

We Care: Policy for Students with Caring Responsibilities

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Author: Arron Pile

Student & Graduate Diversity Officer

Student Life

Document Control Information**Status and reason for development****Status:** New**Reason for development:** Lack of Previous Policy**Revision History**

Date	Author	Summary of changes	Version No.
5 June 2014	Arron Pile	Amendments after staff consultation	V1.1
20 April 2015	Arron Pile	Amendments after LTEC consultation	V1.2

Policy Management and Responsibilities**Owner:** Linda Tompkins, Acting Director, Student Life**Author:** Arron Pile, Student & Graduate Diversity Officer, Student Life**Others with responsibilities (please specify):** All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.**Assessment***Cross relevant assessments**Cross if not applicable*

Equality Analysis

Legal

Information Governance

Academic Governance

Consultation*Cross relevant consultations*

Staff Trades Unions via HR

Students via USSU

Any relevant external bodies

(please specify)

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e.g. The Executive

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Document location:e.g. University Policy & Procedures page: www.salford.ac.uk/university/governance/policies-and-procedures**Document dissemination and communications plan**

Please specify how and to whom the document will be communicated e.g. US online, student channel briefing etc.

1.0 Purpose

This policy provides guidance for staff and students on the support available for students who are combining their studies with a caring role. It is not intended for designated primary carers as students studying over 16 hours a week are not able to take on this role. It is anticipated that by raising awareness of the support available more students will access support available to them both within the University and through external agencies and this will support them towards positive personal and academic outcomes.

2.0 Scope

The policy provides information, advice and guidance for:

1. Students who are or become a carer during their studies at the University of Salford or a partner institution. For the purposes of this policy, a carer is defined as someone who provides care to a partner, relative, friend or neighbour who could not manage without this help, because of frailty, physical or mental illness, disability or addiction. The scope of this policy does not include parental responsibilities, unless for a disabled child, nor does it apply to caring which is paid employment. This policy is limited to supporting UK Home students and international/ EU students who are caring for friends/ relatives or children in the UK as we recognise it would be very difficult to care for someone who resided outside the UK.
2. University staff that have a role in advising, supporting, supervising or teaching students who are, or anticipate becoming carers.

3.0 Policy Statements

3.1 Support for students who are carers:

3.1.1 Student Carer registration

The carer is encouraged at the point of disclosure, whether that be a member of staff in the School or at a Student Life information point, to make early contact with the Student Life Carer Support Coordinator to register as a carer (Appendix1) and be advised of the support available to them. Tutors/ School staff should refer students who are carers or anticipate becoming a carer to the Student Life Carer Coordinator. Whatever route the carer takes in disclosing their caring responsibilities the information must be sent to the Student Life Carer Support Co-ordinator in order for the student to receive support via a Carer Support Plan. The student will need to provide permission for their information to be shared between Schools and Student Life in order to access support. If this is not agreed the student should understand that support for their caring role will be limited. Evidence of caring responsibilities needs to be collected as early as possible and sent to the Carer Support Co-ordinator, if this is not the person completing the registration form with the carer.

On registering as a carer the carer will need to provide appropriate evidence of their caring role. Although medical evidence regarding the condition of those that the student is caring for can be useful in writing the Carer Support Plan this cannot be accepted as evidence for support. The evidence must document the caring role of the student not the condition of the person being cared for. This may be a letter from a doctor or consultant detailing the caring role, a local authority carer assessment, a letter from a Carers Centre, DWP correspondence regarding withdrawal of Carers Allowance due to starting university, or a solicitor's letter. This is not a complete list as we recognise that caring responsibilities can vary but any acceptable alternative evidence will have to be from a reputable organisation

and detail the exact nature of caring responsibilities. If the Carer Support Co-ordinator has any doubts about the validity or appropriateness of the evidence they will refer it to the Director of Student Life for an investigation.

3.1.2 **Carer's Support Plan** (Appendix 2)

Due to the unpredictable nature and demands of caring roles, students may be provided with a Carers' Support Plan which provides leeway in relation to assignment deadlines, tutor contact and attendance but not exams and in accordance of 3.12 of the Student Participation Policy.

The plan may consider or suggest adjustments but will not make recommendations around placement support, international visits, field trips or residential requirements as we recognise that these may be difficult to put in place. The University recognises the importance of placements and co-curricular activity and the Carer Co-ordinator will work with the student carer to source appropriate experiences and placements but we cannot guarantee that support for the students caring responsibilities will be available on placement and during some co-curricular activity.

The plan will be written during a meeting between the Student Life Carer Support Co-ordinator and the carer taking in individual need and a limited number of criteria (see Appendix 2)

3.1.3 **Personal Mitigating Circumstances**

A student may not submit a PMC form for matters covered by a **Carers' Support Plan**. If a student has a Carers' Support Plan but experiences additional mitigating circumstances or the circumstances covered by the Carers' Support Plan worsen, then he/she may submit a PMC with relevant evidence.

3.1.4 **Interruption of Studies**

Where the caring role becomes too demanding and the student can no longer combine study and caring, the student may wish to take an Interruption of Studies. The Carer Support Coordinator will inform the student of the structure of an interruption and any other implications, particularly any financial implications. In order to support the student's long-term retention, the Carer Support Coordinator will advise of support available to them for the duration of their interruption and for their return to study and will keep in contact with them regularly by way of telephone and/or personal email.

3.1.5 **Student Life Services**

There is a wide range of services available to all students; the Carer Coordinator will inform the students of those most relevant for the student to help the student to continue with their studies alongside their caring responsibilities. The following areas are particularly relevant:

- **Counselling.** Where the caring role affects the carer's own wellbeing, students will be able to access health and wellbeing support and counselling services.
- **Disability and Learner Support.** Where the caring responsibility affects the student's own mental and/or physical health, support will be available and a Student Support Plan may be required in addition to the Carer's Support Plan. In this case,

the Student Support Plan will have primacy and address the student's personal circumstances.

