

Corporate Parenting Plan 2021

- ✓ Informing Choices
- ✓ Funding Futures
- ✓ Supporting Success



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Interim Chief Executive's Introduction

I am extremely proud to introduce the Student Award Agency Scotland's (SAAS) Corporate Parenting Plan 2021, which includes our report on our first plan.



As an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government, SAAS is fully supportive of the Corporate Parent values. Working with Care Experienced people has been a focus for us for some time now so we readily embrace the responsibilities which Corporate Parenting represents.

Our 2017-2019 Corporate Parenting Plan centred around the introduction of the **Care Experienced Bursary & Care Experienced Accommodation Grant**. The focus for this plan is to work on a wider cultural approach encompassing attitudes and strategic planning to enhance the overall learners journey of our Care Experienced students.

We took time in developing our plan to consult the people who would be delivering the commitments in SAAS, some of whom have lots of experience supporting this group. More importantly, we took the time to listen to the Care Experienced people we support, directly and through organisations closest to them. We identified how we could work towards being the best possible Corporate Parent which shaped the commitments you will read about in this plan.

Building key partnerships and collaborating with other Corporate Parents across Scotland will be essential for us to deliver a quality service. At SAAS we are committed to collaborative working and know that by sharing our objectives, knowledge and resources we can jointly achieve better outcomes for Care Experienced people.

Our ambition is to continue to provide a high quality, student-centred service to support all of Scotland's students, enabling them to realise their aspirations and explore their potential to the fullest.

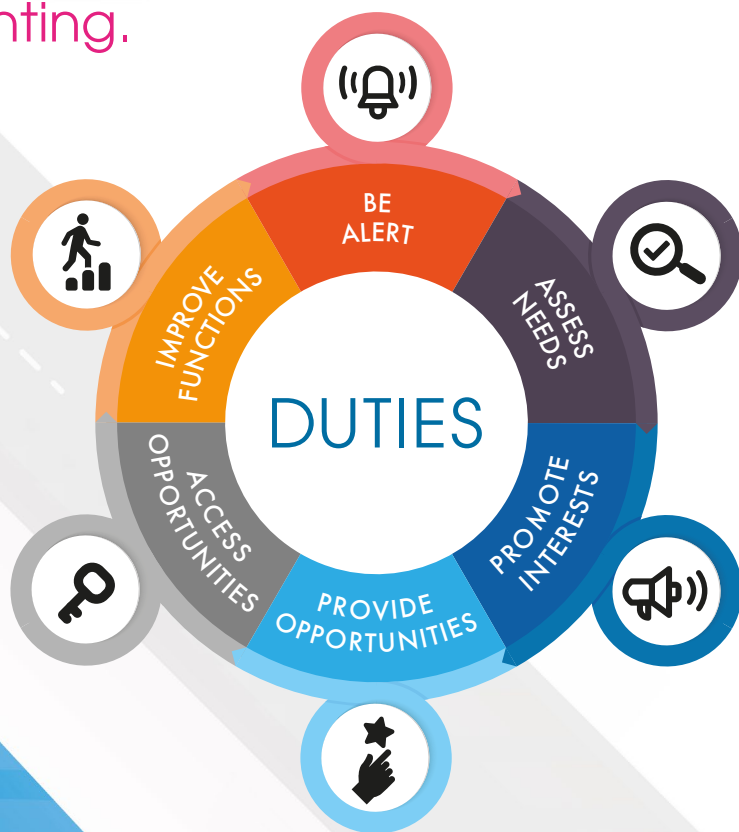
We look forward to working with you to help make these ambitions a reality.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren McNamara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lauren McNamara
Interim Chief Executive

What is Corporate Parenting?

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, came into effect on the 1st of April 2015. Part 9 relates to Corporate Parenting.



The Statutory Guidance on Corporate Parenting defines it as:

“An organisation’s performance of actions necessary to uphold the rights and safeguard the wellbeing of a looked after child or care leaver, and through which physical, emotional, spiritual, social and educational development is promoted.”

(Scottish Government, 2015)



Under the act, Corporate Parents have duties to deliver on to Care Experienced people. Overall, they have a responsibility to promote the wellbeing of Care Experienced people. To do so they must understand the lives of Scotland’s looked after young people and care leavers and respond to their needs as any parent should.

What is expected of SAAS?

