



22 March 2024

Dear Susan,

It was with real sadness that we received the news that StandAlone would be closing. When we look back over the period since 2016, when the University of Glasgow first signed the StandAlone Pledge, it is clear there have been huge strides taken in the sector, both in terms of the awareness raised of the needs of Estranged Students, and in the support and provision that has been built up and put in place for them.

There is so much for StandAlone to be proud of.

From an institutional point of view, working with StandAlone provided us with a much fuller and more nuanced understanding of Estranged Students – who these individuals are, the particular challenges they can face, and the most appropriate and effective language to use in reaching them. It also provided the necessary impetus for us to be far more proactive in our efforts to identify and support Estranged Students, both at the pre-entry stage and on-course at the University. The huge increase, over the past 8 years, in the number of Estranged Students we are supporting, is testament to this impact.

We were delighted to host at the University of Glasgow the first Scottish StandAlone conference in 2018. That was undoubtedly a significant learning moment for many of our staff at the University, from those in support services roles to members of our senior management team. When we think back to the wide range of attendees at that conference from colleges, universities, and related organisations across the whole country, this was clearly a pivotal moment for the sector too.

So much has been achieved since that point, from the better recognition of Estranged Student status by SAAS, to the increased opportunities individuals now have, on SAAS and UCAS applications, and at university registration, to self-identify as being Estranged. The mechanisms are now in place to collect consistent and meaningful data, and this is an absolutely key factor in terms of better understanding and supporting this cohort of students going forward. The harnessing of student voice, so important to informing and effecting real change, was also a major part of StandAlone's impact over the years, and

we were always incredibly proud of our students who shared their stories in support of this work, through events at the Scottish Parliament, for example, or in the media. There can be no doubt of its influence.

Much though, of course, remains to be done.

At the University of Glasgow, we will continue to offer to Estranged Students exactly the same supports that we have in place for Care-experienced Students. This is written in to the University of Glasgow's Corporate Parenting Plan and includes the guarantee of a contextual offer at the University of Glasgow Access Threshold, 365 days per year accommodation, priority financial support, and the support of our named contacts within the WP&LLL team. It is thanks to our work with StandAlone that this support for Estranged Students is now embedded within the institution and we will continue to promote and advertise this provision on our webpages, in all of our widening participation literature and promotional materials, and through our partnership work with schools, Local Authorities and other external agencies. We will also continue to offer, and to look for ways to develop, opportunities for our students to self-identify as being Estranged, through our registration processes, our Financial Aid and Guarantorship Scheme forms, and our Scholarship applications. We will continue to advocate for these students in regard to the supports that can be made available to them external to the University.

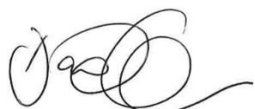
We remain committed to the idea that Estranged Students should be entitled to a level of support equivalent to that which is now established for Care-experienced Students, and we will continue to promote this cause and the needs of this particular student group within the wider sector.

We believe the foundations have been laid and we are confident that the momentum is there for this work to carry on. Once more, we would like to thank StandAlone and all the individuals involved with the organisation over the years, for the pivotal role you have played in getting us to this point.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Neil Croll – Head of Widening Participation & Lifelong Learning



Dr Dan Keenan – Team Leader, WP&LLL Adult Learner Team / University Estranged Student Named Point of Contact