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Dear Becca

### **Stand Alone Pledge**

I am delighted to be writing to you to give our commitment to the Stand Alone Pledge. We value greatly the work that you and colleagues do at Stand Alone to support young people estranged from their families and support you are offering Universities and Colleges to ensure greater awareness, inclusion and support.

As a University located in an area where young people are among the least likely to progress to Higher Education we recognise the absolute importance of expert services and accessible support for underrepresented and vulnerable students. We have a long and proud record of dedicating ourselves to raising aspirations, attainment and in supporting our students to fulfil their potential.

### **Our Pledge Commitments**

In committing to the Pledge, we are focussed on developing further our provision of support across the four priority areas identified as barriers to success. The below, outlines our commitments across all areas of the pledge. In addition to this, we will work with Stand Alone, other organisations who support estranged students and with estranged students studying at Staffordshire University to review the value of this offer and make changes where it is deemed necessary and important.

#### **Outreach**

Where pupils are estranged from their families, we will support them in making informed decisions about their future. We are committed to developing a greater awareness among school and college staff and advisers as to the support we provide to students as they transition into and through University life. We will be developing a guide for School and College staff about the support that we provide for estranged students, and have developed webpages which provide information for estranged students and their supporters about the support we can provide from initial enquiry through to post-graduation.

#### **Money and Finance**

From September 2018 we pledge to offer estranged students dedicated financial support and priority access to University hardship funds for the duration of their course. We will work hard to raise awareness of part time work opportunities and placements and will support estranged students to secure and succeed with these opportunities.

**Accommodation**

We will ensure that estranged students have guaranteed access to University accommodation 365 days a year and for the duration of their time studying at the University.

**Mental Health and Wellbeing**

Within our Student Guidance team, we have two named support contacts for Estranged students who are accessible to deliver information, advice and support at any stage of the student experience; from enquiry through to post-graduation.

We will also be providing named contacts in our Student Wellbeing Service and will ensure that students are provided with information about Counselling and Wellbeing services available to them within and outside of the University.

We commit to developing our whole communities understanding of the challenges and barriers experienced by Estranged Students. We will achieve this through the delivery of training and the provision of information that will be available for all staff.

Our commitment to the pledge will be overseen by Ian Munton, Director of Library and Student Services who will be supported by colleagues and services from across our community.

We are very proud to be signing the Stand Alone Pledge and hope that this commitment and the efforts of our community will encourage more estranged students to identify themselves, access our services and reach their potential. We are looking forward to developing our relationship with Stand Alone as we look to develop our support and services for estranged students further.

Yours sincerely



**Sue Reece**  
**Pro Vice-Chancellor**