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Dear Becca,

Middlesex University is delighted to commit to the Stand Alone Pledge and develop further specific support for students who come into higher education without the support and encouragement of their families. At Middlesex we are committed to empowering our students with the tools, attributes and opportunities to turn their potential into success. We strive to remove any barriers to a rewarding learning experience and, ultimately, fulfilling careers and lives.

We are reviewing support for estranged students in our outreach work and for our current students and are developing further dedicated support for the coming academic year. An overview of this is provided below. Working with our Students' Union, we will develop an action plan for further measures beyond this.

Jude Cringle, the manager of our Student Welfare Advice Team is the named contact for estranged students. Our website for care leavers and estranged students provides information about contacts and support. We also contact students before they arrive and at certain times of the year, for instance in the run-up to assessment periods, to remind them of internal and external support available.

Pre-entry

We support estranged students on a one-to-one basis in our outreach work, providing in particular advice on student finance. We will extend this support to include a dedicated contact for estranged students in our outreach team and provide relevant information, case studies and a Q&A section on our website.

We will provide a programme taster day and confidence building programme for care leavers and estranged students with an overnight stay from summer 2018.

Wellbeing support

We will extend existing support offered by our Wellbeing Service which currently includes sessions on Coping Strategies and Difficult Conversations.

Peer support

We set up a peer-to-peer support group at the start of the 2016/17 academic year, led by a student ambassador who is a care leaver. Care leavers and estranged students are referred to this group which has, for instance, received support to organise a Christmas meal.

We are working in close partnership with our Students' Union to engage and support estranged students. The Students' Union provides a pre-arrival buddy scheme which can be tailored to the wishes of students.

Accommodation

Care leavers and estranged students are made a priority for University accommodation. We offer year-round accommodation for our students and also provide emergency accommodation. We have Resident Assistants in all our halls whose training includes information about the challenges estranged students may face and the internal and external support available for them.

Financial support

The University's Student Support Fund prioritises care leavers and estranged students. Emergency support is available through this fund.

Employment support

We will provide a named contact in our Employability team who will be available in term time as well as out of term time. We will proactively engage estranged students throughout their studies at Middlesex and offer a needs analysis at an early stage. Middlesex employability support is for life. We will encourage students to avail themselves of this ongoing support and to engage with mentoring opportunities provided through our extensive network of alumni.

I would like to congratulate you on the invaluable work of *Stand Alone* in raising awareness of the challenges estranged students face, highlighting their resilience and achievements and enhancing the support available to them at university.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Andrea Dlaska
Deputy Vice-Chancellor Learning and Innovation