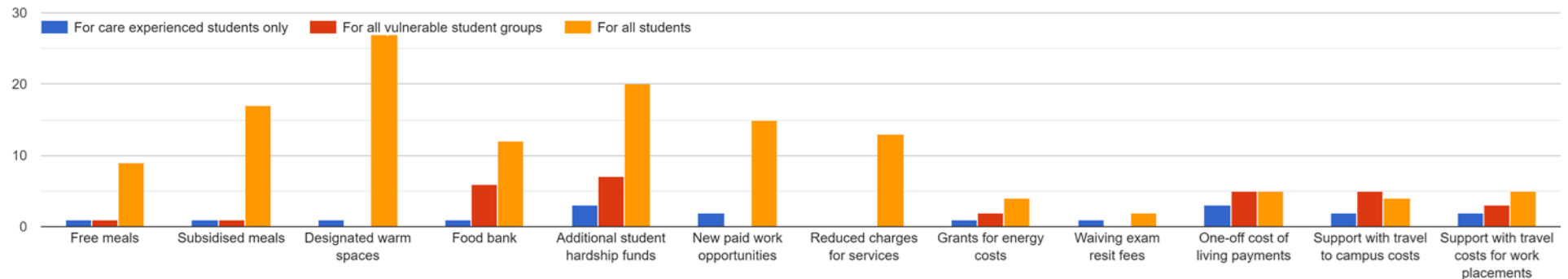


NNECL survey on cost of living support for care experienced students: January 2023

Summary of responses

1. Please indicate which, if any, of the following support measures have been put in place at your institution and whether these apply only to care experienced students, all vulnerable students groups or all students.



2. Please provide brief details of any other support measures your institution has put in place and indicate whether these are for care experienced students, all vulnerable student groups or all students.

- For vulnerable students we have allowed them to stay free of charge in halls of residence
- Use of a discretionary fund, accessed on a case by case basis
- Additional support for all students: finding work support; helping with cost of Student Union events, activities and membership fees; money management sessions; review of course materials to keep costs low; discount on costs of childcare in uni nursery; free weekly sporting activities
- We have a specific bursary for care experienced students but we also have the success for all fund all students can apply for at any time .
- For care experienced , estranged and carers we have increased the amount of the bursary we give. All of the above are targeted (in terms of comms) at care experienced students, but available to all.
- Care Leaver students are entitled to £2,000 per academic year while students with disabilities are entitled to £1,000.

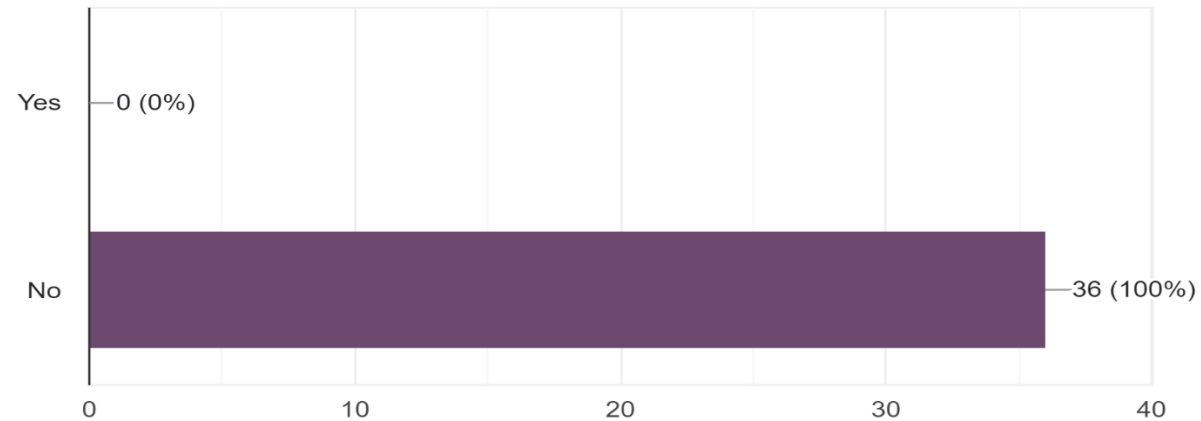
- Cost of living support hub, which is a site that gives students a single point of access to wellbeing, financial and employment support. Heated spaces on campus, with access to charging devices and hot showers. Afternoon reductions on food and free end of day giveaways and microwaves to heat your own food. 121 financial support for students. Free inter-site university bus and free parking on campus, where eligible. Removal of the costs for assessment printing. Increased applications for our paid student ambassador role. Lobbying government for additional support as part of Universities UK and the Universities Alliance.
- We have food parcels available to students while they await a hardship payment.
- Care leavers and estranged students receive an additional £1000 bursary on top of the standard low household income bursary max rate £3k for UK UG students whose HHI <£16k
- Cost of Living Hub which includes an overview of everything that is being offered: Student Support Fund; Emergency Loans; Energy Grant; food vouchers; free period products; free food events; advice on benefits; free laptop loans; no library fines; additional payment for self-funded PGR students.
- Currently reviewing travel support for all students. We have implemented emergency cash payments for travel and energy costs, food vouchers (Tesco), e vouchers and smart card top ups for use in university catering areas for all students. We are working with neighbouring universities to eliminate library charges for all students.
- We have introduced grants for energy costs, one off cost of living payments and increased student support funding for those deemed most at need. This has (so far) been allocated using household income and postcode data to identify the most vulnerable students. We are reviewing this currently and I have already requested that all care-experienced students automatically be 'in scope' for any additional financial support, regardless of household income.
- Offering registered students a one-off payment to help with the cost of living. Full time students will receive £170 and part time students will receive £85; agreeing an initial figure of £360,000 to fund Cost of Living support, with further funding to come; providing, through the Cost of Living Support Fund, grants for students who are struggling; raising the minimum stipend for 2022/23 by more than £2,000 for all PGRs on a studentship funded directly by the University; creating a new Emergency Hardship Support Fund for students in immediate financial need – we aim to make this funding available within 24 hours of applying; making an additional contribution to the SU's Recreational Grant so more students can take part in social activities, regardless of their financial situation.
- The Inclusive support team (Priority groups) has a larger personal budget so we can afford to help more students/provide larger sums of money if needed.
- Toiletries Bank - available for all students.
- The university has doubled its Hardship Funding provision this year for all students and offered advice and support. We have encouraged all vulnerable students to apply for the Hardship Fund and carry out a financial health check with our Student Money Advice team as part of their regular 1:1 Check in Appointments from pre-entry throughout the student journey. For 2022/23, we provided a pre-loaded £28 of free credit onto a

