POLICY 067:
LOOKED AFTER YOUNG PEOPLE AND CARE LEAVERS

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Policy 067: Looked After Young People and Care Leavers

1. PURPOSE

1. 1 This Policy outlines the Institution's approach to meeting the needs of 'Looked After Young People' and 'Care Leavers' studying at ACM. Supporting these young people to succeed and progress to higher education, employment and a better future, as set out in this policy, is a priority of ACM.

1.2 ACM recognises their corporate responsibility to support students who come under the category of LAYP and CL.

1.3 This policy will support the engagement, admission, support and progression of LAYP and CL, whilst developing a consistent approach across all ACM campuses. It is hoped that this focused approach will provide these learners with an excellent learning experience whilst studying at ACM, as well as providing them with the confidence and motivation to succeed in their lifelong learning and wider life experiences.

1.4 This Policy should be read in conjunction with ACM's Equality and Diversity Policy.

1.5 The intention of this Policy is to support ACM's key values of inclusivity, supportive environments and the removal of barriers.

1.6 This policy has been written in line with the Statutory Guidance 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children' 2014 (updated in 2018): https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children

2. POLICY DETAILS

2.1 The designated officer with responsibility for Looked After Young People (LAYP) and Care Leavers (CL) studying at ACM is the Additional Needs and Disability Additional Needs and Disability Manager. It is the duty of the designated officer to inform the senior management team of the progress of students who are in care/care leavers on a regular basis.
The designated officer can be contacted via email on and@acm.ac.uk or telephone on 01483 501211.

Pre-Entry
2.1 ACM's approach to supporting the achievements of LAYP and CL, pre-entry, will aim to:
- Develop and maintain effective links with local authorities and other partners to publicise and make available information, advice and guidance (including financial and other forms of support) about progression and study in FE/HE.
- Provide impartial, free and confidential pre-course guidance on FE/HE study options, including financial and other forms of support.
- Provide accessible information about taster days and other events.

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- Provide a range of informational materials relevant to study and support options and make them available and accessible through a range of formats.
- Put indicators in place throughout the recruitment process to help identify those in care/care leavers either through the local authority, support agencies or through self-disclosure.

On-Course

2.2 ACM's approach to supporting the achievements of LAYP and CL, whilst on programme, will aim to:

- Identify a member of staff within the central student support team to coordinate and lead on internal and external communications regarding LAYP and CL.
- This staff member will also offer and provide support prior to entry and throughout the duration of the student's course including identification of suitable support arrangements as required.
- Provide Full Bursary support for LAYP to support them with college related costs.
- Monitor LAYP attendance in accordance with the College's existing policy for managing student absence. Provide careers guidance relating to progression within FE, HE or careers and will support with applications.

End of Course

2.3 The ACM's approach to supporting the achievements of LAYP and CL, at the end of their studies at ACM, will aim to:

- Obtain feedback from students who are LAYP/CL about our support offer, delivery and their distance travelled.
- Maintain records of the recruitment, retention, achievement and progression of our students in care/care leavers.

Information Sharing and Data Protection

2.4 Students can give permission for information to be given to all staff who deal with them. Otherwise the information will only be shared on a "need to know basis" and only with appropriate staff, such as the Tutor.

2.5 Information requests from local authorities will only be met:

- If written consent has been given by the student (unless the student is at risk of significant harm).
- If an ACM information sharing and service level agreement has been signed by the organisation requesting the information.
- Via the Access All Areas website which local authorities will access directly through a secure login access issued by the ACM IT Department.

4. POLICY SCOPE

4.1 This Policy applies to students at all ACM campuses who fall under the definitions outlined in section 7. This includes young people under the age of 18 who are identified as 'looked after' under the Children Act 1989 and 'care leavers' students under the age of 25

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who have been looked after by a local authority in the past.

4.2 The procedural elements of this Policy apply to all timetabled learning activities, as well as ACM activities outside of timetabled teaching.

