The background features vertical stripes in shades of purple, teal, and grey. Scattered throughout are various circles in matching colors, some solid and some outlined. Two circular icons are present: one in the top right showing two female silhouettes, and one in the bottom left showing three male silhouettes.

Pathways to Further and Higher Education for Looked After and Care Experienced Young People

NORTHERN
IRELAND
2015 - 2016

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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 wellbeing 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 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 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.

BACKGROUND Key findings indicate that a higher proportion of care leavers aged 16-18 had a Statement of Educational Need (19%) compared with the general school population (5%). Three quarters of care leavers had GCSEs or other qualifications. However, the proportion of care leavers obtaining 5 GCSEs (A*-C) or higher was 21% which remains much lower than for school leavers as a whole (79%). The proportion of young people leaving care with no qualifications was 28% in 2013/14, over 15 times that for general school leavers. Of care leavers for whom information was available, two-thirds (67%) were in education or training, 10% were working and 23% were unemployed or economically inactive.

Northern Ireland Care Leavers 2013/14, National Statistics, DHSSPS, Jan 2015

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 should be maximised so that the young person benefits.**

CORPORATE
PARENTING
RESPONSIBILITY

THE
ROLE
OF
HEALTH
AND
SOCIAL
CARE
TRUSTS

Helping children and young people in care to succeed in education, reach their potential and fulfill ambitions will make a major contribution to realising positive outcomes and to promoting their economic wellbeing 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.

Articles 34A and 35C of the **Children (Leaving Care) Act 2002** set out the need for preparing pathway plans for young people in care when they attain 16 year of age. Regulation 7 of, and the Schedule to, the Children (Leaving Care) Regulations (NI) 2005 sets out the matters to be dealt with within the Pathway Plan which includes a detailed plan for the education or training of the young person. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) were introduced in 2011 for all Looked After children and are required to be developed alongside teachers and in place up to compulsory school leaving age.


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 looked after and 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 fulfill 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.

THE 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 in Careers Resource Centres, Jobs and Benefits Offices and Job Centres throughout Northern Ireland.

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

 <p>PHONE</p> <p>Call:</p> <p>0300 200 7820</p> <p>to speak to a careers adviser in your area.</p>	 <p>WEB</p> <p>Visit the Careers Service website:</p> <p>www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers</p> <p>The site also carries extensive information on education, skills and training.</p>	 <p>EMAIL</p> <p>Email a careers adviser at:</p> <p>csni@delni.gov.uk</p>
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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 will help 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.

Careers advice and guidance is delivered throughout Northern Ireland by the Department for Employment and Learning’s professionally qualified Careers advisers based in Careers Resource Centres, Careers Offices, Jobcentres and Jobs & Benefits offices.

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.

