

Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award



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About Carers Trust Scotland

Carers Trust Scotland is part of Carers Trust, a major charity for, with and about carers. We work to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, **unpaid**, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems.

With locally based Network Partners we are able to support carers in the community with information, advice, emotional support, hands on practical help and access to much needed breaks. We offer specialist services for carers of people of all ages and conditions and a range of individually tailored support and group activities.

Background

There are student carers in every college, trying to complete their course to the best of their ability just like their peers. However, they often experience additional challenges because of their caring responsibilities. Student carer data in the college sector in Scotland has been collected since 2013–2014. In that time the number of identified student carer enrolments in Scotland's colleges has increased from 3,413 to 10,655 in academic year 2016–2017. While this is a significant increase, many student carers continue to be unidentified and continue to be a hidden group.

Research commissioned by Carers Trust found that student carers were generally providing a very high level of care, and that:



39%

rated their physical health as either 'just ok' or 'poor'.



45%

reported having mental health problems.



56%

were experiencing difficulties because of their caring role.



16%

were concerned that they might have to drop out of college.



75%

of respondents informed college staff of their caring role.



45%

said there was no-one at university who recognised them as a carer and helped them.



Student carers are four times more likely to drop out of college or university than students who are not carers.

(Sempik, J and Becker, S (2014), *Young Adult Carers at College and University* (Carers Trust) at https://professionals.carers.org/sites/default/files/young_adult_carers_at_college_and_university.pdf).



Thanks to funding provided by the Scottish Funding Council we have been able to produce the new Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award to help empower colleges and professionals to better support student carers.

Carers Trust Scotland's *Time to be Heard for Young Adult Carers, Bridging the Gap: Young Adult Carers in Scotland 2015* report (Carers.org/sites/files/carerstrust/ttbh_scotland_report_-_final.pdf) highlighted recommendations for improved identification and support for student carers.



Carers Trust Scotland's Going Further for Student Carers in Scotland initiative is calling for all colleges to:

- **Identify** the number of student carers attending or hoping to study at their institution.
- **Support** all student carers throughout their education to ensure they maintain good health, successfully complete their course and achieve the best grades possible.
- **Report** on student carers' progression and showcase student carers' achievements.



The Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award in Scotland

This award is only available to colleges operating in Scotland. Colleges in the rest of the UK should email Carers Trust at info@carers.org to find out about initiatives in the nations.



What is the Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award?

This award aims to make it easier for colleges to support student carers and reward good practice. It incentivises and encourages colleges to adopt a sustainable, whole institution approach to **identify, support** and **report** on student carers.



There is no cost in undertaking the award process. By taking part, colleges will have access to the application process for the Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award, enabling colleges to potentially gain recognition from Carers Trust Scotland for effective practice. They will be supported by Carers Trust Scotland staff to make the process as straightforward as possible.

By coming on this journey, colleges will send a positive message to student carers that they are recognised, supported and will be given a fair chance to be successful in their institution. They will also make it clear to other institutions and to the wider student body that inclusivity and fairness is at the heart of its institution.



About carers

A carer is anyone who cares, **unpaid**, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support.



Principles into action

Carers Trust Scotland promotes an inclusive approach to student carer developments in colleges, including when creating or reviewing policies and procedures.

This award encourages consultation, participation and a holistic review of carer provision. However, changes will only come about if colleges commit to implement and promote the award to make a real difference to the lives of carers. Development of carer support needs should be embedded into day-to-day practices to ensure these are effective. It is also important to have robust reporting and evaluation procedures. Like all new processes, Carers Trust Scotland encourages carer support developments to be monitored closely, and amendments made to ensure that they are successful.



The Going Further for Student Carers: Recognition Award consists of three separate principles. To gain the award colleges will need to demonstrate that they are fulfilling and championing the following three principles:

- 1. Identify:** Carers are being proactively identified and awareness is being raised throughout the college.
- 2. Support:** Carers are being supported to give them a fair chance to be successful in their studies.
- 3. Report:** Student carer progression is showcased and evaluation tools are used to celebrate achievements and make improvements.



The award system is points based and in order to gain the award a college must demonstrate that it has achieved 70 points, which is 70% of the total number of points (100 points) available for the award.

