

SQA is a proud corporate parent



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You probably know us as 'the exam people'.

SQA helps individuals to realise their potential and achieve their ambitions, no matter what their background, by providing a wide range of high-quality, internationally recognised qualifications.

Since April 2015, we are also a proud corporate parent. We are in a unique position to make some very clear guarantees to looked-after children and care-experienced young people like you.


In April 2017, we produced a short video clip to mark the two-year anniversary of corporate parenting duties and responsibilities. SQA's video demonstrates some of the work carried out in collaboration with Who Cares? Scotland over our first two years as a corporate parent.

[Take a look here.](#)

We promise that we will:

Improve opportunities for you to access Modern Apprenticeships, internships, routes to work experience, and employment with SQA

Do our best to ensure those who work for us, and with us, are aware of your needs and SQA's responsibilities



Work with you
to ensure that you
have access to
SQA services that
meet your needs

Ensure your
ambition and
achievements
are supported,
recognised,
and celebrated

Work with other
corporate parents
to make sure we
are all doing our
best for you



Stepping up

It's been an amazing three years. Here's what we've been up to:

✓ We've listened more effectively

We take every opportunity to listen to care-experienced young people like you at the events that we attend; and we've invited young people to speak to SQA staff about their experience of growing up in care, and the impact this has had on them. Many of our staff volunteer as part of our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland, and several volunteer as mentors with MCR Pathways.

✓ We've stopped children's hearings from clashing with exams

Since 2016, we have shared SQA's examination timetable with the Scottish Children's Report Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland to allow both corporate parents to ensure that children's hearings are organised outwith examination time.

✓ We've made it easier to get replacement SQA certificates

We've explored options to provide free replacement SQA certificates in certain circumstances for care-experienced learners through a pilot project in Glasgow, and are looking to extend this to other Scottish local authorities.

✓ We've incorporated care experience in our qualifications

Thanks to your input, we're incorporating relevant and appropriate scenarios of young people in care into the design of our qualifications.

✓ We've celebrated Results Day

In partnership with Who Cares? Scotland, we hold an annual Results Day event in August to celebrate with a group of care-experienced young learners as they open their results envelopes. You can see what some of our young learners thought of Results Day at [this clip](#).

✓ **We're working to make care experience a protected characteristic**

We've made considerable progress in ensuring that 'care experience' is regarded as a new protected characteristic — as covered by the Equality Act 2010 — like gender, disability, or race. And we're examining how we can review the design of external assessments to reflect this.

✓ **We've created an extra Modern Apprenticeship (MA) for a care-experienced young person**

We work with Who Cares? Scotland and Barnardo's Scotland to promote our MA opportunities and to ensure they are as accessible as possible for you. In 2017, we were delighted to offer an extra MA to Toni Durning, a care-experienced young person from Cumbernauld.

You can see what this experience has meant to Toni at [this clip](#).

✓ **We've provided corporate parent training to our staff**

In partnership with Who Cares? Scotland, SQA has launched in-house, online corporate parenting training.

✓ **We've helped to create memorable Christmas Days**

SQA staff, in partnership with Who Cares? Scotland, donated gifts, wrote cards, and joined care-experienced young people at a Christmas Day dinner.

You can see more pictures from the Care Family Christmas Dinner in [this clip](#).

'All the young people were quite amazed when the presents came out and couldn't believe the value of the gifts. It's nice to know that other people care'.

Chelsea, aged 21, care-experienced young person and Development Assistant for Who Cares? Scotland



'It was a real joy and privilege to be at the SQA and Who Cares? Scotland event to celebrate the exam successes of some of our looked-after young people on Results Day. What SQA is doing is a great example of good corporate parenting by showing personal support on what will be a nerve-racking time for care-experienced young people as they prepare for the next steps in their life journey.'

John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister

Apprenticeships are a really good thing to go for. The team are lovely, and I also have my mentor and assessor for support. It has made me feel proud and realise that my background won't hold me back from applying for jobs that I want to go for in the future.'

Toni Durning, SQA Modern Apprentice



The only way is up

Like any good parent, we believe in emphasising the positive, and your incredible potential — now, and in the future.

You will have heard statistics about care-experienced young people that paint a pessimistic picture of your future. We don't accept this as inevitable, and neither should you. We can help you on the way to fulfilling your ambitions.





What
inspires
you?

What
worries
you?

What
motivates
you?

What's
holding
you back?

Tell us what you're thinking

We make a point of really listening to young people, to ensure that what we do is meaningful to you. We work with other corporate parents to understand what it is like to grow up in care; to discuss ideas and initiatives; and to combine clout and resources. We have a particularly special partnership with Who Cares? Scotland and, in March 2015, we pledged our support for its 'Listen-Act-Unite' campaign.



We're learning — just like you!

...that by removing the smallest obstacles in your path, we can help you on the way to a bigger future

...to listen better. We want to hear about your concerns and ambitions directly, and build our ideas around those

...how to use our resources, creativity, and influence to make our qualifications and assessments relevant and fair for you

...to work more effectively with organisations like Who Cares? Scotland, and develop initiatives that have a positive, tangible impact on your life

...to help our staff fulfil their aspirations as corporate parents too. We have hundreds of people who are happy to volunteer their time

And guess what? We are learning about the great contributions that you can make at SQA when you become our colleagues





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