

The Bairn Necessities

Student parents' experiences of education
at college and university in Scotland



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Foreword



NUS' 2009 report, 'Meet the Parents', was the first ever UK-wide report into the experiences of students with children in further and higher education. The report was the catalyst for a slew of activity and positive change from institutions and campaigns led by students.

But now it's 2016 and the barriers faced by student parents haven't gone away. Students with children are still faced with difficult financial situations and a need for flexibility and childcare that goes beyond the basics.

We commissioned this report because it was time for an update on how student parents experience tertiary level education in Scotland. There was a demand from our members to highlight best practice and to have the information needed to make change.

The education landscape in Scotland is changing, both for the students looking to enter further and higher education, but also the situation facing them once they are studying. While funding for home students remains a postcode lottery, and with living costs set to increase it is even more important that our education system is working for everyone.

Previous NUS research has highlighted that financial concerns and lack of community are two factors that often contribute to a students' ability to stay in education. Although there are no public retention figures for student parents, it is clear from this report that they are an at risk group for leaving education.

Our research makes clear that students with children desperately want and need institutions to be understanding of their situation as parents and apply mitigating circumstances accordingly. Students said it

took courage to enter education as a parent but this isn't often reflected in the support offered. Creating inclusive learning environments improves the experiences of all students, particularly those who need it most.

The students we spoke with have entered education determined to experience college or university just as their peers do, and have high expectations for the quality of that experience. They want to join societies and sports clubs, volunteer and succeed on their course. But so few of our student parents are currently able to participate in these activities – because our structures favour students without family commitments.

In 2015/16, two-thirds of the elected college representatives in Scotland were student parents. Whilst this is positive for the representation of student parents, it is not indicative of students' associations as exemplar employers. Students' associations and NUS Scotland need to work harder to ensure that elected student officers with children are properly supported in their roles.

We hope that this report sparks more developed support for student parents in order for student parents to feel their institution is doing everything it can to allow them to succeed.



Emily Beever
NUS Scotland Women's Officer 2015/16



Angela Alexander
NUS Scotland Women's Officer 2016/17

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Bairn Necessities provides an up to date picture of how student parents in colleges and universities experience Post-16 education. In 2009, NUS published its Meet the Parents report, which was the first report of its kind, examining the education landscape for student parents across the UK. NUS Scotland believed it was time to do a specific report on the needs and experiences of student parents in Scotland. We believe that this report should not be seen as a stand-alone contribution, but should be viewed in the context of lifting all barriers to accessing Post-16 Education in Scotland.

The overarching theme of this report is recognising that colleges, universities and their students' associations need to be more understanding of the needs and life circumstances of student parents in order for them to succeed. NUS Scotland firmly believes that, if implemented, the recommendations in this report would make a substantial positive difference to student parents at colleges and universities.

Key Recommendations:

Who are the student parents?

- All colleges and universities should be required to keep a record of how many student parents are studying at their institution, in order to provide those student parents with suitable support tailored to their needs.
- Institutions should use this data to embed a holistic, integrated system of support for student parents, to include detailed and timely information about services available and entitlements.

Learning well

- The whole system of self-certificates, attendance and absences should be reviewed by Scottish Funding Council in partnership with colleges, to create a more flexible system that reflects the needs and life circumstances of student parents.
- Colleges and universities should set up plans with student parents about how they're going to be able to meet their course demands with their childcare responsibilities. This plan should be communicated with all the students' lecturers in order for them to receive the same treatment from all members of staff.
- Colleges and universities should provide quiet areas with fridges for mothers to breastfeed or express if they are currently breastfeeding.
- A comprehensive review of the allocation of nursery places both at on-campus and local facilities should be undertaken to ensure the needs of student parents are being met.
- Colleges and universities where possible must align their term times with school holidays.
- College, universities, and students' associations should work through NUS's

10 steps from child free to child friendly institutions.

- Staff at colleges, universities and students' association should be trained to recognise students that may be experiencing or recently experienced domestic abuse, and are able to signpost those students to receive the appropriate support.

Finances and family leave

- Scottish Funding Council, Scottish Government, and relevant partners work with NUS Scotland should implement SFC's recommendations on how discretionary funding can better support student parents.
- Scottish Government or its respective agencies, should conduct further and more in depth research to determine the real cost terms of childcare provision for university students and the relationship of these costs to the SAAS loans. More in depth research is necessary to gain a fuller understanding of why monthly shortfalls for some students can be so high, and could provide solutions that enables childcare funds to meet the full costs of childcare.
- Scottish Government should use new powers to review how financial support given to student parents interlinks with the Carers Allowance and other benefits the student may be entitled to, ensuring that student parents receive the best possible support.
- Colleges and universities should provide some kind of bursary support to cover maternity and family leave for students who become parents during their studies.

Students' Associations

- Students' associations should recognise the time limitations student parents experience, and set up a student parent network.
- Students' associations should provide child friendly spaces in order for student parents to participate in extracurricular activities when they are able to do so.
- Students' associations should consider how they can support full time elected officers who disclose a pregnancy during their time in office.

Research Methodology

Research Methodology

Research for this report was carried out between October 2015 and April 2016. There were several different aspects to this research, including:

- A brief literature review, to determine the existing research and recommendations regarding student parents, in the past 10 years;
- Desk based research, including FOI requests to universities and colleges, to establish what was known about student parents and the support offered to them;
- An online survey filled out by 721 student parent respondents;
- And, phone interviews with elected student officers—full-time, part time and volunteer—to find out about their experiences of working in a students' associations as a student parent.

NUS', if not the UK's, first ever research into the experiences of student parents was 'Meet the Parents', published in 2009, and that report has formed the foundation for this report, updating the research and recommendations to reflect current issues. A key aim of this research was to establish how much had changed since Meet The Parents was published, particularly in the support provided by universities and colleges, exemplifying good practice we have seen around the sector, and recommending how further changes should be made.

For the qualitative research, our online survey ran for a total of four weeks. The survey questions focused on the financial support students receive, and what non-

financial support they identified as having received or been offered, if any, from their institution. The survey was filled in by 721 students, which is the highest number of student parents to be surveyed at one time by NUS Scotland. The survey results were more representative of student parents studying at a college. However, the information received by freedom of information requests (FOI) shows that the number of student parents studying at universities are also sizeable. We believe that the low response rate from university students highlights how difficult it is for institutions and students' associations to identify and contact student parents at a university, given the lack of central information that often exists.

A series of phone interviews were conducted with elected student officers at students' associations across Scotland. From these interviews we got a deeper understanding of how student parents who volunteer and serve as part or full time officers are supported by their association, institution and NUS Scotland.

Who are student parents?



Who are the student parents?

It is difficult to say how many student parents there are across Scotland because colleges and universities are currently not required to collect information on whether or not a student is a parent. As part of their Further Education Statistics (FES) returns, colleges do collect information on whether a student is a 'carer', but this definition is obviously much broader than being a parent, and also the data collected can often be of low quality for statistical purposes.

In 2009, NUS's Meet the Parents report recommended that colleges and universities collect data on student parents in order for the institution to provide more tailored support. Unfortunately, this has not been implemented nationwide.

However, there are a handful of Scottish colleges and universities that do collect information on student parents. From those universities and colleges that collect this data, we know that student parents make up a significant proportion of their student population - anywhere from 7.8% to 20% of the overall student population is made up of student parents. This high percentage of student parents across colleges and universities demonstrates that student parents form a large part of the student body, possibly higher than was previously thought.

