Estranged Students: (Widening) Participation Postcards

Our ‘Estranged Students’ project aims to understand the challenges faced by estranged students. Funded by the Carnegie Trust and the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE), work is already informing policy, to ensure these students feel as ‘at home’ and connected as their classmates.

Our research found experiences of homelessness and financial hardship. Many interviewees felt unable to socialize with other students, fearing questions on, ‘What does your family do?’, ‘Do you have siblings?’, ‘Are your parents visiting you?’

To be on the outside of typical family experience can be isolating, lonely and stigmatising.

Estranged students are now being recognized as a new category of ‘widening participation’, in admissions policies, and in UCAS entry forms.
This is just one important way forward, and we urge more action on targeting isolation, stigma and a lack of resources.

Being careful not to assume all students have families may make estranged students feel more seen and supported.

The following postcard messages were produced in our various workshops, conferences and seminars and are intended as training, support and information resources.

Read our illustrated guide here:
https://pureportal.strath.ac.uk/en/publications/
estranged-students-illustrating-the-issues

Play our ‘Estrangement Challenge’ board game here:
https://pure.strath.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/90590639/
Taylor_etal_2019_The_estrangement_challenge.pdf

Read our publications here:
https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2019.1648639
YOU ARE NOT ALONE
DEAR STUDENTS,
YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU ARE PART OF A LARGER GROUP WITH A MASSIVE VOICE. NEVER BE AFRAID TO LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD. THE VOICE OF THE MANY WILL INFLUENCE AND ENCOURAGE THE FEW, TO LISTEN AND TO SUPPORT YOU. ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS MAKE YOURSELF HEARD.

'BESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
Dear student,
Do you sometimes feel university is a strange space? Me too! Know that my students and staff experience a less than straightforward route through university. You are entitled to be here, university is for you, access the supports out there and feel entitled to it. Be in touch with WP teams, student unions and tutors.

‘ Estranged Students’, Samia Singh (Designer), Yvette Taylor (PI) and Cristina Costa (Co-I), funded by The Carnegie Trust and The Society for Research in Higher Education.
DEAR STUDENT,
IT WILL BE OKAY, JUST HANG ON IN THERE. FILL YOUR TIME BEING PRODUCTIVE, DO ONE LITTLE THING AT A TIME. DON’T BE TOO HARD ON YOURSELF. THERE’S A REALLY GOOD BOOK ENTITLED, “THE HIERARCHY OF NEEDS”, WHERE YOU CAN REFLECT ON THE THINGS YOU DO NEED AND DON’T. NOT EVERYTHING YOU LOSE IS A LOSS. GIVE IT A TRY : )

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM,
THINK ABOUT ESTRANGEMENT AS
A CONTINUUM WHICH IS DYNAMIC AND
FLUID AND CAN CHANGE OVER TIME,
NOT JUST A BINARY EVENT.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
YOUR UNIVERSITY DEGREE IS A LONG, HARD ROAD TO PURSUE ON YOUR OWN, BUT ONCE UNI BEGINS YOU WILL NOT BE ALONE. YOU ARE GUARANTEED TO MEET NEW FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY WHO WILL HELP YOU TO ACHIEVE ANYTHING YOU SET OUT TO DO, AND THE UNIVERSITY HAS A HUGE RANGE OF SUPPORT AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
KEEP DOING ALL THE GREAT WORK
IN SUPPORTING ESTRANGED
STUDENTS AND DEVELOPING
NEW INITIATIVES TO MAKE
THEIR LIVES EASIER AND MORE
CONNECTED TO OTHERS.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
MAKE ACCOMMODATION AFFORDABLE
AS A WAY OF GIVING STABILITY TO STUDENTS WHO DO NOT HAVE
ANYWHERE ELSE TO STAY
(AND OUTSIDE THE TEACHING PERIOD).

