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Stand Alone
34B York Way
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Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing this letter as a commitment from The University of Surrey to the Stand Alone Pledge, demonstrating our support for students who are estranged and are studying without the support of their family.

We are committed to providing an inclusive education and opportunities for all students. Considering this, we recognise the need for enhanced support for estranged students. We began collecting data in the 2019/2020 academic year on how many estranged students joined The University of Surrey; currently 71 students have self-declared their status as estranged.

We have a holistic support package at The University of Surrey available for estranged students which is detailed below:

Outreach and transition

- Estranged students are a priority target group for all the University's widening participation and outreach activity, including the Year 12 Residential Summer School Programme and year 12 Taster Days, which in 2018 saw 6 students who declared that they were estranged.
- We have an admissions access scheme, In2Surrey, which is designed to support eligible students including those who are estranged, enter the university. It offers an alternative grade offer, access to on-campus events, an e-mentor and a scholarship of up to £1,500.
- We provide moving in support for estranged students and care leavers; students have a specific point of contact on moving in day and, from 2020/21, will receive a welcome pack upon arrival.

On course support

- A dedicated Senior Support Officer is available to support estranged students. This staff member provides bespoke pastoral and welfare support.
- We have a dedicated Careers Advisor who supports estranged students. This staff member is available to signpost, provide advice and guidance on many careers related queries including advice on CV enhancement and preparation for assessment centres.



Accommodation

- Estranged students are prioritised for accommodation on campus and they can access year-round 365 accommodation. This information can be found on the following link <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/student-support/student-communities> . The Senior Support Officer also refers students to the accommodation team in their second and third years of study to access year-round 365 accommodation.
- Estranged students are given special consideration for our summer placements abroad through our Global Engagement Team.

The University of Surrey is committed to learning from best practice in the higher education sector and ensures that evaluations of all our initiatives, which support access and participation, are an embedded part of our programme delivery. Below is a list of developmental priorities for improving policy, practice and provision at our institution for estranged students, which will be overseen by the University's Access and Participation Advisory Group:

- We will ensure we have a guarantor scheme in place for estranged students.
- We will look to create priority access for estranged students to the hardship fund.
- We are looking at pathways into further study for estranged students.
- We are looking at creating an estranged student specific bursary.
- We will continually commit to measuring the impact of policy and practice on estranged students and continue to place the voice of estranged students at the heart of developing new initiatives.

We hope that this letter effectively demonstrates our commitment to supporting estranged students across the student lifecycle. If you would like any further information from us, please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Yours faithfully,



Lucy Evans
Chief Student Officer
On behalf of the University of Surrey