Our survey results also provided a better picture on the demographic characteristics of student parents. Based on the responses we received, student parents tend to be mature students – the highest category of responses came from those aged 31 or over

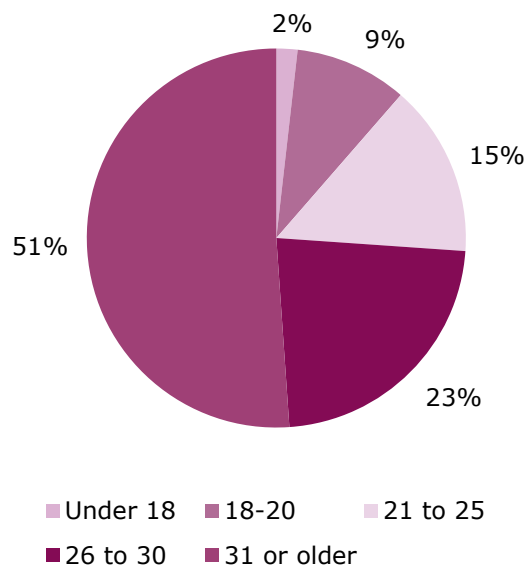
(51.1%) and 26-30 (22.8%). This is the same trend as found in Meet the Parents. (Fig. 1)

The respondents were primarily full time students (92.4%) and 46.5% of respondents were in their first year of study. However, 5.1% of respondents were studying some at postgraduate level (PGT 2.4%/PGR 2.7%). (Fig. 2) This is a marked shift from the findings in Meet the Parents, which found that student parents were primarily studying part-time.

We believe there are two reasons that full time students feature prominently in our results. Firstly, as a result of a shift in national policy, there has been an increasing focus on provision of full-time courses in our colleges, and a decline in the number of part time courses. Since 2009, when Meet The Parents was released, there has been a gradual decline in part-time students in both university and college (covering both further and higher education). As shown in the tables below, in universities this decline has been 22.4%, and in colleges it has been 25.5%.

Secondly, the survey was promoted almost entirely by our member students' associations, which usually have more experience of engaging with full time students rather than part time students, primarily as a result of the additional time and work commitments many part-time students have (i.e. combining much more working hours with their studies).

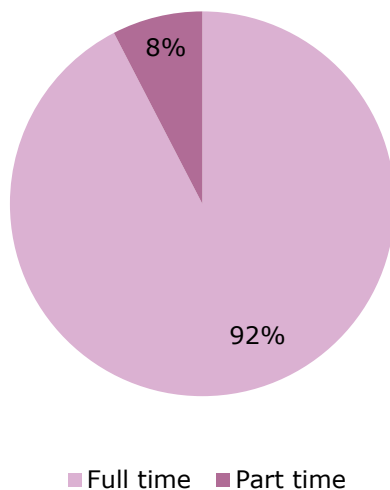
Fig. 1 What is your age?



Part-time university students, by gender			
	Male	Female	Total
2008-09	29,420	45,010	74,430
2009-10	29,570	45,225	74,790
2010-11	29,380	42,910	72,295
2011-12	26,450	39,190	65,640
2012-13	25,450	38,205	63,885
2013-14	23,450	36,545	60,000
2014-15	22,985	34,700	57,730

Source: SFC, Higher Education Students and Qualifiers at Scottish Institutions 2014-15

Fig. 2 Do you study full time or part time?



FTE part-time college students, by gender			
	Male	Female	Total
2007/08	28,919	28,853	57,772
2008/09	28,815	27,745	56,561
2009/10	26,156	25,660	51,817
2010/11	24,467	23,066	47,533
2011/12	23,054	21,276	44,330
2012/13	24,725	21,107	45,832
2013/14	24,607	20,445	45,052
2014/15	23,909	19,094	43,019

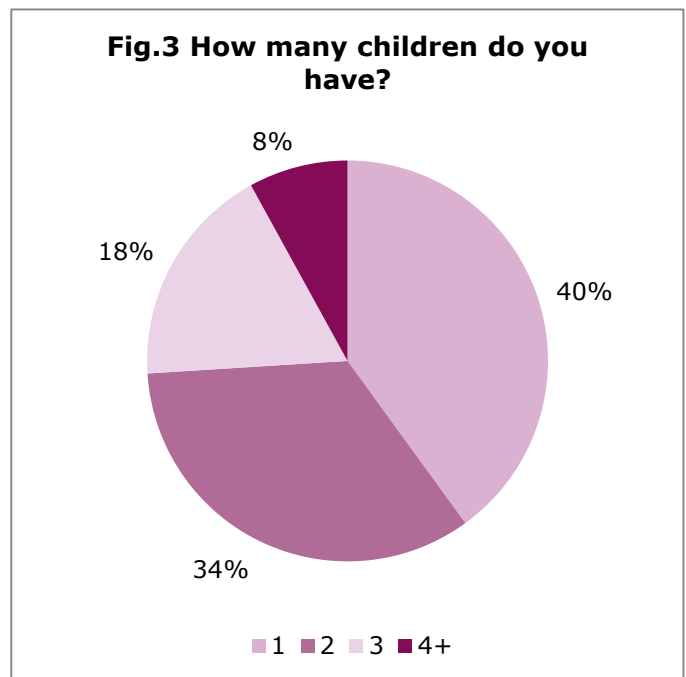
Source: SFC infact database

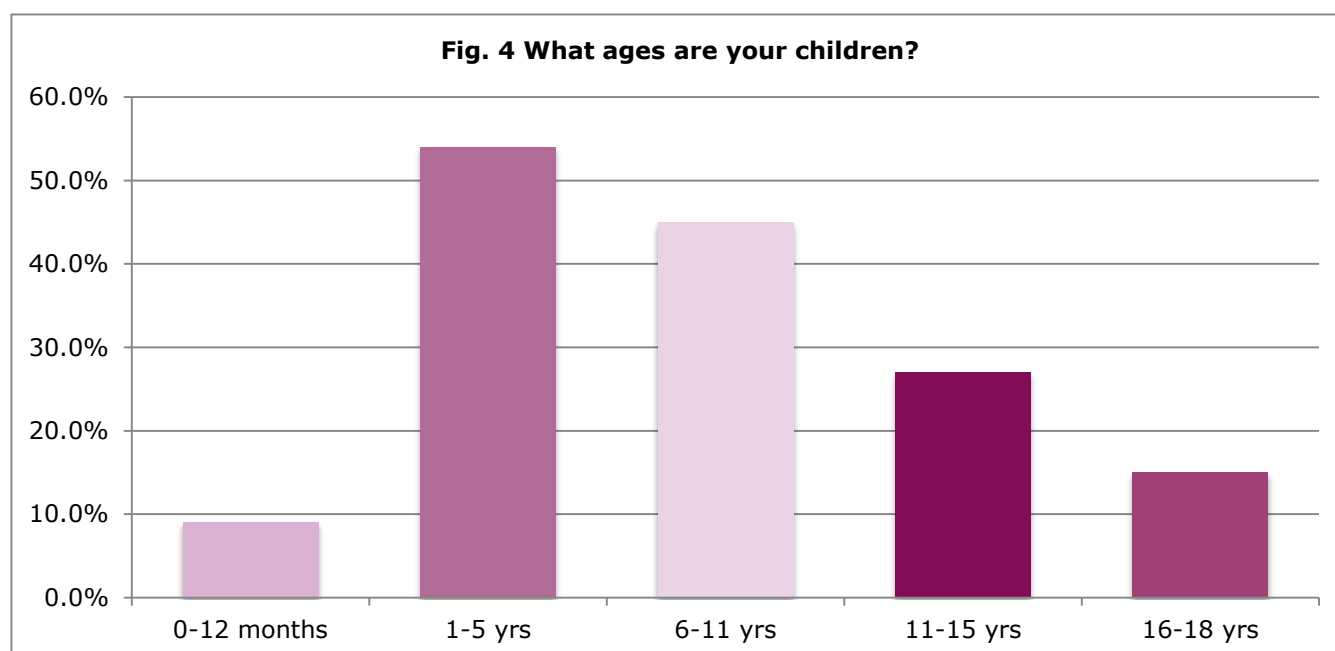
Regardless of any difficulty engaging with part time students, NUS Scotland believes that this shift from part time to full time students is significant new trend in how student parents are studying, and one that must be taken account of by institutions.

