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Principal and Chief Executive

Stand Alone
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To Whom It May Concern

Stand Alone Pledge

West College Scotland (WCS) publicly pledge to support students who are estranged from their families and who are studying at college without the support of a family network. This is core to the values we aspire to achieve. WCS actively ensures our students have the opportunity to achieve all they can and we place our students and local communities at the heart of what we do.

By supporting the Stand Alone Pledge, we aim to raise awareness not only within our own community but within the wider Education sector in Scotland.

WCS understands and recognises that estranged students have similar issues and support requirements to those who are care leavers and looked after students. Our growing support for care leavers and looked after students will be extended to our community of estranged students.

WCS pledges to support our estranged students by:

- Providing local cross campus contacts
- Providing support and advice around funding
- Creating and developing online information for estranged students with useful links and contact information
- Training appropriate staff in having the knowledge and understanding to support and provide guidance for estranged students
- Work collaboratively with the Students' Association to promote support available for estranged students
- Ensure appropriate signposting to external support organisations and our own internal teams for pastoral and wellbeing support

Clydebank Campus
College Square, Queens' Quay
Clydebank, G81 1BF

Greenock Campus
Finnart Street
Greenock, PA16 8HF

Paisley Campus
Renfrew Road
Paisley, PA3 4DR

In signing this pledge, we at WCS, confirm we will be working across the College to develop a two year action plan to develop and support the needs and understanding of our estranged students. Our approach will be the WCS way, where we will be encouraging our estranged student body and our staff to work in partnership with us through the development of our action plan. This plan would be made available to share with you.

Our dedicated contact for our estrange students is Iain Forster-Smith, Director of Student Services & Communities and he will be leading on the development of our two year action plan.

We have included Appendix (i) to outline the support WCS offers our student community and areas we aim to transition support for our estranged students.

WCS would be proud to be associated with Stand Alone and we look forward to with to ensure our estranged students have a positive experience during their time of study with us.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Audrey Cumberford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Audrey Cumberford
Principal and Chief Executive

Appendix (i):

Information on support available for our student community at WCS:

Student Advisory Services:

- Advice about studying at college
- Advice about choosing a course and making an application
- Advice about funding, fees, the application process, SAAS and Loans
- Advice about accessing services to support your learning
- Advice about nurseries and accommodation
- Advice about council tax exemption and discounts

Funding and fees:

- General advice about funding options / help to complete your application
- Specialist funding advice and tracking the progress of your application
- Advice about Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) and Student Loans

Enabling Services:

Enabling Services is for students requiring extra help with their studies. This service includes:

- Access to and loan of assistive technology
- Provision of 1-2-1 support in the form of study skills
- Training in the use of assistive technology
- Screening for dyslexia and dyscalculia
- Training on specialist equipment for example live scribe pens, dictaphones, etc.
- Provision of reader / scribe for both assessment & in-class support
- Training on specialist software for example Read & Write, Inspiration, Dragon,
- Advice and assessment for HNC/D students on the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) as provided by Students Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS)

Care Leavers and Looked After Students:

The Care Experienced Student Support Team will:

- Be there to provide you with help and advice about courses, funding and support services;
- Help you, if needed, to fill in forms and gather paperwork;
- Help to ensure you have the best possible start at West College Scotland;
- Guide and support you during your studies, in a way that is seamless and invisible to others;