5. RELATED POLICIES

Please see Appendix C for further details, all associated documentation can also be found on the ACM website using the link. https://www.acm.ac.uk/policies/

Associated policies include:

- 010 Safeguarding
- 009 Special Education Needs
- 008 Equality and Diversity
- 013 Hardship and Travel Bursary Funding
- 015 Admissions Policy
- 020 Data Access and Protection
- 046 Risk Assessment
- 058 Student Withdrawal, Interruption and Internal Transfer

It also directly relates to ACM's Access and Participation Strategy. This can be found on the ACM website via the link
https://2k6rdi1ldku625c2mfpsfiwu-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/ACM_Guildford_Ltd_APP_2019-2020_V1_10067853.pdf

6. POLICY OWNER

The responsibility for this policy falls under the remit of the Designated Officer for Looked After Young People and Care Leavers (LAYP/CL), Student Experience and Quality Committee. This role is part of the Additional Needs and Disability Additional Needs and Disability Department that sits within the Integrated Services Division.

7. DEFINITIONS

The term 'Looked After Young People' is interchangeable with Children Looked After (CLA), Looked After Children (LAC) and Care Leavers (CL).

Definition of 'Looked After'

This policy refers to young people who are 'Looked After' as defined by the Children Act 1989. That is those learners who are under the age of 18 and are:

- The subject of an interim or full-time care or emergency protection order;
- Unaccompanied minors who are asylum seekers;
- Accommodated by a local authority with the agreement of their parent(s) or legal guardian;
- Compulsorily accommodated as a result of criminal proceedings

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Why do Children become Looked After?

A large number of these children coming into care will have a history of physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Some may have suffered the death of a parent or have parents who are unable to look after them properly because of illness. Others may have disabilities and other complex needs. A very small number are in care because of criminal behaviour.

How do Children become Looked After?

Children come into care by two main routes: because the parents have asked for this help or because the child is in danger of being harmed.

- Under section 20 of the Children Act 1989: where parents have asked for help, because for some reason their child can no longer stay at home, suitable accommodation for the child will be provided. Parental responsibility remains with the parent/guardian.
- Under section 31 of the Children Act 1989: if the child is in danger of being harmed, a care order will be made by a court. The court will take all the circumstances into careful consideration before doing this. When a care order is made, children's services acquire parental responsibility and become a legal parent alongside the parent/guardian.

Who are Young Care Leavers (CL)?

A 'Care Leaver' is defined as a person aged 25 or under who has been looked after by a local authority for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14; and who was looked after by the local authority at school-leaving age or after that date. Between the ages of sixteen to eighteen a young person who has been 'Looked After' will be expected to begin the transition towards independent living to become a 'Young Care Leaver'. They may remain with their Foster Carers or they may move into supported lodgings or into a bedsit or flat depending on the provision available. From the age of sixteen they will be supported by their Local Authority Leaving Care Team.

8. PROCEDURES

The designated lead member of the college will:

- Monitor the ACM's implementation of its LAYP/CL policy through the annual Self-Assessment Report.
- Ensure that the ACM has a senior member of staff with responsibility for LAYP/CL.
- Complete an annual evaluation with External Relations regarding the retention and attainment and progress of LAYP/CL at the ACM.
- Induct, support and monitor CLA/CL progress through 1-1 review meetings.
- Integrate Personal Education Plan meetings with local authorities into the ILP/Progress review process Ensure student support and local authority is informed and that interventions are regularly monitored.

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- Ensure local authorities and the allocated Integrated Services are informed of all APLB procedures and invited to relevant meetings/aware of outcomes.
- Attend relevant CPD around supporting students that are LAYP/CL.
- Check students are in receipt of Full Bursary.
- Update 'Further Details' section of Insight to include LAYP/CL Virtual School/Social Worker contact details and any missing badge information
- Notify and invite Local Authority Virtual School/Social Workers to PEP/Review/APLB meetings.
- Monitor attendance and inform allocated Tutor of any LAYP/CL learners with attendance concerns.
- Contact all identified students that are LAYP/CL to inform them about the student bursary available to them and note details of any support under 'further details' and 'learner comments' on Insight.
- Set-up a list of LAYP/CL learners on Insight so that local authorities can access the relevant information via the data sharing protocols.

Responsibility of Tutors

- Ensure that the transition to ACM is as smooth as possible for these learners and takes account of their particular needs.
- Signpost further support via ACM referral process.
- Inform the designated officer where there are concerns.
- Review learner's progress and attendance regularly, ensuring that required support is in place and effective.