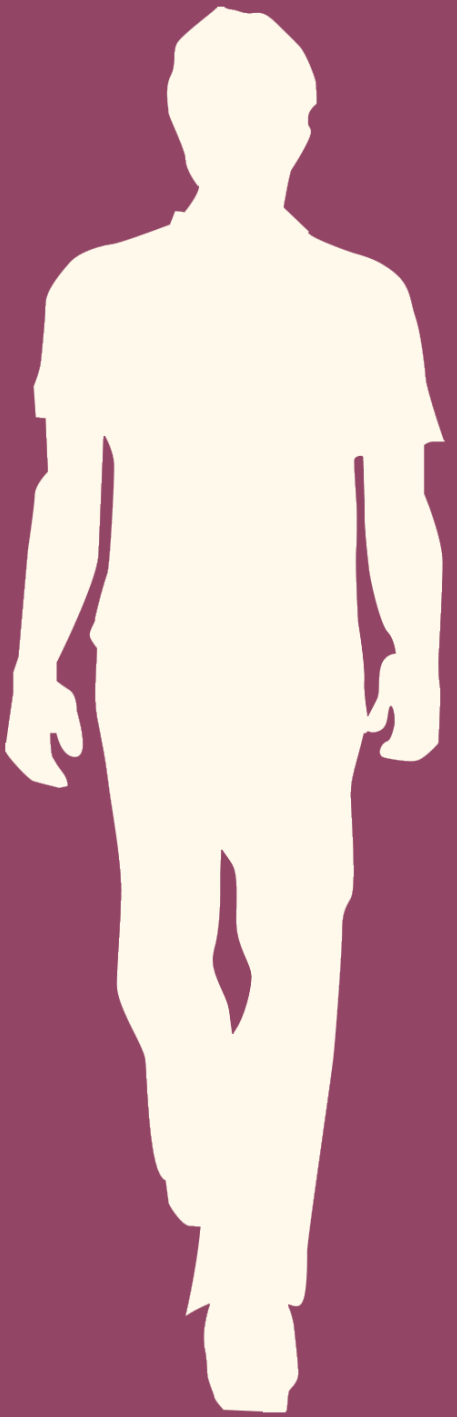


WHAT PROVISIONS DO COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MAKE FOR LOOKED AFTER AND CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE?

All Further Education (FE) colleges and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have either achieved or are working towards the Buttle UK Quality Award. The Buttle UK Quality Mark has resulted in a structured, sustained effort to encourage participation in both further education and higher education from looked after and care experienced young people. It has also provided greater levels of support to help these students to successfully complete their studies and progress to further study, training or employment.

The Department for Employment and Learning has been strongly supportive of the Buttle UK Quality Mark and the work Buttle UK has done with further and higher education providers in Northern Ireland to provide a framework to improve and accredit support for looked after children in higher education. The Department has provided support for FEs to gain the award and has encouraged HEIs to achieve the award.

Discussions have taken place between key Northern Ireland stakeholders to discuss the withdrawal of the Quality Mark and the way forward for Northern Ireland. Alternative ways to ensure that institutions adhere to Quality Mark standards are currently being considered.



ACCESS TO SUCCESS is the Department for Employment and Learning’s (DELNI) regional strategy to widen participation in higher education among those groups which are currently under-represented, in particular students from disadvantaged backgrounds and including students from a care background. It was launched in September 2012 and has 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.


Significant progress has been made on a range of measures in the strategy.

THESE INCLUDE:

- the launch in March 2014 of “Reach Higher”, a single, centralised and co-ordinated higher education awareness and aspiration raising campaign to better communicate the benefits of higher education to under-represented sections of the community;
- work on the introduction the “Reach” programme which aims to expand the range of aspiration and educational attainment raising programmes at school, college, community and the workplace;
- the introduction of Widening Access and Participation Plans – an amalgamation of Access Agreements and Widening Participation Strategic Assessments into a single document which is produced annually 12-18 months in advance of the proposed fee year. This 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.




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.

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 www.delni.gov.uk/index/further-and-higher-education.

Each is committed to the promotion of a caring, supportive environment where staff and 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. The Buttle UK Quality Mark is awarded to FE colleges that demonstrate a commitment to young people in and leaving care. The Quality Mark is a formal acknowledgment of this commitment to care leavers.

WHAT IS FURTHER EDUCATION?

If the young person is over 16, he / she could consider enrolling at a further education college 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 at levels 2 and above and Higher Education programmes.

More and more pupils 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

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 student support for progression, retention and successful outcomes.

We have a Learning Support Officer dedicated to ensuring that young people get the package of support they require to be successful in their studies. Belfast Metropolitan College holds the Buttle UK Quality Mark at exemplary level.

DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR BELFAST MET:




JENNIFER CAMPBELL



PHONE

02890 265 097



EMAIL

jennifercampbell@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. The Northern

Regional College was awarded the Buttle UK Quality Mark Award.



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 counseling, 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. NWRC was awarded the Buttle UK Quality Mark in 2011 in recognition of our support for students from a background of care.



NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE

DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR NRC:



STEPHEN MCCARTNEY



PHONE

028 2563 6254



EMAIL

stephen.mccartney@nrc.ac.uk



DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR NWRC:



ANN MCGARRIGLE



PHONE

028 712 78709



EMAIL

ann.mcgarrigle@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.

