



GO HIGHER
West Yorkshire



Stand Alone

Pledge

2023-24

Your higher education journey

Introduction

Welcome to Go Higher West Yorkshire's collaborative Stand Alone Pledge, which has been designed to support you on your journey into Higher Education (HE).

We are a partnership of 13 HE providers that represents a huge range of higher education options, from universities and HE-in-FE provision, to a specialist training provider and a conservatoire.

Our resource outlines the support our member institutions offer to estranged people in terms of HE access, success in HE, and progression (succeeding) after HE (see pages 3-4).

It also includes a 'qualification routes' graphic that identifies ways into HE depending on your level of education (page 6); Top Tips and Useful Links for you to find out more about support that is available from a range of organisations, including UCAS and Student Finance England (pages 7-8). It concludes with a comprehensive glossary that explains terms used in this resource and throughout HE (pages 9-10).

The Stand Alone Pledge was developed by Stand Alone, a national charity that offers support and raises awareness of what estrangement means. Find out more about it on the next page.

Depending on your life stage, you may find it useful to read and talk through the document with a friend or trusted adult, such as a teacher.

Important Information

Some of the key information in this publication remains subject to change. Please check for the latest information using the websites and other resources referred to before making any decisions.

Who are estranged students?

A person is considered to be estranged if they have no contact, support, and / or approval from a family network. This is usually due to them removing themselves from a dysfunctional or damaging situation with their biological, step or adoptive family.

Estrangement is also frequently caused by a difference in values (such as religion), sexual orientation, or escaping forced marriage.

It is most common for an individual to become estranged between the ages of 16-19 but many will become so while already studying in HE.

Estranged people have additional considerations when applying and studying in HE but these should not be seen as barriers to entering or progressing in their studies.

What is Stand Alone?

Stand Alone is a charity that raises awareness of estrangement and supports adults who are estranged from family members.

It offers support to adults dealing with estrangement situations and talks openly about the experience of family estrangement to break down the stigma and to help those affected to lead lives that are less isolated.

The Stand Alone Pledge is a public commitment by a HE institution to help students studying without the support or approval of their parents and often the wider family network. It acts as a driver for universities and colleges to continuously improve their provision for estranged students and so enable them to succeed at every stage of the students' journey.

Find out more at www.standalone.org.uk and www.thestandalonepledge.org.uk

Support offered by our members

OUR DECLARATION

We, Go Higher West Yorkshire, recognise the challenges that people face when they do not have family support. We recognise our responsibility to support estranged people so they can make a successful transition to Higher Education (HE). We hereby make a commitment to improve estranged students' life chances by widening their access and supporting their success in HE and beyond.



SUPPORT OFFERED BY HE PROVIDERS	Bradford College	University of Bradford	Calderdale College	University of Huddersfield	Kirklees College	University of Leeds	Leeds Arts University	Leeds Beckett University	Leeds College of Building	Leeds Conservatoire	University Centre Leeds	Leeds Trinity University	University Centre Wakefield
GETTING TO HIGHER EDUCATION													
Dedicated estranged student web-page		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Experiences on campus		✓			✓	✓							
Contextual admissions*		✓						✓	✓		✓		✓
Application support		✓			✓	✓			✓		✓		✓
Outreach support		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
HEP acts as rent guarantor											✓		
SUCCEEDING IN HIGHER EDUCATION													
Wellbeing support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Named contact for estranged students	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support with the transition to Higher Education		✓				✓			✓	✓	✓		
Accommodation support	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Graduation costs support		✓		✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	
Additional financial support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Training to help staff understand the experiences of estranged students	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
SUCCEEDING AFTER HIGHER EDUCATION													
Employment support		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

* This is when HE providers can consider additional information, such as background factors, to make decisions on individual applications and achievement to identify potential, particularly where this may not be evidenced through grades



Getting into Higher Education

- **Activities and events:** Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) supports member institutions to make sure their staff are aware of issues around estrangement, including through Good Practice Events.
- **Campaign support:** We have partnered with Stand Alone to promote the Estranged Students Solidarity Week campaign each November since 2018. #WithEstrangedStudents
- **Disabled Learners' HE Transition Pack:** If you've received SEND support or adjustments at FE, the transition to HE can be confusing and hard to navigate. We have produced a Transition Pack to help support you on your educational journey. Find out more: www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/resource/disabled-learners-transition-pack

Succeeding in Higher Education

- **Sharing ideas and successes:** Our 13 member institutions work together to share what has worked well and develop new ideas to support the success of estranged students.
- **Student participation opportunities:** We welcome the involvement of estranged students in our outreach work, including creative case studies and speaking at events.
- **Increasing staff awareness:** Our free e-training course helps HE staff to support you by raising awareness of some of the barriers you may have faced and the support that is available.

