(Name)

(Full address)

(Postcode)

(Date)

Dear (Vice Chancellor name),

My name is (add name) and I am a student / an alumni (delete as appropriate) of (add university). I am writing to you as I am very concerned that care experienced and estranged students, are being blocked from finding accommodation because they don’t have access to a rent guarantor.

As you will be aware the UK rental market is highly competitive, especially for students, and landlords are now demanding rent guarantors as standard from university students looking to secure accommodation.

This doesn’t necessarily pose a problem for students who have a parent or family member to call upon, but for the 16,000 care experienced and estranged students at university in the UK this is a huge issue.

These students have already overcome considerable barriers to get into Higher Education. Only 13% of care leavers go to university, as compared to 45% of the wider population. Yet research from the Unite Foundation shows that given the right support and somewhere secure to live, care experienced students complete their degrees at the same rate as non-care experienced students and are awarded top rate degrees at the same rate too.

But finding stable accommodation without a rent guarantor is almost impossible.

I am supporting Unite Foundation’s ‘Be Our Guarantor’ Campaign and asking you, if one is not yet in place, to provide a rent guarantor service for care experienced and estranged students at your insitution.

* Universities like Cardiff, Edinburgh and UCL are already providing this service to their students. Whilst others such as Salford provide a guarantor service for care experienceed and estranged students via a third party provider.
* It’s a simple ask and low-risk for you as a university. UK students are unlikely to default on their rent payments. They have access to student finance, hardship funds and bursaries to help them.
* Providing a rent guarantor service levels a very uneven playing field for care-experienced and estranged students.

**Please don’t let something as simple as not having access to a rent guarantor be the issue that blocks care-experienced and estranged students from finding somewhere to live at university and completing their studies with you.**

You can find more information on the ‘Be Our Guarantor’ campaign at www.thisisatuni.org/beourguarantor and Fiona Ellison, director of the Unite Foundation, would be very happy to speak to you about this issue should you need further information.

Please let me know as a student / alumni (delete as appropriate) at your university, what provision you currently provide and how you intend to address this urgent issue.

Yours sincerely,

(Add name)