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE



The **SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE** (SERC) recognises that the challenges facing looked after children and care leavers as enormous. Applying for and succeeding within Further Education can seem daunting to looked after and care experienced young people as they face the additional challenges of limited family support, financial disadvantage and sometimes struggling to find somewhere to live. At SERC we aim to help find solutions to these challenges and we encourage all looked after children or care leavers to disclose that they have experienced the care system. This information will be passed directly to the Pastoral Care Team who will then make contact with the young person to discuss their particular circumstances and the options available to them. All information will stay in strict confidence and will not be passed on without prior consent. We have dedicated Student Support Staff who can tailor any support required directly to a young person’s needs. Roger Duncan is the dedicated specialist for care leavers.

DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR SRC:



RAYMOND MALLON



PHONE

0845 604 0033



EMAIL

mallonr@src.ac.uk

DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR SERC:



ROGER DUNCAN



PHONE

028 926 77225
ext1710



EMAIL

rduncan@serc.ac.uk



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 enrollment stage, will enable them to enter and continue on their chosen career path.

DEDICATED SPECIALIST FOR SWC:



SHARON PRITCHARD



PHONE

0845 603 1881



EMAIL

sharon.pritchard@swc.ac.uk

South West College

HOW TO MAKE AN APPLICATION

<http://www.welbni.org/index.cfm/do/StudFin>

An application can be made as follows...



FORM

Download a form from the Forms and Guides section of

www.welbni.org/feapplication



EMAIL

feawards@welbni.org

for an application

Each FE produces an annual college 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 the 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.

These 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

PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES

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. ELB grants include:

one: EMA

If the young person is a UK resident and under 20 years old on 30 June 2015, 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 the young person is under 19 years of age on 1st July 2015 and lives more than 3 miles from the nearest College, he/she can apply for a Bus Pass.

three: FREE SCHOOL- MEAL ALLOWANCES

Students up to the age of 18 can apply for free school meals.

Application should be made to the relevant local office of the Education Authority. This will have changed with the introduction of the new Education Authority therefore needs to be updated.

four: FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) COURSES

The arrangements for applying for Further Education Awards have not changed with the creation of the Education Authority (EA). The Western Region, on behalf of the five regions of the Education Authority, offers a limited number of Further Education Awards each year for full and part-time courses for students undertaking courses up to and including Level 3. The closing date for applications for funding for full time courses is 1st September 2015. Eligible students who submit an application by 30 June 2015 will be guaranteed funding.

It is important that application is made early to avoid disappointment. This form is can be downloaded from <http://www.eani.org.uk/i-want-to/apply-for-a-further-education-award/>. Contact the Western region of the Education Authority for further information. ☎ 028 8225 4546 / 824121

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 Student Service/ Support Offices.

six: CHILDCARE

Full-time students may be eligible for assistance with childcare costs, for registered childminders only (including creches, nurseries etc). Application can be made directly to: www.studentfinanceneni.co.uk

seven: CARE TO LEARN

This is a support scheme which is available to students aged between 16-20 years old, where a young person may be eligible for full support for registered childcare whilst going to college to study. Application should be made to the Student Services at the young person's College.

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 need and can be either providing technical equipment or personal support. Those declaring a learning difficulty or disability will be assessed upon enrollment 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.

Early application to local offices of the Education Authority is advised because forms are processed in the order they are received. Contact should be made with the relevant ELB to ascertain the closing date for application.

Regardless of whether the College has offered the young person a place on a course, an application should be made as the young person can change his/ her course choice at a later date.

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

Student Awards Section
Western Area,
Educational Authority
Hospital Road,
OMAGH,
County Tyrone,
BT79 0AW



nine: CHOICES PLUS

Choices Plus is open to lone parents throughout Northern Ireland who would like to return to training and education in their local area. Funded by the EU’s ESF programme and designed to complement government programmes, it offers support and bursaries to help with the costs associated with returning to study, including childcare, travel and course fees.

In addition, Choices Plus supports lone parents to progress towards employment by providing professional careers advice and guidance, work placements with local employers to gain experience, welfare rights advice incorporating “better-off” calculations, ongoing mentoring and support with job search, job applications and interview preparation.