In terms of the legislation, Scottish Ministers are named as a Corporate Parent. SAAS is not a Corporate Parent in its own right. Executive Agencies, such as SAAS, are organisations set up to perform a specific function(s) of Scottish Government.

The key function of SAAS is to distribute public funds to eligible students of Higher Education on behalf of the Scottish Ministers.

Why are SAAS involved?

With our primary function aligning with the Government’s aim to see more Care Experienced Students supported into higher education; we are embracing the values of Corporate Parenting by providing a service which is efficient, responsive and proportionate to the needs of our students.

Widening Access for Care Experienced Students



“The bursary has helped me a lot as I have been able to afford to rent my own flat. This has allowed me to get my own space and to become a lot more independent and confident. I know I would not have been able to afford my laptop to help with my studies or my books for the various subjects I take without the help of the bursary.”

– Care Experienced Student

35% ☆ ☆ ☆

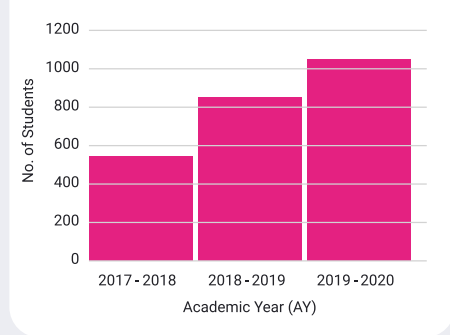
of looked after children leave school with one or more qualification at SCQF Level 5 or more; compared with 85% of all school leavers.

48% 

of school leavers who were looked after within the last year were in either Higher or Further Education 3 months after leaving school. In comparison, more than two thirds (68%) of all school leavers were in Further or Higher Education.

→ Looked after Children: education outcomes 2018-2019

HE Care Experienced Bursary Uptake



Key Milestones

▲ The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2014-15 set out the ambition that every child should have an equal chance of accessing higher education. The Commission on Widening Access was established to advise Ministers on how to meet this ambition.

2014

▲ In March 2016, the final report of the Commission on Widening Access: **A Blueprint for Fairness** was published detailing 34 recommendations to support that those from deprived backgrounds including those with care experience will have equal access to University.

2016

▲ In 2017, the Scottish Government introduced the Care Experienced Bursary (CEB) to be administered by SAAS on behalf of Scottish Ministers. The bursary, was introduced to improve access to education for those with care experience.

2017

2018

▲ In 2018, the Care Experienced Bursary was made available to students in Further Education which was and continues to be administered weekly by the colleges across Scotland, under the guidance of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC).

2018

▲ In 2018, the Care Experienced Bursary amount was increased from £7,625 to £8,100 across both Further and Higher Education.

2020

▲ In 2020, to further improve the access to education for care experienced people, the upper age limit of 26 for the Care Experienced Bursary was removed, allowing those with care experience to enter further or higher education when they are ready, regardless of age.

Funding Package overview for Care Experienced Students



Care Experienced Students Bursary

The Care Experienced Students Bursary (CESB), also known as the Care Experienced Bursary (CEB) is a non-income assessed, non-repayable award of £8,100 per year and is issued to Care Experienced Students studying at undergraduate level.

To be eligible for the CESB you must:

- be completing an eligible course of higher education
- meet our residency conditions
- have been looked after by a Local Authority in the United Kingdom, before you turned 18

Care Experienced Accommodation Grant

The Care Experienced Accommodation Grant is to help students with accommodation costs during the long break between each year of their course. Students can receive a maximum of £105 per week.

Further details and support can be found on: www.saas.gov.uk

*A professional person can be someone from the local authority by whom you were looked after, social worker, doctor, nurse, lawyer, solicitor, college/university student adviser, teacher, nursery teacher, notary public, counsellor, police officer, minister of religion or family mediation worker.

APPLICATION PROCESS:



ONE

Complete an online application making sure you select the Care Experienced Student Bursary box.



TWO

Your application is then routed to one of our specially trained caseworkers to be reviewed.



THREE

A member of our team will contact you and ask you to fill in an evidence form.



FOUR

You will need a professional person* to sign this form and confirm the information provided is correct.



FIVE

You then send the form back to us to be reviewed in line with your application.



SIX

An award notice will be made available in your online account confirming your funding.

Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-2019 Review

Key Achievements

▲ The Programme for Government was published and the Scottish Government introduced a non-repayable, non-income assessed bursary known as the **Care Experienced Bursary**.



▲ The **Care Experienced Accommodation Grant** was also introduced to provide additional financial support towards costs over the summer months at a maximum rate of £105 per week

▲ The introduction of an additional **plus one year** of funding for Care Experienced Students to enhance their opportunity of completing their studies.

+1

2017

▲ Introduced a bespoke online functionality allowing Care Experienced Students to self-identify and apply for Care Experienced Student support.



▲ SAAS implemented and continue to have quarterly meetings with the **Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection (CELCIS)** to discuss the experiences of Care Experienced people.

2018

▲ The **Care Experienced Bursary** amount was increased to £8,100.

▲ **Who Cares? Scotland** delivered five Corporate Parenting training sessions engaging with 75 members of staff across the agency.



▲ SAAS attended a consultation and training session on developing a Corporate Parenting plan with **Disclosure Scotland** and provided advice on training specialist caseworkers in their Contact Centre.

Disclosure
SCOTLAND

▲ As part of Care Experienced Week, SAAS participated in the second **'The Lifetime of Love Rally'** through central Glasgow demonstrating their commitment to Care Experienced people.

2019

▲ The previous under 26 age restriction was removed for students to access Care Experienced funding, encouraging people from a Care Experienced background to return to education

▲ SAAS created a pilot team of specialist caseworkers to process applications for the **Care Experienced Bursary** and **Care Experienced Accommodation Grant**.



▲ The **Care Experienced Accommodation Grant** was originally issued to the students accommodation provider. In May 2020, we agreed to start making Grant payments directly to these students.

▲ In response to COVID-19, SAAS extended the **Care Experienced Accommodation Grant** payment, to begin in April 2020 until the start of their course in the next academic session, an additional eight weeks of funding.



2020

Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-2019 Review

(Continued)



Our first Corporate Parenting Plan focused on the introduction of the Care Experienced Bursary & Care Experienced Accommodation Grant.

 We said...	 We did...
We will create and develop a bespoke application process which allows Care Experienced Students to ACCESS student support in an efficient, inclusive and respectful manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduced an online functionality allowing Care Experienced Students to self-identify and apply for Care Experienced Student support.
We will IMPROVE Management Information in relation to Care Experience Students in order to adapt our approach and to improve the learner journey of Care Experienced Students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Quarterly meetings were held with CELCIS to feedback on the experiences of CE people.
We will actively PROMOTE and develop staff awareness on the subject of Corporate Parenting and Care Experienced Students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Created a pilot team of specialist caseworkers responsible for assessing Care Experienced Students applications. ✓ Hosted 'Who Cares? Scotland' to deliver training to 75 members of staff.
We will develop new and existing partnerships with other Corporate Parents to ensure that SAAS remains ALERT to the needs of Care Experienced Students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attended a consultation session on developing a Corporate Parenting Plan with Disclosure Scotland. ✓ Participated in 'The Lifetime of Love Rally' in Glasgow, organised by 'Who Cares? Scotland.'
We will PROMOTE our products and service through a bespoke outreach programme and specialised literature targeted towards Care Experienced Students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Attended STAF Conference to provide advice & guidance to practitioners. ✓ Produced CEB leaflet and distributed digitally and at events. ✓ Facilitated application workshop for CE students.

Our Aims

In 2020, we published our Corporate Plan for 2020-2025 which defines our purpose as an Agency - to enable all students to fulfil their potential by providing information, funding and support.

[→ View SAAS Corporate Plan](#)

To fulfil our purpose, we identified three strategic aims which have also helped shape our commitments and actions for our Corporate Parenting Plan.

As Corporate Parent's we recognise that it is our duty to ensure our Care Experienced Students receive clear guidance and support throughout their higher education journey.



Informing Choices

Information and guidance is clear, relevant and easy to access.



Funding Futures

Student funding is easy to access, efficient and fair.



Supporting Success

Students are supported throughout their studies.

To uphold our duty, we have formed commitments in alignment with the six Corporate Parenting Responsibilities and the strategic aims detailed above.



Our Commitments

▲ We will provide opportunities for our Care Experienced people to gain an understanding about the funding available to them and how to access it.



Informing Choices



▲ We will strive to improve the learner journey for our Care Experienced Students by exploring opportunities with key stakeholders to align the 'Care Experienced Bursary' in FE and HE.