Our points weighting structure can be found under the Award criteria section on page 9 of this guidance. Once a college has achieved its award we intend to review this every two years.

Applying for the award

To qualify for the award, a college must supply evidence to show how it is holistically implementing each principle into action. Each application will be reviewed by a panel of members consisting of Carers Trust Scotland and other relevant stakeholders.

Carers Trust Scotland can work with any college that has applied and has not fulfilled enough of the criteria to receive the award, to assist it in strengthening its future submission. Carers Trust Scotland will respond to all colleges that have applied – both those who have and have not successfully fulfilled the criteria for the award – to suggest ways to further improve student carer support.

Submitting evidence:

To apply for the award, applicants will need to complete the submission checklist which can be found at <https://carers.org/going-further-scotland>.

Please remember to:

- Tick the relevant box on the submission checklist to show which criteria the college has submitted evidence for.
- Write a brief description of the evidence provided in the boxes on the submission checklist.
- Ensure that all evidence submitted is GDPR compliant and meets your institution's data protection policies. Evidence should be anonymised, with no identifiable factors for any carer or other person.

The application should be submitted on a USB stick/CD in electronic format, including a completed signed submission checklist and each piece of evidence should be labelled with the criteria number, college name and description (for example – 1.1 College of Carers, Pre-baseline survey) and posted to:

**FAO Going Further for
Student Carers Initiative
Office 64
Spaces
Tay House
300 Bath Street
Glasgow G2 4JR**

We regret that we cannot accept applications via email.

Your privacy

We promise to keep your personal details safe. You can change how we contact you at any time by contacting us at dpo@carers.org or 0300 772 9600. To see how we protect and use your personal data read our Privacy Policy at [Carers.org/privacy-policy](https://carers.org/privacy-policy).



Further information

If you have any queries about the application process, please get in touch with Carers Trust Scotland. Call 0300 772 7701 or email scotland@carers.org.



The award process

Get in touch with Carers Trust Scotland to find out more about the award process.

Review the college's existing student carer support provision.

Develop any new student carer support provision, as deemed necessary.

Collect relevant award criteria evidence and complete the application process.

Submit award application.

You will be notified of the date of when the next panel session will take place to assess submitted applications.

Carers Trust Scotland will be in touch no later than two weeks after the panel meeting regarding the outcome of the submitted application.



Award criteria

Below we have provided information about the different award criteria and made some suggestions about possible evidence sources, and the weight given to each award criteria area. Evidence is not restricted to these suggestions and we welcome and encourage colleges to demonstrate other evidence sources.

Points available for each criteria area will only be awarded on the extent to which it has been demonstrated that these criteria have been fulfilled. Full available points for each criteria field will only be awarded when the college has fully demonstrated that it has met or exceeded the criteria.

Principle 1 – Identify

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
1.1 Pre-baseline survey completed	<p>This will provide the college with an opportunity to reflect on its understanding of student carer issues and consider its provision of support for student carers at the start of the process.</p> <p>The interactive Pre-baseline survey can be accessed at: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GoingFurtherandGoingHigherPre-baselineSurvey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Copy of completed Pre-baseline survey.• Confirmation email to Carers Trust Scotland of completed Pre-baseline survey.	1



Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
1.2 Carers Support Working Group established	<p>A group appointed to review student carer identification and support at the college and make recommendations to improve such support.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland would advise a full institution approach to the Carers Support Working Group and encourages cross-departmental representation; including management team, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and student body representation.</p> <p>There is no expectation that this Working Group is a new Working Group or committee at the college. The Working Group established to oversee and review student carer support could be assigned to an existing Working Group or committee at the college. The emphasis is that there is a body within the college that has a remit and responsibility for student carers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job titles of those on the Carers Support Working Group. • Evidence that the Carers Support Working Group has been established, and the opportunity to participate, has been promoted to college staff and the student body. 	3
1.3 Carers Support Working Group meeting(s) and remit	<p>The frequency and duration of meetings will be dependent on the aims and remit of the group.</p> <p>A Terms of Reference for the group may help to clarify the remit and purpose.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland would advise that the Carers Support Working Group meetings take place biannually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas, Minutes and Actions. • Copy of the Terms of Reference for the Carers Support Working Group. • Statements from members expressing their experience as a member. 	3
1.4 Carer definition established	<p>A definition is established and endorsed by the college which clearly explains the college's understanding of who is a carer.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland encourages institutions to adopt the Carers Trust definition: 'A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or relative who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the college's definition of a carer. • Screenshot or link to the definition of a carer on the college's website or Student Carers Support Policy. 	1

