

Caring Responsibility (Student) Policy

“We Care”

Version Number 7.0

Effective from June 2020

Name of Owner/Unit: Arron Pile, Student Experience & Support

1.0 Purpose

1.1. Introduction

The University aims to provide an inclusive and supportive environment for all students or prospective students who are carers and have identified themselves as needing support. It recognises that some students will be carers and may face obstacles in accessing and pursuing their study, including time, energy and emotional resources.

Care is individual to a person(s) and the University recognises that the roles and responsibilities of the carer may vary and change over time, sometimes with little notice. The University recognises that these caring responsibilities have no set timescale and may be short or long term, and each carer's needs are unique and therefore need to be dealt with on an individual basis. In some instances, an individual may continue to be affected after caring responsibilities have ceased.

1.2. Objective

This policy outlines the support available for prospective students and students who are combining their studies with a caring role and outlines roles and responsibilities. It is anticipated that by raising awareness of the support available more students will access this both within the University and through external agencies leading to more positive personal and academic outcomes.

It is estimated that 10% of the UK population have caring responsibilities and this number is likely to increase. This is broadly reflected in the number of students that self-declare at registration each year. If carers received the right support and information studies have shown that they are more likely to succeed in Higher Education (Carers Trust 2015)

2.0 Scope

The policy provides information, advice and guidance for:

1. Students who are, or who become, a carer during their studies at the University or a partner institution. 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 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 and may be subject to Home Office visa regulations.
2. Prospective students who have caring responsibilities and maybe thinking of studying at Salford.
3. University staff that have a role in identifying, advising, supporting, supervising or teaching students who are, or anticipate, becoming carers.

The policy focuses primarily on the responsibility of the caring and impact on academic potential and study. The University works in partnership with the Salford Carers Centre who

can, along with other carers centres, provide more specialised assessments and guidance where appropriate.

3.0 Policy/Procedure

3.1. Policy Statement

The University will ask students if they are a carer at the point of registration for the purposes of proactively offering support. We will also use any information on caring responsibilities provided by UCAS. Students with caring responsibilities at the University benefit from a dedicated contact within askUS. This team will co-ordinate the support but is not responsible for putting it in place as this is a School responsibility.

3.2. Student Carer Registration Process

We encourage student carers to register their caring role online at <https://myadvantage.salford.ac.uk/Form.aspx?id=331491> (see Appendix 1).

3.2.1. If a student discloses caring responsibilities to a member of staff, we encourage staff to direct the student to complete the registration form to access support. It is important that this is done as soon as possible as support cannot be applied retrospectively.

3.2.2. When completing the registration form indicating caring responsibilities, the student will need to provide permission for their information to be shared between Schools, relevant partner organisations (if appropriate) and askUS to access support. The registration form includes an information sharing clause. If this is not agreed the student should understand that support for their caring role will be limited.

3.2.3. When registering for support, the student with caring responsibilities is required 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 documentation must provide evidence of the caring role of the student, not the condition of the person being cared for, and may include the following:

- A letter from a doctor, consultant or healthcare professional detailing the caring role and perceived impact on the student.
- Local authority carers' assessment.
- A letter from a local Carers Centre.
- Receipt of carers allowance or letter/ correspondence from the Department of Work and Pensions regarding withdrawal of Carers Allowance due to starting university
- A solicitor's letter.
- Any other reasonable evidence

This is not a complete list as we recognise that caring responsibilities can vary, but any additional evidence will have to be from a reputable organisation and detail the nature of caring responsibilities. If the Carer Co-ordinator has any doubts about the validity or appropriateness of the evidence, they will refer it to the Associate Director, Student Experience & Support for a decision.

3.2.4. The registration form will trigger, if necessary, an invitation to meet with the Carer Support Co-ordinator or an askUS adviser to write and distribute a Carer Support Plan (appendix 2).

3.3. Carer Support Plan (see Appendix 2)

3.3.1. Students with caring responsibilities will be invited to meet and create a Student Carer's Support Plan with the askUS Carer Co-ordinator/ askUS staff in order to discuss the student's needs and support.

