



**Edge Hill
University**

Dear Susan

At Edge Hill University, we are sad to learn of the closing of Stand Alone and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support and guidance you have offered us and the sector in advocating for estranged students. We signed the Stand Alone Pledge in February 2021 as our public commitment to supporting estranged students through their higher education journey, and remain committed to supporting this student group.

We continue to be committed to delivering the activity in our original Pledge and have advanced many of the commitments we made. We are proud to have been a partner of Stand Alone, and are delighted to be committing to the below as our Stand Alone Legacy Pledge:

Accessing University

- We have a named contact for students who identify as estranged, for support on researching and applying for higher education and student finance.
- We offer one to one or small group support to students for Personal Statements, interview, and application form preparation.
- We offer bespoke visits to our campus, to meet current students and support staff to provide more detailed information about our on-course offer.
- At Our Open Day and Offer Holder Days, we have a dedicated stand for students from various underrepresented groups, including estranged students, to receive bespoke advice and guidance.
- We are available to speak to students on exam results day and post results day to discuss next steps.
- We work with our partners to deliver an annual Continuous Professional Development Conference for colleagues working with Care Experienced and Estranged students.
- We communicate the support available to estranged students via our work with schools, colleges, community organisations, external partners and on our website.

On course support

- We have a named contact for students who identify as estranged, who students can contact for advice, guidance and support when on course.
- We offer a place on our pre-induction Thrive Programme to our estranged students, this includes access to a range of bespoke events, funded career enhancing opportunities, social events, and the option of having a 1:1 coach for the first year of your degree.
- We offer a calendar of tailored care experienced and estranged student events throughout the year including crafting, social meet ups, board games, awareness raising events (for example around Care Day, Estranged Student Solidarity Week etc).
- We deliver Christmas Hampers to all care experienced and estranged students on campus, we support those off-campus with a Christmas voucher.
- We have an established Student Advisory Panel initiative, whereby students contribute to the design and delivery of key University services. The Panel includes students who identify as estranged, and we actively promote this paid opportunity to this student group.
- We actively promote and offer a guaranteed interview to estranged students for our paid Student Guide Opportunity.



Edge Hill
University

- We have worked with our Student Union to establish a Care Experienced and Estranged Students Union Society.
- We have a dedicated employment advisor in our Careers team to support students from underrepresented backgrounds with their future career, by offering longer appointments and bespoke events throughout the year.
- Estranged students can request a contract for a room in the University halls of residence for 365 days a year, for the three years of their degree.
- Estranged students can request an early move into halls and midweek move in dates.
- Estranged students can access the discretionary fund for financial support (our Student Support Fund) if needed over the summer period for food, travel and accommodation.

Additional support

- We have developed a 'supporting staff to support students' toolkit in collaboration with our students, to help staff across the university best support care leavers, care experienced and estranged students.
- All students at the University have access to a wide range of student support services, including but not limited to Well-Being and Counselling, Money Advice, Learning Services, Inclusion and Student Life.

Further enhancements

- We are committed to continuing to reflect, respond and develop our offer for estranged students in response to student feedback, evaluation data, and effective practice.
- We will continue to work with our partners NNECL and the Care Leaver Covenant when developing support for care leaver and care experienced students, and pledge to reflect upon the needs of our estranged students in conversations with these partners.

Best wishes,

Liam Owens
Pro Vice-Chancellor

March 2024