



Harvard Summer School & Who Cares? Scotland

Who Cares? Scotland is committed to supporting Care Experienced people's educational aspirations. To help achieve this aim, we're offering two scholarships to members aged 16-18 to attend **Harvard Summer School, Secondary School Program**.

We believe all people should be able to achieve their educational goals regardless of the barriers they may face. Care Experienced people can encounter systematic challenges, including the tides of poverty and frequent placement moves between schools.

We want to offset these difficulties by providing a Care Experienced person with a first-rate educational opportunity at a world-renowned university.

The Program runs from **Saturday 21 June to Saturday 9 August 2025** and takes place on the Harvard campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA just north of Boston. Participants in the Summer School Program spend seven weeks at Harvard, studying two university level academic courses and taking part in campus life.

Who Cares? Scotland has been involved in the Harvard Summer School Program for more than ten years and in that time we have developed personal relationships with the Director of the Harvard University Summer School and his staff. These relationships are invaluable in ensuring that our young people are well supported while attending Harvard.

This is a fully immersive, seven-week university experience with rigorous academic requirements. To find out more about the program and the courses available, check out the links below:

- www.whocaresscotland.org/event/harvard-25
- www.summer.harvard.edu/high-school-programs/secondary-school-program
- www.summer.harvard.edu/high-school-programs/secondary-school-program/courses-subjects

Can I apply to attend Harvard Summer School?

You are eligible to apply if you are:

- Currently attending school or college and plan to go on to further education.
- Aged 16-18: This age restriction is set by Harvard University, not Who Cares? Scotland. Applicants must be at least 16 years old by June 21, 2025, and will not turn 19 years old before July 31, 2025.
- Willing to be an ambassador for Who Cares? Scotland, through writing and speaking publicly about your experience.
- In possession of a valid, in-date passport and able to travel to the USA unaccompanied.
- Have lived experience of the care system. This could include foster care; secure care; kinship care; living at home and has a social worker; living in a residential unit or school; living with adoptive parents.
- A Who Cares? Scotland member. If you are not already a member, sign up here: <https://www.whocaresscotland.org/members-hub/become-a-member/>

What will I gain?

- Valuable academic experience studying at a world-class university.
- Confidence to live and travel independently and build friendships with people from all over the world.
- The chance to share your experiences and inspire positive change for Care Experienced people.

What will Harvard Summer School be like?

Harvard University is the oldest educational institution in the United States. Summer School students come to study from all over the world. You will spend seven weeks living, dining, studying, and socialising. You will share a room with another Summer School student and three meals a day are provided in the Harvard dining halls. You will be taking two, four-credit university level courses which will be challenging. The need to study, take exams and attend classes will be a priority. You will also have opportunities to take part in social and sporting activities, explore Cambridge and Boston and perhaps even travel further afield. Hear what Harvard summer students have to say in this [video](#) and check out the SpeakOut article we've included at the end that tells you about the experiences of our 2023 students.

How can I apply?

We suggest that you read this document carefully, learn more about the [Secondary School Program](#) on the Harvard University website, then discuss the program with a supportive adult to determine if the Secondary School Program is the right opportunity for you.

If you would like to apply, please email harvard@whocaresscotland.org and we will send you the application form. You must send the completed application form, a copy of the photo page of your passport and a copy of your academic transcripts by REPLYING to the email we sent you. This will allow us to keep your data secure.

We will be holding online information sessions on Tuesday 24th of September at 6pm and Thursday 3rd of October at 5:30pm. If you would like to attend, please email us and we will send you a link.

The deadline for applications is 9am Monday 4th November 2024

Interviews will be held on Saturday 30th November 2024

Application

- Sections 1-5:** To be completed by the applicant. If the applicant is currently under 16, they will also need consent from a parent/legal guardian.
- Section 6:** To be completed by a supporting adult, such as a social worker or throughcare worker.
- Section 7:** This section must be completed by the supporting agency to confirm the financial contribution that the supporting agency will make to secure the application for the Harvard University Summer School Program.

Section 1: Contact details and personal information

Section 2: Qualifications

Please list all academic qualifications already achieved and subjects/levels you are currently studying. We also require a copy of your academic transcripts. If you need copies of your SQA Certificates, you can request them [here](#). This is free of charge for Care Experienced people aged 26 and under.

Section 3: Personal statement

You will need to write a personal statement about why you would like to take part in the Program, how you will benefit from it and what skills and qualities you have that will enable you to thrive in this environment. We are looking for bright, engaged young people who:

- will work hard academically
- will thrive in a university environment
- will cope well with travelling and living independently for 7 weeks
- have good social skills and are keen to get involved in the opportunities on offer
- are willing to share their experiences through public speaking and social media

Section 4: Short Essay Questions

You will need to answer a number of short essay questions.

Section 5: Consent & Signature

Selection process

Once the applications have been reviewed by staff at Who Cares? Scotland, successful applicants will be invited to attend an interview. The interviews will take place on Saturday 23rd November in the National Office in Glasgow. All applicants will be contacted by Friday 29th November to let them know whether they have been selected for an interview.

Our offer of support does not guarantee a place on the Harvard Summer School Program. Following the interviews, at least two candidates will be selected by Who Cares? Scotland. They will then need to apply directly to the Secondary School Program through an online application on the Harvard University Website no later than Wednesday 12th February 2025. Who Cares? Scotland will provide ample support to complete this process.

Will I have to pay any money towards my place?

