



YOUNG ADULT CARERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Process Area	Student Services
Reference Number	STS/023
Directorate	Client Services

Issue No	Date	Details	Author	Approved	Next Review
001	Nov 2022	New policy	RS	Governing Body	2025-26
002	Nov 2025	Updated with minor changes to Section 5 and removed Appendix 1.	RS	Governing Body	2028-29

If requested, the College will make the policy available in alternative formats to accommodate visual impairments. The policy can also be downloaded from the College website and made available in alternative languages upon request.

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Southern Regional College (SRC) is committed to supporting Young Adult Carers and recognises the importance of promoting and supporting students that have caring responsibilities for a family member, partner or friend at their home. SRC believes that all Young Adult Carers have the right to an education regardless of their commitment to providing care for a family member. When a Young Adult Carer is providing care for someone in their family who has a serious illness, disability or substance misuse problem, they may need additional support to ensure they achieve their potential. SRC recognises this and is committed to ensuring support is in place to support the Young Adult Carer in achieving their qualification.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all students of the College and should be read in conjunction with other relevant organisational procedures and student support policies.

3. DEFINITIONS

Young Adult Carer	A young adult carer is a student aged between 16 and 25 who provides unpaid care for a family member or friend who is disabled, physically or mentally ill or has a substance misuse problem.
Caring responsibility	A young adult carer may: • Help with personal care and medication. • Do domestic chores, like shopping, cooking and housework. • Respond to challenging or unusual behaviour. • Keep the person they care for safe. • Care for siblings. • Listen to and keep the person they are caring for company. • Translate or use sign language for the person they are caring for.
Lead Young Adult Carer Champion	The College's Lead Young Adult Carer Champion has responsibility for policy implementation including directing the work of the College Carer Champions.
College Carer Champions	Trained staff located on each Campus that referrals must be made to. A list of Designated College Carer Champions is published on the College website and is included in Appendix 1.

4. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Governing Body and Principal and Chief Executive

The Governing Body and Principal and Chief Executive have overall responsibility for the effective communication, implementation, monitoring and reviewing of this policy on a continuing basis.

4.2 Lead Young Adult Carer Champion

The Lead Young Adult Carer Champion has overall responsibility for the effective communication and implementation of the Young Adult Carers Policy ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy and that Young Adult Carers know how they can access support. The Young Adult Carer Champion will act as a contact point for all relevant agencies, involved in supporting the young person.

4.3 All staff

All staff must:

- be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to Young Adult Carers;
- co-operate with requirements introduced to provide support to Young Adult Carers;
- be aware of Young Adult Carers needing support and refer as appropriate;
- undertake any training or guidance provided on access arrangements.

4.4 College Carer Champions

College Carer Champions must:

- be familiar with, and comply with College policies and procedures relating to Young Adult Carers;
- meet with Young Carers and complete relevant proformas;
- co-operate with requirements introduced to provide support to Young Adult Carers, undertake any training or guidance provided on Young Adult Carers.

4.5 Students

It is the responsibility of the student to disclose their Young Adult Carer status. Existing and prospective students will have a number of opportunities to make this disclosure at any time during their course.

5. PROCEDURE

This section sets out SRC's commitment to existing and prospective students who are classified as Young Adult Carers. The College strives to provide equal access, where reasonable, to the full range of College facilities and services and to treat all students with respect and dignity. The aim is to support student carers and be as flexible as possible to assist at all stages of their learning journey.

5.1 Referral of Young Adult Carer

A student may take on caring responsibilities at any time during their learning journey and it is acknowledged that there may be unpredictability in terms of caring

commitment and time scales. It is therefore recognised that the needs of each carer are unique and the support which an individual may require, will be variable.

It should be noted that the College recognises that all students will have unique needs and we strive to anticipate and meet the needs of all students.

Young Adult Carers can make a referral, as follows, it is essential that this is done as early as possible:

- Personal Tutor/ Tutor.
- College designated Carer Champion based in their campus, contact details are available on the College Website <https://www.src.ac.uk/student-life/student-services/student-welfare/young-carers>
- Lead Young Adult Carer Champion/ Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer.

The Young Adult Carer policy & procedure does not cover:

- Students with parental responsibilities, unless for a child with a disability.
- Students working in a paid caring capacity.

5.2 Identification of Young Adult Carer Status

In most situations, self-certification will be the most common method used, and the College staff will use a high level of discretion and flexibility. However, at any point we may request more information or evidence to confirm carer status or any changes to the student caring responsibilities.

As carers exist in a variety of different situations, proof of status can come from many different sources. Some examples of what can be provided as evidence are listed below but this list is not exhaustive:

- Self-certification, in the form of a short statement, regarding the nature of the caring duties and how this may affect their studies, including how long they anticipate this will last.
- A GP letter confirming carer status.
- Other relevant documentation, for example a letter from a carers organisation, social worker, carer group, receipt of benefits.

5.3 Support Available for Young Adult Carers

A Young Adult Carer will take on responsibilities to those appropriate to their age and development. A Young Adult Carer might be providing the main care or share responsibilities with another family member. The caring tasks that a Young Carer has to deal with can range from:

- a) Nursing
- b) Personal intimate care
- c) Emotional care
- d) Domestic care
- e) Financial care
- f) Childcare/ Care of a Sibling

Because of their responsibilities at home, a Young Adult Carer might experience:

- Being late or absent due to responsibilities at home.
- Concentration problems, anxiety or worry in College.
- Emotional distress.
- Tiredness in College.
- Lack of time for homework.
- Poor attainment.
- Physical problems such as back pain from lifting.
- False signs of maturity, as a result of assuming adult roles.
- Behavioural problems (taking out their anger or frustration).
- Lack of time for extra-curricular activities.
- Isolation, embarrassed to take friends home.
- Limited social skills.
- Bullying.
- Feeling that no one understands and that no support is available.
- Low self-esteem.

The College acknowledges that there are likely to be Young Adult Carers among its learners, and that being a Young Adult Carer can have an adverse effect on a young person's education. Students with identified caring responsibilities can:

- Be supported in the first instance by their Personal Tutor and course team.
- Will have access to a range of information, of service providers, who can support and advocate for them.
- Be invited to investigate how the College can be flexible and/or adjust their studies with education support on their campus. This may take the form of possible adjustments that may be considered such as:
 - extensions to deadlines;
 - flexible start/finish times;
 - additional support mechanisms to help with workload or assignments.
- Receive information, support and guidance from the Student Engagement team.
- Have access to the College counselling services as required.
- Have access to a College laptop as required.

6 DISTRIBUTION

- SRC SharePoint
- SRC Canvas
- SRC Website
- Employee Handbook

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- SRC Safeguarding Policy
- SRC Equality and Good Relations (Staff & Students) Policy
- Education [Student Support] (Eligibility) Regulations (NI) 2012
- Equality Act Regulations (NI) 2006
- The Care Act 2014
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29
- Carers and Direct Payments Act (NI) 2002 (Section 4)
- Children (NI) Order 1995 (Article 17A)
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act

8 FLOWCHART

Process for Identification and Referral of Young Adult Carers