- **Finance.** Over and above the financial support, advice and information available to students, advice will also be available on the benefits which affect carers and the cared for person. Students will be supported and signposted to external information available through their local Carers' Centre.

3.1.6 On-line support

- **Webpage.** A webpage has been created which provides information on the support available for student carers within the University and signposts to other national and local organisations which specialise in carer support. The website is available at <http://www.advice.salford.ac.uk/page/carers>
- **Carers' Forum.** The support and advice available to carers varies according to local authority area and it can be difficult for carers to access the support available to them and for the cared for person. The Carers' Forum is an on-line forum, with a link from the Carers' webpage, where carers at the University can share experience and support each other. This will be moderated by the Carer Co-ordinator.

3.2 Complaints

Problems with carer support where possible should be resolved informally. Where this is not possible, any student who feels that the University has failed to adhere to this policy may raise a complaint under the University's Complaints Procedure.

4.0 Related Documentation

- Student Participation Policy
http://www.governance.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/File/AQA/Student_Participation_Policy.pdf
- Personal Mitigating Circumstances
http://www.governance.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/File/AQA/Personal_Mitigating_Circumstances_Procedure.pdf
- Students Complaints Procedure
http://www.governance.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/File/policies/Student_Complaints_Procedure.pdf

5.0 Appendices

5.1 Registration Form

 <p>STUDENT REGISTERING CARING RESPONSIBILITIES</p>	
<p>This form may be completed online or on paper by the student and can be done in conjunction with Referee/ Personal Tutor OR The Carer Co-ordinator. The form should be sent to the Student Life Carer Co-ordinator electronically (carers@salford.ac.uk), who will contact the student for an appointment</p>	
1. Student Full Name	
Email:	Contact Tel No:
2. Student ID	
3. Name of Referee/ Personal Tutor	
4. Nature of your caring role and anticipated impact on studies:	
5. Do you have a Student Support Plan for Disability? Yes/No (delete as appropriate)	
6. Are you the sole carer? Yes / No (delete as appropriate)	
7. If you are not the sole carer, are you the principal carer? Yes / No (delete as appropriate)	
<p>8. Please tick the evidence provided by the student of their carer status – please tick as many as apply and note you will need to bring all evidence to your first appointment with the Carer Support Co-ordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A doctor's or consultants letter confirming the responsibility of caring for a close friend, relative or neighbor and any perceived impact on the student or staff member; <input type="checkbox"/> A local authority carers' assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Carer Allowance documentation from DWP showing the termination due to start of studies <input type="checkbox"/> Any other reasonable evidence. Please explain what this evidence is..... 	

NB: Medical evidence of the person being cared for is not sufficient unless accompanied by one of the above as evidence
9. Do you (the student) give permission for this form to be shared with their School and staff within Student Life? Yes /No (delete as appropriate) If NO then the student understands that support will be limited or non-existent. (Yes/ No)
This information is a true record. A copy will be kept by the Carer Co-ordinator, by the School, and a copy will be given to the student Student Signature : Date:

If this form was completed by the School, it should be sent to the Carer Co-ordinator, Student Life, University House, or emailed to carers@salford.ac.uk to action if the student has agreed to share information

5.2 Carer' Support Plan Template

University of Salford MANCHESTER	Student Life Directorate
Carer's Support Plan	
To	Programme Leader School Operations Manager Carer's Personal Tutor Library Estates
cc	
From	
Student name	
Roll number	@
Date	

XXXXX has provided evidence that they are a designated carer within the University's Student Carer Policy and as such may experience unplanned events related to their carer role which may affect their ability to meet assignment deadlines. I would be grateful if you could offer XXXXX the following support: (Carer Co-ordinator to delete as necessary. The below show all possible support available, students will not receive all these options.)

Background Information:

Recommendations: (delete as appropriate)

- Provide support to student to catch up during/after agreed caring related absence
- Provide handouts, PowerPoints, etc. electronically during periods of absence
- The student will require extra tutorial time after a caring related absence
 - This has been recommended at 4 x 10 min sessions per semester
 - This has been recommended at 5 x 10 min sessions per semester.
 - This has been recommended at 6 x 10 min sessions per semester.
 - This has been recommended at 8 x 10 min sessions per semester.

- This has been recommended at 10 x 10 min sessions per semester.
- This has been recommended at 12 x 10 min sessions per semester.
- Have additional individual pastoral support meetings with [PERSONAL TUTOR AND/OR CARER CO-ORDINATOR]
- Appropriately address and act on any concerns about student's well being
- Allow extension to coursework deadlines - up to 1 calendar week
- Allow extended library loans
- Allow student's helper/friend to collect books on student's behalf

5.3 External Support Information

Salford Carers Centre

<http://salfordcarerscentre.co.uk/>

Carers UK

<http://www.carersuk.org/Information>

The Carers Federation

<http://www.carersfederation.co.uk/home/>

Counsel & Care

<http://www.counselandcare.org.uk/>

Department of Work & Pensions Carers Service

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/CaringForSomeone/index.htm> **Salford Young Carers**

<http://www.salfordyoungcarers.org/>

Local Specialist Support Services

<http://www.mssociety.org.uk/near-me/branches/salford-and-district-branch>

<http://www.parkinsons.org.uk/local-support-groups/regions/north-west-england/salford-support-group>

<http://www.macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area/local-dashboard/detail/Information%20centres/7913/Macmillan-Cancer-Information-and-Support-Centre-at-Salford?proximity=3.13%20miles%20from%20you>

<http://www.stroke.org.uk/search/node/salford>