Places are limited so we recommend that you apply as soon as possible. If you are interested in finding out more information please contact Avril on 02890231417.

Claire from Belfast was a participant on Choices Plus for one year while she completed the NEB Certificate in Dental Nursing.

She received help towards her course fees and childcare costs. After qualifying she secured part time employment at a local dental surgery.

She really enjoys being back at work and feels it has been beneficial for both herself and her children.

WHY CHOICES PLUS?

“Choices Plus has opened so many doors for me; it was a big step for me moving back into work and without the support and financial assistance from the project I don’t think it would have been possible. It has made a definite improvement to myself and my children’s lives. Choices Plus is great and I would highly recommend it”

- CLAIRE FROM BELFAST

ten: HSC TRUST FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT AND ASSISTANCE

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

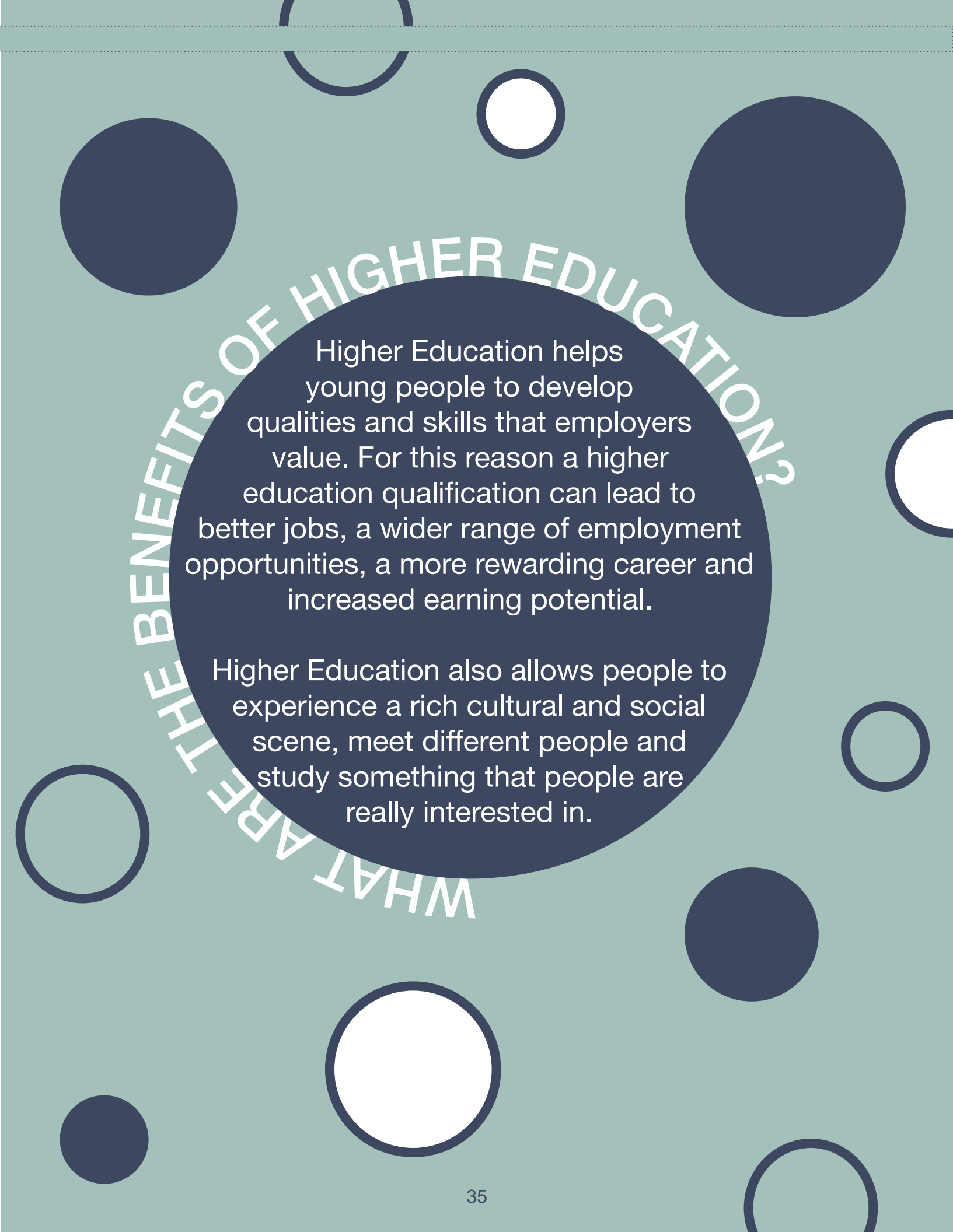
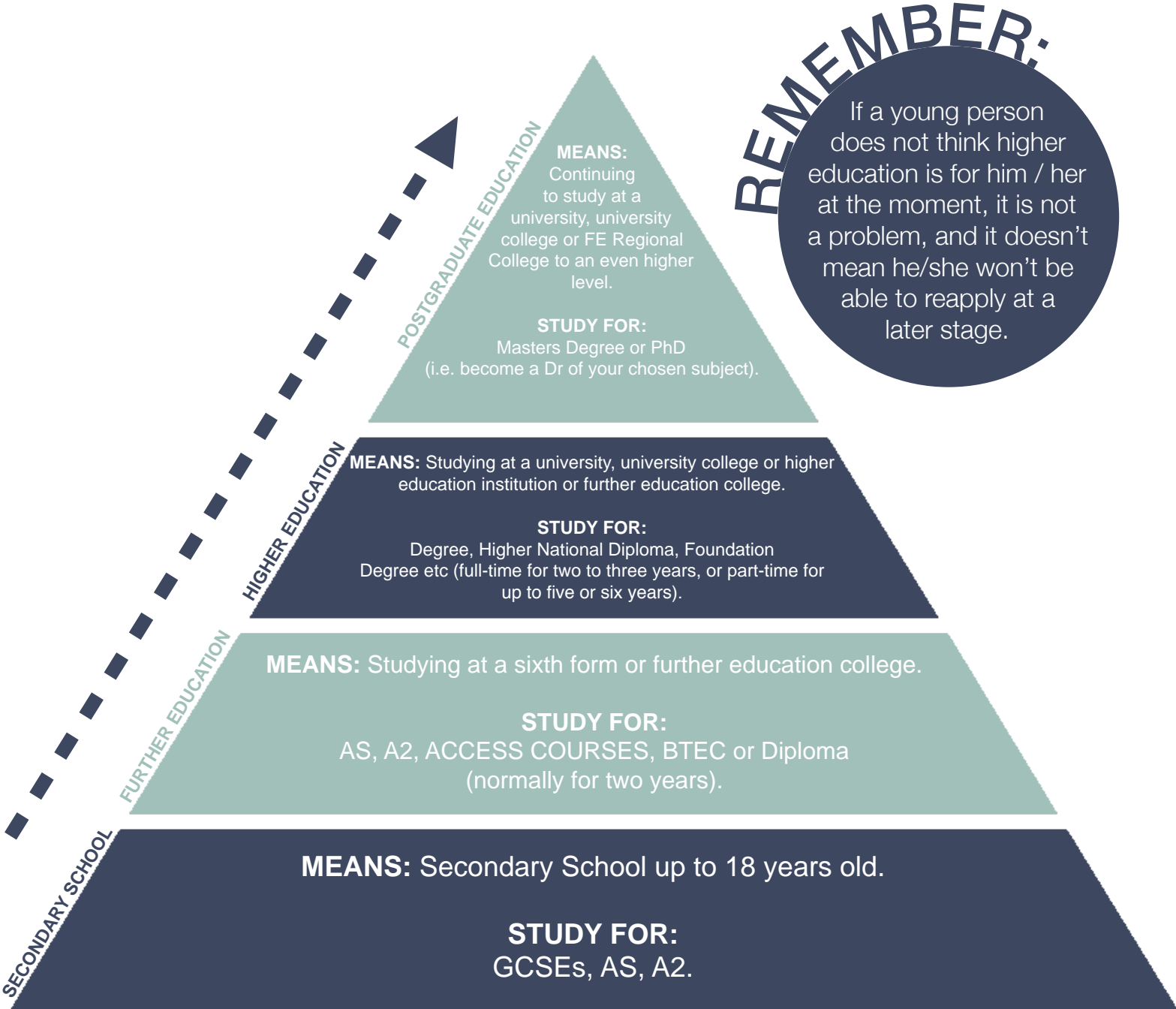
Guidance on the Financial Arrangements to Support Care Experienced Young People in Higher Education Institutions

JANUARY 2015

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 www.delni.gov.uk/index/further-and-higher-education/higher-education/role-structure-he-division.html.