Funding Futures

▲ We will introduce a more streamlined practice in the form of a **Specialist Support Team** for processing our Care Experienced Student applications ensuring they can access opportunities and make use of services and support.

▲ We will promote the interests of our Care Experienced people by improving our internal communications and developing staff awareness through integration of Corporate Parenting training within the SAAS Corporate Induction Programme.






Supporting Success

▲ We will develop new and existing partnerships with other Corporate Parents to ensure that we remain alert to the needs of our Care Experienced Students.

▲ We will work collaboratively with various stakeholder groups to develop feedback mechanisms for our Care Experienced Students in order to continually assess their needs for the services and support provided.



🎯 Aims	✔ Commitments	🛠️ Actions	👤 Owner
 <p>Informing Choices</p>	<p>✔ We will provide opportunities for our Care Experienced people to gain an understanding about the funding available to them and how to access it</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Build upon and review literature aimed at promoting the Care Experienced Bursary and how to apply for it 🔴 Develop targeted marketing aimed at Care Experienced Students 🔴 Develop and distribute bespoke material targeted at S3 school pupils and above 🔴 Host funding awareness outreach events for Care Experienced people, to enable them to make informed decisions about progressing into higher education 🔴 Offer Application workshops specifically for Care Experienced people to provide practical support when applying for student funding 	<p>Funding Awareness</p>
 <p>Funding Futures</p>	<p>✔ We will strive to improve the learner journey for our Care Experienced Students by exploring opportunities with key stakeholders to align the Care Experienced Bursary in FE and HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Commence discussions with Scottish Funding Council and Scottish Government about the prospect of Care Experienced Students being able to 'passport' their eligibility for the Care Experienced Bursary when moving from Further to Higher Education 	<p>Policy</p>
 <p>Supporting Success</p>	<p>✔ We will develop new and existing partnerships with other Corporate Parents to ensure that we remain alert to the needs of our Care Experienced Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Utilise external communication tools to engage with other Corporate Parents and identify opportunities for collaborative working 🔴 Continue to attend regular meetings with relevant stakeholder groups such as STAF, CELCIS, Hub for Success and Who Cares? Scotland to inform and develop the services we provide for our Care Experienced Students 	<p>Policy</p>
	<p>✔ We will work collaboratively with various stakeholder groups to develop feedback mechanisms for our Care Experienced Students in order to continually assess their needs for the services and support provided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Obtain qualitative responses from our Care Experienced Students to inform and improve the services and support we provide 🔴 Ensure we engage with our Care Experienced Students when action has been taken based on feedback they have provided 	<p>Policy</p>
	<p>✔ We will promote the interests of our Care Experienced people by improving our internal communications and developing staff awareness through integration of Corporate Parenting training within the SAAS Corporate Induction Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🔴 Launch an internal communications initiative in conjunction with the SAAS Corporate Parenting Plan to promote, engage and inform staff across the Agency 🔴 Introduce a Corporate Parenting Awareness Session as part of the 'tier 2' stage of the SAAS Corporate Induction Programme 🔴 Promote and signpost relevant learning and development resources across the Agency to help imbed our responsibilities as Corporate Parents 	<p>Communications People & Performance</p>

How we will report on our progress...

Performance measurement and reporting is essential for:

- Understanding what we are doing well
- Seeing what we can improve
- Ensuring that we can deliver

We would like our Corporate Parenting Plan to be a working document in the way that it is updated as we develop and make progress on our actions. Therefore we will be publishing an annual report in line with the Academic Year (AY) to inform you of our progress:

[→ View annual report](#)

The internal forum we have established for reviewing our Corporate Parenting Plan will be responsible for the construction of the State of Play Report. This forum comprises of the key internal stakeholders responsible for delivering our commitments and those who have direct contact with our Care Experienced Students.

Both the internal forum and the State of Play Report will help us measure our performance and hold us accountable for the commitments and actions we strive to achieve.





Funding your future

Student Awards Agency Scotland

www.saas.gov.uk

Visit your SAAS Account regularly and check your emails for any correspondence.

[→ SAAS Care Experienced Quick Guide](#)



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youtube.com/saashelpchannel

Find out what higher education institutions have to offer care leavers:



www.propel.org.uk



GOOD PRACTICE AWARD



Smarter Scotland
Scottish Government

