



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

**Skills support for Care Leavers**

MAY 2014

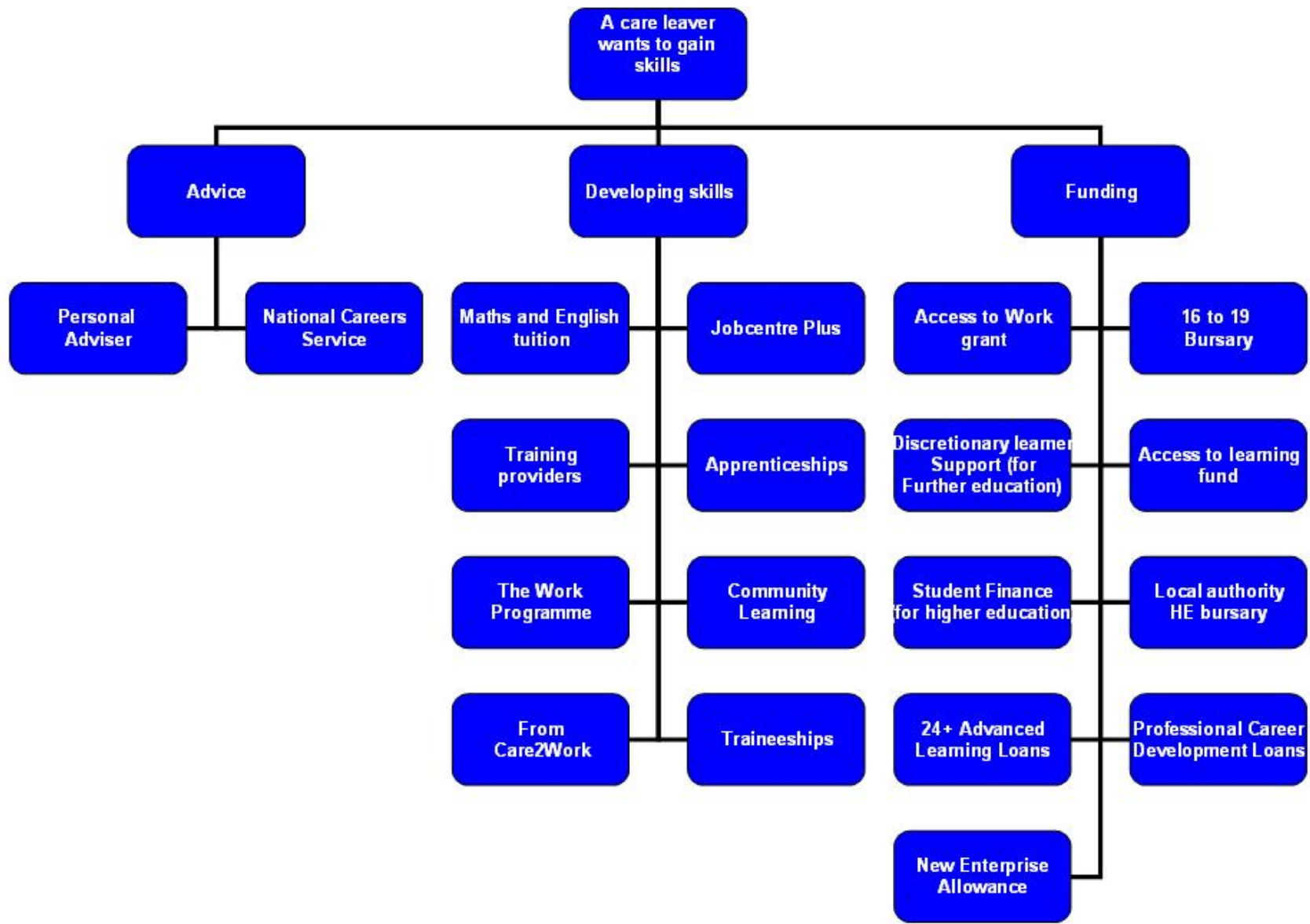
# Skills Support for care leavers

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## Introduction

### About this guide

This booklet is a short guide to the many learning resources available to care leavers to gain new skills and open up new opportunities for work.

It is designed to be useful for anyone helping a care leaver think about their future. It includes initial information on the support available and useful links to further information.

The booklet includes information on opportunities to develop skills that will help those who are unemployed in to work. Opportunities include Traineeships, Apprenticeships, support from Jobcentre Plus and the Work Programme. The booklet also provides advice on the National Careers Service.