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
ESTRANGEMENT MIGHT BE A MOVING
IDENTITY RATHER THAN A FIXED
ONE. THERE ARE NO TWO
EXPERIENCES THAT ARE THE SAME.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
NO ONE SOLUTION WILL WORK FOR EVERYONE, BUT HAVING MANY SUPPORT MECHANISMS IN PLACE CAN HELP CATCH MOST PEOPLE WHO FEEL ESTRANGED.
MONEY, EMOTIONAL & ACCOMMODATION HELP WOULD BE MY TOP 3 SUPPORTS THAT NEED TO BE IN PLACE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
REMIND ESTRANGED STUDENTS THAT THEY'RE NOT ALONE AND TACKLE ISOLATION AND STIGMA.
ESTRANGEMENT IS NOT JUST BETWEEN A PARENT AND CHILD. THINK ABOUT USING ‘INDEPENDENT STUDENTS’ INSTEAD OF ‘ESTRANGED’.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY, AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AND GOVERNMENT,
I THINK FOR ALL ESTRANGED STUDENTS TO BE ABLE TO GET THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT THAT THEY SO NEED TO ENABLE THEM TO NOT FEEL THE PRESSURE DURING THEIR STUDIES - IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU WORK TOGETHER. PROVIDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AND OFFERING A HEAVILY REDUCED ACCOMMODATION FEE COULD ELIMINATE THE POTENTIAL RISK OF HOMELESSNESS, WHICH WOULD SUPPORT THEM.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF LECTURERS
AND SUPPORT STAFF KNEW MORE
ABOUT ESTRANGEMENT. MAKE IT
EASIER FOR STUDENTS TO DISCLOSE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT ESTRANGED STUDENTS. WE SHOULD HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A GOOD LIFE FOR OURSELVES TOO.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,

PLEASE ADVOCATE FOR ESTRANGED STUDENTS TO GET APPROPRIATE THERAPEUTIC SUPPORT TO HELP WITH THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF ESTRANGEMENT.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
THIS CARD IS TO BRING YOU A WEE
MESSAGE OF SUPPORT. IT MAY NOT ALWAYS FEEL
LIKE IT, BUT YOU ARE DOING AMAZINGLY WELL.
YOU’VE MADE IT TO UNIVERSITY, YOU ARE
INDEPENDENT AND YOU ARE CAPABLE OF
INCREDIBLE THINGS! YOUR JOURNEY SO FAR WILL
HAVE BEEN TOUGH AND WE ADMIRE YOUR
STRENGTH. AS A UNIVERSITY, WE WANT TO
SUPPORT YOU ALONG THE REST OF YOUR JOURNEY.
IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU NEED, THE WIDENING
ACCESS TEAM CAN HELP, AS CAN THE WELLBEING
SERVICES AND FINANCIAL SERVICES.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
I KNOW IT CAN BE EMBARRASSING AND DAUNTING, BUT YOU ARE NOT ALONE AND THE UNIVERSITY WILL SUPPORT YOU.
DEAR STUDENT,
IT’S IMPORTANT TO KNOW YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU CAN’T HANDLE EVERYTHING ON YOUR OWN, ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT. MAKE TIME FOR FRIENDS AMONGST THE STUDYING.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
I WOULD LIKE TO WRITE, THAT BEING AN ESTRANGED STUDENT IS NOTHING TO BE ASHAMED OF AND IT'S JUST A PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCE. I WISH YOU A LOT OF STRENGTH AND POSITIVE ENERGY TO FOLLOW YOUR DREAM AND GET THE DEGREE YOU WISH.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
FIRST OF ALL, I WANT TO SAY THAT YOU'RE STRONG AND LOVED IN THE AFTERMATH OF WHAT YOU'VE GONE THROUGH. SECONDLY, I RECOMMEND GOING TO THE ADVICE HUB OR THE STUDENT UNION, OR TRY AND SEEK OUT ANY SECONDARY HELP TO GIVE YOURSELF THE SUPPORT YOU NEED. IT'S ALL GOING TO BE OK.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
YOU ARE NOT ALONE. ESTRANGEMENT IS MORE COMMON THAN YOU THINK.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PLEASE WIDEN AWARENESS OF
WHAT BEING ESTRANGED ACTUALLY
DOES AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO
HELP. IF YOU WANT THINGS TO
CHANGE, YOU CAN’T ONLY TARGET
THIS INFO TO THE ‘OPEN’
ESTRANGED STUDENTS.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,

