



**Regionally Focused – Globally Engaged**



# **Supporting Student Carers Policy**

**February 2020**



supporting  
student carers in  
further education

## History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1.1	New Policy – Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award	Jen MacKenzie	Feb-20

# Policy Statement

Borders College is committed to widening access and to providing equity of opportunity to all students to help ensure that all students are supported to reach their full potential. Borders College are therefore committed to supporting students who are Student Carers and being as flexible as possible to assist at all stages of the learning journey.

While having a caring responsibility is not treated as a 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act (2010), no student carer should experience indirect or direct discrimination by association of providing unpaid care to someone with a 'protected characteristic' such as disability or age.

## 1 Introduction

Our vision is to be a College in which all learners succeed and which inspires growth, creates opportunity, raises aspirations and enhances lives. We are an institution free from bias, providing equality of access and opportunity to succeed for all its students. Wherever there is disadvantage-creating, barriers to learning the College will make adjustments and provide services to ensure that equality of access and opportunity is preserved.

This policy provides details on our commitment to supporting applicants and students who are unpaid carers, at any point during their studies at Borders College.

Borders College uses the Carer's Trust definition of an unpaid carer:

*A carer is anyone who "provides unpaid care for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support."*

## 2 Scope

This policy covers advice and guidance to students who, at any point during their studies at Borders College disclose they have unpaid caring responsibilities.

This policy does not cover:

- Students with parental responsibilities, unless for a child with a disability
- Students working in a paid caring capacity

However, it should be noted that the College recognises that all students will have unique needs and we strive to anticipate and meet the needs of all students.

### 3 Key Principles

- 3.1 Borders College have a role in advising and supporting students who already are, or who anticipate becoming carers, as well as providing the same advice and support to prospective students making enquiries.
- 3.2 This policy covers both prospective and current Borders College students who have an unpaid caring responsibility.

### Disclosure and confirming Carer Status

- 3.3 Confirming student carer status is the responsibility of the student. Declaration of carer status can be made as part of our admissions process; at interview or enrolment; or to any member of staff at any point during the student journey.
- 3.4 Students can self-refer at any point of their student journey through the student portal, where they can complete a referral form for support. Appendix 1 – Referral Form.
- 3.5 There may be circumstances whereby you will need to verify your identity as a student with unpaid caring responsibilities so that Borders College can ensure you get access to specific types of support such as financial or reasonable adjustments to your studies. Students will be issued with a BC8 confirmation form at point of disclosure to aid the process. Appendix 1 – BC8 Form.

In most situations, self-certification will be the most common method used. However, at any point Borders College may request more information or evidence to confirm carer status or any changes to the student caring responsibilities.

- 3.6 A student may take on caring responsibilities at any time during their learning journey and it is acknowledged that there may be unpredictability in terms of caring commitment and time scales. It is therefore recognised that the needs of each carer are unique and the support which an individual may require will be variable.

### Financial Support available

- 3.7 The College administers a discretionary bursary fund, Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), childcare fund and hardship fund on behalf of the Scottish Funding Council. Student Carers are provided with details on how to apply once they accept their offer of place.
- 3.8 Higher Education applicants may be eligible for financial support which is administered by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), again details of how Student Carers can apply are provided after acceptance of place.

### Support available

3.9 At the point of disclosure, Student Carers will be informed of the support available:

- Provide support and guidance through the admissions process including help and advice about courses. We guarantee an interview for applicants meeting the course entry criteria.
- Help make the transition to college as smooth as possible (this might be as simple as showing you around the campus before you become a student)
- Provide support and guidance on your funding entitlement and the funding application process.
- Allocate a named person that you can contact for advice during your time at College.
- Offer on-going support and guidance to help you to overcome any obstacles that arise or could become a barrier to success.
- Help you to access additional support services when required.
- Offer support for your attendance and progression on your course and meet with you during the academic year.
- Offer you support to plan your next steps, whether to another course with us; moving on to university; employment; or taking on something new.

## 4 Responsibilities

The **Senior Leadership Team** is responsible for approving this policy and monitoring its effective implementation.

The **Assistant Principals** are responsible for ensuring that the policy is complied with by Student Support and teaching teams.

The **Vice Principal: Curriculum and Student Services** is responsible for implementing the policy.

The **Teaching Staff** are responsible for complying with the policy.

