

Stand Alone Pledge for Estranged Students

Edinburgh Napier University

go beyond.

Realise your potential

Edinburgh Napier University's dedicated Named Contact welcomes queries and comments, please contact Peter Tormey.
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"An estranged person is someone who no longer has the support of their family due to a breakdown in their relationship which has led to ceased contact. This might mean your biological or adoptive parents or wider family members who have been responsible for supporting you in the past."

Scottish Funding Council

Stand Alone Pledge for Estranged Students

Our Pledge – to provide clear information, support and as frictionless transition into, and throughout, University as possible to estranged students.

Outcomes - in delivering this plan we aim to:

- Increase the number of estranged individuals who self-declare at application, matriculation and during studies;
 - Monitor and increase the number of estranged students accessing financial support such as discretionary funding;
 - Increase access to stable 52 week University accommodation
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Outputs - in delivering this plan we aim to:

- Monitor, evaluate and report positive retention, progression and completion rates (in-line with University and national benchmarks as a minimum);
 - Embed a University environment which nurtures estranged students to succeed;
 - Work collegially with regional university and college partners through the *Care Experienced, Estranged and Carers East Forum (CEECEF)*, third sector organisations and community groups to build professional working relationships.
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Summary of Actions - to implement this Pledge for Estranged Students we will:

- Commit to the provision of access to University student accommodation for 52 weeks per year, from matriculation to graduation stages to eligible students;
- Work with partners at the Unite Foundation to promote accommodation scholarships;
- Provide financial and funding support, including access to bursaries, where appropriate;
- Ensure pastoral support and counselling is available;
- Promote University support and professional services such as Disability and Inclusion, Employability, Global Mobility and Academic Skills from first contact (pre-entry) to graduation;
- Highlight the dedicated Named Contact's role and their responsibility to liaise (with parties listed above) on behalf of students with consent;
- Enhance the University's information concerning estranged students on our webpage.

Edinburgh Napier University's Pledge for Estranged Students

Edinburgh Napier University is proud to state our continued support for our students who study without the support of parents or family, and we are delighted to formally announce our ongoing commitment by signing the [Stand Alone Pledge](#). The University is firmly rooted to the principle of promoting fair access to higher education to under-represented groups based on potential to succeed, acknowledging the additional barriers some students may have to overcome.

Widening participation to higher education is a central aspect of Edinburgh Napier University's identity and we work closely with regional schools, adult education programmes and colleges from across Scotland to offer routes into university study. We work collaboratively at a regional and national level on widening access initiatives, leading on many projects for example the [Hub for SUCCESS](#) which promotes tertiary educational opportunities for care-experienced individuals of all ages.

Edinburgh Napier University is rooted in the communities where we are based and we continue to strive to create a more diverse, representative student body, including young people who experience family breakdown and estrangement. We understand the additional barriers estranged students face and must overcome to access, and succeed, in higher education. We celebrate the great successes of our students and recognise the additional endeavour, hard-work and commitment required for estranged learners to fulfil their academic potential. By signing [this Pledge](#) Edinburgh Napier University will continue to create a more welcoming, understanding and equitable environment for our students studying without familial support to fully participate in our university community.

To support greater participation the University is pleased to share our pledges to support estranged students, including;

- Access to 52-week University student accommodation, including out-of-hours access to Residence Assistants;
- Support with issues related to providing a guarantor to secure University student accommodation;
- Support with queries concerning private rented tenancies through the independent students' union service ENSA Advice;
- Providing guidance on bursaries and financial support, and where requested by liaising with external student funding bodies ;
- Access to mental health, counselling, academic and signposting to other student services through our Student Wellbeing and Inclusion department;
- Providing the opportunity for students to declare their estrangement confidentially at enrolment or at any point during their studies;
- Offering community outreach initiatives such as campus visits.

We commend Stand Alone for their ongoing work supporting estranged students and by signing this Pledge we aim to ensure that every student studying at Edinburgh Napier University never feels like they stand alone, and have access to the timely support they require to reach their academic potential.

Yours faithfully,

Professor Alistair Sambell, Senior Vice Principal and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Edinburgh Napier University