



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow

Improving access to HE for refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland.

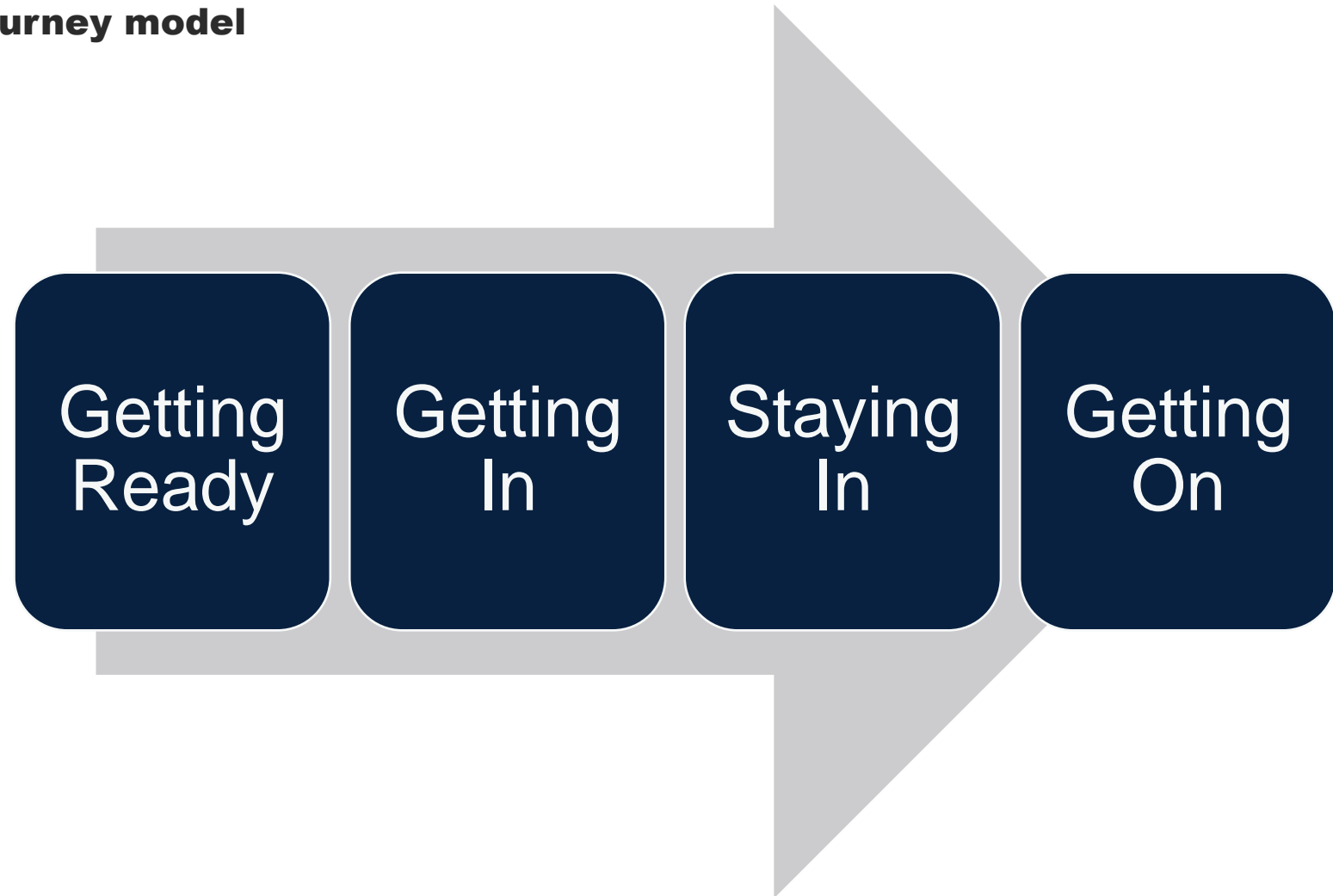
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WIDENING ACCESS AT STRATHCLYDE

Our learner journey model



Support for asylum seekers & refugees through the learner journey

1. Getting Ready

Young Strathclyde: school outreach programme

2. Getting In

Annual 'Bridges to HE' twilight series, delivered in partnership with the Bridges Programme.