THANK YOU FOR BEING SUPPORTIVE, AND GIVING US A CHANCE TO BE EDUCATED AND QUALIFIED DESPITE THE HARD TIME WE'RE HAVING. IT'S BEEN A GREAT JOURNEY AND THANKS FOR SHAPING US INTO A BETTER PERSON.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME, EFFORT AND CONCERN FOR REACHING OUT TO US. IT’S A GREAT GESTURE THAT DEFINITELY WILL GO A LONG WAY. YOU'RE KEEPING US POSITIVE, AND KNOWING FAMILY DOESN’T NEED TO BE RELATED. YOU GUYS ARE AMAZING. <3

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
TODAY WE HAVE BEEN EXPLORING THE COMPLEXITIES OF DEFINING ESTRANGEMENT AND REALISE THAT WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO DO THIS IN A SATISFACTORY WAY.

HOW CAN WE ENSURE THAT WE MAINTAIN MOMENTUM? PERHAPS CRITERIA IS USEFUL FOR FUNDING (AS LONG AS WE CAN HAVE A DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY) BUT CAN WE AGREE THAT WE DON'T JUST OFFER AN OPEN DOOR BUT WE GO OUTSIDE OF THE ROOM AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO COME IN AND TALK TO US AND TO EACH OTHER - THERE ARE MANY THINGS WE CAN OFFER.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR POLICY MAKERS,
ESTRANGEMENT IS DIFFERENT FOR EACH PERSON, AS CAN FAMILY BE. BE MORE FLEXIBLE IN YOUR CATEGORIES.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM, ESTRANGED STUDENTS (HOWEVER DEFINED), INDICATE PASTORAL AND PRACTICAL SUPPORT / GUIDANCE AS A VARIABLE AND SPECIALIST VOCATION. WHERE ESTRANGEMENT SPEAKS OF RELATIONAL TRAUMA AND INSTABILITY, THEN A CONSISTENT, CLEAR AND RELIABLE POINT OF OPTIONAL CONTACT BECOMES HIGHLY RELEVANT.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PLEASE MAKE US FEEL WELCOME!
PLEASE LOOK AT US LIKE HUMAN
BEINGS. PLEASE RELAX : )

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
STUDENTS WHO ARE ESTRANGED FROM THEIR FAMILIES NEED OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE THEIR OWN SAFETY NETS. THESE SAFETY NETS ARE CRUCIAL FOR THEIR GRADUATE DECISION MAKING AND DECISION TAKING. YOU CAN HELP THEM BY PROVIDING FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND CREATE THE THREADS OF THE SAFETY NET.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM,
CAN YOU PLEASE HELP US COMMUNICATE WITH ALL THE STUDENTS THAT MAY NEED OUR SUPPORT.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,

STAND ALONE PLEDGE

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12 MONTH ACCOMMODATION

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POSSIBILITY OF SELF IDENTIFYING AT REGISTRATION / MATRICULATION EACH YEAR SO INFORMATION CAN BE SENT (NOT PESTERING THE STUDENT).

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PLEASE COULD YOU SET A TARGET FOR WHEN AND HOW TO COMMIT TO THE STAND ALONE PLEDGE.
THANKS : )
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
CAN WE PLEASE REVIEW OUR
CRITERIA FOR HARDSHIP FUNDS
FOR ESTRANGED STUDENTS, AS
THERE'S STRICT CRITERIA FOR
ADDITIONAL FUNDING.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
INVEST IN THERAPY AND
COUNSELLING SERVICES, AS THIS
WAS THE SUPPORT SERVICE MOST
ACCESSSED BY ESTRANGED STUDENTS
IN THE HIDDEN VOICES SURVEY.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
DON’T BE AFRAID TO SEEK OUT
SUPPORT. FIND SOMEONE WHO WILL
FIGHT YOUR CORNER; STUDENT
PRESIDENT, MSP, CITIZEN’S ADVICE,
ADVOCATES. DON’T SUFFER IN
SILENCE, KNOCK ON DOORS AND
MAKE YOUR CHALLENGES KNOWN. THE
SUPPORT STILL ISN’T WHAT IT NEEDS
TO BE, BUT UNIS STILL HAVE A
RESPONSIBILITY TO YOU!