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
1.5 Statement of Intent to Support Carers	A short statement highlighting what the institution's ethos, approach and commitments are to supporting student carers (please see Carers Trust Scotland's guidance for more information at Carers.org/sites/default/files/media/guidance_on_statement_of_intent.pdf).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Statement of Intent to support carers. • Screenshot or link to the Statement on the college's website. • Evidence of widely promoting the Statement of Intent across the college. • Evidence of promoting the Statement of Intent to relevant external stakeholders. 	2
1.6 Access and Inclusion includes carers	Carers are listed as a prioritised group in the college's Access and Inclusion Strategy to ensure additional support is available to improve carers' successful participation at the college.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the college's Access and Inclusion Strategy or statement. • Screenshot or link to the college's listing of carers as an Access and Inclusion priority group on its website. • Evidence of Access and Inclusion support information specifically developed for carers. 	4
1.7 Student carer applicants identified	<p>Putting systems and programmes in place to proactively identify carer applicants could result in adequate pre-entry support being in place for students prior to entering the institution. This could give carers a fairer chance to be successful in their studies.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland would advocate that it would be good practice for colleges to guarantee, as part of their admissions, an automatic interview for prospective students identified as having caring responsibilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and designation of carers lead for candidate enquiries and link or screenshot of where this contact and support information is available on the college website. • Evidence that courses administered by the college enquire about carer status on the application form. • Copy of posters developed to encourage student carers to disclose caring status. • Evidence of admissions support information specifically developed for carers. • Evidence of pre-entry programmes for identified student carers prior to commencing their course. 	3

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
<p>1.8 Identifying student carers throughout their time at college</p>	<p>Asking students annually about their caring status does not only provide data to inform the college about the carer demographic in the student body, but also helps to tailor personalised and relevant support.</p> <p>This can be achieved or carried out during annual enrolment or matriculation identification. Having systems in place to actively identify carers from the existing student population during an academic year could enable appropriate support to be offered and students may be less likely to get to crisis point because of juggling studying and their caring responsibilities.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland advocates for colleges to be able to identify student carers at all points in their academic journey as anyone can become a carer at any stage in their life and caring status can change over time. Also, a student's caring role may end during their time at college.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of the college's annual enrolment or matriculation form(s), and the inclusion of a method for carers to identify themselves. • Data report of the number of student carers at the college in the current academic year, and possible trends compared to previous academic years; or projections for future academic years. • Evidence of posters and leaflets on campus targeting student carers. • Evidence that the college has a dedicated information and support section of the website for carers. • Evidence of an internal flagging system, which includes a student carer flagging option. • Further Education Statistic records. 	<p>5</p>

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
1.9 Confirming unpaid carer status of students	<p>By establishing recognised and flexible criteria for students to confirm their caring status, the college can make it easier for carers to come forward and disclose that status.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland would advocate that self-identification is the best means to allow students to identify their caring status as it presents the least barriers for them to disclose as a carer.</p> <p>However, this might also include a copy of their Carers Support Plan or Young Carers Statement. Alternatively, a carer's identification or authorisation card, carer service letter, or a letter from GP surgery or local authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of accepted carer status criteria. • Copy of Student Carer Support Policy with carer status criteria highlighted. • Screenshot or link to the college's information about affirming carer status of applicants or enrolled students. • Further Education Statistics submitted to Scottish Funding Council on student carers. 	3
Total			25



