northumbria at Newcastle
North Warwickshire and Hinckley College
University of Nottingham
Nottingham Trent University
University of Oxford
Oxford Brookes University
Plymouth University
University of Portsmouth
Queen Mary, University of London
Robert Gordon University
Roehampton University
Royal Holloway, University of London

Royal Veterinary College
Ruskin College
University of Salford
University of Sheffield
Sheffield Hallam University
University of Southampton
Southampton Solent University
University of St Andrews
St George's, University of London
Staffordshire University
University of Stirling
Stoke on Trent College
University of Strathclyde
University of Sunderland
University of Surrey
University of Sussex
Swansea University
University of Teesside
Trinity University College
University for The Creative Arts
University of the Arts London
Ulster University
Wakefield College
University of Wales Institute, Cardiff
University of Wales, Newport
University of the West of Scotland
University of West of England
University of West London
University of Westminster
University of Winchester
University of Wolverhampton
The University of York
York St John University



Appendix Four

Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland

Belfast Metropolitan College



North West Regional College



Castlereagh

Springvale

Millfield

Titanic Quarter



Derry/
Londonderry

Limavady

Strabane

Springtown

Greystone



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www.belfastmet.ac.uk



For course enquiries:
028 9026 5265



Email:
**Central_Admissions
@belfastmet.ac.uk**



Visit our website:
www.nwrc.ac.uk



For course enquiries:
Derry/
Londonderry: **028 7127 6000**
Limavady: **028 7127 8700**
Strabane: **028 7127 8844**



Email:
info@nwrc.ac.uk

Northern Regional College

NORTHERN Regional College

Southern Regional College

src Southern Regional College



Farm Lodge

Magherafelt

Trostan Avenue

Newtownabbey

Ballymoney

Beresford Avenue



Portadown

Greenbank

Lurgan

Armagh

Newry

Banbridge

Killeel



Visit our website:
www.nrc.ac.uk



For course enquiries contact
Newtownabbey Campus on:
028 9085 5000



Email:
admissions@nrc.ac.uk



Visit our website:
www.src.ac.uk



For course enquiries:
0300 123 1223



Email:
info@src.ac.uk

South West College



South Eastern Regional College



Cookstown

Omagh

Dungannon

Enniskillen

Technology and Skill Centre



Bangor/
Space Bangor

Downpatrick

Lisburn

Newcastle

Newtownards

Ballynahinch

Hollywood



Visit our website:
www.swc.ac.uk



For course enquiries:
0845 603 1881



Email:
admissions@swc.ac.uk



Visit our website:
www.serc.ac.uk



For course enquiries:
0845 600 7555



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