This booklet also gives information on funding opportunities including Access to Work grants, Discretionary Learner Support, Access to Learning fund, Advanced Learning Loans, Professional Career Development Loans, New Enterprise Allowance and Student Finance.

Finally the booklet gives information about Community Learning programmes and From Care2Work.

See which you think might be helpful to the care leavers you work with and investigate further. In many cases there will be more than one route or source of support which might fit the needs of the care leavers you are working with. We have included some links to further information in the booklet.

There is also an accompanying booklet for care leavers themselves.

If you are helping a care leaver, make sure you discuss the ideas in this guide with them and listen to their feedback on any skills training they undertake as a result.

The entries in this guide are correct at the time of going to print. However, changes can frequently occur in these areas, so we intend to produce updated versions when new information becomes available. Any comments, feedback or suggestions for improvement will be welcome. Please send them to:

[rahima.elaheebucus@bis.gov.uk](mailto:rahima.elaheebucus@bis.gov.uk)

## Care leavers' entitlements

When a young person leaves care their local authority has to continue to support them.

The level of support their leaving care service should give them depends on their status, i.e. are they 'eligible', 'relevant', 'former relevant' or 'qualifying'? Their status depends on their age, when they were in care and for how long.

Care leavers can also use Voice's online tool (<http://www.voiceyp.org/young-peoples-zone/are-you-care-leaver>), which asks some short questions about their situation and clarifies their entitlements. The different categories and what support each group should get are detailed on the next page.

The basic rules are that from 16 a care leaver should have a **Personal Adviser**, an **assessment** of the support they need and a **Pathway Plan** that sets out how the local authority will support them, including **financial support for education, employment and training**. They should also **keep in touch** with the care leaver until they are at least 21.

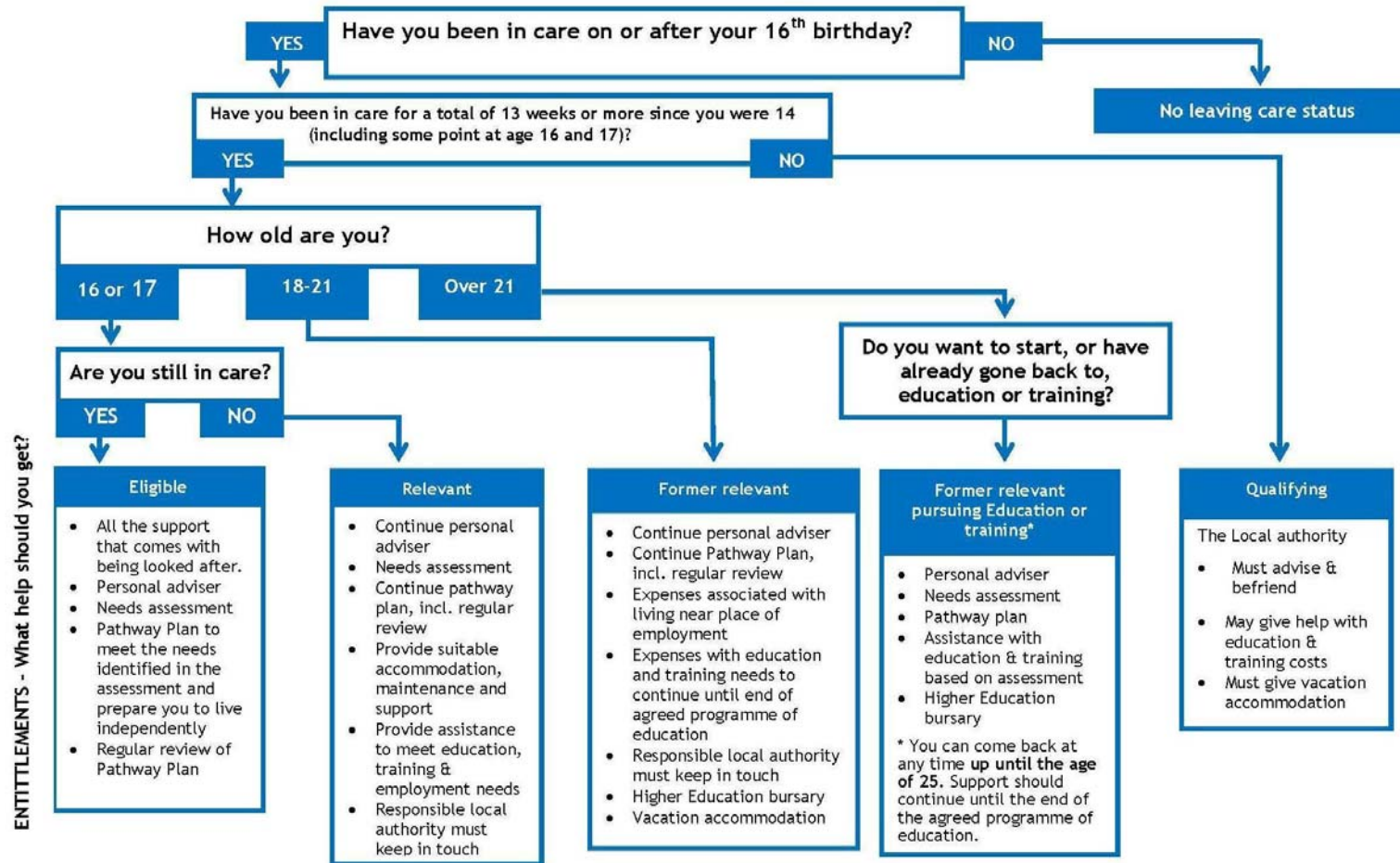
**If at age 21 they are already in education or training** then leaving care support continues until the programme of education or training, which has been agreed in your Pathway Plan, ends.

