

The GSA Corporate Parenting Report 2025



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1. Introduction

This report sets out our responsibilities as a Corporate Parent, detailing the support available to Care Experienced Young People, providing an overview of relevant statistics, and presenting a high-level summary of progress achieved during 2024–2025.

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) recognises its pivotal role in supporting the wellbeing and success of care-experienced young people. We aim to ensure that all care-experienced learners have the same opportunities to access, enjoy, and succeed in higher education as their peers, regardless of their background.

Corporate Parenting asks a simple question: *“Would this be good enough for my child?”*

At the GSA, we believe every care-experienced student deserves a network of supportive, caring, and dedicated people who understand their needs and provide meaningful opportunities. We are committed to:

- Offering clear information, advice, and guidance;
- Ensuring accessible and inclusive student support services;
- Taking a whole-School approach to removing barriers and improving educational outcomes.

2. Roles and responsibilities at the GSA

Corporate Parenting at GSA is a whole-School responsibility:

- The Board of Governors ensures GSA meets its corporate parenting duties and reviews progress annually through the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee;

- The Senior Leadership Group ensures strategic alignment, responsible for ensuring that efforts to improve corporate parenting are aligned with institutional policy and effectively implemented within their areas of leadership;
- The Head of Professional and Continuing Education is responsible for leading and evaluating Open Studio and Widening Participation initiatives, ensuring GSA supports care-experienced young people in accessing education;
- The Head of Student Support & Development is responsible for coordination of support, development of policy and facilitation of reporting in consultation with the Secretary and Registrar;
- The Student Welfare Manager serves as the main point of contact for all enrolled students and is responsible for gathering service user feedback and engaging with external networks;
- Student Support and Development provide a dedicated contact, personalised guidance throughout studies, priority wellbeing, financial and accommodation guidance and support;
- Academic staff provide an inclusive learning environment, apply contextual admissions, and remain alert to potential barriers for care-experienced students, signposting when required;
- Professional support staff (e.g., Registry, Finance, Admissions, Accommodation, Careers) deliver targeted services, advice, and guidance.
- The GSA Halls of Residence offer 52-week housing;
- Human Resources promote and track completion rates of the Who Cares? Scotland, Care Experience and Corporate Parenting eLearning module;
- All Staff require an awareness of support services and ability to signpost effectively.

3. Access & Admissions Support

- All Scottish Higher Education Institutions set out a [new commitment](#) that care-experienced applicants who meet minimum entry requirements will

be guaranteed an offer of an undergraduate place at university;

- Open Studio Widening Participation Programme engages local schools and colleges to broaden participation in the arts through hands-on workshops, collaborative projects, and tailored support at application, interview and transition. Students who engage with pre-entry have 100% success rate in offers which is higher than other Scottish School Leavers;
- The programme actively targets Care Experienced young people with prioritised places. Engagement has continued to increase;
- Care Experienced students who apply but may not have engaged with WP directly are contacted for interview advice sessions;
- Information and advice for care-experienced students has been published on GSA's external website [Support for Care-experienced 2425](#);
- Support is clearly signposted on the [Propel](#) website, guiding users to relevant resources and opportunities;
- Undergraduate applications are contextualised and assessed against a adjusted threshold to enhance the opportunity for interview;
- Formal articulation agreements are in place to support progression from partner institutions into degree-level study at the GSA. These are complemented by the GSA's Associate Student Scheme, which offers early engagement, access to facilities, and tailored academic support for prospective students, helping to ease the transition into higher education.

4. Priority Access to Funding and Wellbeing Support

In September 2019, [the upper age limit of the SAAS Care Experienced bursary](#) was removed for entry 2020. There is also an [Accommodation Grant](#) available to care-experienced students through SAAS. In addition, we offer:

- Safe, stable accommodation options guaranteeing 365-day access;
- Priority access to funding opportunities; targeted scholarship and accommodation grant funded by the Social Hub, Childcare and Discretionary/hardship funds and mid cycle Access Scholarships;
- Named single point of contact for advice and early intervention;

- Priority access to the Digital inclusion Initiative giving access to laptops for the duration of their studies;
- Opportunity to complete the Reasonable Adjustment Process, if required;
- Allocation of a Personal Tutor;
- Priority access to counselling, mental health, and wellbeing workshops;
- Access to Learning Development workshops and study skills support.

5. Support with Careers & Progression

- Career mentoring pathways and guidance;
- Access to workshops, one to one support, competitions, and industry placements to develop graduate attributes;
- Access to weekly career service; vacancy and graduate information;
- Access to graduate transition workshops;
- Continuous support post-graduation.

6. Data

The following tables demonstrate a continual increase in enrolments and excellent retention and attainment rates, in line with the wider GSA profile. Due to the small numbers involved, it has not been possible to consider intersectionality as this could allow identification.

