



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT - RESULTS

<b>Title of Policy</b>	Care Experienced Bursary - removal of age 26 cap
<b>Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy</b>	<p>Relevant National Outcomes: "We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation" "Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens."</p> <p>At present, to be eligible for the Care Experienced Bursary a student must have been looked after by a Local Authority in the UK and be under 26 on the first day of the first academic year of their course.</p>
<b>Directorate: Division: team</b>	<p>Advanced Learning and Science Directorate. Higher Education and Science: Student Support Review Team</p>

### Executive summary

A review of the removal of the age 26 cap from the eligibility for the Care Experienced Bursary (CEB) was carried out, of which this EQIA forms a part.

The EQIA identified that removing the age 26 cap in general is seen as a positive change for all equality groups by supporting students with experience of care to enter Further and Higher education at whatever point in life they feel ready.

## **Background**

At present, a student may be eligible for the CEB if:

- They have been looked after by a Local Authority in the UK and;
- Are under 26 on the first day of the first academic year of their course (the relevant date).

The First Minister made her Parliamentary Statement setting out the Scottish Government's Programme for Government (PfG) for 2019/20 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019.

This included an announcement that from the Academic Year (AY) 2020/2021, the Scottish Government will be removing the age 26 cap for access to the CEB.

This contributes to the following national outcomes:

- We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.
- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.

## **The Scope of the EQIA**

As the removal of the age 26 cap from the eligibility of the CEB is intended as a positive change for all prospective care experienced students, it is considered a concise and focused Equality Impact Assessment is proportionate in these circumstances.

Data provided by HESA shows that in the academic year 2017/18, there were 245 Care Experienced Undergraduate students, aged 26 and over.

Data provided by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), shows that in the academic year 2017/18 there were 1,310 Further Education Care Experienced students, aged 26 and over.

The EQIA considered; key data regarding the age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation of Care Experienced students aged 26 and over, in both Further and Higher Education. However, the removal

of the age 26 cap from the eligibility of the CEB will apply to all eligible care experienced students in Further and Higher education, irrespective of the protected characteristics and is therefore seen as a positive change for all.

## **Key Findings**

The EQIA identified that there are gaps in the information available relating to the impact on the protected characteristics of care experienced students over the age of 26, living in Scotland.

However, removal of the age 26 cap for access to the CEB in general is seen as a positive change for all equality groups, as they will have access to an increased level of non-repayable support throughout their education.

## **Recommendations and Conclusion**

In conclusion, positive or neutral impacts as a result of removing the age 26 cap from the eligibility of the CEB have been identified for care experienced students in all equality groups. No negative impacts have been identified.

SAAS and SFC will continue to gather statistical data on student applications for bursaries and we will be able to monitor the impact of the changes to the CEB on relevant groups going forward.

The HE and FE student support package in Scotland will be subject to ongoing monitoring by the Colleges, Young Workforce and SFC Sponsorship division and the Higher Education and Science Division.