

## Support for Care Leavers and Care Experienced Young People

The Glasgow School of Art wants to ensure that every young person, regardless of their background or social circumstances, who has the ability and aspiration to become an artist, designer or architect or pursue a career in the creative sector, gets an equal chance to do so. We want to ensure all our new and continuing students know that we are here to offer help and guidance with any issues or queries that arise.

Young people who are care-experienced may have experienced one of many different settings at some point in their lives, such as in residential care, foster care, kinship care, or being looked after at home with a supervision requirement. This includes adopted children who were previously looked after too.

In Scotland, public bodies such as universities are considered "corporate parents" which means we have a legal duty to ensure care-experienced students are not adversely affected at university. GSA's *Corporate Parenting Plan* can be viewed [here](#).

### Contact

Starting student life for the first time or navigating a new institution can be daunting, and we want to make sure you are supported throughout this transition, having the information you need to build familiarity and confidence at GSA. We offer a single point of contact with one of our student support staff members, from when you arrive to after you graduate.

Our student support team is a small, friendly specialist team offering support with a variety of services, you can find an overview below. Your point of contact can help you navigate these support services and connect with the relevant support you need. If you would like to reach out now and find out a bit more about this you can contact Graeme.

Graeme Fraser, Student Support Manager  
Email: [g.fraser@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:g.fraser@gsa.ac.uk)  
Tel. 0141 353 4485

If you have already disclosed on your UCAS form you are Care-Experienced, we will initiate contact in the months prior to your studies to let you know some important information and to encourage you to meet with Student Support.

### **Support available from GSA as a Corporate Parent for Care Experienced applicants and students:**

#### **Pre Entry and Application Support available:**

If the prospective student is at a **state secondary school in Scotland**, are care experienced and thinking about applying to the GSA, they can participate in our Widening Participation Programme. For more information, please visit the [WP webpages](#) of the GSA website or email [wp@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:wp@gsa.ac.uk)

The Widening Participation programme can help applicants to:

- Make informed decisions about which degree courses they may be suited to.
- Write a strong UCAS Personal Statement.
- Produce relevant, high quality art and design work through our portfolio courses.
- Photograph/scan art and design work to include in your digital portfolio.
- Layout their digital portfolio so it looks professional.
- Write a good digital portfolio statement.
- Prepare for portfolio interview(s).
- Get ready for studying an undergraduate degree at GSA.

Transitions workshops and a pre-induction is provided in the summer, as an introduction to study at GSA and to signpost the support available.

### Entry Requirements

Care experienced applicants can benefit from:

- Guaranteed interview for those applicants whose portfolio meets the minimum threshold (portfolios are a key part of our entry requirements therefore regardless of academic achievement if portfolios are not of sufficient standard, qualifications alone would not guarantee a place to study).
- Contextualised offers for those who tick the care box on UCAS and pass the digital portfolio and interview stages. They will receive an offer with adjusted entry requirements for Scottish Highers applicants are required to achieve.

### Funding

Getting your funding organised and planning finances in order to study can be overwhelming but there is support here to help you.

Scottish students who are care experienced (have spent time in a looked after setting) are eligible to apply for a Care Experienced Student Bursary and a Care Experienced Summer Accommodation Grant from the Students Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS). More information can be found on the [SAAS website](#).

Similar schemes exist for students from elsewhere in the UK. There is some helpful information on the [UCAS website](#) about applying to the different statutory funding bodies in the UK.

UK care experienced applicants are prioritised for GSA hardship funds, such as the Discretionary Funds and Access Scholarships

If you are unsure about what you can apply for or with the application process, our Student Welfare Advisors can help you: [welfare@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@gsa.ac.uk)

It is also important to speak to your key worker, social worker or aftercare team about **what support your local authority could provide**. Some local authorities will offer support for you whilst you're in full-time education up until the age of 25. You can ask to see their policy on the provision of financial support for care leavers.

Our Student Welfare advisers are here to offer funding advice to make sure that you receive all appropriate funding available, as well; we can also offer help with managing your finances. More information can be found in [the Funding & Finance section](#) of our Student Intranet, or by contacting the Student Welfare Service: [welfare@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:welfare@gsa.ac.uk)

## Accommodation

Care experienced students who wish to live in GSA halls of residence and have need of a secure and consistent home base are able to do so fifty-two weeks a year for the duration of their studies. The opportunity to disclose care experience has been added to the accommodation application. We can arrange year-round accommodation for students in halls of residence, please contact [accomodation@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:accomodation@gsa.ac.uk)

For students who prefer to live in a private flat, our Student Welfare Advisers can assist with information on how to go about finding suitable accommodation within the city.

## Support from Student Support

*(with links to the Student Intranet, which all enrolled students can access)*

All new students are offered support through a range of [Student Support Services](#) that are available such as practical welfare guidance, counselling, advice on services for students with a disability and help with employment opportunities and careers. There is also help and advice available to students about the process of learning and learning in a studio environment.

- Care experienced students are a priority for funding with the opportunity to access ongoing one to one support via [Learning Support and Development](#).
- Care experienced students have priority access to the [GSA Counselling Service](#) and can be referred to the Mental Health Adviser for further support if required.
- Liaison with the student's social worker, landlord, GP etc.
- Appropriate pastoral care, advocacy and mentoring
- Funding advice, support with budgeting and money management/household bills, council tax etc.
- Support to access [Disabled Student Allowance](#), assistive technology, Learning Support
- Access [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#) support
- Liaison with academic staff and advising/supporting students with GSA's policies and procedures.

GSA student support services is comprised of a small specialist team who offer support with a variety of services: Student Welfare, Learning support, Disability support, Counselling and Mental Health and wellbeing.

The **Student Welfare** service is available to support and advise students on the practicalities of being a student, from funding and finances to accommodation, Visa inquiries, healthcare,

and safety and can point you in the right direction if you're not sure who to ask. You can find out more about Student Welfare and access a wealth of resources [here](#)

Our **Learning Support** service offers one one-on-one support sessions with a specialist Learning support tutor to develop study skills and strategies so students can tackle, both written and studio-based learning. You can find out more about Learning Support [here](#)

Our **Disability Service** works with students to explore how their disability might interact with their learning environment and what reasonable adjustments could be made to address any barriers. To find out more about our disability support please visit [here](#)

GSA **Counselling service** is free to all students and offers students the opportunity to talk through any issues they are facing with a training professional. To find out more about our counselling service please visit [here](#)

GSA's **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Service** offers students a confidential space to explore their mental health and emotional wellbeing and how this is impacting on their studies and day to day. They offer workshops and also work with students one on one to provide tailored support, please find more information on this [here](#)

### **Support from Enterprise Studio**

The GSA's [Enterprise Studio](#) provides the following support which can be accessed by emailing [careers@gsa.ac.uk](mailto:careers@gsa.ac.uk):

Careers service: providing careers advice and guidance, education and information tailored to GSA's disciplines, including vacancy sharing, professional practice support and access to creative career resources and schemes

Enterprise and Creative business support: providing advice and guidance on generating and developing innovative business ideas and how to launch a creative enterprise support.

### **External Links & Support**

Young people with experience of care can also access information and support from:

- **Who Cares? Scotland** – you can join [Wee Campus](#) and connect with other students and their higher education experiences. Wee Campus also has a [Facebook community](#)
- **Articulate** – regular events promoting connection and well-being; they also provide studio space.
- The **Become** Charity, phone line support and more.
- **Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland**
- **Life Changes Trust**
- **This is Us**