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, art and music.



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.

HEIs IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND DEDICATED CONTACTS FOR CARE LEAVERS

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 counseling, careers and study skills support and the advice and guidance of a dedicated student support team.

*Dedicated Contact for
St Mary's University College:*

 Susan Morgan

 028 9026 8250

 s.morgan@smucb.ac.uk

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE



Stranmillis University College welcomes students from a care background and has recently been awarded the Buttle UK Quality Mark. As part of this we will offer a range of support for those who are leaving care or have previously spent time in care, for example, a free Halls of Residence place for the duration of their degree and a full time dedicated member of staff to look after the pastoral and academic needs of care experienced students. During the academic year 2013-2014 Stranmillis also invested in the appointment of a Looked After Children Graduate Intern to assist and inform policy and practice.

*Dedicated Contact for
Stranmillis University College:*

 Bronagh McKee

 028 9038 4405

 b.mckee@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 Student Support Outreach Advisor.

Those full time undergraduates who meet this criterion are eligible for £1000 Care Leavers Bursary per year whilst studying at Ulster University. Ulster University has achieved Buttle UK Quality Mark status since August 2009.

*Dedicated Contact for
Ulster University:*

 Paul Cassidy

 028 716 75233

 p.cassidy@ulster.ac.uk

QUEENS 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. Queen's has recently been awarded the Buttle UK Quality Mark. 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 with the Student Financial Adviser, 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 counseling, careers and study skills support throughout their time at University.

*Dedicated Contact for
Queens University:*

 Deirdre Lynskey

 028 9097 1567

 d.lynskey@qub.ac.uk

OPEN UNIVERSITY



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 enroll on our website - <http://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 higher education level. Candidates may also initially register for an Access Module “test the water” and to see if distance learning suits them. 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. Fee waivers are available to students on certain benefits or a low income to help with costs and our Student Registration Team will guide applicants through the application process.

Our dedicated Student Support Teams will maintain individualised support throughout the educational journey, including guidance in choosing study pathways and careers advice.

For Open University students there are grants to help towards the cost of tuition fees. There are two types of grant 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.

The online eligibility checker will help candidates work out if they qualify for financial support:
<http://css2.open.ac.uk/fafcalculator/eligibility.aspx>

Dedicated Contact for
Open University:

 Janette Nhangaba

 028 902 45025

 janette.nhangaba@open.ac.uk



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.

View video link below:
<http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/individual-needs/advice-care-leavers>



CAN A YOUNG PERSON GET HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

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.

See www.studentfinancenir.co.uk for further details.

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*

***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.**

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 qualify for the disability premium or severe disability premium;	is deaf and qualify 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.

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.

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.

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.

Student finance includes:

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

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.

HOW MUCH CAN THE 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 £3,805 for tuition fees in academic year 2015/16. 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 £3,805 in academic year 2015/16.

Universities and colleges in England, Scotland and Wales can charge up to £9,000 for tuition fees in academic year 2015/16. 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 £9,000.

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.

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, 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:	The amount available is:
£19,203 or less	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 2015/16 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

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 Employment and Learning 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.

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

3. Register of Support Providers

Through DSAs the DEL 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.
The young person will pay 9% of anything earned over £17,335 (15/16) before tax per year. For example:

Period Applicable:	Annual Repayment Threshold:	Monthly Repayment Threshold:	Weekly Repayment Threshold:
6/4/15 - 5/4/16	£16,910	£1,409	£325

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%



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 job even easier.

WHERE DOES CAO OPERATE FROM?