Although there were a number of subjects (Health and social science at colleges, and nursing at universities, particularly) that were most likely to be studied by survey respondents, it is impossible to assume that student parents will simply study on certain subjects, as there was a wide range of subject topics and levels that student parents are studying for.

Based on the survey results, it is most common for a student parent to have either one child (40.1%) or two children (33.9%). Although, over 20% of the respondents have three or more children, which clearly creates additional pressures for childcare and financial support. (*Fig. 3*)

Student parents are most likely to have a child and/or children between ages 1-5yrs (53.7%), followed closely by children ages 6-11yrs old (44.8%); children that are of nursery, pre-school and primary school ages. This means that childcare support to cover hours that cannot be spent in nursery or school are a particular area of concern for student parents. (*Fig. 4*)





Without a clear and coherent picture of how many student parents are studying at any given institution, it is challenging to provide the adequate support that these students may require. Given the diversity of the student parent population at any given institution, and the limitations of any survey that is conducted, it is essential that more robust data is collected on student parents by universities, colleges, and agencies, such as UCAS. Creating a more coherent, national picture of the demographics of student parents could enable institutions, students' associations, and the Scottish Government and Scottish Funding Council to provide more adequate and targeted support.

NUS Scotland recommends that all colleges and universities be required to collect information on how many student parents are studying at their institution, in order to provide those student parents with suitable support tailored to their needs. The data about student parents should be returned to Scottish Funding Council on an annual basis, ideally as part of the FES and HESA returns, or captured through admissions systems – though this is far from perfect, as not all university students apply through UCAS, and there is no common application process for college students.

NUS Scotland further recommends that institutions should use this data to embed a holistic, integrated system of support for student parents, to include detailed and timely information about services available and entitlements to, for example, additional funding.

Learning well

*Creating a supportive learning
environment for student parents*



Learning well

Understanding culture and flexibility

Across the Scottish Post-16 education sector there have been a series of moves to make education more inclusive. This ranges from The Post-16 Education (Scotland) Act and its introduction of widening access outcome agreements, later followed by the creation of the Commission on Widening Access, to implementing the recommendations of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce. At the same time national agencies and organisations have carried out a number of inclusive education projects, such as the Scottish Funding Council's Gender Action Plans, the Higher Education Academy's work on Embedding Equality and Diversity in the curriculum, and NUS Scotland's work on Liberation and Learning. NUS Scotland welcomes all of these developments as there is clear evidence that shows when education is made more inclusive for one group of students, it improves for all students.

NUS Scotland believes that this is the case for student parents. There are specific things that colleges, universities, and students' associations can do that would dramatically increase the positive experience of student parents, but these changes would also benefit other sections of the student population; making the culture of the entire institution more inclusive for everyone. Therefore, colleges and universities, should not consider this work to be additional, but fundamental to all that they do.

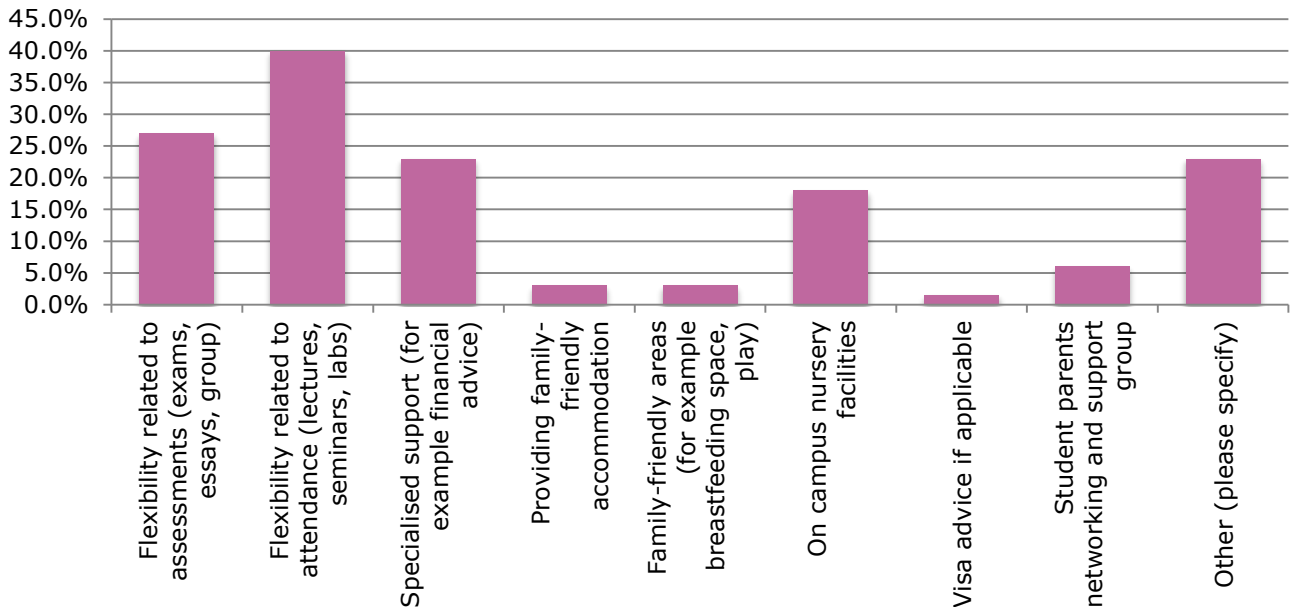
'It took a lot of courage to come back to college after having kids. It was scary.' Sam, Perth College

An understanding and inclusive culture was a key theme in the responses to our survey. Student parents placed a high premium on the ability for lecturers to be flexible with their needs and life circumstances. Our survey asked a specific question regarding any non-financial support colleges or universities had offered student parents. The two most common answers were 'flexibility related to assessments (exams, essays, groups work etc.) and 'flexibility related to attendance (lectures, seminars, labs, etc.)' (Fig. 5) This indicates that when students receive flexibility from their institution it was well received and recognised as a support given to them as student parents. However, a significant number of students, 28.4% of those that answered our open response question about what further support could their institution offer them, reflected that they would like their college or university to be more understanding about their individual circumstances.

The University of Strathclyde is committed to supporting all students in matters relating to pregnancy, maternity, paternity and adoption of a child that arise during the course of a student's studies. The University recognises that such matters can have a major impact on studies and is committed to facilitating a student's success, whilst upholding academic standards.

Quote from Strathclyde policy

Fig. 5 If your institution has provided support as a student parent, in what way have they provided this?



In particular student parents expressed the need for greater understanding when their children are sick. Currently, student parents studying on further education courses can lose their bursary allocation if they do not achieve 90% attendance of 'planned class hours'. From 2016/17, this will be increased to 100%, but with some allowance for self-certified absence. However, NUS Scotland maintains that this could still unfairly disadvantage students with immediate and/or diverse needs and circumstances. There should be much greater flexibility in the system, or students risk unfairly losing their vital bursary funding.

This tension between self-certificates, the need to achieve 100% attendance so students are not financially penalised, and the reality that children can become sick and need a carer at the last moment can place a large amount of stress on student parents.