3.3.2. This plan will be individualised to meet the student's needs and completed with consent from the student. This plan may include a number of measures to support the student:

- Recommending flexibility up to a week in assessment dates*
- Attendance due to carer related absence (this may vary due to course requirements).
- Increased tutor contact time.
- Time to attend appointments.
- Other recommendations due to individual circumstances.
- Help and support to reintegrate back into studies if they have been off for a prolonged period.
- Provision of timetables in advance to allow students to make alternative arrangements.

*If a student has a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) for Disability and Learner Support, then the two plans will be combined and flexibility of only one week can be recommended in total.

Support cannot be given retrospectively.

3.3.3. The plan will then be distributed to named roles within the school and support services for implementation. These will include:

- a. Programme Leader
- b. Personal Tutor
- c. School Progression Administrator/s
- d. Library (if relevant)
- e. Estates (if relevant)
- f. The student

3.3.4. The Carer's Support 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 and vary across the University.

The University recognises the importance of placements and co-curricular activity and the Carer Co-ordinator will work with the student with caring responsibilities to source appropriate experiences and placements. We cannot guarantee that support for the student's caring responsibilities will be available on placement or during some co-curricular activity.

Caring responsibilities should be discussed and included in the Placement Agreement and the Placement Tutor for the School should take reasonable steps to ensure the placement provider provides support for a student's caring role if necessary.

3.4 Personal Mitigating Circumstances (PMC)

3.4.1. If a student has a Carer Support Plan as detailed in this policy which makes provision for individual assessments arrangements (e.g. extra time to submit assessments), they will not be required to complete a PMC form to make use of these arrangements.

3.4.2. A student cannot submit a PMC form for matters covered by a Carer Support Plan or where other interim arrangements have been put in place.

3.4.3. Carer Support Plans only cover assessment and not examinations. If their caring responsibilities interfere with examinations, then a PMC must be submitted

3.4.4. If a student has a Carer Support Plan but experiences additional personal mitigating circumstances or the circumstances covered by the Carer Support Plan worsen, then a PMC must be submitted with relevant evidence but they are advised to seek a review of their Carer Support Plan through askUS.

3.4.5. If flexibility around deadlines is a recommendation in the Carer Support Plan, a student should be reminded that this flexibility is built into their Carer Support Plan for use when required but they should try to meet the standard deadlines as far as possible. They should also note that flexibility around submission deadlines **cannot** be used for reassessments

3.5. Interruption of Studies

3.5.1. Where the caring role becomes too demanding and the student can no longer combine study and caring, the student may need to interrupt from study for a period of time or may consider withdrawing from study. The Carer Coordinator will inform the student of an interruption and any other implications, particularly any financial implications. To support the student's long-term retention, the Carer 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.

3.6. Resuming Studies

3.6.1. Once a student with caring responsibilities is ready to return to their studies, they should contact both the Carer Co-ordinator and the appropriate member of School staff.

3.7. Responsibilities

3.7.1. University Responsibilities

3.7.1.1. Sufficient information is provided about the essential requirements of a programme of study for a prospective student to make an informed decision about whether the programme is realistic for them considering the demands of their caring responsibilities.

3.7.1.2. Relevant colleagues are made aware of this policy and their responsibilities.

3.7.1.3. The Carers Team in askUS will remain a single point of contact for advice and guidance for both colleagues and students regarding this policy

3.7.1.4. The University will adhere to its duties under the relevant legislation including The Care Act 2014 and The Equality Act 2010

3.7.1.5. Ensure that this policy is widely publicised and available to colleagues and students

3.7.2. Student Experience and Support (SES) Responsibilities

3.7.2.1. Staff in SES will ensure that students who contact them about their caring responsibilities are contacted quickly and empathetically and that the staff helping student carers are trained to undertake their role.

3.7.2.2. They will ensure that, if required, a Carer Support Plan is written in collaboration with the student and passed onto relevant School staff with prior agreed consent.

3.7.2.3. Staff are available to offer advice and information, not only to students with caring responsibilities but to other staff within the University, including training as necessary.

3.7.2.4. Staff will sustain effective partnership relationships with local Carers Centres with at two meetings a year to ensure services work best for all students

3.7.2.5. They will undertake annual evaluations and that the response from this will be used to evaluate review and change services in the future.

3.7.3. Academic & School Staff

3.7.3.1. Ensure members of staff, such as personal tutor, research supervisor or someone that will provide appropriate advice, guidance and support to students with caring responsibilities and refer on to askUS for further support if necessary.