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM, REMEMBER THAT EACH STUDENT EXPERIENCE IS DIFFERENT. REMIND YOURSELF THAT SOMETHING THAT CAN BE HELPFUL / SUPPORTIVE TO ONE STUDENT, MIGHT NOT BE TO ANOTHER. APPRECIATE THE COURAGE IT TAKES FOR SOMEONE TO SHARE THEIR STORY. NEVER STOP ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
SIGNING THE STAND ALONE PLEDGE IS IMPORTANT, BUT ENSURING THAT YOUR SUPPORT DEVELOPS AND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE WITH YOUR ESTRANGED STUDENTS IN MIND IS VITAL! LET THE WHOLE INSTITUTION WORK TOGETHER. : )

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM, AND STUDENT SERVICES / SUPPORT, HAVE NAMED CONTACTS FOR SUPPORT / ADVICE PRE AND POST ENTRY. OPERATE CONTEXTUALISED ADMISSIONS!

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR WIDENING PARTICIPATION TEAM,
TODAY I HAVE LEARNT ABOUT THE
EXPERIENCES OF ESTRANGED STUDENTS
AND THEIR BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN
HIGHER EDUCATION. IT UPSET ME TO LEARN
THAT FOR MANY, FINANCIAL BARRIERS WERE
A SIGNIFICANT THREAT TO THEM. ON TOP OF
THAT, INSTITUTIONS FOLLOWING UNREALISTIC
CRITERIA OF ESTRANGEMENT ENFORCED WITH
A MONITORING OF VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS
THAT DISCOURAGES REBUILDING OF FAMILY
RELATIONSHIPS IS SHOCKING. PLEASE DO
ALL YOU CAN TO HELP NAVIGATE
 THESE CHALLENGES.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THERE WILL BE STAFF TO SUPPORT YOU IN ANY WAY THAT YOU NEED. IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM RELATED TO YOUR FINANCES, ACCOMMODATION, OR ANYTHING ELSE, DO TRY TO FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP YOU.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR SAAS,
PLEASE MAKE YOUR SYSTEMS MORE USER FRIENDLY AND TRANSPARENT.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR LECTURERS / TEACHERS, PLEASE DO NOT ASSUME THAT STUDENTS HAVE FAMILY SUPPORT, OR CARERS WHO PROVIDE THEM WITH SUPPORT.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY / COLLEGE,
PLEASE PROVIDE A DEDICATED POINT OF
CONTACT WHO WILL COMMUNICATE WITH
ME AND SUPPORT ME THROUGH MY
STUDIES.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
I HAVE LEARNED TODAY THAT
ESTRANGEMENT IS A COMPLEX
SITUATION AND CAN SEE WHY IT IS
DIFFICULT TO CATEGORISE PEOPLE WITH
A VIEW TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.
I TOTALLY AGREE THAT A FAMILY
SITUATION / UNIT SHOULD BE A POSITIVE
EXPERIENCE FOR ALL. I HOPE YOU CAN
FIND A POSITIVE NOTE ON YOUR
JOURNEY. ONCE YOU REACH YOUR
DESTINATION YOU KNOW WHERE YOU
WANT TO BE, WHAT YOU WANT TO HAVE,
AND ACHIEVE.

‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-PI),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
I DON'T CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH OR ARE GOING THROUGH. I CAN'T REALLY KNOW HOW YOU FEEL OR HAVE EXPERIENCE OF THE TRIALS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH. BUT I DO PROMISE TO BELIEVE WHAT YOU TELL ME AND TRY TO HELP YOU AS MUCH AS I CAN, EVEN IF IT JUST TO LISTEN. DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN!
(SENIOR ADVISER OF STUDIES).

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
September 17th
Dear Widening Participation Team,

Please could you arrange and set a date for in-house training and how to best publicize available support for estranged students, and train staff to recognise multifarious forms of estrangement when offering advice. : )

‘ Estranged Students’, Samia Singh (Designer), Yvette Taylor (PI) and Cristina Costa (Co-I), funded by the Carnegie Trust and The Society for Research in Higher Education.
Dear Fair Access,
Please advertise your events in a way that will make me feel more like I have a place in that activity. Please make it easier for me to understand what support will be available to me if I attend this institution.