'Just a basic understanding of my circumstances would be good instead of having to explain it all of the time. A little understanding of how circumstances can be out of my control at times i.e. submissions and or classes being difficult.' Student, GCU, Information Systems Development

From our survey we asked the following open text question 'If they [the institution] could provide one form of additional support to you as a student parent, what would this be for you?' The response rate was 324. From this 14.5% of students commented on the need for flexible attendance for classes, or a later start time for classes to allow for a morning school run. While some students said that their lecturer was understanding, this was the exception rather than the rule.

NUS Scotland recommends that the whole system of attendance requirements and FE bursary policy is looked at again by the Scottish Funding Council, in partnership with colleges, NUS Scotland, and students' associations, to create a more flexible system that reflects the needs and life circumstances of student parents.

NUS Scotland further recommends that colleges and universities set up plans with student parents about how they're going to be able to make their course demands with their childcare responsibilities. This plan should be communicated with all the students' lecturers in order for them to receive the same treatment from all members of staff.

Kids on campus

From an open text question in our survey asking students 'If they [the institution] could provide one form of additional support to you as a student parent, what would this be for you?', 12.9% of 324 respondents said that the lack of child friendly space on their campus had a negative impact on their studies and they wanted more child friendly spaces to be provided on their campuses. Student Parents mentioned that they only received discretionary childcare funding to cover the time that they were in classes, but couldn't claim discretionary funds for time spent studying in the library. Other student parents found it difficult to access resources through the institutions' libraries, labs or computer rooms.

The support and spaces that are needed for parents and their children will depend on the ages of their children. The following

section examines what kinds of support should be in place for student parents at each stage of their children's lives.

Parents with infants

Consideration must be made for students who choose to breastfeed during their studies. The Equality Act 2010 explicitly protects students from less favourable treatment because of breastfeeding. However, the Equality Act does not specifically say that breastfeeding and rest areas should be provided; it only implies that not doing so could disadvantage students who are breastfeeding.¹

In order to create an inclusive environment for mothers of young children, NUS Scotland recommends that colleges and universities are welcoming and tolerant – right across their full campus – of breastfeeding mothers, as well as provide quiet areas with fridges for mothers to breastfeed or express if they are currently breastfeeding.

Colleges and universities also need to take into account that parents with infants will need designated space for baby changing.

NUS Scotland recommends that all colleges and universities provide baby changing facilities in all campus toilets.

http://www.strath.ac.uk/media/ps/cs/gmap/academicaffairs/policies/Student_Pregnancy_and_Maternity_Guidance_September_2014.pdf

Best Practice

A number of universities and colleges provide dual purpose spaces for rest, first aid, and breastfeeding. Both the University of the West of Scotland Paisley campus and Queen Margaret University have designated room for breastfeeding students and staff that also have a fridge for storing breastmilk.

Nurseries and preschool children

Nursery provision is essential for student parents to access their classes during the day. However, nursery places at the on-campus nurseries or nearby nurseries are often in high demand and can be expensive. Student parents have to pay a high deposit to reserve nursery places, sometimes before they have a confirmed place at the college or university. Student parents can be out of pocket while waiting to hear whether they have a place to study and if they been successful in securing enough nursery days to cover the childcare while studying.

Instead of having the current system where students are uncertain about their childcare and/or financial provision, **NUS Scotland recommends that an overhaul of how student parents can access nursery places is undertaken.**

Ideally NUS Scotland would like to see more on campus nurseries with spaces for student parents.

Where this is not possible, NUS Scotland recommends colleges and universities form partnerships with

local nurseries in order to reserve a number of spaces that can only be allocated to students from that institution.

These places would be allocated on a needs basis through the college or university, ensuring that the student parents who most need the support are guaranteed a nursery place for their child. NUS Scotland would also like to see a more flexible system introduced where nursery spaces are measured in units of hours rather than days. This could allow one day to be split between two or three children depending on the needs and support of the student parents.

School age children

One of the questions asked in our survey was 'What difficulties have you faced as a student with children?' Of the students who responded, 56.4% said they had difficulties with classes not aligning with the school term times. (Fig. 6) The extra pressure to find childcare cover or budget for extra childcare costs causes additional stress for student parents.

NUS Scotland recommends that colleges and universities work to align their term times with local school holidays. In the event that term times are out of sync with the local school holidays, NUS Scotland recommends that colleges and universities should provide specific funding for childcare during school holidays, as was recommended in SFC's Report of the Student Support Review Group (Recommendation number seven).²

² 2010 ECU, [Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions](#)

Making the case for change

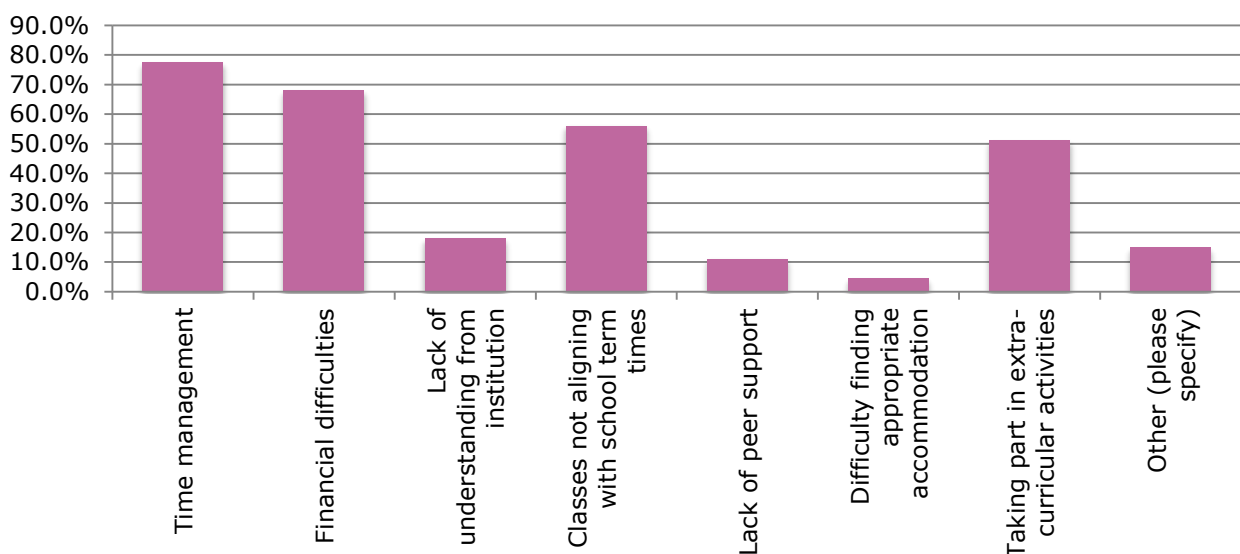
The campus nursey at Perth College currently closes during the lunch time hours, leaving student parents in a difficult position about what to do with their children during this time. This past year, Perth College Students' Association campaigned to allow children in the union building. Previously there was a small dedicated space above the main area that was the only space students could bring their children.

As a result of this campaign, children are now allowed in the union building and the on-campus nursery are reviewing their policy that children have to be taken out of the nursery at lunch times.

Breakfast clubs and afterschool clubs can be expensive, but essential, for student parents to be able to attend all of their classes. NUS Scotland recommends that colleges and universities form local partnerships and work together to provide breakfast and afterschool clubs which work for the student parent community. NUS Scotland further recommends that discretionary funding can be used to pay for places at breakfast and afterschool clubs.

To achieve a completely child friendly campus for children at all ages, providing the most flexibility and support to student parents, NUS Scotland recommends that college, universities and students' associations all work through NUS's 10 steps from child free to child friendly (Appendix 1).