**If at age 21 they are not in education or training** then support from leaving care services will usually stop around their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. They should have a final meeting with their Personal Adviser who will talk to them about other services they may be able to get help from.

However, if, up until their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday, they return, or want to return to, education or training, they can go back to their local authority and ask for support.

The local authority that took them into care remains responsible for them.

## Are you a care leaver? Categories of care leavers and entitlements (courtesy of tch22/NCAS)



## DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL & EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

**There are some learning entitlements whatever the care leaver's benefit status**

**All adults in England aged 19 or over, regardless of benefit status, are eligible for fully funded English and Maths tuition where needed.**

- Full fee remission is provided for first full Level 2 and 3 qualifications for 19-23 year olds and for Foundation Learning (pre-Level 2) and full level 2 for those who need a step up to progress to GCSE English and Maths.
- Although a list of qualifications eligible for full funding is available on the Skills Funding Agency website, the National Careers Service or a local Further Education College will often be a more straightforward source of advice.

(Residency rules apply to much of this funding, although UK citizens and citizens of a country within the European Economic Area will generally be eligible. For further information in relation to refugee or migrant young people go to:

Skills Funding Agency: <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/>

National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

### **If the person is unemployed ...**

- Anyone looking for work through Jobcentre Plus will search for jobs through Universal Jobmatch. Jobseekers can access Universal Jobmatch by visiting: [www.gov.uk/jobsearch](http://www.gov.uk/jobsearch)
- By setting up an Universal Jobmatch account, jobseekers can make full use of the service, including creating, copying or uploading a public CV, receiving automated matches to jobs and email alerts when new jobs are posted.
- Jobcentre Plus works with specialist providers from the voluntary and community sector, so have the scope to adopt approaches to improve employment outcomes for care leavers. Jobcentre Plus: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/working/finding-job>
- Jobcentre Plus claimants who received JSA/ESA(WRAG) have access to government funded vocational training. The same full funding eligibility applies to unemployed people on the new Universal Credit claimant who are mandated to training.
- For Community Learning, Local Authority adult education services, FE colleges and other Community Learning providers set their own fees. In practice, courses are often free for people on work-related benefits. However, fee concessions will vary from area to area and each learning provider will have information about which learners are entitled to a concession, and for which courses.
- Skills Funding Agency funded providers also have the discretion to help people on other state benefits access some training if it helps them prepare for work. This discretionary funding eligibility applies to unemployed people on Universal Credit and other state benefits who have not been required by Jobcentre Plus to undertake training, but where the training may help them into work.