'Estranged Students', Samia Singh (Designer), Yvette Taylor (PI) and Cristina Costa (Co-I), funded by the Carnegie Trust and the Society for Research in Higher Education.
DEAR STUDENT,
THE WELFARE TEAM ARE ALWAYS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU THROUGH YOUR JOURNEY, IN MANY WAY, IF YOU ARE FEELING OVERWHELMED PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO COME TO THE OFFICE AND SEEK ASSISTANCE, AND BE REASSURED THAT NO MATTER WHAT, WE AIM TO HELP AND ASSIST YOU IN CONFIDENCE.

THE WELFARE TEAM.

'Estranged Students', Samia Singh (Designer), Yvette Taylor (PI) and Cristina Costa (Co-I), Funded by the Carnegie Trust and the Society for Research in Higher Education.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PLEASE UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEXITIES OF ESTRANGEMENT WHEN SUPPORTING YOUR STUDENTS. THE STIGMA ATTACHED TO THIS IS CRITICAL AND AS SUCH, MANY WILL NOT COME FORWARD TO SEEK SUPPORT.
ALSO, PLEASE SET UP GUARANTOR SCHEMES TO ALLOW ESTRANGED STUDENTS TO EXPERIENCE A SENSE OF HOME AND SAFETY.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
WE ARE COMMITTED TO PROVIDING CLEAR ADVICE TO ESTRANGED STUDENTS. ENSURING THAT ANY BURSARIES, STREAMS OF FUNDING AND SUPPORT ARE COMMUNICATED TO ESTRANGED STUDENTS ON ENTRY. WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO CONSULTING ESTRANGED STUDENTS TO DISCUSS WHICH TERMINOLOGY AND WAYS OF ADVERTISING SUPPORT AND EVENTS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
THERE NEEDS TO BE MUCH MORE
COMMUNICATION ABOUT ESTRANGEMENT
BETWEEN TEACHERS, UNIVERSITIES, FUNDING
BODIES AND THOSE AFFECTED BY
ESTRANGEMENT. THE ONUS SHOULD NOT BE
ON THE ESTRANGED STUDENT TO SEEK OUT
HELP AND SUPPORT. IT SHOULD BE CLEARLY
VISIBLE ON UNIVERSITY WEBSITES, FROM
GUIDANCE TEACHERS AT SCHOOL AND FROM
WELFARE ADVISORS AT UNIVERSITIES AND
COLLEGES. AT PRESENT SO MUCH EMOTIONAL
LABOUR IS BEING DONE BY ESTRANGED
STUDENTS DUE TO THEIR LACK OF
CORPORATE PARENTING. ESTRANGEMENT
NEEDS TO BE SPOKEN ABOUT MUCH MORE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR STUDENT,
YOU HAVE COME THIS FAR, JUST KEEP PUNCHING.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
PROVIDE WITH AFFORDABLE
ACCOMMODATION AND GOOD
NURSERY SERVICE.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
THANK YOU FOR BEING SENSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE TOWARDS MY PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES, IT MAKES MY TIME AT STRATHCLYDE FEEL MORE AT EASE, AND I'M THANKFUL FOR THE SUPPORT.

'ESTRANGED STUDENTS', SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I), FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
THINK ABOUT THE VARIOUS THREADS THAT
ARE REQUIRED TO BUILD A ROBUST
"SAFETY NET".
EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS -
NAMED CONTACT, CP, RELATIONSHIP
FINANCIAL SUPPORTS -
ACCOMMODATION, SPECIFIC FUNDS
EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS -
INCREASING AWARENESS ACROSS THE
BOARD, SUPPORT TO LEARN IN OTHER WAYS.
PRACTICAL SUPPORTS -
CONTINUOUS ACCOMMODATION, MOVING
HOME, RELATIONSHIP BUILDING,
TIME OFF -
FOR RESPONSIBILITIES WE HAVE THAT
OTHERS MAY NOT.

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FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
DEAR UNIVERSITY,
THANK YOU FOR ALL THE SUPPORT.
HOPE YOU KEEP UP THE WORK.
: )
‘ESTRANGED STUDENTS’, SAMIA SINGH (DESIGNER), YVETTE TAYLOR (PI) AND CRISTINA COSTA (CO-I),
FUNDED BY THE CARNEGIE TRUST AND THE SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION.
Estranged Students:
(Widening)
Participation
Postcards

These postcard messages were produced in our various workshops, conferences and seminars and are intended as training, support and information resources.