Fig. 6 What difficulties have you faced as a student with children?



Responding to students experiencing domestic abuse

Based on our survey results and our interviews we found a small but significant number of students that were using education as a means to change their lives and escape from domestic abuse. Students described moving out of an abusive relationship to experiencing insecure accommodation situations, difficulties accessing funds from their former partners, and challenging childcare arrangements. These difficult life circumstances place extra burden and stress on student parents trying to complete their qualifications. The support which is generally offered to student parents might not be the right form of support or go far enough for students who are still in or transitioning out of an abusive relationship.

NUS Scotland recommends that support staff in colleges, universities, and students' associations are trained to identify the signs of domestic abuse and are able to confidently arrange adequate support measures e.g. to signpost to and work alongside specialist services, to meet the needs of this particular group of students.

Additionally, consideration should be given to the way in which means testing is evaluated for childcare funding. Testing by household income may mask the reality of who receives money and who is responsible for paying for childcare, where financial abuse is part of domestic abuse.

NUS Scotland recommends that a review of means tested childcare funding and its allocation is conducted, to confirm that there are adequate safeguards in place to ensure that those who need the money receive it.

Finances and family leave



Finances and family leave

National picture

The relationships between childcare support, student funding and benefits are incredibly complex. Looking at the chart below it is easy to see why student parents can become confused about what they are entitled to, and when, as they move through their learner journey. Across all our universities and colleges, and within many students' associations, there are hundreds of dedicated, knowledgeable and supportive advice service staff, equipped with the understanding of how student support and benefits interact with each other, and the support that may be available to those students with particular circumstances, including student parents. Unfortunately, we know that still too many students either don't know how to access these services, or simply don't access them.

Moving towards a system whereby student parents can self-identify themselves to their institution, and institutions are able to better tailor and target support and advice, would mean these students are better able to access the full support they need and are entitled to.

With potential further changes to the benefits and student support system coming in 2016 and beyond, particularly as a result of the Scotland Act 2016, **NUS Scotland recommends that colleges and universities, including students' associations advice staff, ensure that all advice staff have access to the most up to date training and information, in order to effectively guide student parents through the different**

processes ensuring that they receive the full amounts which they are entitled to, and that this advice is offered in a targeted way.

At the same time, we would want to see the Scottish Government work to use its full powers to ensure, wherever possible, a more positive interaction between the student support system and benefits. That is particularly true for student parents - currently only limited groups of students are eligible for benefits while studying, and this includes student parents.

From previous NUS Scotland research, we know that a significant number of mature students - which this research has shown student parents are more likely to be - do not take out a student loan. A FOI request by NUS Scotland to SAAS revealed that 66% of students of mature students (those in receipt of the independent student's bursary) don't take out a loan. Any of these students with a household income of £17,000 and above would receive no bursary support.

However, for the purpose of receiving benefits they will be treated as if they have taken their full loan entitlement, regardless of whether or not they actually do. This could lead to a double trap, where the students who most need the greatest support are receiving none at all; neither taking on a student loan, nor being eligible to receive benefits.

Under the planned introduction of universal credit, the situation will be made worse for many students as there will be a straight pound-for-pound withdrawal of benefits against 'income'. In further education, because it is currently a discretionary system, FE bursaries only count as income if you actually apply for and receive one.

However, this leaves many students facing the choice of not taking a bursary, and staying on benefits, or vice versa.

In extreme circumstances, this lack of support could even be contributing to student drop-out.

NUS Scotland recommends that the Scottish Government use the powers available to them to mitigate these effects and ensure that students receive the full amount of support they deserve through student support and benefits.

What benefits can students access?

Circumstances	Benefits available
Aged 16-18 in full-time further education	
Have a child	Income support
	Housing benefit
	Child tax credit
	Child benefit
	Universal credit
Aged 16-20 in full-time further education	
Orphan, estranged or separated from parents	Income support
	Housing benefit
	Universal credit
Living away from parents	Housing benefit
Full-time student	
Single	Health benefits
Lone parent of child under five	Income support
	Child tax credit
	Housing benefit
	Child benefit
	Universal credit
Student couple with a child, or lone parent	Housing benefit
	Child tax credit
	Child benefit
	Universal credit
Couple, one student	Income support
	JSA
	ESA
	Housing benefit
	Child tax credit
	Child benefit
	Universal credit
Part-time student	
All	Income support
	JSA
	ESA
	Housing benefit
	Universal credit

How student support is treated for benefits purpose

Undergraduate/higher education support	
Applicable student support	Treatment and/or disregards
Student loan (including young students bursary)	Disregard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £390 per year (books and equipment) £303 per year (travel) £10 a week (to allow annual income to arrive at a weekly amount) Any student and/or partner contribution
Higher education independent students bursary	No disregard – full amount taken into account
Vacation grant for care leavers	
Dependents grant	
Disabled students allowance	
Lone parents grant	Taken into full account for HB Disregarded for IS and income-based JSA (if you get CTC)
University or college discretionary funds	Taken into account if paid for basic living costs, less a weekly disregard Disregarded if paid for other items
University or college childcare funds	Disregarded

Further education support	
Applicable student support	Treatment and/or disregards
FE bursary	Disregard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £390 per year for books and equipment £303 per year for travel
Dependents allowance	No disregard – full amount taken into account
EMA	Disregarded
ASN learning allowance	
Study expenses	
Lone parents childcare grant	
Travel expenses	
Childcare fund	
FE discretionary fund	Taken into account (less weekly disregard) if for basic living costs Disregarded if paid for other items

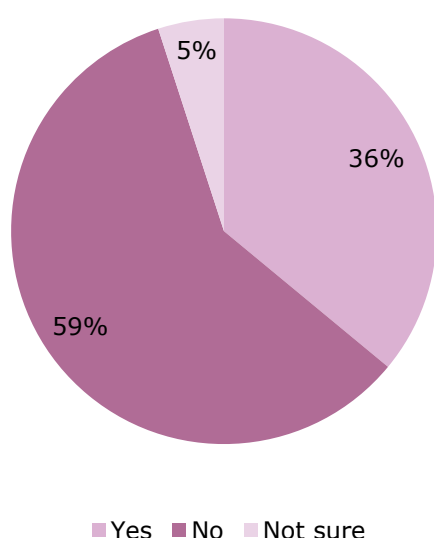
Note: The above applies to all benefits except for child tax credits. For the purposes of CTC, the vast majority of student loans and grants are disregarded except for: dependents grants and lone parent's grants.

Local picture

According to our survey 36.3% of student parents receive discretionary childcare funding from SAAS, via their institution. (Fig. 7) A follow-up question asked if these discretionary funds covered their monthly costs. Of those that answered this question 49.6% said yes, discretionary funding covered all their costs, and 50.4% that the funding did not meet their total monthly costs. There was a range of difference of the monthly shortfall between college and university students. Student parents at college and university that had three or more children tended to fall into the higher end of monthly shortfalls.

For college students, the monthly shortfall between funding received and the costs of childcare ranged from £20-£400. The two most common answers for how students make up this shortfall were by relying on family members' time and income, or maintaining a part time job while studying.

Fig. 7 Are you now, or have you ever been, in receipt of childcare discretionary funding from your institution?



mentioned at the beginning of the report. In 2014, Scottish Funding Council made a series of recommendations about how discretionary funding at colleges can be used to better support student parents.³

NUS Scotland was at the time and remains fully supportive of the recommendations that this report produced. We recommend that SFC and Scottish Government continue to work with NUS Scotland and other partners to implement these recommendations in a timely manner.