- Care leavers, who, after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, remain estranged from their family can claim Income Support (or Universal Credit if applicable) if they are in relevant Education (up to level 3) if the course is full time and below higher education level. Entitlement extends to the end of the academic year following their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.
- To download the regulations go to: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/757/part/3/made>
- To find out more, contact your local or visit: <https://www.gov.uk/contact--plus>

Leaving care services, or organisations that run employability schemes for care leavers will want to discuss with the local Jobcentre Plus District Managers how this can fit in with Jobcentre Plus support allowing young people who need it to remain on benefits whilst on such schemes. For instance Barnardo's Lincolnshire negotiated an agreement with Jobcentre Plus so that those taking part in work experience can sign-on fortnightly by post, rather than have to take time off placements to attend the Jobcentre. To find out more: <http://bitly.com/TGbRN0>

## **Traineeships**

Traineeships are an education and training programme with work experience, providing 16-23 year olds (16-24 year olds from 2014/15) with the skills and experience they need to be able to successfully apply for apprenticeships or other jobs. At the core of traineeships are work preparation training, English and Maths for those below GCSE A\*-C standard, and a high quality work experience placement with an employer.

The core target group for traineeships are young people who:

- are not currently in a job and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it;
- are 16 to 18 and qualified below Level 3 or 19 to 23 (or up to academic age 25 for those with a Learning Difficulty Assessment) and have not yet achieved a full Level 2; and
- providers and employers believe have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

Traineeships last for a maximum of 6 months.

Providers have the flexibility to be able to design traineeships to fit with the benefit rules. Providers and individuals are encouraged to work with their local Jobcentre Plus to ensure a suitable fit with the traineeship and the benefit system.

More information can be found in the traineeships Framework for Delivery: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-young-people-to-develop-the-skills-for-apprenticeships-and-sustainable-employment-framework-for-delivery>

Individuals can find out more about traineeship opportunities by visiting <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/traineeships.aspx>, by calling the National Careers Service on 0800 100 900 or by visiting their local Jobcentre.

## **National Apprenticeship Service**

The National Apprenticeship Service allows young people to search for and apply to apprenticeships online.

The Skills Funding Agency funding rules for 2013/2014 set out details of Apprenticeships funding for both 16-18 olds and those post 19. The rules explicitly mention care leavers as part of a group of learners for whom the normal funding requirements are enhanced.

Eligible learners, including care leavers, who have not been available to enter learning prior to their 19th birthday due to a reason beyond their control, will be funded at fully funded 19-23 rates as long as they start an Apprenticeship before their 24<sup>th</sup> birthday.

In order to benefit from this the training provider will need to be aware that a person is a care leaver so they can make the case for additional funding.

Local authorities can also use external providers to ensure access to opportunities for their young people, for example, a **Catch22 apprenticeship** is a package of on-the-job training and qualifications designed around the needs of the employer. Hampshire County Council have partnered with Catch22 and The University of Winchester to create a specially **supported apprenticeship** scheme for care leavers. The scheme, called **Internships Plus**, offers a 12 to 18 month paid work placement within a range of teams across Hampshire

## **Jobcentre Plus Support**

Jobcentre Plus advisers have the flexibility to judge which support will help claimants at the most appropriate point of their claim and tailor this to their individual needs.

Jobcentre Plus advisers can offer a variety of support to individuals including help with: job search; careers advice; boosting literacy, numeracy and language skills; other skills training; work experience; and setting up a business. This support can be provided by a range of organisations.

Where individuals need to improve their skills to get a job they can be referred to provision mainly funded by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), or the Scottish and Welsh governments. Turning up to skills training and completing it can be made mandatory, as a condition of receiving benefit.

Where Jobcentre Plus District Managers identify gaps in skills or other provision they have discretion to purchase extra support to meet particular needs using their Flexible Support Fund.

Where Jobcentre Plus advisers feel that a person would benefit from a short period of work related activity, they can refer them to a placement that lasts 4 weeks focused on delivering benefit to the local community.

For more information contact the Jobcentre Plus: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus> or call: 0845 6060 234 or by visiting their local Jobcentre Plus.

## **The Work Programme**

The Work Programme provides intensive support and advice for those who are struggling to find work.

- Jobcentre Plus advisers have discretion to enable care leavers to opt for early access to the Work Programme .
- Work Programme providers have the freedom to deliver personalised support for a broad range of participants and are paid more for supporting those who are harder to help.

For more information contact the Jobcentre Plus: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus> or call: 0845 6060 234

## **Youth contract**

Young people who are or were in care, aged 16 or 17, and are not in education, employment or training ('NEET') are eligible for tailored help to return to work with training, school or college.