Principle 2 – Support

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
2.1 Named carers lead	By establishing a named carers lead contact the college can make it easier for prospective and current student carers to come forward and make enquiries and access support and information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name and designation of carers lead for carer enquiries and information. Link or screenshot of where carers lead contact and support information is accessible on the college website. Evidence in Student Carers Support Policy of a carers lead. 	1
2.2 Action Plan	A student carer action plan should highlight the actions that the institution is committed to take forward to improve student carer identification and support (please see Carers Trust Scotland’s guidance for more information at Carers.org/sites/default/files/media/student_carer_action_plan_0.pdf).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of the Action Plan. 	4
2.3 Student Carers Support Policy	A holistic overarching policy for the college should clearly explain practice and procedures for identifying, supporting and reporting on carers. Such policies can include specific detail around many areas including definition, Statement of Intent (please see criteria area 1.5), confirming status, admissions, access and inclusion, enrolment, absence, extenuating circumstances and student services (please see Carers Trust Scotland’s guidance for more information at Carers.org/sites/default/files/media/guidance_for_student_carers_policy_4.pdf).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of Student Carers Support Policy. 	6

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
2.4 Student Carers Support Policy launched	<p>A public launch of the Student Carers Support Policy can help promote it.</p> <p>Ideas for launching could include a Carers Week event in June or on Carers Rights Day at the end of November; or on Young Carers Awareness Day at the end of January.</p> <p>Promoting the policy could also include online promotion or information sharing via all student and staff email.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of Student Carers Support Policy launch – such as photographs, screenshot of online posts, copies of email communications or copies of press release distributed. 	4
2.5 Other relevant policies and strategies	<p>Relevant policies should make explicit and direct reference to carers and their specific considerations and support needs. Such policies and strategies may include – but are not limited to – anti-bullying, equality and diversity, access and inclusion policies/strategies.</p> <p>Carers Trust Scotland suggests that making connections between the Student Carers Support Policy and other relevant policies should be done as part of the planned review cycle of those relevant policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that college policies make specific reference to, and account of, carers and their needs. 	2
2.6 Publications and resources	<p>Creating your own or making use of existing publications and resources for student carers, such as leaflets and posters, which can help promote available or upcoming support for carers. This may also help you to reach out to carers and improve identification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copies of publications and resources developed. Evidence of how these have been promoted and displayed. 	3
2.7 Website information	<p>Having a dedicated webpage can provide details about student carer support and other relevant information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link or screenshot of the dedicated carer section on the college website. Evidence of raising awareness of the webpage to student carers. 	3

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
2.8 Acknowledging carers	Regular promotional activities or events are a great way to recognise the contribution that student carers make to your institution or to raise awareness of the needs and ambitions of carers too. This could be for example, a campus carer awareness campaign, a Carers Week event or a fundraising stunt for a local or national carers organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of activities undertaken to acknowledge carers. • Emails and posters promoting events. • Social media screenshots highlighting activities. • Photographs of activities/ events. • Testimonies of participants. • Activity/event reports. 	4
2.9 Referral and signposting	Establishing procedures and protocols for referring or signposting student carers to relevant support services can make it easier for carers to get support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreement(s). • Evidence of signposting arrangements. 	3
2.10 Student Association(s') participation	<p>Student Association(s') active participation can play a key role in college planning for identifying, supporting and reporting on carers.</p> <p>One suggestion would be to include the Student Association in the design and implementation of an acknowledging carers event as outlined in criteria 2.8.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Action Plan specifically listing Student Association(s') involvement and actions. • Student Association(s') Student Carer Support Policy. • Evidence of Student Association(s') membership on Carers Support Working Group. 	4
2.11 Promoting of, and collaborating with, local and national carer organisations	<p>By establishing working and collaborative relationships with local and national carer services/ organisations the college can open access and support for its student carers body and encourage local carers to apply to college.</p> <p>The college promotes carer services and organisations. For example, displaying carer services posters and adding links on the college's website to Carers Trust Scotland, and other relevant carer support services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of the college engaging with local and national carer services or organisations. • Evidence of local and national carer services or organisations attending college events. • Photographs of posters on display. • Link or screenshot of carer services promotion, or weblinks on the college website. 	4

