

# 18+ CARE LEAVERS SERVICE

**THIS FACTSHEET PROVIDES INFORMATION FOR CARE LEAVERS ABOUT THE SUPPORT THAT MAY BE PROVIDED TO THEM AFTER THE AGE OF 21.**

## RETURNING FOR SUPPORT AFTER AGE 21, UP TO AGE 25 (2014 EDITION)

A new law came into effect on 1st April 2011 – which says that if a young person was previously eligible for leaving care services, and they take up a programme of education or training after the age of 21, they may be entitled to further support from their local authority. The 18+ Care Leavers Service is very happy to continue supporting young people. Many young people make the choice to continue or resume education after they reach age 21.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

If you are already on an agreed course of education and training as stated in your Pathway Plan, then support will continue until the end of that course even if this goes past your 21st birthday. If not, we will explain what is available to you before services come to an end, which is usually after your 21st birthday.

If you want to go back into education or training after your 21st birthday, you can contact the 18+ Care Leavers Service to ask for an assessment of your needs. This assessment will focus on what you want to achieve and how you could do this. You should approach us at any time before your 25th birthday, which is the upper age limit to apply under this ruling. If support is agreed, we may be able to continue this to the end of your course, even if this goes past your 25th birthday.

You should try to give us as much notice as possible before the start date of your course to ensure we have time to carry out the assessment and complete the Pathway Plan with you. If you are thinking of financial support, and you have already started a course - we cannot provide funding for the period before you ask for support, or back-date funding for a programme that you have already completed.

### WHAT WILL THE ASSESSMENT ENTAIL?

The assessment will look at your last Pathway Plan, particularly your career goals, and how this new educational activity fits with that Plan. If your plans have changed we will discuss what your new career goals are, what you have done so far, and how this course of education or training will help.

You should be clear about how you think this programme will help you to find employment in the future. The assessment will look at your financial situation - we can help you to look for sources of funding.

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## WHAT SUPPORT WILL I GET?

If the assessment concludes that you are entitled to further support we will draw up a Pathway Plan with you – this plan will focus on education and training. You must agree to the 18+ Care Leavers Service having contact with a named person at your college / training provider to ensure you are attending regularly, that you are completing your work and that you are likely to pass your course. If you are not attending your course or are not achieving, we will review the Pathway Plan with you and we may stop the support.

The type of support you might get will depend on what your needs are. We will advise you about sources of grants and bursaries. Many courses which are part time can be taken at the same time as you are working, or claiming benefits. You will be provided with an Aftercare Adviser who will work alongside you. The support may include financial assistance, where appropriate, which will be discussed during the Pathway Planning process.

## WHAT FORMS OF EDUCATION OR TRAINING ARE ELIGIBLE?

We will look at whether you are eligible for support with your chosen course (and what will be provided) during the assessment of your needs. The law and guidelines ask us to think about the outcomes – what course you need to take to reach your goal and what difference it will make to your life. There are a wide variety of

courses you may be looking at – Apprenticeships, Level 1-3, A Levels, BTEC, Vocational courses, Degree courses, part time, full time – the key thing is to have a discussion with us about your aspirations, choices and goals.

## HOW SHOULD I GET IN TOUCH?

You should call **18+ Care Leavers Service** on **0121 464 1229** and ask to speak to a duty worker at the 18+ Service. They will take down initial details of your request.

## POSTAL ADDRESS:

**18+ Care Leavers Service,  
PO Box 16378,  
Birmingham B2 2AH**

You can visit us at our drop-in service at:

**New Aston House,  
Alma Street, Newtown,  
Birmingham B19 2RL.**

Our opening hours are **8.45am - 5.15pm  
Monday - Thursday, and  
8.45am - 4.15pm Friday.**

## Equal Opportunities

Birmingham City Council is committed to equality of opportunity. We will treat everyone with respect, regardless of race, disability, gender, age or sexual orientation.