

NEON mature student working group presentation, 18th May 2022

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Student Success Officer

Lancaster Success Programme

Overview

- Student parents and carers at Lancaster
 - The Lancaster Success Programme
 - Student stories
 - Supporting the individual and encouraging institutional change
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Parents and Carers at Lancaster

At Lancaster University there is a Student Portal Guide for student parents and carers which offers a wealth of information and advice, including:

- Childcare and caring costs – financial support available
- Help with funding and fees
- Support with academic activity
- Pre-School care available on campus
- Facilities for parents on campus – baby care room, family study space, family friendly library area, playground etc.
- Wellbeing support

Carers are eligible for additional support from the Transitions team as below:

- A Carer is someone who cares for or supports a family member or friend who has a disability, mental ill-health, or has age-related health concerns. Student carers may be eligible for advocacy and support from the Transitions Team to access support services or receive a recommendation for reasonable academic adjustments and a bursary if you need to travel to look after someone
- If you are a parent you don't automatically qualify as a Carer. You are considered a Carer if you have a child, or children, with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or other additional needs. Parents can access a wealth of support on the student parents and carers student portal guide and you can check out the [Lancashire County Council website](#) for information on childcare and funding. You can also speak to [Graduate College](#) about their termly socials for parents.



Lancaster Success Programme (LSP)

Social Mobility & Student Success

What is the Lancaster Success Programme?

A targeted support programme for students from widening participation (WP) backgrounds, including parents and carers.

- Outcomes:
 - to enhance the pre-arrival experience;
 - to empower students to maximise their potential and achieve academic success;
 - to facilitate students' personal development and engagement;
 - to encourage a sense of belonging among students

Core elements of the LSP

- Pre-arrival events (in person and online)
- 1:1 coaching informed personal development sessions with a dedicated Student Success Advisor (usually 2 per term)
- Action Learning Sets (usually 3 per term)
- Social events throughout the year
- Newsletter
- Opportunities to shape the LSP community
- Access to an enrichment fund
- Referral routes to support

The LSP and positive change in the individual and the institution

The LSP aims to empower students from underrepresented backgrounds to get the most out of their university experience.

We don't just address barriers to learning, we build on the particular strengths that individuals bring to their studies. Mature students often have excellent organisational skills, are not afraid of speaking up in seminars and have clear career goals they are working towards for example.

In addition, the LSP acts on student feedback to encourage positive change within the University.

Mature students at Lancaster University and on the LSP 2021-22*



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- Number of mature ug UK students studying at Lancaster: 336 out of a total of 8,694 ug UK students. (3.86%)
 - Number of mature ug UK students on the LSP out of the total of mature ug UK students at the University: 60 out of 336 (17.9%)
 - 25% of LSP students are mature (60 out of 239), and some are parents or have caring responsibilities
 - Lancaster doesn't offer part-time studying options
 - APP target – to improve the retention rate of mature students

* Figures given for ug UK students only because overseas and EU students are not eligible to join the LSP due to WP funding.

Meet some of our mature students



A student perspective – female 2nd Year Criminology mature student

“The main challenge I faced was time management. Having the one hour twenty-minute commute, meant I had to put my son in wrap around care on top of school hours so I could adhere to my timetable of lectures across four days, some which started at 10am and others that didn't finish until 4pm.

I had to miss one of my module lectures for the whole term because it was at 5pm until 6pm in the evening which was impossible for me to attend because of my caring responsibilities. I feel this disadvantaged me not been able to be there in person however I was grateful for the lectures been recorded so I could catch up online.

The time I wasn't in university I was a single parent and running a household, I spent many nights reading and doing essays because I had other things to do the rest of the time. The cost of petrol and rise in living costs had affected me so I reached out to my Success Officer, and he told me to apply for financial support which a great help.

Another challenge was my timetable changing each term. I had 1 lecture on one of the days and emailed the department and they managed to move it to another day where I had other things meaning it was consolidating my days which made it easier for me to commute.

Adding to that, the support I have received from the LSP and my peers has been invaluable, knowing that others are in similar situations makes you feel like you're not alone and you're in it together, having that support has built my confidence in myself and pushed me to believe more in myself. Although it has been a challenge, the support I have received has helped me so much and made me believe that anything is possible.”

Examples of issues raised by mature student parents and carers (1)

Issue	Support/response
I'm feeling lonely - no one on my course is in a similar position to me and I would like to have met other mature students earlier	Mature specific LSP events pre-arrival and a mature social in welcome week. Regular LSP mature Action Learning Sets and social events throughout the year. The LSP are liaising with colleges to coordinate with their mature student support.
I don't have friends on my course. I don't have time to socialise or join societies because I have too many family commitments	Informal buddying with other LSP students and feedback to departments to encourage buddying
When looking at Universities, mature students said they were looking for reassurance that there would be people like them there.	LSP recorded interviews with 2 mature students for website and are developing a new mature student information website
Late communication of timetable causing issues with arranging childcare	Student encouraged to contact department which now consults the student before they issue her timetable and makes any changes before issue
Some of my lectures are at 5pm, which makes life difficult with small children	Unfortunately, some big lectures can only take place at this time due to timetabling constraints, but online options can be arranged with the department.
It's a waste of my time commuting to campus for just one hour of teaching	Student encouraged to contact department who were able to move the sessions and LSP have liaised with Timetabling to try and prevent this arising in the first place

Examples of issues raised by mature student parents and carers (2)

Issue	Support/response
Student becoming pregnant in first year	Personal LSP Success Advisor arranged meeting with student and department to find out how it could support. Resulted in flexibility around coursework and intercalation. Also put student in touch with another undergraduate student who had become pregnant during her studies
Information for students who are pregnant, preparing to become parents or already a parent or carer hard to find on University website.	LSP met with Student Services to feed back on our student's experience and this led to the development of new webpages for student parents and carers
I'd like to find an internship with child friendly hours during the summer vacation	LSP Success Advisor put the student in contact with specialist Mature Student Careers Advisor for 1:1 support
A lot of the careers support at the University seems to be aimed at younger students with no prior experience	LSP is now working closely with the Careers service to ensure mature students are receiving tailored support. For example the Mature Student Careers Advisor was invited to attend a Mature ALS meeting
The car parking cost is high	The student used their LSP Enrichment Fund allocation to pay for this
I feel guilty studying when I should be helping my son with his GCSE revision – it's not like I'm earning any money is it?	The LSP provides many opportunities to talk feelings through and share experiences, both with staff and peers

Thank you for listening

Please get in touch if you have any questions or would like to share ideas:

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[Lancaster Success Programme](#)