Among university students, the monthly shortfall between funding received and meeting the costs of childcare ranged from £100-£1,000. The two most common answers for how this shortfall is made up were part time work, and relying on family members' time and income.

Again, the vast majority all these students are studying full time. The single most common way that students in universities have met these costs are through personal savings. A small but significant number of students rely on commercial loans to make up the difference. Funding received from SAAS was the fourth highest option that students pointed to for making up their childcare cost, which indicates that for many students SAAS funding is not meeting their living costs. (Fig. 8)

³http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Funding_Streams_Student_Support/Student_Support_Review_Group_Final_Report_Updated.pdf

NUS Scotland recommends that further and more in depth research is undertaken by the Scottish Government, or its respective agencies, to determine the real cost terms of childcare provision for university students and the relationship of these costs to the SAAS loans. More in depth research is necessary to gain a fuller understanding of why monthly shortfalls for some students can be so high, and could provide solutions that enables childcare funds to meet the full costs of childcare.

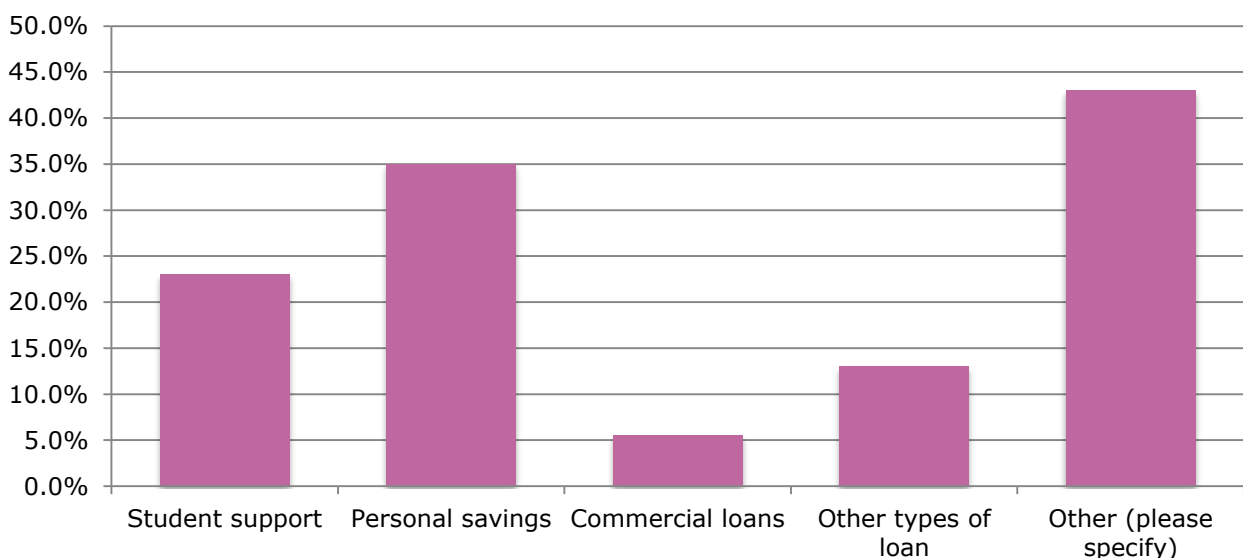
'It would be good to get a pack if you become a parent outlining support and policies so you don't have to scrabble about looking for information. [The financial support for childcare] I would never have time to fill it out, it was a massive document. It would be good to simplify it or have someone available to help fill it out. Neil, Orkney College

Interplay between child benefits and Carers Allowance

NUS Scotland believes that institutions and government must recognise that student parents who have children with additional support needs require additional support themselves. Several students who responded to NUS Scotland's Student Parent survey commented on how unpredictable their daily lives can be when caring for a child with additional support needs. In some cases, the child with additional support needs is over the age of 16 they are no longer eligible for childcare allowance, but neither does the student qualify for Carers Allowance, because they are full time students and therefore (often nominally) studying over the 21 hours limit.

Parents who have children within this category face different stresses and demands on their time and finances.

Fig. 8 If childcare funds provided by your institution have not met your full costs of childcare (or, if you do not receive childcare funding from your institution), how have you met these costs?



"I don't qualify for carer's allowance. I've been advised by the Job Centre to quit university [so I could qualify for the allowance]. That defeats the whole point – I went to uni so I'm not on benefits my whole life."

Laureen, Strathclyde University

With Carers Allowance being one of the benefits being devolved in full to the Scottish Parliament, as a result of the Scotland Act 2016, **NUS Scotland recommends that the Scottish Government uses these new powers to review how financial support given to student parents interlinks with the Carers Allowance and other benefits the student may be entitled to, ensuring that student parents receive the best possible support.**

NUS Scotland further recommends that all information, advice and guidance services are able to support individuals to make choices which will enhance their living standards in both the short and long term.

Family Leave

It is important for institutions to recognise that students can become parents during their studies. In order to support these students properly, it is essential that there is adequate maternity and family leave cover offered to new student parents. The Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) published guidance on student pregnancy and maternity leave in 2010, specifically for higher education institutions. Since this time, a number of universities have implemented policies outlining the minimum level of flexibility and support a

Best Practice

Policies, such as those at the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, University of Strathclyde and University of Glasgow, set out guidance on a range of issues including health and safety, field work, and visa issues.

West Lothian College has provision for bursary payments during maternity and paternity leave. Students are permitted four weeks paid maternity leave (six weeks if birth by caesarean section) and two weeks paid paternity leave.

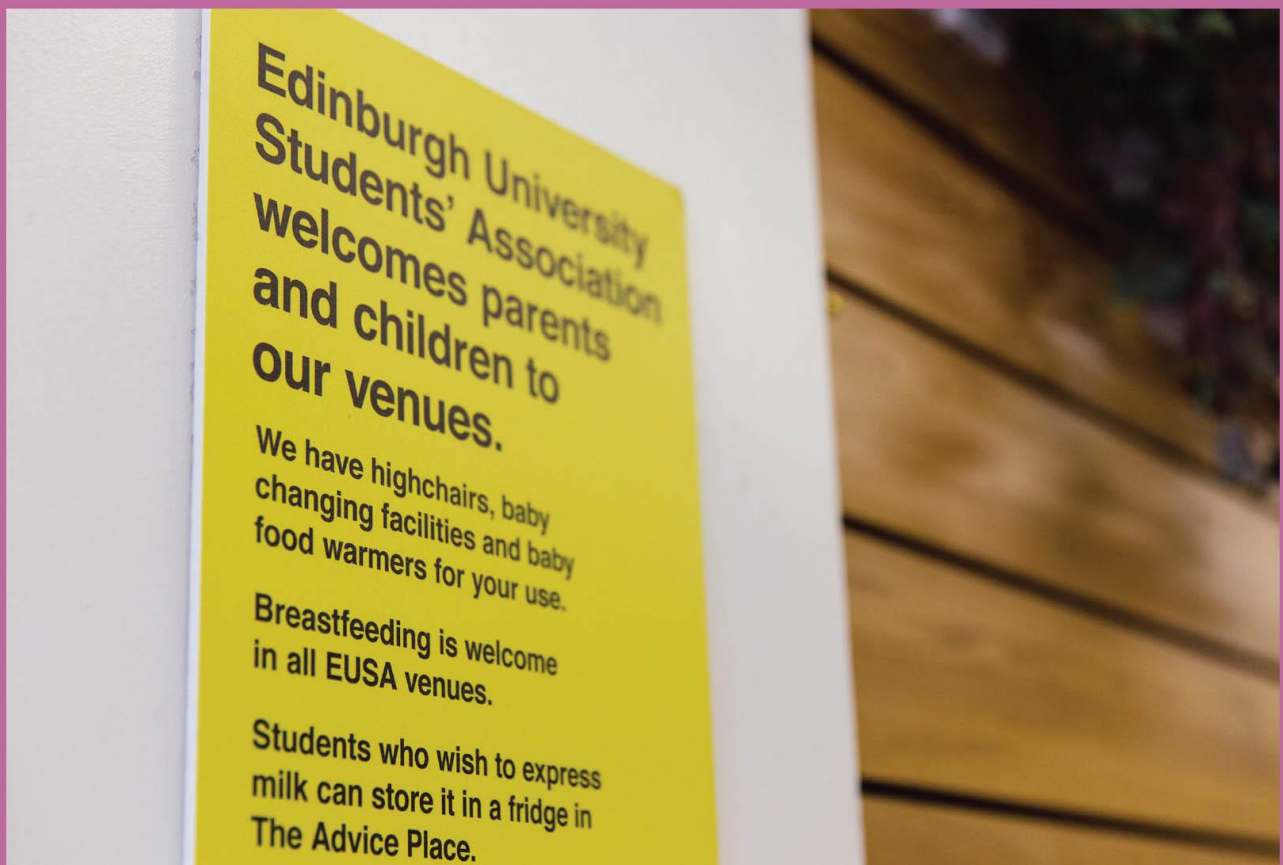
student should expect from the institution surrounding pregnancy and family leave. NUS Scotland recommends that all universities and colleges have policies regarding maternity and family leave.