uni laundry card to reduce the laundry costs this year. For the 2022/23 academic year, we ensured that our uni food outlets offer a hot meal for £1.50. Each week the Fresh store will stock ingredients for a meal to feed four people for £5. We signed up to Apps and programmes to reduce food waste and set up Community Fridges for donation/take for unwanted in date food. Students can use any of the study spaces to charge electrical items for free. We tripled the amount available in bursaries to support students in our accommodation in the current academic year, compared with 2021/22. We offered free laptops for a short term loan and financially supported students in purchasing of laptops. We offered a Sports pass for free to use swimming pool, racket sports, pitches and sports hall. We advertise the local Library of things rental scheme.

- In addition to the above, the University has increased the Care Experienced and Estranged students Bursary from £1,000.00 to £1,500.00 for 2022-23. £1.5 million has been allocated to the Hardship Fund to all students in financial difficulty for 2022-23.
- This year, the University launched its care leaver bursary. Eligible residential students will be offered a 50% discount on accommodation (including the summer) and a catering package equivalent in value to one hot meal per day. In addition to this, any deposits needed to secure the accommodation would be waived. Non-resident students will be offered a bursary of £1,000 each year to be paid in 3 instalments in line with the current scholarship payment arrangements and a catering package equivalent in value to one hot meal per day. The bursary is also open to students who are living in Foyer/supported housing, providing they are under the age of 25 at the start of their course.
- The Care-leavers bursary has increased by £500 a year due to the cost of living crisis. Wellbeing events focused on cost of living crisis and advice on making their money go further, available to all students. Free hot water in cafeterias available to all students.
- We offer a care experienced bursary as part of our Fair Access Fund, but this has not been increased in anyway due to the cost of living crisis.
- Breakfast club for all vulnerable.
- Free hire of blankets and hot water bottles for students working on campus (e.g. within library). Increased communal spaces on campus for students to work or socialise in ("warm banks"). Free food and personal care items available for students identified by support services as in need. Too Good To Go initiative in place at campus supermarket to sell fresh food at heavily discounted price. Free items available for students Mon-Fri 9am-5pm: phone charging, condoms and period products, £5 sim cards, lateral flow tests.
- All the following are for all students are the Univeirsty including care experienced students: Free period products; Free kitchen access; Free shower access; Cheaper food options - paired up with 'Too Good To Go'; Promoted our free hopper bus service; Promoted our laptop loan and repair service; Promoted Part-time or temporary work/uni temps vacancies; Promoted our financial support towards the cost of childcare for our students.

3. Are you aware of any care experienced students who have withdrawn from their courses due to the cost of living crisis?

36 responses



4. If you answered yes to Question 3, please provide further details of any feedback you received from care experienced students about their decision to withdraw.

- Anecdotally I have spoken to one student who has taken a leave of absence - in part because of financial hardship. Unfortunately, I do think that during this academic year there will be students who withdraw from their course due to the cost of living crisis.

5. Please use this space to add any further relevant information which has not been covered in the earlier questions.

- The number of care experienced applicants has dropped since 2020.
- All students in receipt of a means tested Undergraduate Bursary this year will receive a one off uplift equivalent to 10% of their bursary entitlement. PGR students in receipt of a stipend from the university will also receive a 10% uplift on this amount.
- The rate of the standard low HHI bursary was increased by £500 for all students in 22/23 in response to the rising cost of living, and further hardship funding has been made available for all students.

- Although no bespoke financial support for care leavers outside of the bursary for the cost of living - we are ensuring each care leaver is contacted and that they are claiming everything they are entitled to and referring for hardship support where appropriate.
- Accommodation also have specific support (free meals etc) for all students living in University Accommodation. Our fund specific for care experienced students allows us to process support for our students (one working day), and the allocation of vouchers has increased significantly during/from pandemic. Vouchers are for university catering outlets (for free meals), transport costs, Tesco for groceries/fuel, Amazon for stationary/books etc. Students apply online and we process vouchers from £50-£150 depending on student need - students can apply on more than one occasion, and at any time of the year. All our care experienced students were offered new laptop for their studies and stationary packs at the start of the last 2 academic years.
- Eligible undergraduate students receive a non-repayable bursary of £1,000 per academic year plus £1,000 to help with start-up costs and a further £1,000 on graduation – a maximum of £7,000 over a 5-year programme including placement.
- Money advice support and hardship fund.
- Due to resources we have not been able to add in any additional measures beyond what we already have on offer for students. We are considering subsidised meals but are not sure when this will be able to be implemented.
- We have a designated member of staff focussed on this group. Close working with them enables us to identify any need and address this from a money/Cost of Living perspective. This means while focus is on all students we are able to respond in an agile way to any requests of support and build a bespoke package for any of this group in a timely manner.