Responsibility of Integrated Services

- Integrated Services will offer 1-1 pastoral support to LAYP/CL students where there are concerns through the standard referral process via the Helpdesk.
- Signpost further support via ACM's referral process.
- Inform the designated officer where there are concerns.

Responsibilities of Learning Support Officer/Assistants

- Inform the designated officer of any LAYP/CL who also have learning difficulties/ disabilities.
- Inform designated officer of any LAYP/CL with EHCP's.
- Work with the designated officer to combine EHCP and PEP meetings as part of the ILP/Progress review process.
- Ensure swift access to additional learning support for LAYP/CL whose learning needs are disclosed after entry to ACM.

Local Authorities

- Complete and agree ACM's service level and information sharing agreement.
- Encourage applicants to make appropriate disclosures and attend interviews.
- Inform ACM of any potential applicants and ensure a smooth transition onto course.

- Access all LAYP/CL attendance/monitoring data and reports via secure communication systems e.g. Egress, WelfareCloud etc.
- Chair/Lead on any LAYP/CL PEP meetings and subsequent documentation.
- Ensure effective support is provided i.e. with housing placement, equipment/resources, extra tuition and any other financial assistance in order for LAYP /CL to achieve.
- Update ACM of any pastoral concerns or issues impacting on LAYP/CL achievement.
- Ensure the data protection principles are upheld and appoint data officers/notify ACM of changes as per agreement.
- Only store the data accessed on secure systems and do not extract unless for the purpose of a PEP meeting with signed consent and agreement with LAYP/CL and in accordance with your own Data Protection and Information Security Policies.

9. EXHIBITS/APPENDICES/FORMS

9.1 Appendix A: LAYP/CL Annual Procedure

9.2 Appendix B: Financial Support Information

9.3 Appendix C: PEP Guidance

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Version: 1.0

Approved on: 07 September 2020

Approved by: Integrated Executive

Next review: August 2021

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Appendix A: LAYP/CL Annual Procedure

Timeframe	Action
April – August	Local Authorities identify and send any future student applicant information to Additional Needs and Disability Team.
September – October	1. Local Authorities send through lists of confirmed applicants to Additional Needs and Disability Team Designated officer to undertake ILP / PEP meetings for LAYP/CL students 3. Designated officer also identify LAYP/CL through self-declaration report and bursary applications 4. Designated officer to update student record. 5. Local Authorities provided with information on attendance or non-starters.
October - November	1.Confirmed LAYP/CL information compiled by Additional Needs and Disability Team. 2. LAYP /CL Learner badge information updated by Additional Needs and Disability Team. 3. LAYP /CL Learners monitored by Tutor/ALS/Engagement Team/Additional Needs and Disability Team. 4.Local Authorities access learner attendance and ILP/Progress Review information as required

October – November	Designated officer to notify/invite Local Authority, ALS and Student Engagement Advisor if any APLB Stage 2's issued
December- January	1.PEP meetings integrated into Progress review week meetings, Local Authority Social Workers/Virtual Schools invited to attend 2.Local Authority Social Workers/Virtual Schools invited to Parent evenings if learner aware and consents

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Appendix B: FINANCIAL SUPPORT INFORMATION FOR LAYP/CARE LEAVER

FURTHER EDUCATION

The **Full Bursary** of £1,200 per year is available to students who meet the following criteria:

- Are in Care/a Care Leaver
- Are enrolled on a full-time further education government funded course
- Are aged 16-18 on 31st August 2020.
- Have 'home' student status or have been granted full 'refugee' or 'asylum seeker' status
- Have been 'ordinary resident' in the UK, EU or EEA continuously for the last three years with 'settled status' which means having indefinite leave to remain
- Maintain at least 85% attendance

The Bursary is paid monthly, directly into the student bank account, provided they have at least 85% attendance in that month.

Process for applying:

- All applicants who declare LAYP/ CL status will be contacted with application details, consent forms and evidence requirements (letter from Social Worker confirming status as LAYP/ CL)
- All Local Authorities / Virtual Schools will be sent information on Bursary so they can support young people in applying and provide appropriate evidence
- Bursary will be promoted to all students to encourage LAYP/CL to declare and apply

Personal Education Plan – Personal Education Allowance

Students that are CLA may be eligible for additional financial support through the PEP meeting process (dependent on age and local authority policy). The Personal Education Allowance (PEA) is a sum of money available each year to help young people progress in their education, there is different financial help available for those aiming to attend University.