Young people aged 18-24 in receipt of benefit are eligible for additional help:

- Extra Jobcentre Plus adviser support including a referral to a careers interview delivered by the National Careers Service within the first 3 months of a Jobseeker's Allowance claim.
- The chance to go on a work experience placement, including one that offers training and a guaranteed interview (sector-based work academy); and
- Wage incentives worth up to £2,275 each, for employers who recruit an 18-24 year-old from Jobcentre Plus or the Work Programme.

More information can be found on the Department for Work and Pension's website: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/youth-contract/key-initiatives/>

## **From Care2Work**

A DfE funded national programme called From Care2Work managed by Catch22 NCAS helps care leavers gain work experience and skills which can help them enter the workforce. From Care2Work organises placements for care leavers and works with employers and local authorities to ensure they are supported e.g. in Marriott Hotels and at Premier League football clubs. To find out more about how From Care2Work can support your care leavers with employment go to:

[http://leavingcare.org/what\\_we\\_do/ncas\\_projects/from\\_carework\\_project](http://leavingcare.org/what_we_do/ncas_projects/from_carework_project)

## Local provision

Individual councils also run programmes helping young people, including care leavers, into work. Young people or their advisers should enquire as to what is available from their council. This may be delivered in house by the leaving care service or other parts of the council, by local Connexions services, or other services such as local charities.

## HELPING PEOPLE MAKE CAREERS DECISIONS

The National Careers Service provides information, careers and skills advice that is tailored to the needs of the individuals.

The service provides a telephone helpline and web chat service, so people of all ages can discuss their options with careers advisers and make informed choices.

Adults aged 19 and over (or 18 if on out of work benefits), have access to one on one or face to face support from a qualified, expert adviser. Under the Youth Contract, the National Careers Service will provide all 18-24 year olds registering for Jobseekers Allowance access to a careers interview within three months of their claim. Contact: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

National Careers Service advisers are professionally qualified and can give personalised advice to help individuals make the right choices about learning and work. They can help:

- find learning and training that is right for the individual, including courses that can help improve reading, writing and maths skills;
- understand the local job market;
- look at, and assess skills;
- find out about funding to support learning;
- develop CVs;
- improve interview and presentation skills;
- find out about the types of disability and childcare support available.

National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Call: 0800 100 900

Care leavers still at school may be able to access school based career advice.

Care leavers have a named Local Authority personal adviser and pathway plan that is updated every six months. The agreed pathway plan should set out the support that will be provided to the young person with education, employment and training and how online and telephone support from the National Careers Service advisers can help with this.

Many colleges and universities will also offer support for care leavers in making decisions about further study. This may include the provision of impartial advice, taster days, open days and summer schools with priority places for care leavers.

For further information, contact the college or university. Many will often have a named contact for care leavers, whose details can usually be found on their website and publications. The *Who Cares? Trust's* HE handbook has university contacts: <http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/pages/the-h.e-handbook.html>

## **FUNDING LEARNING FOR CARE LEAVERS**

The material above describes how much of the learning and skills activity available to care leavers will be fully-funded by the government. But other sources of funding support is available for those with particular circumstances:

### **Access to Work Grant**

- Those with a disability or health condition that affects their ability to do a job or that means they incur extra work-related costs (for example, special computer equipment or travel costs because they cannot use public transport) may be eligible for this grant. They must be 16 or over and either:
  - unemployed and about to start a job or a work trial; or
  - in a paid job or self-employed – it's not available for voluntary work.

Access to Work grant: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

### **16-19 Bursary**

- For 16 to 19 year olds in further education or training, the Bursary Fund can help pay for costs like equipment needed for the course, lunch, and transport to and from the school or college. Young people in care and care leavers are automatically entitled to at least £1,200 which is paid directly by the school, college or training provider.
- For further information contact the Student Support Officer or Tutor at the school, college, or training provider that the care leaver you are working with attends/plans to attend.

An example of joint working is in East Sussex where young people in care and care leavers eligible for the bursary are identified via the virtual school, their Personal Education Plan at 16, through applications and regular monitoring.

For more information on the 16-19 bursary: <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

### **Discretionary Learner Support**

Discretionary Learner Support Funds can help students aged 19 and over with the costs associated with further education. Those may include accommodation, transport costs, course material, domestic emergencies, and exceptionally, fees support.

If learners are under 20 they can apply for Care to Learn instead, which is government provision for childcare costs for those in education.

