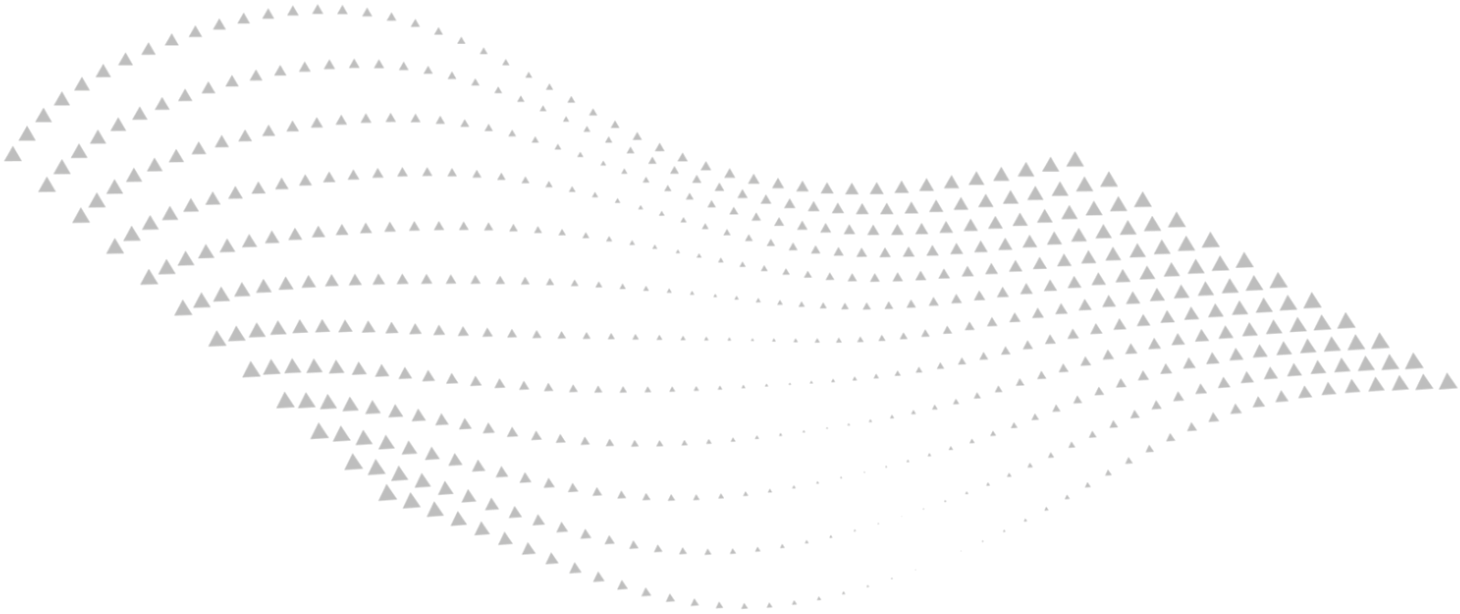
BIMM UNIVERSITY | A university for the creative industries

# Care Experienced Student Policy



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| **Approved by:** | Academic Board |
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| **Changes since last version:** | Minor amendments to role titles reflecting organisational change. |

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## 1. Scope

1.1. This Policy applies to students in BIMM University's UK Campuses that come from a care background. These students can be classified as either Care Leavers or Care Experienced.

## 2. Commitment

2.1. At BIMM University, we are committed to ensuring that Care Experienced students are empowered and supported to thrive and achieve their full educational potential. We aim to ensure that students who have experience of being in care have a successful and enjoyable time studying at the University.

2.2. The University aims to:

- Create an inclusive culture that is championed by our senior leaders.
- Recognise the disadvantage Care Experienced students have encountered and play our part to try to counter this.
- Understand our Care Experienced students so that their views shape the decisions that affect them.
- Proactively monitor our performance against a range of university-wide targets, including those for Access & Participation and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, so we can continue to improve outcomes for our care experienced students.
- Engage with potential students and anticipate their needs before they arrive.
- Promote the physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing of our care experienced students.
- Have high expectations for students' academic, personal and professional development and support structures that reflect this.
- Collaborate effectively with relevant partners to promote the interests of our Care Experienced students.

2.3. The activities we will undertake to ensure delivery on our commitments will be outlined in an Action Plan owned by the Care Experienced Students Working Group, which will be developed alongside our application to the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) Quality Mark.

2.4. This Policy and its accompanying Action Plan are owned and monitored by the Head of Wellbeing.

## 3. Definition

3.1. The University defines a Care Experienced student as an individual who will have spent at least 13 weeks of the last 5 years in local authority care prior to the start of their course. This could include living with foster parents, living at home with parents/guardians under the supervision of social services, living in a residential children's home, living in another residential setting like a school or secure unit.

3.2. The University will consider each case individually, and applicants should contact the campus Student Wellbeing Manager for further information.

## 4. Commitments to Care Experienced Higher Education Students

4.1. Prior to enrolling at a UK Campus, the Wellbeing team will assist with a Fair Access Fund application, which includes a Care Experienced Student Bursary and other elements of bespoke support to help the transition into university.

4.2. Students will be invited to a 'Settling In' day prior to enrolment, with a tour of the facilities and an opportunity to meet the team.

4.3. Prior to enrolment, campuses will arrange meetings with students' Social Workers and/or any other appropriate key workers, and this contact will continue after enrolment, if appropriate.

4.4. Students will be assigned a Designated Adult at their local campus – a named member of the Student Wellbeing Team to connect with for the duration of studies, including outside of term-time (except for extended holiday periods, such as the winter break, when campuses are closed).

4.5. Students will be referred to the Learning Support Team, if appropriate, to ensure appropriate support is in place for the duration of studies.

4.6. Students will be offered Care Packs during their studies; these may include elements such as supermarket vouchers, introductions to Society Memberships and other location-specific endorsements.

4.7. On completion of a Higher Education course, students will be entitled to hire Graduation robes free of charge.

4.8. Students will be offered career support workshops, such as CV writing and interview techniques.

## 5. Additional Resources for Care-Experienced Students

5.1. An overview of Student Wellbeing services.

5.2. Fair Access Fund.