- **No personal financial contribution is required from the applicant.**
- Total cost of the program per applicant is approximately £13,500.
- For the application to be considered by Who Cares? Scotland, the local authority or care provider must agree to contribute £5,500 to the costs of the program. Who Cares? Scotland will fund the remaining costs.
- The cost of the program includes: university tuition fees; all meals and accommodation in halls; F-1 Student Visa fees and Harvard visa processing fees; travel to Belfast to obtain F-1 Student Visa; US health insurance and travel insurance; return flights to Boston; book purchase for courses; immunisations*; and spending money.

**Harvard University requires all students to provide proof of immunisations/immunity to MMR, Varicella (Chicken Pox), Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis, Hepatitis B and Meningitis. COVID vaccinations are also mandatory. You can read more about the University's COVID policies [here](#).*

Any other questions?

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Who Cares? Scotland team by email: harvard@whocaresscotland.org or phone: 0141 226 4441.

Send your completed application, along with a copy of the photo page of your passport and a copy of your academic transcripts to harvard@whocaresscotland.org with 'Harvard Summer School 2024' in the subject line no later than 9am Monday 4th November 2024.

Splendid Studies

This summer, four of our members went on a trip of a lifetime to America. They spent seven weeks studying at the world-famous Harvard University. The group immersed themselves in academics while also making lifelong friends, going to American cinemas and eating in famous restaurants. Hear from them about their experiences below.

Now back that you're back, what do you think of the experience?

Katie: The whole thing was an amazing experience for me, studying at one of the most prestigious universities and meeting people from all over the world, a couple who have become my best friends.

Ethan: My life has undoubtedly changed forever – for the best that is.

“Having the chance to travel halfway around the world and live independently may seem daunting at first but I guarantee you it was the best 8 weeks of my life!”

This is before you even take into consideration where you're going. Harvard University! Legally Blonde. Social Network. Suits. Elle Woods. Mark Zuckerberg. Harvey Specter. Harvard itself is iconic and it definitely does not disappoint.

Shantelle: I can't believe that it's already over! Somehow it flew by but it also felt like an absolute lifetime!

What were the people like and did you take part in social events?

Shantelle: The relationships I made are extremely meaningful and will always continue to be. I'm still in touch with

my international friends and can't wait to visit Italy soon to be reunited.

Ethan: The social aspects of life on campus are infinite. I became immersed in the day-to-day life both socially and academically. Boston and the surrounding areas boast a wide variety of activities and events. I was lucky enough to go to a Red Sox game, watch Barbie and Oppenheimer in a cinema and eat at the world-famous Pinocchio's Pizza on a regular basis.

Katie: I cannot believe how close I got with the people there. They were all so nice and now I cannot see my life without some of them. During our free time, we went shopping, visited the Arnold Arboretum (which was so pretty), we saw the Boston Symphony orchestra (which was so good) and we also just hung out in the dorms. There were a couple of dances put on for the students which we went to. We enjoyed them as it was a chance for us all to get dressed up and meet some new people.

“Some of my favourite memories were just times when I was with my friends, even when we were not doing anything special.”

Natasha: Without a doubt the social side was the most invaluable thing to me. The memories of hanging out with my friends in our dorms will stay with me forever. Just being in the presence of these students who were so intellectual and clever, yet also funny and witty, encouraged and still

motivates me to be my best self and try my hardest in every situation.

What were the courses like?

Natasha: The academic side was interesting and engaging. I really loved discovering the aspects of writing articles and interviewing people on specific topics through my journalism class. My improvisational drama class was so different from any education I have ever experienced - it was fun. Yet while I was enjoying myself with my classmates doing the silly games and interactive activities, I still felt as though I had learned new skills and developed my already existing drama skills.

Ethan: I constantly found myself challenged and engaged and the work required my time and effort. Since coming home and starting at university, I've found my experience at Harvard to be incredibly helpful in coping with not only the workload but the independent lifestyle too.

Shantelle: I studied neurobiology and philosophy. The experts in the neuroscience department, paired with others, had an immediate impact on my attitude towards learning and was such an encouraging environment. Although the coursework was overwhelming at times, it was invaluable. The philosophy course increased my understanding, regarding myself and others. This was extremely meaningful to me as this is not only applicable to our current modern society, but it gave me insight into the past ways of thinking and how this has evolved – or even stayed similar!



ETHAN



SHANTELE



NATASHA



KATIE

Katie: “I studied Performing Musical Theatre and Spanish. Both classes taught me so much and my professors were so lovely and supportive.”

Even though the classes were intensive, I loved them! My musical theatre class was my favourite class ever! It has always been my passion and this course has grown my love for it even more than I thought it could. Before going to Harvard, I had never taken a Spanish class. Learning this

new language interested me and I'm so glad that I decided to take that course.

What are you doing now and has attending Harvard helped with your future?

Shantelle: I am studying neuroscience at the University of Glasgow. The introduction to neurobiology I got over the summer will be immensely helpful as I progress into the specialisation of my course - and even now with the core fundamental biology topics.

Katie: Since coming home, my three closest new friends and I still speak every single day and call every weekend

which is so lovely. We are even planning on meeting up at some point in the next year.

I'm in my sixth year at high school and I'm planning on going to university to get a music degree and then either pursue music therapy or teaching. This experience will be so beneficial for the application process and my future.

Applications for the 2024 Harvard Summer School Programme have now closed. Look out for news on our next group of students in the new year.