Table 1: Applications and Acceptances (Care Experience) at the GSA

	Sept 20	Sept 21	Sept 22	Sept 23	Sept 24
UCAS Applications	28	21	49	65	56
Offers	6	8	9	20	16
Decline/Insurance	3	1	2	10	6
Acceptances	3	7	7	10	10
Matriculations	3	7	7	10	10

Table 2: Students with Care Experience participating in Widening Participation (WP) activities

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Number of participants	11	8	12	19	14

Table 3: The GSA Number of Undergraduate, Care-Experienced Students by Academic Year

Academic Year	No of care-experienced students	% of enrolled students	Retention	Attainment ¹
2020/2021	17 (14 Scottish)	1.3%	15 (88%)	14 (82%)
2021/2022	14 (12 Scottish)	1.1%	12 (86%)	12 (86%)
2022/2023	15 (14 Scottish)	0.8%	11 (73%)	11 (73%)
2023/2024	28 (24 Scottish)	1.4%	25 (89%)	25 (89%)
2024/2025	28 (23 Scottish)	1.8%	25 (89%)	25 (89%)

7. Key Updates

- Fair admissions practices were implemented and SFC widening access targets continue to be consistently met;
- A review of internal and external literature including the development of the GSA external website and creation of Staff Intranet resources, supporting access and promotion of opportunity;
- Support is embedded from pre-entry to beyond graduation with evidence that care-experienced students are aware of support, and how to access it;
- Evidence of increased participation in Open Studio activities in addition to increased applications and enrolments;

¹ This analysis defines attainment as progression to the next year or graduation.

- Data collection was strengthened, evidencing positive retention (89%) and attainment (89%);
- Tailored career guidance was provided to care-experienced students, encompassing enterprise activities and skills development aimed at enhancing graduate outcomes both before and after graduation. This included signposting and support to access initiatives such as the Scottish Government’s Graduate Recruitment Incentive Scheme, helping students transition into meaningful employment and further opportunities;
- Staff training opportunities were embedded; Who Cares? Scotland facilitated an in-person training session for all senior leaders, Heads of School and Heads of Department in 2024 and all student facing staff are encouraged to complete the Who Cares? Scotland eLearning module;
- Collaboration with Who Cares? Scotland and other corporate parents, e.g., Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum;
- Strengthened stakeholder relationships, implemented a student survey, enabling feedback and consultation opportunities to shape service and inform the development of the action plan.

8. Student feedback

Five students opted to participate in 2024/25 survey accounting for 18% of care-experienced students studying at the GSA. Although the survey yields valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge the limitations posed by the small sample size, which may affect the findings:

- 20% participated in Widening Participation activity via Open Studio as their route into the GSA;
- 100% were aware of the support offered by GSA before they started their course and during;
- 60% accessed a range support including digital inclusion, hardship and access scholarship funds, disability, learning and mental health support.

8.1 When asked if the support made a difference, all responded positively:

- *“The counselling definitely helped my day-to-day life and the scholarship I got definitely helps me financially”;*
- *“Helped me to settle into Uni, and the portfolio course helped me to get in”;*
- *“Widening participation and mental health support”, “Helping students financially”, “Dropping in via email regularly”, “Very supportive, Keep up the good work, thanks”.*

8.2 When asked how the GSA can improve support for care-experienced students, responses included:

- *“I’m not sure, I left care years ago and have been ok on my own so I don’t specifically need help in this regard”;*
- *“Bringing more awareness to what Care Experienced actually means.”*
- *“Provide more scholarships and funded entry placements for potential Care Experienced students”;*
- *“Maybe have a large quiet room by itself rather than 2 separate quiet rooms, they are always full and not easy to access”;*
- *“The support during my pregnancy was incredible however I feel there needs to be some plan ahead for when students already have a young child to look after. I can discuss this in more detail but it's hard to explain in writing”.*

8.3 In direct response to student feedback; we aim to encourage more Care Experienced students to access the support available by raising awareness via eLearning and in person training, encouraging a whole school approach to awareness and signposting. In addition, the GSA have committed to increasing the Scholarship offer and hope to develop a Masters Scholarship for Care Experienced students.

Detail of actions for progression can be found in the [GSA Corporate Parenting Action Plan](#); developed in consultation with service users and appropriate staff,

with advice and guidance from Who Cares? Scotland and the GSA Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

9. Reporting

We will continue to engage with current care-experienced students to listen to and understand the voice of those with experience of the Glasgow School of Art, offering opportunity to provide feedback on current services and inform future action. In addition to the [Corporate Parenting Action Plan](#), we will publish an annual update report. In the absence of a working group, the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will retain oversight of both.