Care to Learn: <https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>

- For further information contact the Student Support Officer at the school, college, or training provider that the care leaver you are working with attends/plans to attend.
- Care leavers are a priority group for Discretionary Learner Support.

### **Local Authority funding**

Local authorities have a duty to support care leavers, in education or training, but financial support packages vary from local authority to local authority. All care leavers in higher education are entitled to a £2,000 HE bursary, but most local authorities also have additional packages of support. Local authorities also have to provide vacation accommodation for all care leavers in residential further education or higher education who need it.

- For further information on the HE Bursary :  
<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare/education/a00208597/support-beyond-compulsory-education>

### **Student Finance**

There is a range of support available for full-time and part-time undergraduate studies. Eligible full-time students are able to take out an up-front loan to finance their tuition costs and a loan to help towards their living costs, regardless of their household income. Other support is available in the form of a maintenance grant to help with living costs and other support for students who are disabled or have dependants. These grants are paid in addition to the tuition and maintenance loans and do not have to be repaid. Most students will be entitled to a loan for living costs of at least £3,575, with those studying in London entitled to a loan of at least £4,988. All tuition fees and maintenance loans are subject to previous study and Equivalent Level Qualifications Rules and Regulations.

- Student Finance: <https://www.gov.uk/student-finance>

### **National Scholarship Programme**

Most universities and many colleges offer financial support to undergraduate students from non-traditional backgrounds. Care leavers are often a priority group for such support. Part of the support they offer comes from the National Scholarship Programme.

From 2015 the National Scholarship Programme will be refocused towards providing support for post graduate students, but universities and colleges will in many cases still offer support to undergraduate students from their own funds.

- For further information go to:  
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/wp/currentworktowidenparticipation/nsp/>

### **University Care Leaver Bursaries**

Many universities now offer dedicated bursaries to care leavers with lots of other dedicated support. The bursaries can be applied for on top of all other finances. Care leavers will also generally get the maximum Maintenance Grant or Special Support Grant.

- For further information on what colleges and universities offer and key points of contacts for Care Leavers please see Who Cares? Trust's HE handbook: <http://www.thewhocarestrust.org.uk/pages/the-h.e-handbook.html>

The Buttle UK Quality Mark is awarded to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care.

- To see information about the Buttle UK Quality mark go to: <http://www.buttleuk.org/pages/quality-mark-for-care-leavers.html>

### **Access to Learning Fund**

HE students facing hardship may be entitled to additional help from the **Access to Learning Fund (ALF)**. ALF is discretionary funding that is administered by higher education institutions, which are best placed to assess students' individual circumstances. These funds allow universities and colleges to provide extra discretionary support for students in particular need. Students are advised to seek help from the student welfare adviser if facing difficulties or financial hardship.

Care leavers are a priority group for the Access to Learning Fund.

- For further information go to <http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy-information/access-to-learning-fund.aspx>

## **SOME CARE LEAVERS MIGHT ALREADY BE IN WORK OR HAVE SKILLS, BUT BE INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING THEIR SKILLS FURTHER ...**

### **24+ Advanced Learning Loans**

- Learners aged 24 and above studying at Level 3 and 4, now have access to loans to help meet up front course fees, removing one of the main barriers to learning.
- All providers with a loans facility also have a Loans Bursary Fund to assist disadvantaged and vulnerable learners who are funded through a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan with the associated costs of learning such as travel and childcare. Learners can apply directly to the Student Support office of their chosen provider.

24+ Advanced Learning Loans: <https://www.gov.uk/advanced-learning-loans>

However, apprentices aged 24 and above on Level 3 and above Apprenticeships no longer need Advanced Learning Loans as direct Government funding is now available again to support their training.

## Professional and Career Development Loans

- A Professional and Career Development Loan is a bank loan set at a competitive interest rate that learners aged 18 years or over can use to help pay for learning that leads to work or that will improve their employability.
- The loan can be used to support any full-time, part-time or distance learning courses for up to two years, as long as the course leads to a trade, occupation or profession.
- Like any loan, learners must repay the money they borrow, but the Skills Funding Agency will pay the interest on the loan while the learner is in learning and for up to one month afterwards. The learner then repays the loan to the bank over an agreed period at a fixed rate of interest.

Professional and Career Development Loans: [www.gov.uk/career-development-loans](http://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans).