ECU's guidance on student pregnancy and maternity leave highlights that students are entitled to discretionary funding through their grants or loans to support them through maternity leave. Students who fall into one of the following categories can receive financial support during maternity leave through their funding group: HEI studentships, NHS bursaries, and research council-funded postgraduates.⁴

NUS Scotland further recommends that all colleges and universities provide some kind of bursary support to cover maternity and family leave for students who become parents during their studies.

⁴ [2010, Equality Challenge Unit, Student pregnancy and maternity: implications for higher education institutions](#)

Students' Associations



Students' Associations

Extracurricular support

Students' associations provide a range of extracurricular activities, often catering to students' needs and capitalising on opportunities for students to spend their time exploring and enjoying new activities. Extracurricular opportunities often provide students with a community and sense of belonging. However, extracurricular activities often happen outside of core class hours, including evenings and weekends, potentially excluding more diverse demographics of students, including student parents.

From our interviews, student parents explained that they were sometimes unable to participate in extracurricular activities. This included being unable to fulfil their responsibilities as class representatives, because class rep meetings were scheduled after core class hours, and the students could not afford to pay for extra childcare provision. This indicates that student parents do want to be involved in the life of their institution, but face barriers to carrying out their roles. **NUS Scotland recommends that students' associations work with their college or university to ensure that class rep meetings are inclusive, including revising when they happen, or providing video conferencing ability for the meetings.**

Student parents also value the experience of meeting up with other student parents at their institution. However, student parents may find it difficult to find the time to arrange such meetings or informal activities. **NUS Scotland recommends that students' associations recognise the**

time limitations student parents experience, and set up a student parent network.

NUS Scotland further recommends that students' associations provide child friendly spaces in order for student parents to participate in extracurricular activities when they are able to do so.

"A parent/ student buddy. It's really hard to meet people when you've got to zoom off to nursery straight out of class and live out of town." Student, University of Edinburgh

Volunteering

Volunteering is another way that students are able to get involved in different activities and give something back to their community. Students' associations themselves rely on volunteers to carry out many of their events and campaigns. The interviews that we conducted with student officers were very positive. Most of them began their journey in the students' association as a volunteer. Most students' associations understand that volunteers will contribute when possible, but their studies and personal lives need to come first. Students' associations can be good at providing flexible hours to their student volunteers.

NUS Scotland recommends that students' association continue to provide flexible hours for student volunteers, and think about how their volunteering opportunities can be more accessible for student parents.

Model employers for student officers

During this past academic year, 2015–16, approximately two thirds of the elected full time officers at colleges were student parents. This is an incredibly positive move, and shows that, increasingly, student parents are finding it possible to engage with their students' associations and, just as importantly, that the students' association is able to provide the necessary flexibility and support. However, to ensure that this positive progress remains and continues to grow it will be vital that students' associations and their institutions are able to adapt to and meet the flexible, diverse needs of more student parents, not just as volunteers but also as elected officers.

One aspect of students' association becoming more adaptable is by being a model employer, and leading by example, to the standards we think all employers should have.

As an employer, students' associations must, of course, adhere to all statutory requirements and provide student parents who are officers with the same benefits available to all employees. This includes any support for officers who become pregnant or have a pregnant partner during their term of officer. Consideration and support must be given for appointments, check-ups and ante-natal classes. We would strongly support students' associations and their institutions in enhancing these benefits as far as is possible.

NUS Scotland recommends that every students' association constitution has the provision for by-elections in case it is necessary to elect another student to an officer role if the student officer

discloses a pregnancy during their time in office.

NUS Scotland further recommends that students' associations plan in the budget support for maternity leave and salaries for officers serving the same role in one academic year.

When asked what is your experience like as a student parent full time officer? 'Hard, very hard. They aren't flexi hours, which doesn't work if you're a parent.' Karena, North East Scotland College

Students' associations should be able to provide a system of flexible working hours for their elected representatives, recognising that there will be certain peak times of work. Student parents who are elected officers may find it particularly difficult to take part in activities or meetings that happen after school hours.

NUS Scotland recommends that, whenever possible, students' association meetings happen within core business hours.

NUS Scotland further recommends that students' associations work with their institution to make sure that meetings happen within an inclusive time, or set up video conferencing abilities for student officers to contribute from home.

Overall representation of student parents

Across students' associations in Scotland student parents are under-represented, despite there being a high number of student parents as elected representatives within college students' association.

University students' associations have a different challenge. Mentioned at the beginning of the report, our survey had poor returns from most universities, despite knowing that student parents make up a significant proportion of the student population. NUS Scotland believes this is because the nature of universities, and the larger spread of students and activities, means it could be more difficult for student parents to engage with their students' association, and vice versa. This means that student parents could be missing out on services and/or support which could make a big difference to them as students. University students' associations should consider how they are able to support, engage, and represent student parents within their existing and future structures and activities, ensuring that such considerations are led, where possible, by student parents themselves.

Trying to engage different demographics of students can be challenging, which is why it is important for students' associations to understand the needs of all their members, and set up different support methods when necessary. This could be setting up a specific student parent forum to hear the needs of those students at a time which suits them. Another example of how this could work in practice is by making class reps more aware that there could be a student parent on their course, and asking specific questions, with the help of the

students' association, to the class that may resonate with student parents.

NUS Scotland is committed to working with all our members to make their students' association more representative of the student parent population.

NUS Scotland recommends that students' association reflect on current practices of representing students and take positive steps to make these practices reflect the needs of student parents.

Appendices

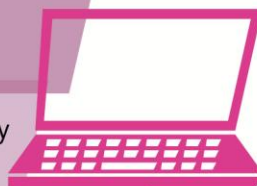


10 steps from child free to child friendly



1. Colleges/universities should collect data on students' family circumstances at enrolment and provide this information to departments, the students' association and student support to ensure that student parents are visible and steps can be made to provide support to them.

2. College/university website should dedicate a page to student parents where they provide clear information on the support, representation and facilities available.



3. Colleges/universities should take account of the specific caring responsibilities of student parents and be prepared to take extra steps to address these needs.



4. Family life should be taken into consideration when developing timetabling and attendance monitoring. Timetables should be provided well in advance. Students' associations should work with their institution to support parents during school holidays, by looking at events that will allow students with older children to continue with lectures or study time.

