

<b>Case study title</b>	Encouraging Looked After Children and Young People to go into High Education
<b>Organisation (s)</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Key words</b>	<i>Looked after children, education, higher education, university</i>
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<b>What's the case study's USP?</b> <i>(Unique selling point)</i>	Bridgend County Borough Council, as part of a 'Reaching Wider regional partnership', has set up programmes to encourage looked after children and young people to continue into higher education.
<b>Case study text</b>	<p><b>Background</b> Widening access to higher education for care leavers has been greatly improved by well-co-ordinated work by the Welsh Government, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), Reaching Wider regional partnerships, higher education institutions and the involvement of other organisations and professionals.</p> <p><b>Issue</b> Practical barriers to access include being required to leave care and live independently whilst studying, accessing student accommodation all year rather than only termly, as well as financial barriers.</p> <p><b>Solution and Benefits</b> The 'Reaching Wider' regional partnerships have been active in working with care leavers and universities.</p> <p>The Bridgend Council looked after children education (LACE) team has forged links with Cardiff University Coursework Mentoring Club and the University 'Confident Futures Summer School'. Up to six looked after young people attended the monthly group meetings at the University in 2011. Each is supported by a student mentor studying in their third year. The monthly meetings are an opportunity to meet up, eat, chat and get help with their course work, inspire and encourage them to achieve their goals. It also offers the opportunity to experience the university environment, meet and make friends whilst offering an insight into life at university and raise aspirations.</p> <p>At the end of the mentoring the programme, the young people are given the opportunity to attend the 'Confident Futures Summer School'. This is a two day event aimed at giving young people in care the chance to experience student life in a safe and supported environment and six young people from Bridgend attended the summer school in July 2012.</p>

	The Bridgend LACE team arranged four workshop carousels with Glamorgan University through the HEFCW 'Reaching Wider – Reaching Higher' project. Up to ten young people at Key Stage 4 were invited to the events and enjoy a day at the university sampling a range of courses such as, drama, animation, music and film-making. The South East Wales Reaching Wider Partnership, First Campus, and Newport University held an open day attended by nine looked after children and their carers and explained the support available for care leavers in higher education.
<b>Website</b>	
<b>Date case study completed</b>	August 2012
<b>Case study author</b>	Stephen Martin

### **External sign-off**

I confirm that I am happy for the contact details shown to be included with the case study if it is posted in the Wales Audit Office's case study library.

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