Examples of PEA expenditure:

- Educational Books
- Equipment /specialist kit
- 1:1 Tuition
- Additional support for vocational training
- Educational trips or visits
- Extracurricular activities that will build confidence and self-esteem

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All PEA requests need to be discussed and agreed with the local authority Virtual School/Social Worker and student at the PEP meeting in line with the educational targets set, PEA request procedures will vary between boroughs. PEAs are not intended to replace services, support or resources already provided by local authorities or other agencies.

HIGHER EDUCATION

ACM offers Higher Education students the opportunity to secure financial support towards the cost of the course each year through the form of Bursaries or Scholarships. Please see https://www.acm.ac.uk/course-fees/ for further information.

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Appendix C: PEP GUIDANCE

What is a Personal Education Plan (PEP)?

All looked after children must have a care plan, of which the PEP is an integral part. All of those involved in the process of developing the PEP should use it to support the personalised learning of the child.

The PEP (pre-school to age 18) is an evolving record of what needs to happen for looked after children to enable them to make expected progress and fulfil their potential. The PEP should reflect the importance of a personalised approach to learning that meets the identified educational needs of the child, raises aspirations and builds life chances.

The quality of the PEP is the joint responsibility of the local authority that looks after the child and the Education provider. All professionals involved should work closely together at each stage of the PEP process and should involve the student and their carer where appropriate.

Who has ultimate responsibility for the PEP?
The Local Authority/Social Worker has responsibility for the PEP as part of their Care Plan.

What is a Virtual School?
Each Local Authority has a Virtual School, it does not exist in real terms as a building, and children and young people do not attend. It is a service provided by dedicated professionals within the Children, Schools and Families Directorate whose work is to promote and co-ordinate educational support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers to succeed and have high educational aspirations for them at college and university; wherever their place of learning.

Who should initiate a PEP?
The Local Authority/Social Worker/Virtual School has a duty to initiate the PEP. The completion of the PEP takes place at the PEP meeting and professionals within the meeting negotiate who takes the lead to complete the PEP form.   The Social Worker may take the lead for some parts and the designated officer for the others.

PEP content and format?
Each Local Authority has a different process for gathering data and writing PEPs, some use paperwork which they complete others now use an EPEP which they require Schools to complete. In order to have a consistent and efficient approach as an organisation, ACM staff are required to direct the local authority accordingly.

Typical targets/outcomes of a PEP meeting may involve:

- Ongoing catch-up support for those that have fallen behind with coursework (including use of effective intervention strategies).
- Identify short-term targets around attendance, learning needs/skills, or knowledge.
- Identify longer-term aspirational targets around managing money, HE, work experience, careers.

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- Identify any additional support needs and subsequent referral.
- Agreement of payment by the Local Authority for additional 1-1 tuition or equipment required for studies.
- Transition support from Social Care where a young person is on a new course or in a new residential placement.
- Change or review of residential placement / increased support in placement.
- Referral by Social Worker to specialist agencies e.g. CAMHS /Substance Misuse team.
- Careers advice and guidance appointment / or financial information about higher education.
- Support with bursary application arranged.
- Learner consent / agreement of information sharing and review date.
- Equipment identified / to support with learning needs.

How often should it be written?

The PEP process should be integrated into the ILP and Progress review meeting cycles of the designated officer. If a child has recently joined the education setting a PEP should be completed within 20 course days. It is useful to have a PEP meeting prior to the young person's statutory CLA/CL review, so that any issues raised in the PEP can be highlighted by the Social Worker at the CLA/CL review. Plans should be amended if there is a major change to the young person's situation e.g. placement or authority.

Who needs to be present?

The young person, designated officer and Social Worker/Virtual School and if appropriate carer/other specialist professional e.g. Support Student Engagement Advisor.

Where should it take place and for how long?

Meetings should take place at the College (not offsite). College staff need to be time specific as to the time they have available with the local authority representatives.

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