The CAO Application System operates from the CAO premises at:

	ADDRESS Tower House, Eglinton Street, Galway	OFFICE CONTACT TIMES Office: 09:00am to 1:00pm and 2:00 to 5:00pm Telephone: 09:30am to 1:00pm and 2:00pm to 5:00pm Monday through Friday
	PHONE (091) 509800	
	FAX (091) 562344	
	WEBSITE www.cao.ie Application may be made online on this website.	

CAO HANDBOOK

This CAO Handbook gives information on application and admission procedures only.

<http://www2.cao.ie/handbook/handbook/hb.pdf>

Application should not be made for any course without first consulting the information literature of the institution offering that course.

CHAPTER
NINE

ORGANISATIONS

WHO
SUPPORT
CARE
LEAVERS

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.

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 counseling helpline



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 each year 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

FOSTERING THE FUTURE PROJECT

Fostering the Future is an innovative new Fostering Network NI project funded by The Big Lottery’s Reaching Out Empowering Young People Programme which aims to work directly with foster carers and young people in foster care to meet their training, development and support needs.

The key areas of work for children and young people within the Fostering the Future project include combating negative life events, increasing self-esteem and self- confidence, developing skills and assisting with transitioning from child care to adult independence.



PHONE:

028 9070 5056



EMAIL:

ni@fostering.net

LONDONDERRY VOYPIC

13 Queen Street,
Londonderry,
BT48 7EG
Tel: 028 7137 8980

BELFAST AND SOUTH-EASTERN VOYPIC

9-11 Botanic Avenue,
Belfast,
BT7 1JG
Tel: 028 9024 4888

LURGAN VOYPIC

Flat 12,
Mount Zion House,
Edward Street,
Lurgan,
BT66 6DB
Tel: 028 3831 3380

BALLYMENA VOYPIC

25 Castle Street,
Ballymena,
BT43 7BT
Tel: 028 2563 2641

WEBSITE

www.voypic.org

FOLLOW US ON

Facebook and Twitter

VOYPIC is a charity working across Northern Ireland promoting the rights and improving the lives of children and young people cared for away from home.

They may be living at home in care, with foster or kinship carers, in children's homes, in secure settings or in supported accommodation. They may be preparing to leave care or be care leavers.

Since 1993, we have worked directly with children and young people encouraging them to participate in the plans and decisions affecting their lives. We support them to have their voices heard. All of our work with children and young people helps us to promote positive change in legislation, policy and practice. We work in co-operation with voluntary and statutory partners to build effective policy and practice for the safety and support of vulnerable children and young people.

VOYPIC works across Northern Ireland promoting the rights and improving the lives of children and young people cared for away from home.

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



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.



SCOTLAND, ENGLAND AND WALES: RESOURCES ON SUPPORT FOR LOOKED AFTER AND CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE IN FE AND HEIs

SCOTLAND

The HE
Handbook for Care
Leavers: A Guide to the
Support available in HE
Scotland January 2014;
Who Cares Trust

http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/data/files/H.E.Handbook_2014_Scotland.pdf

ENGLAND

The HE
Handbook for Care
Leavers: A Guide to the
Support available in HE
England January 2014;
Who Cares Trust

http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/data/files/H.E.Handbook_2014_England.pdf

WALES

Further and Higher
Education Guide for young
people in and leaving care in
Wales, Information for 2014/2015;
South West Wales, Reaching Wider
Partnership

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/media/Further%20and%20Higher%20Education%20Guide%20for%20young%20people%20in%20and%20leaving%20care%20in%20Wales.pdf>

APPENDIX 1

Contact Details
for Health and
Social Care Trust
Services

TRUST	NAME	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Belfast Trust	Hilary Walker	Fairview 1, Mater Hospital Site, 47-51 Crumlin Road, Belfast, BT14 6AB	028 95041279	hilary.walker@belfasttrust.hscni.net
Northern Trust	Ian Allen	Alder House, Antrim, BT41 4JE	028 37520562	ian.allen@northerntrust.hscni.net
South Eastern Trust	Maurice Largey	Ards Family Resource Centre, James Street, Newtownards, BT23 4DY	028 91818518	maurice.largey@setrust.hscni.net
Southern Trust	Liz Stevenson	Lisanally House, 87 Lisanally Lane, Armagh, BT61 7HW	028 37520562	liz.stevenson@southerntrust.hscni.net
Western Trust	Stephen McLaughlin	Riverview House, Abercorn Road, Londonderry	028 71266111	stephen.mclaughlin@westerntrust.hscni.net