The **Student Services Team** are responsible for providing advice and Guidance.

The **Students** who disclose they are student carers, in line with our definition as detailed and have confirmation of status are entitled to have individualised support to help them to access courses and to reach their potential.

The designated Achievement Coach and/or Student Wellbeing Adviser to meet with the student and provide support across the student journey.

The **named contact** to work with the student and other relevant staff to meet the needs of the student, where possible and where reasonable, and to signpost any additional support available from external agencies.

### 5 Related Documents

Relevant legislation:

- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Scottish Funding Council – Outcome Agreement
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Carers (Scotland) Act (2016)
- Carers (Scotland) Bill (2015)
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2018)
- The Data Protection Act (1998)

**This policy should be understood in conjunction with the other College strategies, policies and documentation:**

#### **Access and Inclusion Strategy**

Our Strategy underpins and guides all we do and provides an umbrella under which every aspect of the student journey is encompassed. The Students named above, along with other priority groups, are highlighted in our strategy as a particular group who may require some additional support to enter education and achieve a successful outcome.

#### **Equality Outcomes and Action Plan 2017-2021**

May 2012, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 came into force. They apply to the College and their purpose is to enable us to meet our obligation under the general duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or any other prohibited conduct
- Advance equality of opportunity by having due regard in particular to the need to remove or minimise disadvantage; meet the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others; and encourage participation in public life
- Foster good relations, which involves in particular the need to tackle harassment, bullying and prejudice, and promote understanding

Relevant Policies:

- Admissions Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Student Behaviour and Discipline Policy and Procedure
- Student Guidance Policy

### 6 Review

Compliance with the policy will be monitored and evaluated through regular update reports from the Corporate Parenting, Student Carers and Estranged Working Group to the Access and Inclusion Committee.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years and updated as necessary.

#### Other relevant services:

##### Care Aware Co-ordinator:

Jen Mackenzie

Email: [careaware@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:careaware@borderscollege.ac.uk)

Telephone: 01896 662594

Text: 07788320294

##### Students' Association:

Email – [bcsa@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:bcsa@borderscollege.ac.uk)

Telephone – 01896 662586

Website – <http://www.tartanmonkey.co.uk/>

##### Student Wellbeing Team:

Email – [studentadvice@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:studentadvice@borderscollege.ac.uk)

Telephone – 01896 662516

Text – 07833627387

Message: <https://www.facebook.com/BC.SAdvice1>

##### Learning Support:

Email – [learningsupport@borderscollege.ac.uk](mailto:learningsupport@borderscollege.ac.uk)

#### Useful Organisations:

Borders Carers Centre – <https://www.borderscarerscentre.co.uk/>

Action for Children – Chimes Service – <https://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/>

Edinburgh and Midlothian Carers Support – <https://www.vocal.org.uk/carer-support/>

Cornerstone - In Your Corner – <https://www.cornerstone.org.uk/>

Carers Trust Scotland – <https://carers.org/country/carers-trust-scotland>

Skills Development Scotland – <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Young Scot – Carer Grants – <https://young.scot/information/rights/young-carer-grant/>

## Form BC8 – Certificate to Confirm Student Carers Status



Please provide the following details to confirm Student Carer Status:

Please note Borders College uses the Carer's Trust definition of an unpaid carer:

*A carer is anyone who "provides unpaid care for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support."*

<b>Student's Name:</b>	<b>Date of Birth:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Postcode:</b>	
<b>Course:</b>	

<b>Proof of Status</b> (Please attach any relevant document)	<b>Please tick</b>
A GP letter confirming carer status	
A local authority Carer's Assessment, Adult Carer Support Plan or Young Carers Statement	
Young Carer's Authorisation Card	
Other relevant documentation, for example a letter from a Carer's organisation, social worker, carer group, receipt of benefits	

<b>Self-certification</b> , short statement, regarding the nature of the caring duties and how this may affect your studies, including how long you anticipate this will last	
Who do you care for?	
Indicate nature of duties	
Possible impact on studies	
External support	

*Please note this form will only be used for the purposes of support during your academic studies at Borders College.*

### DECLARATION

*I hereby certify that the information given above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.*

<b>Name (printed):</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	

Status: Approved  
Policy Dated: February 2020  
Author: Student Services Team Lead  
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Equality Impact Assessed: May 2020