3.7.3.2. Take account of students with caring responsibilities in any considerations of student absence, mitigating circumstances and temporary suspension of studies applications and to implement any support recommended in a Carer's Support Plan in a timely manner.

3.7.3.3. Ensure this policy document is widely publicised and available to staff and students using a variety of information medians such as the virtual learning environment Blackboard.

3.7.4. Individual Staff Members (institution wide)

3.7.4.1. Familiarise themselves with this policy document and the University's responsibilities towards those students who have declared themselves to have caring responsibilities.

3.7.4.2. Treat any disclosure of caring responsibilities seriously and respect the student's right to confidentiality.

3.7.4.3. Be aware of General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and gain consent from the student prior to disclosure of information with other staff whom it is relevant to know, i.e. on a need-to-know basis.

3.7.4.4. Discuss with the student who has declared caring responsibilities how this may impact on their continued studies.

3.7.4.5. Seek advice from colleagues in askUS if you are unsure about how to support the continued study of the student with caring responsibilities.

3.7.5. Students with Caring Responsibilities

3.7.5.1. To notify the University as quickly as possible about their caring responsibilities and /or respond to any correspondence from the University in a timely manner.

3.7.5.2. To provide evidence of their caring responsibilities as set out in this policy.

3.7.5.3. To let the University know of any changes to their caring responsibilities so support can be adjusted accordingly.

3.8. askUS Services

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

- **Counselling and Wellbeing.** When the caring role affects the health and well-being of the student with caring responsibilities, 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 Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) may be required in addition to the Carer Support Plan. In this case, the two plans will be combined into a RAP to cover both caring responsibilities and disability support to avoid replication.
- **Finance.** Over and above the financial support, which includes an annual bursary of £500 and access to the Salford Support Fund, 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.
- **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>

3.9. 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.

3.10. Related Organisations

These organisations provide support and information for those with caring responsibilities.

<https://www.carersuk.org> A national carers membership charity providing support

www.carers.org . National organisation that has published valuable H.E specific guides

www.gaddumcentre.co.uk Greater Manchester charity providing health and wellbeing services to carers. Manages the Salford Carers Centre.

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

Appendix 1 - Students Registering with Caring Responsibilities

Student Registering Caring Responsibilities

This form is a confidential document and will NOT be shared until the student has met in person with the Carer Support Co-ordinator and a Support Plan submitted

Student Registering Caring Responsibilities

This form must be completed by the student and can be done in conjunction with Referee / Personal Tutor or the Carer Support Co-ordinator

Name

First Name	Last Name
------------	-----------

Contact Details

Email	
Phone	Mobile

Student Number

Name of Referee or Personal Tutor

What is the nature of your caring role and anticipated impact on your studies?

Please give as much information as possible

Do you have a Reasonable Adjustment Plan for Disability?

Yes

No

Please select below the evidence you (the student) will be providing of your carer status

Please tick as many as apply and note you will need to upload suitable evidence or bring a to your first appointment with the Carer Support Co-ordinator

A doctor's letter or other healthcare professional confirming the responsibility of caring for a close friend, relative or neighbour and any perceived impact on the students

Social Worker or Care Coordinator letter

A local authority carers' assessment

Carer Allowance documentation from DWP showing termination due to start of studies

Any other reasonable evidence - please explain what the evidence is in the box below (NB: Medical evidence of the person being cared for is not sufficient unless accompanied by one of the above as evidence)

Other

Please upload the evidence to support your registration as a student with caring responsibilities

Upload file

Do you the student give permission for this form to be shared with your School and staff within askUS following the appointment?

Note: If you select NO to this question then support will be limited or non-existent. Information will only be shared following the meeting with the Carer Support Co-ordinator and the submission of a Student Support Plan

Yes

No

Please confirm below

If you have given personal information (including just a name) of someone else to us, then you need to ensure that you have asked the person's permission. This is most likely to be the name of the person you are caring for. Please tick one of the following:

1. I have asked the person if it OK to share the information and they have agreed
2. I have asked the person if it is OK to share and they haven't agreed
3. I haven't asked the person

Please note that if you ticked either 2 or 3 then you should not provide evidence to us with personal details of another person, including the person you are caring for. Letters with health professionals' names is OK and you do not have to seek their permission.