## SOME CARE LEAVERS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN STARTING UP IN BUSINESS ...

### New Enterprise Allowance

- The Jobcentre can tell care leavers you work with about help and information about starting up a business.
- People claiming Jobseekers Allowance and who can show that they have a business idea that could work, can apply for New Enterprise Allowance. A business mentor will provide advice and support on becoming self-employed, setting up in business and starting to trade.
- Once a business plan has been made and approved, financial support is available:
  - a weekly allowance worth up to £1,274 over 26 weeks and
  - if they need start-up capital from an unsecured loan through the BIS start-up loan scheme.

The Prince's Trust also provides start up loans and mentoring to disadvantaged young people who want to start up a business. For further information see:

[http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about\\_the\\_trust/what\\_we\\_do/programmes/enterprise\\_programme/start\\_up\\_loans.aspx](http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/about_the_trust/what_we_do/programmes/enterprise_programme/start_up_loans.aspx)

## SOME CARE LEAVERS MAY BE A LONG WAY FROM BEING READY FOR FORMAL LEARNING

### Help for those who are furthest from employment



BIS-funded Community Learning covers a broad range of courses, usually unaccredited, that bring together adults aged 19 and over from different backgrounds in order to acquire new skills, reconnect with learning, pursue an interest, prepare for progression to formal courses and/or learn how to support their children more confidently.

- Many courses focus on helping people who have not had the chance to learn in the past to build their confidence, learn new skills and progress to training or employment.
- Community learning takes place in accessible, friendly community venues and caters for individual needs and learning styles. Most community learning courses are delivered or commissioned by Local Authority Adult Education Service providers, but provision is also commissioned and/or delivered by Further Education Colleges and voluntary sector organisations.

### **How to find a course**

- There are many sources of information to help learners find the right community learning course, including:
- Looking at the website or published prospectus of the Local Authority Adult Education Service, Further Education College, voluntary sector organisation and/or Workers' Educational Association (WEA) branch.
- Using the National Careers Service website, which offers advice on choosing courses and a post code search to help you find a suitable class  
<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/courses/Pages/default.aspx>.
- Reading notices in local newspapers or on notice boards in schools, children's centres, doctors' surgeries, community centres, libraries, church halls or voluntary groups (this list is not exhaustive).
- Speaking to friends, neighbours and colleagues to find out what is happening locally and what courses they have found enjoyable.
- For people who are employed and whose workplace supports these schemes, speaking to the Unionlearn representative or Workplace Learning Advocate.

### **What if the care leaver has problems getting support?**

If a care leaver is having trouble accessing skills support they should speak to their leaving care personal adviser. They should be able to help them. Other sources of help include the Virtual Head in their local authority or the designated person for care leavers at the place of education they want to attend. Their personal adviser can put them in touch. If they cannot help they can get independent advocacy from:

Voice: <http://www.voiceyp.org/>

Call: 0808 800 5792

National Youth Advocacy Service:

<http://www.actionforadvocacy.org.uk/contactServlet?contact=2681&borough=3>

Call: 0808 808 1001

There will also be local providers of independent advocacy in different areas.

### **More information:**

Gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/education>

Skills Funding Agency: <http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/>

Care to Learn: <https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>

Access to Work grant: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Professional and Career Development Loans: [www.gov.uk/career-development-loans](http://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans).

24+ Advanced Learning Loans: <https://www.gov.uk>

National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Jobcentre Plus: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus>

# Skills support for care leavers (individual)

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Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

## How can this guide help me?

This booklet is for you as a care leaver. It is a short guide to what support is available to get you the skills that will help you get and keep a job. In this guide you will find lots of ideas. Try and find out more about anything that interests you, for example by talking to your personal adviser, to help you decide which option would be best for you.

Your personal adviser may want to talk you through the booklet. There is another booklet for your personal adviser, which goes into more detail.

## What leaving care support should I receive from the local authority?

Your local authority should make sure that you have a **personal adviser**, who should keep in touch with you and support you to achieve the things that are set out in your **pathway plan**. The **pathway plan** is a document which identifies your needs and how the local authority will help you meet these. This can include financial help with education, employment, and training.

If you have a personal adviser make sure you discuss your plans with them – their advice can be really helpful.

If you don't have a personal adviser, why not consider getting this kind of help as a first step – speak to your leaving care team about getting one.

## What is the National Careers Service and how can they help me?

The National Career Services provides information, on careers and skills advice which is designed especially for you. It is free to everyone aged 13 or over in England. You can use their telephone helpline and their web chat service to discuss your options with advisers who will help you make the choice which is right for you.