Succeeding after Higher Education

- **Employer links:** Our member institutions have excellent links with local employers, creating opportunities for us to champion the skills and potential of estranged students in the workplace.
- **Collaborative networks:** Representatives drawn from across our 13 member institutions attend a Care Experienced and Estranged Students Network, which shares best practice.



Top tips

Speak with a named contact

at at one of our 13 members. They can answer your questions and show you around campus. They can also direct you to colleagues to discuss your personal circumstances; anything from caring responsibilities to a criminal record.

I have had constant support from my personal academic tutor and other lecturers if I have ever struggled with keeping up my workload or personal issues.

Refer to **Stand Alone's Student Finance Guide**, which includes lots of practical information about how your HE application will be assessed as an estranged student. Read more here:

www.standalone.org.uk/guides/student-guide

Talk to people you trust about the benefits of HE, what may be important for you to consider as an estranged student, and what is the best path for you. This document is a useful conversation starter.

Tick the 'estranged student' box when applying for courses through UCAS to ensure you have access to all the support on offer. This information will be treated in confidence, and will not affect the outcome of your application in any way.

The university has helped me during my darkest times. I feel like I can talk to them about anything. They made sure that I knew exactly who to go to if I had any problems or worries.

You can email us at ghwy@leeds.ac.uk and we will help to signpost you to further information.

Find out more

GHWY: More details about the support offered by our 13 member institutions, as well as links to case studies and useful resources. www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk

Prospects: Careers advice including a skills quiz, with information on study options and work experience. www.prospects.ac.uk

Discover Uni: A resource to help people decide about their HE choices and compare courses. www.discoveruni.org.uk

Not Going to Uni: Training and development opportunities, including degree apprenticeships and HE at colleges. www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

UCAS: Portal for people applying to university, including finance information and career options. www.ucas.com

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA): Information about jobs and working in the Leeds City Region. www.futuregoals.co.uk

Stand Alone: Information about support, financing studies, and accommodation options as an estranged student. www.standalone.org.uk

Student Finance England: You can complete an estrangement form to confirm that you are irreconcilably estranged from your parent(s) in order to receive financial support with your studies. www.sfcotland.slc.co.uk



Glossary of Higher Education terms

Access to Higher Education is a qualification that prepares students (usually aged 19+) who do not have traditional qualifications for study at university. Find out more: www.accesstohe.ac.uk

Apprenticeship - A paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences through on-the-job training, supplemented with 20% of their time completing classroom or distance learning with a college, university or training provider. It leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

Conservatoire (or Conservatory) is an institution that specialises in the performing arts. The programmes they offer focus on practical learning and performance.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a combination of ideas, approaches, and techniques that help individuals manage their own learning and growth.

Entry Level qualifications provide learners with an introduction to education. They are designed for people who do not feel ready for GCSEs, or equal qualifications, or have not studied in a long time. They are offered in a wide range of subjects including Mathematics and Computer Science.

Foundation degree is a combined academic and vocational qualification that is the equivalent of a Higher National Diploma (HND) or two-thirds of a Bachelor degree.

Further Education (FE) refers to any education after secondary school that is not an undergraduate or postgraduate degree (e.g. A-levels).

Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) is a partnership of 13 Higher Education Providers that works to achieve common goals on access to, success in and progression from HE for those from under-represented groups. Refer to the back page for a full list of our members.

Graduate - a person who has successfully completed a course of study or training, especially a person who has been awarded an undergraduate or first academic degree.

Higher Education (HE) is education at level 4 or above, where level 3 comprises qualifications such as A-levels, T-levels and BTECs, and level 2 includes GCSEs.

HE-in-FE - Many FE colleges offer a wide range of HE programmes. These might appeal to people who want to stay close to their home to study, or want to continue studying at the FE college they have already attended.

Higher Education Provider (HEP) is any institution that provides higher education qualifications, including universities and other approved organisations.

Higher National Certificate (HNC) is a vocational, work-related Higher Education qualification that prepares students for a particular job and/or career. It is equivalent to the first year of a degree.

Higher National Diploma (HND) is a vocational, work-related Higher Education qualification that prepares students for a particular job and/or career. It is equivalent to the first two years of a degree.

Higher Technical Qualification (HTQ) is an alternative to apprenticeships or degrees. It has been developed in partnership with businesses to ensure learners get the specific training and skills they need for their chosen careers.

Specialist training providers offer 60% or more of their courses in one or two subjects.

T Levels are technical-based qualifications that have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses. They are broadly equivalent to 3 A Levels.

Undergraduate (or Bachelor) degrees are an academic step up from A-levels (or their equivalent). They are typically completed at a university or other higher education institution.

Universities are institutions of higher education where people can study for degrees in several academic disciplines. They also carry out academic research.

University Centres offer Higher Education courses in a Further Education setting.



Web www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk Email ghwy@leeds.ac.uk

Bradford College



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