



Summary

At the Unite Foundation, we believe being a care experienced or estranged student shouldn't mean being disadvantaged when it comes to finding somewhere to live when at university.

This campaign was co-created and developed with care experienced and estranged students – giving their experiences of the lack of consistent rent guarantor provision a platform to create change.

Jess, current undergraduate student

"I want to ask universities to put themselves in my shoes. How would you handle finding a rent guarantor, aged 18 with no savings and no family and no support system in place?"

The issue

The majority of students are asked to provide a rent guarantor to secure accommodation, but not all students have someone to ask. Accessing a rent guarantor is an issue for all students, but one which affects estranged and care experienced students disproportionately.

Students are put in the position of having to disclose sensitive information to landlords, often multiple times if accommodation isn't secured first time – and going through this process anew every year. Without a rent guarantor, students can be asked to pay six or twelve months rent in advance. An additional financial burden for students who are already under additional financial pressure.

The issue of rent guarantor can have a huge and detrimental impact on them. For some it can be the difference between them continuing their degree or not. Or even accessing a university education in the first place.

Research from the Unite Foundation found that just 36% of universities signpost help on rent guarantors and even fewer actually provide a rent guarantor service for students.

Universities need to step in and provide a rent guarantor service, whether directly or through a third party, for students who don't have a parent or family member to call upon. **It's low risk for the universities, and life changing for the students.**

The likelihood of a UK student defaulting on a rental payment is low. In providing a rent guarantor service, universities can ensure they proactively engage with students, and limit the risk of any students defaulting.

When?

The campaign launches on Monday March 6th 2023. With a media and communications push aimed at raising awareness on the guarantor issue and how it affects care experienced and estranged students. Throughout the w/c March 6th Unite Foundation will be sharing content via our social channels.



We will then be following up with a workshop for universities at the end of March to learn more about how to set up a rent guarantor scheme at their university. Universities can sign up [here](#) to register:

How can you support?

We would love for you to amplify our messages on social media. The more noise we generate the more people will hear about the campaign. We'd love for you to RT our content on Monday 6th March.

We've also included some sample social copy for you to adapt – please feel free to adapt to your own voice:

- + Every year 16,000 estranged & care experienced students in the UK struggle to find a place to live because they don't have a [#rentguarantor](#). We're supporting [@ThisIsUniteFdn](#) new [#BeOurGuarantor](#) campaign because we want unis to step in! Find out more at tinyurl.com/beourguarantor
- + In the UK, care experienced & estranged students can face real problems when finding a place to live, because they don't have a rent guarantor. We're joining [@ThisIsUniteFdn](#) to call for universities to do more to support these students [#BeOurGuarantor](#) tinyurl.com/beourguarantor
- + We welcome the new [#BeOurGuarantor](#) campaign from [@ThisIsUniteFdn](#). Many care experienced & estranged students struggle to secure a rent guarantor. This can be the difference between them being able to go to uni or not. Uni's should be doing more to help! tinyurl.com/beourguarantor

You can also download campaign graphics including quotes from some of the students involved in the campaign here: www.thisisusatuni.org/beourguarantor.

Want to know more?

You can find more information about the campaign at our campaign landing page www.thisisusatuni.org/beourguarantor.

If you need any support amplifying our campaign or with messaging please email info@unitefoundation.org.uk

Thank you for your support!