3. Staying In

Asylum Seeker Scholarship, Strathclyde Cares mentor programme, trips & social opportunities.

4. Getting On

Careers Service support

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship

- Developed in 2014 in consultation with the Scottish Refugee Council.
- Open to prospective UG and PGT students.
- Meets costs of tuition fees plus essential study-related expenditure.
- From AY 2017/18, we partnered with the Carnegie Trust to extend the scholarship programme's capacity. We exercise discretion to charge Home fees to successful scholarship applicants and the Carnegie Trust pays this fee, for UG students. The Trust has also contributed towards the study costs of UG scholars. This model has since been rolled out at other Scottish HEIs.

Scholarship Eligibility Criteria:

- Conditional and unconditional offer holders
- Have submitted (or are dependent of someone who has) an application to the Home Office for recognition as refugee and awaiting decision, **or**
- Have been offered leave to remain in UK and have not become eligible for support from funding bodies in Scotland, England, Nr Ireland or Wales

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship: Key Statistics

Total number of scholars supported: 48

Scholars currently studying with us: 17

Scholarships awarded this academic year: 8

Scholarships planned to award in AY 2023/24: 12

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship: Mentorship

- Included within our Strathclyde Cares mentoring scheme.
- Developed in 2015 to support care-experienced students.
- Asylum seeker scholars integrated in 2016.

How does it work?

- One to one mentoring between a student and staff member.
- Undertaken in mentor's own time or as arranged with line manager.
- Fortnightly meetings or as agreed between mentor and mentee – via Zoom during pandemic but now back to in-person meetings.

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship: Mentorship

Role of the mentor

- Allow mentee to realise potential and support their progression.
- 'Go to' person/ source of guidance and advice.
- Signpost support services (study skills, counselling).
- Stable source of support.
- Friendly face as they transition to University and progress through studies.

"Having a mentor is good because university can be daunting and knowing there is someone that will help where and when they can with any struggles you are having makes your life a lot easier. Sometimes the benefit just lies in the knowledge that someone cares about you and how you get on."

*- 4th year student asylum seeker,
MEng Chemical Engineering*

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship: Mentorship

“I want to say that having a mentor was a great help for me both psychologically and informationally. I felt secure that I knew someone was there for me, if I had any concerns. Having a mentor is very helpful, especially for first year international students and asylum seekers, as this is when you have a lot of questions and assume they might be too trivial or you simply do not want to sound ‘stupid’. But my mentor helped me to open up and encouraged me ask as many questions as I could. So in a way this helps us build more confidence.”

- *Student asylum seeker, LLB Law*

STAYING IN: Our support for current students

Asylum Seeker Scholarship: Other Opportunities

- Fully-funded extra-curricular trips/ social opportunities:
 - Outward Bound (5-day residential)
 - Edinburgh Christmas Markets trip
 - Christmas Day Dinner at Students Union
- Other support offerings include:
 - Festive goody bag at end of Semester 1
 - Christmas Toy Appeal

Other work in the community

Support for Refuweegee

- We have been supporting Refuweegee since AY 2017/18, through our Corporate Social Responsibility pathway that we offer on the Management Development Programme module for third year undergraduate students in our Business School.
- Since then, 29 students have worked approximately 2900 hours for the benefit of Refuweegee. This would generally be as 1 day per week working in the office during both semesters, as well as running a variety of fundraising and awareness-raising activities.

“We’ve been impressed with the commitment of most students and delighted when they have continued to volunteer and support Refuweegee long after their course is completed. Overall it is a very positive experience as it offers development in a variety of ways for all involved.” - Refuweegee

*“Overall, this experience has been nothing short of rewarding and something which I will always be proud of. I hope to continue my work with Refuweegee as a volunteer when I can offer up my time.” – **student working for Refuweegee***

GROUP DISCUSSION

Topics:

1. Support across the Learner Journey

*What **does** this look like? What **should** this look like? Where are the current gaps in support?*

2. Named Contacts

Is this the best option to support student asylum seekers and refugees or should an institution-wide approach be taken? How can a named contact be most effective in HEIs?

3. Social Opportunities

What effect do these have on the HE journey of student asylum seekers and refugees? How can HEIs offer effective social opportunities to these students?

- **20 minutes to discuss in groups before feeding back to room.**



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