

What is the definition of a care leaver for Student Finance England?

A care leaver is defined as: “A student looked after by a local authority throughout any 3-month period ending on or after the date on which the student reached the age of 16 and before the first day of the first academic year of the course provided that the student has not in fact at any time during the relevant period been under the charge or control of the student’s parents.”

Care leavers will be classed as **an independent student** when being assessed for student finance, however we will require evidence to support the student status.

- a Letter from the local authority or a social worker confirming the circumstances (‘former looked after child’ or ‘care leaver’)
- additional information: A ‘Residency order’ and ‘Care order’ can support your finance application but will not be acceptable evidence if sent as the only evidence

Please note that students who are awarded ‘care leaver’ status but then go back to live or reconnect with their parents will revert to being financially dependent on them. These students will need to complete a Student Finance England PFF2 form. These can be downloaded here www.gov.uk/student-finance-forms.

Universities and colleges also provide care leaver support and you can find these advisers usually within the Student Services / Wellbeing or Student Union.

- **The Become Trust** - www.becomecharity.org.uk
- **Brightside** - www.thebrightsidetrust.org
- **NNECL** - www.nnecl.org
- **The Care Leaver Associations** - www.careleavers.com
- **Student Finance _All Domiciles** - www.thestudentroom.co.uk

Your social worker/adviser will inform you about the support available from your council and possible benefits support you may be entitled to.