National Careers Service: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Call: 0800 100 900

## What skills training and further education can I get?

You can get nationally recognised training which will help you get a job and improve the everyday skills that employers want. The main areas of training which you could get are:

- Help with English, Maths, and IT. Today most jobs need you to have some of these skills. If English is not your first language, you can also get help to improve this.
- Training on how to write a CV, how to prepare for an interview, how to work well with others, how to improve your confidence – all these will help you get and keep a job.
- Skills training, especially for the job you want, can help you prepare for jobs which you feel are right for you. For example you could do a course on carpentry, hairdressing, or working in the care sector - there is training available to prepare you for most jobs.

Contact the National Careers Service for further details:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

Call: 0800 100 900

## How can the Jobcentre help me?

The Jobcentre can help you with information on benefits and services which you might be able to receive, free CV advice and help with looking for jobs. The Jobcentre adviser can help you to decide which skills or training will help you get a job. They can also help you with the

Universal jobmatch, the on-line job search and matching service.

It may be a good idea to let the Jobcentre adviser know that you are a care leaver so they can support you and understand the issues you might face. As a care leaver you may be able to get extra help.

Job Centre Plus: <https://www.gov.uk/contact--plus>

Call: 0845 6060 234

### **How can the Work Programme help me?**

The Work Programme provides support, work experience and training for up to two years to help you find and keep a job.

Contact the Jobcentre Plus for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/contact--plus>

Call: 0845 6060 234

### **What about Volunteering?**

The government is encouraging unemployed people to take up voluntary work when they are looking for a job. If you are interested in volunteering you can get further information from the Jobcentre Plus (see above)

You can volunteer for as many hours as you like and still claim benefits as long as you stick to the rules for volunteering. For further information see

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp1023.pdf>

### **What about Community Learning?**

Community learning courses take place in informal, friendly community venues, such as your Local Authority Adult Education Service, Further Education College, voluntary organisation and/or Workers' Educational Association (WEA) branch. There are different types of course on offer, including arts, crafts and computer skills. These courses help you build your confidence, develop new skills and increase your chance of progressing to a training course or job.

To find a local community learning course, you can:

- Look at the website or prospectus of the Local Authority Adult Education Service, Further Education College, voluntary organisation and/or Workers' Educational Association (WEA) branch
- Use the National Careers Service website, which offers advice on choosing courses and a post code search to help you find a suitable class.

For more information speak to your personal adviser.

### **Traineeships**

Traineeships are an education and training programme with work experience, providing eligible 16-23 year olds (16-24 year olds from August 2014) with the skills and experience they need to be able to successfully apply for apprenticeships or other jobs. At the core of traineeships are work preparation training, English and Maths for those below GCSE A\*-C standard and a high quality work experience placement with an employer.

Traineeships last for a maximum of 6 months.

Individuals can find out more about traineeship opportunities and whether they are eligible by visiting <http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/traineeships.aspx> , by calling the National Careers Service on 0800 100 900 or by visiting their local Jobcentre.

### **How about an Apprenticeship?**

Apprenticeships are paid jobs that include on and off the job training and lead to nationally recognised qualifications. As an employee, apprentices earn as they learn and gain practical skills from the job.

To do an apprenticeship you have to be aged 16 or over. You must also meet the entry requirements of the apprenticeship you want to do.

To find out more about apprenticeships go to <https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>

### **What about the Youth contract?**

The Youth Contract encourages employers to take on young people including care leavers. As a care leaver you can get help to get a job, with training or education.

Speak to your personal adviser or Job Centre Plus for further information

### **Want to go to University?**

If you want to go to university there are lots of funding opportunities for you. These include from your local authority, from universities themselves and from Student Finance. Speak to your personal adviser about how to get this support.

### **What if I am having problems getting skills support?**

If you are having trouble accessing skills support speak to your personal adviser. They should be able to help you. Other sources of help include the virtual head in your local authority or the named person for care leavers at the place you want to study. Get your personal adviser to put you in touch. If they can't help you can get independent advocacy from:

Voice:

<http://www.voiceyp.org/>

0808 800 5792

National Youth Advocacy Service:

<http://www.actionforadvocacy.org.uk/contactServlet?contact=2681&borough=3>

Call: 0808 808 1001

There will also be local providers of independent advocacy in different areas.

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