APPENDIX 2

Contact Details
for Education and
Library Boards

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 Board
County Hall,
182 Galgorm Road,
BALLYMENA,
County Antrim,
BT42 1HN

Email: student.awards@neelb.org.uk

BELFAST

Student Awards Section Belfast Education
and Library Board,
40 Academy Street,
BELFAST,
BT1 2NQ

Email: info.belb@belb.co.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

SOUTH EASTERN
(NORTHERN IRELAND)

Student Awards Section South Eastern
Education and Library Board,
Grahamsbridge Road,
Dundonald,
BELFAST,
BT16 2HS

Email: info@seelb.org.uk

WESTERN
(NORTHERN IRELAND)

Student Awards Section Western Education
and Library Board,
1 Hospital Road,
OMAGH,
County Tyrone,
BT79 0AW

Email: info@welbni.org

APPENDIX 3

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 4

Further Education Colleges in Northern Ireland

COLLEGES
NORTHERN IRELAND
(CNI) MEMBERS

BELFAST METROPOLITAN COLLEGE



Titanic
Quarter



e3
Springvale



Millfield



Tower
Street



Whiterock



Castlereagh



Visit our website: www.belfastmet.ac.uk



For course enquiries: 028 9026 5265



Email: Central_Admissions@belfastmet.ac.uk

NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE



Strand Road L'Derry



Limavady



Strabane



Visit our website: www.nwrc.ac.uk



Derry/Londonderry: 028 7127 6000
Limavady: 028 7127 8700
Strabane: 028 7138 2317



Email: info@nwrc.ac.uk

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

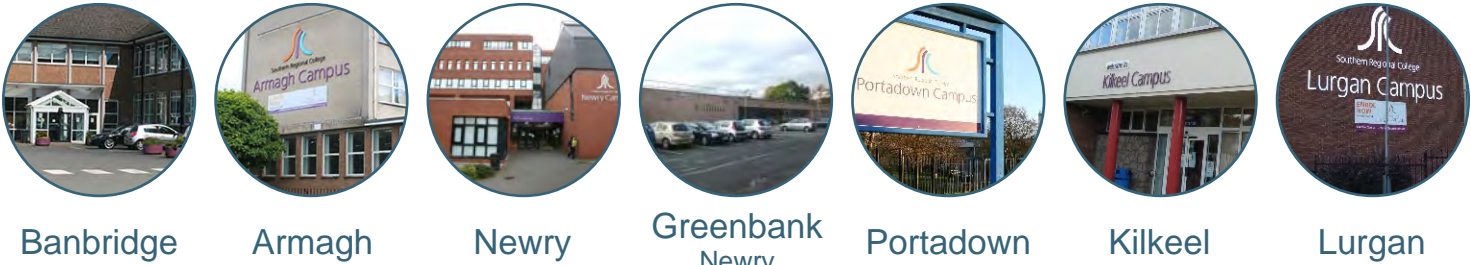


Visit our website: www.nrc.ac.uk



For all enquiries please contact
Newtownabbey Campus on:
028 9085 5066

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE



Visit our website: www.src.ac.uk



For course enquiries: 0845 604 0033



Email: info@src.ac.uk

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE



Cookstown



Dungannon



Enniskillen



Omagh



Visit our website: www.swc.ac.uk



For course enquiries: 0845 603 1881



Email: StudentPortal@belfastmet.ac.uk

SOUTH EASTERN REGIONAL COLLEGE



Downpatrick



Lisburn



Newtownards



Bangor



Newcastle



Holywood



Ballynahinch



Visit our website: www.serc.ac.uk



For course enquiries: 0845 600 7555



Email: info@serc.ac.uk