5. Establish a representation system linking together departments, student support, students' associations and college/university management, to ensure the interests of student parents are discussed and dealt with.

6. Establish child-friendly areas in college/university buildings and create a programme of activities, in partnership with the college/university, for parents and their children throughout the year. Baby-changing and breast-feeding facilities should be provided. As much of the campus as possible should be accessible by children accompanied by a responsible adult.



7. Colleges/universities should ensure that, where accommodation is provided, it is affordable and suitable for families. Institutions should work with local landlords and social housing to make sure that there is affordable accommodation within the locality.

8. Colleges/universities should provide affordable childcare facilities for student parents where possible. Where this is not possible, institutions should work in partnership with childcare centres in the community to secure subsidised childcare for students. Where institutions have well-established childcare facilities, they should offer the facilities to the local community as well as to students and staff.

9. Extend funding for student parents including grants, childcare vouchers/subsidies and emergency loans for family crises. Colleges/universities should also consider providing financial advice specifically focused around childcare and family issues.

10. Colleges/universities should be public spaces at the centre of their communities. Institutions should expand links with local schools, nurseries, and community groups. They should increase activities for the involvement of children and young people in the community (open days, art competitions, sports, come and try sessions etc.).



Guide to support for student parents: College Edition

This is a guide to the support currently provided by colleges in Scotland. It can be used by prospective students to assess which institution has the support they require, by students' associations to focus their campaigning and by institutions themselves to benchmark against other institutions.

For more information on how we collated this information, please see the main report.

Key

Institution does have this	✓
Could not verify information	?
Institution does not have this	✗

Data

This aspect assess whether institutions collect information on how many students have children.

Policies

Examples of policies could include specifically for students with children, student pregnancy and family leave.

Information online

This could include information about childcare, funding, extra support or support groups.

On campus nursery

For this aspect we assessed whether there is an institution-run nursery on campus or one of the campuses.

Partnership with local nursery

Partnerships go beyond informal links with local childcare providers. To have this there must be an official partnership agreement between the institution and the nursery.

Family accommodation

Accommodation suitable for more than one person and specifically for families.

Breast feeding/child friendly areas

We looked for areas that were specifically designated for breast feeding and children.

Maternity leave allowance

Student should be able to choose the length of their own leave period with the support from the institution.

Ayrshire College

Website: www.ayrshire.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✗	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	✗

Other: The on-campus nursery closes June 2016. There is a play area in Ayr.

Borders College

Website: www.borderscollege.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: Although there doesn't seem to be official partnerships, the college has good working relationships with a wide range of childcare services.

City of Glasgow College

Website: www.cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the new City Campus building there will be baby changing facilities and a fridge to store breastmilk.

Dumfries and Galloway College

Website: www.dumgal.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In 2015/16, there were 1119 full time FE students studying at the college.

Dundee and Angus College

Website: www.dundeeandangus.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There is a nursery at the Arbroath campus.

Edinburgh College

Website: www.edinburghcollege.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There is a nursery at the Granton campus and a parent room in all campuses.

Fife College

Website: www.fife.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: Although there is not an official partnership, there are nurseries next to the college.

Forth Valley College

Website: www.forthvalley.ac.uk

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There is a quiet room on campus but it is not specifically for breastfeeding.

Glasgow Clyde College

Website: www.glasgowclyde.ac.uk

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	✓
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	?
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There are nurseries at Anniesland and Cardonald campuses and a partnership with a nursery at Langside. Students are directed to the first aid room if they would like somewhere private to breastfeed.

Glasgow Kelvin College

Website: www.glasgowkelvin.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	?
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: The college has close links with local childcare providers and there is a nursery near the Easterhouse campus.

Inverness College

Website: www.inverness.uhi.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: The college website has a lot of useful information about the on-campus nursery.

North East Scotland College

Website: www.nescol.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

New College Lanarkshire

Website: www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Perth College

Website: www.perth.uhi.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

South Lanarkshire College

Website: www.south-lanarkshire-college.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There is a quiet room in the college, though not exclusively used for breastfeeding.

West College Scotland

Website: www.westcollegescotland.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There are nurseries at the Greenock and Paisley campuses.

West Lothian College

Website: www.west-lothian.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: The college allows four weeks maternity (six weeks if by caesarean) and two weeks paternity leave paid by bursary.

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Family accommodation

Accommodation suitable for more than one person and specifically for families.

Breast feeding/child friendly areas

We looked for areas that were specifically designated for breast feeding and children.

Maternity leave allowance

Student should be able to choose the length of their own leave period with the support from the institution.

University of Aberdeen

Website: www.abdn.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✗	Family accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: Aberdeen University don't have a partnership with a local nursery, but has a page on where to find them. They offer maternity leave allowance for research students, others not found.

Abertay University

Website: www.abertay.ac.uk/

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: Abertay University do have information for student parents in their pre-arrival pack, but this is not available on their webpages.

University of Dundee

Website: www.dundee.ac.uk/

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✗	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: University of Dundee don't have a partnership with a local nursery, but has a page on where to find these. They offer maternity leave allowance for research students, others not found.

University of Edinburgh

Website: www.ed.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✓
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: The university has an official student maternity policy and housing for couples and families. There is a dedicated webpage for student parents on the EUSA website and a fridge for breastmilk in EUSA Potterrow building.

Edinburgh Napier University

Website: www.napier.ac.uk/

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	?
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 12.7% of students at Napier had children.

University of Glasgow

Website: www.gla.ac.uk

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✓
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: The university has an official student maternity policy, a dedicated webpage for student parents and carers, and family housing for couples and families.

Glasgow Caledonian University

Website: www.gcu.ac.uk/

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: GCU don't have a partnership with a local nursery, but has a page on where to find them.

Glasgow School of Art

Website: www.gsa.ac.uk/

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: The institution provides maternity related absence, and offers quiet rooms for families – these are not widely publicised.

Heriot Watt University

Website: www.hw.ac.uk

Collects data	✗	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✗
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	✗

Other: Heriot Watt doesn't provide family accommodation, but directs students to advisors who are able to assist on Scottish borders campus.

University of the Highlands and Islands

Website: www.uhi.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	✓
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year over 7,700 UHI students had children. There are campuses at most campuses and an official nursery partnership at the Orkney campus.

Queen Margaret University

Website: www.qmu.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 5% of QMU students had children.

Robert Gordon University

Website: www.rgu.ac.uk/

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	✗
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 19% of RGU students had children.

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

Website: <https://www.rcs.ac.uk>

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 1.7% of RCS students had children. There are child changing areas on the campus.

Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)

Website: www.sruc.ac.uk

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	?	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: There is a nursery on the shared University of Edinburgh campus, but not in partnership with the institution.

St. Andrews University

Website: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/

Collects data	?	Partnership with local nursery	✓
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✓
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	?
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: St Andrew's offer maternity leave for PHD students, and offer discount rates at two local nurseries.

University of Stirling

Website: www.stir.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	✓
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	✓
Information for student parents online	?	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 10.9% of students at Stirling had children. The university also has various accommodation for couples and families.

University of Strathclyde

Website: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	✓	Family Accommodation	✗
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✓	Maternity leave allowance	✓

Other: In the last academic year, 7.8% of Strathclyde students had children. Strathclyde has official student maternity guidance.

University of the West of Scotland

Website: www.uws.ac.uk

Collects data	✓	Partnership with local nursery	?
Policies on student parents	?	Family Accommodation	?
Information for student parents online	✓	Breast feeding/child friendly areas	✓
On campus nursery	✗	Maternity leave allowance	?

Other: In the last academic year, 22% of UWS students had children.

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