Do you confirm this is a true and accurate record?

Yes

No

For Administration ONLY (askUS Student Adviser to complete)

Student has attended meeting with askUS Student Adviser

Student has provided suitable evidence to verify caring responsibilities

Support Plan has been completed and sent to key stakeholders

Appendix 2 – Carers Support Plan Template



Student Carer Support Plan

To

Programme Leader: XXXXXXX

School Operations Manager: XXXXXXXXX

Carer's Personal Tutor: XXXXXXX

Library XXXXXXX

Student Progression Administrator: **XXXXXXXXXX**

Estates: **XXXX**

From

XXXXXXXXXX, Carer Support Coordinator, askUS

This Student Carer Support Plan outlines the Universities responsibilities to Students under the “We Care: Policy for Students with Caring Responsibilities”

http://www.askus.salford.ac.uk/cms/resources/uploads/files/FinalPolicy-Carers%20V1_2.pdf

If you feel that any of these departmental adjustments are not reasonable and cannot be carried out please contact the adviser named below. This should be done within 3 weeks of receiving this Plan; after 3 weeks it will be assumed the adjustments have been put in place.

The student’s needs may change therefore this Support Plan may be subject to temporary and/or permanent amendments

Student Name: XXXXXXXXXXX

Roll number: XXXXXXXXXXX

DOB: XXXXXXX

Email: XXXXXXXXXXX

Carer Status: Carer for family member

Course: XXXXXXX

School: XXXXXXXXXXX

Student Carer Support Plan determined by:

Carer Support Coordinator: XXXXXXXXXXX

Email: XXXXXXXXXXX

Date: XXXXXXX

Barriers to study: **[SAMPLE]:** Attendance; she may need to leave/miss lectures due to her xxxx needing her assistance, or to answer the telephone. Time away from University is spent attending to her xxxx on a daily basis as she suffering from cancer and has recently had major surgery. XXXXX may struggle with assignment deadlines and where possible will prefer placements to be located near to home.

XXXXXX 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 and attend lectures.

I would be grateful if you could offer **XXXX** the following support:-

(Carer Coordinator to highlight as necessary, below shows all possible support available, students will not receive all these options)

Recommendations:

- Provide support to student to catch up during/after agreed caring related 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
- Have additional individual pastoral support meetings
- Placements to be located near to home where possible
- 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
- Flexibility in timetable
- Allow student's helper/friend to collect books on student's behalf
- Regularly review student's progress every **XXXX** weeks to ensure completion of assignments, examinations & success

Further Information:

All staff involved in the student's teaching and learning to be aware of this Student Carer Support Plan including postgraduates with teaching duties, administrators, part-time and sessional staff.
The student will be contacted 6 weeks after the distribution of the Plan to ensure the recommendations have been implemented.
Regular reviews of this student's progress will help to ensure completion of assignments, examinations and success with their academic studies.

Document Control Information

Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first)			
Author	Summary of changes	Version	Authorised & Date
AP	<i>Reformatted on new template</i>	V7	September 2020
AP	<i>Approved by SELTEC</i>	V6	May 2020
AP	<i>For consideration at SELTEC</i>	V5	February 2020
Policy Management and Responsibilities:			
Owner: Helen Parker	This Policy is issued by		
Others with responsibilities	Student Experience & Support		
Arron Pile (Author)			
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR)	<p>In line with the University's process for assessing draft strategies, policies and procedures for their relevance and potential impact on different groups, the EIA template was originally completed with the policy in 2014. This has been reviewed and as the purpose of the policy has not changed the original EIA is still valid for this updated policy</p> <p>As this is a revision, no changes to legal implications, Information Governance</p> <p>UKVI – N/A – policy is for home students only</p>		
<u>Equality Assessment form</u>			
Legal implications (LPG)			
Information Governance (LPG)			
Student facing procedures (QEO)			
UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)			

Consultation:	
Staff Trades Unions via HR	<i>N/A Student facing policy only</i>
Students via USSU	
Relevant external bodies (specify)	<i>Salford Carers Centre</i>
Review due: May 2023	
Document location:	
http://www.salford.ac.uk/policies	
The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.	