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
2.12 Basic student carer awareness training taken up by college staff	Relevant staff at the college, including senior management, teaching staff and non-teaching staff engage in Carers Trust Scotland's basic student carer awareness training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of evaluation forms. • Registration or participant forms. • Photographs of training being delivered. • Correspondence promoting training. 	5
2.13 Advanced student carer training taken up by college staff	Relevant staff at the college, including senior management, teaching staff and non-teaching staff engage in Carers Trust Scotland advanced student carer training module.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of evaluation forms. • Registration or participant forms. • Photographs of training being delivered. • Correspondence promoting training. 	4
2.14 Student carer training made mandatory for college staff – teaching and non-teaching	<p>College demonstrates leadership to ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to identify, support and report on student carers by engaging in continued professional development in this area.</p> <p>New college staff are required to take part in the basic student carer awareness training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email correspondence communicating mandatory status. • Copy of policy or continued professional development plans that indicate mandatory status. 	3
Total			50



Principle 3 – Report

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
3.1 Data	Data gathered through Further Education Statistics return should be submitted to the Scottish Funding Council. This information should also be shared with staff, the student body and Carers Trust Scotland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Further Education Statistics return; as well as any other relevant data such as year-on-year trends on student carer numbers. • Evidence on how this data has been communicated. • Evidence of how this data is being used to shape or influence policy and practice. 	5
3.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	How is data gathered on student carers contributing to the college meeting its KPIs either at institutional or departmental levels? What impact is being able to identify, support and report on student carers making to the college?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of relevant meetings and agendas. • Strategy documents. • Business plans. • Monitoring and evaluation reports. • Case-studies or testimonies. 	3
3.3 Outcome Agreement between the College and Scottish Funding Council	Scottish Funding Council Outcome Agreement guidance (http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/outcome-agreements/outcome-agreements-guidance/outcome-agreements-guidance.aspx) disseminated to colleges during October 2018 for College Outcome Agreements: 2019–20 and 2021–22 (points 110 to 112 on page 32) states that colleges should improve the support to staff and carers with unpaid caring responsibilities as well as using the Carers Trust Scotland definition of a carer. It also urges all colleges to fully support and participate in the Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Regional Outcome Agreement. • Email or letter of commitment from the college to Carers Trust Scotland stating its participation in the Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award framework. • Copy of Student Carer Support Policy or link to college website which includes a definition of how the college defines a carer. 	5

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
3.4 Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award Journey	Promoting and reporting on the college's journey in undertaking the award is a good awareness raising activity and assists in showcasing the good policy and practice that the college embodies to identify and support student carers to a range of stakeholders. This could be promoted across the campus to students and staff as well as relevant local and national organisations or institutions, and other relevant partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence on how the journey has been communicated. • Copy of all staff email. • Copy of all student email. • Link or screenshot to website promotion. • Link or screenshot to social media promotion. 	4
3.5 Showcasing the Student Carers Action Plan	<p>Your Action Plan should be a live document and promote the college's intended actions for student carers. Communicating the difference these actions are making is also a great way to raise awareness and enhance stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>As well as raising the profile and furthering the reputation of the college this could be achieved through the production of a summary document which is widely circulated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of how the Action Plan has been showcased. • Evidence of how the Action Plan is making a difference. 	2
3.6 Promoting Student Carers Support Policy	The Student Carers Support Policy should be widely promoted and accessible to staff, students and relevant organisations. Having an easy read version or different formats is also another way to ensure that it is accessible to student carers with a range of needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of all student email. • Copy of all staff email. • Copy of external communications promoting the policy. • Copy of easy read version or alternative formats. • Link or screenshot of website promotion. • Link or screenshot of social media promotion. 	2

Criteria	Description and information	Possible evidence	Possible points available
3.7 Carers Support Working Group review	The group should have established ongoing monitoring and evaluation plans. This could include the Action Plan and remit, and impact of the group. It's important to know what difference the Working Group and Action Plan are making to student carers and the college more widely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of reviewing structures in place to monitor and evaluate the impact of the Carers Support Working Group. 	3
3.8 Post-baseline survey completed	<p>The completed Post-baseline survey will provide the college with an opportunity to critically reflect on its understanding of student carers' issues now that it has taken part in the Going Further for Student Carers Recognition Award journey. It will enable the college to consider its successes, its learning and future areas for improvement regarding the provision of support for student carers at the time of portfolio submission.</p> <p>The interactive Post-baseline survey can be accessed at: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GoingFurtherandGoingHigherPost-baselineSurvey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of completed Post-baseline survey. Confirmation email of completed Post-baseline survey. 	1
Total			25

Notes





supporting
student carers in
further education

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