

Susan Mueller
HE Director
Stand Alone
34B York Way
London
N1 9AB

s.mueller@standalone.org.uk

4 August 2020

Dear Susan,

Stand Alone Pledge

The University of Worcester has an established and successful whole institution approach to inclusion. This is demonstrated in our strategic vision and permeates all the University's structures and activities. Our mission is to enable those that can benefit from higher education to succeed and flourish regardless of background; we strive for continuous improvement in all that we do and in measuring our success as an institution: it is the successful realisation of our students' potential that is the true indicator.

Worcester Students' Union is passionate about supporting students from all backgrounds to develop and achieve personally, socially and academically. Through our Welfare and Inclusion Council and our Student Networks we are committed to continually listening to our members and delivering positive action in partnership with the University, which drives the inclusion agenda at the University. Our Student Networks provide a representative structure for our underrepresented and liberation groups. These Networks enable students to build communities and create change through collective action.

The University and Worcester Students' Union understand that students estranged from their families may lack the support, approval or knowledge that can facilitate successful outcomes in higher education and may experience multiple barriers in accessing and succeeding in higher education. Our approach is to work with students to understand their specific circumstances and to plan support that meets the individual needs. Through our commitment to this Pledge we are letting those students know how we will support them throughout their higher education journey.

Our well-established University strategy for supporting vulnerable learners including estranged students works across all stages of the student lifecycle and includes pre-entry outreach work; transition support; on course support and support for progression onto employment, further study and lifelong learning.

Working in partnership with Worcester Students' Union, the University is committed to supporting those students in the following ways:

- Dedicated specialist support for students who identify as estranged throughout the applicant cycle including assistance with attending open days, preparing an application and pre-entry connection to subject specific staff.

- Financial support advice and priority access to hardship funds including specialist budgeting advice, advice on applying to Student Finance England as an independent student.
- A dedicated staff member with whom the students can plan their support and who can liaise with the wider institutional support and academic areas.
- Priority access to University accommodation including the option to stay in University managed accommodation all year round for the duration of their course, if required.
- Signposting to an easy to access Counselling and Mental Health Service that prioritises quick appointments and additional support for estranged students.
- Careers and job support, including support to access University employment opportunities.
- Encourage and support estranged students to participate in University of Worcester and Worcester Students' Union committees and wider representation structures.

We look forward to working with Stand Alone and to further supporting our estranged and care leaver students.

Please liaise with Lucy Sandwell, Student Community Wellbeing Service Manager, who will be responsible for taking the Pledge commitment forward on behalf of the University of Worcester and for liaising with Stand Alone. Lucy can be contacted at l.sandwell@worc.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,



Professor David Green CBE
Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive
University of Worcester



Meg Price
President
Worcester Students Union