

Board of Management Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 15 January 2020
Paper No.	SSEC2-K
Agenda Item	6.2
Subject of Paper	Audited Student Funding Support 2018/19
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Gillian Plunkett Student Experience Director
Date of production	3 January 2020
Action	For Noting

1. Recommendations

SSEC is asked to note the audited student funding support information for 2018/19.

2. Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the audited student support funds expenditure for 2018/19.

3. Strategic Context

A key strategic priority for the College is **Strategic Priority 2 - To enable individuals to excel and realise their full potential** and in order to achieve this students are provided with a range of information, advice and support, including financial support.

The College receives an annual support fund allocation from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) which is managed and disbursed through the Student Experience Directorate.

However, student support funds are governed by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and the Students Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) Policy and Guidance. This Policy and Guidance outlines student eligibility (including residency eligibility), assessment processes, and appropriate use of funds, management and audit requirements.

Student support funds are subject to an annual, audit and support fund information together with all enrolment data is returned to the SFC via our annual Further Education Statistical (FES) return (October) which is compiled by the Student Records Section.

Links to the Policy and Guidance documents for 2019/20 are provided below.

[2019 -20: National policy for further education bursaries](#)

[2019-20: National policy: further education discretionary fund](#)

[2019-20: National policy: childcare funds for further and higher education students in Scotland's colleges](#)

[Higher Education Discretionary Funds Guidance Academic Year 2019-2020](#)

4. Student Support Fund Expenditure 2018/19

Expenditure on student support funds at City of Glasgow College for 2018/19 was £10,243,346 and Table 1 below provides information on expenditure by funding type.

Table 1 – Student Support Fund Expenditure 2018/19*

Fund Type	Total Expenditure per Fund	No. of Students Supported	Average Annual Payment	Average Weekly Payment
Further Education Bursary Fund	£7,426,533	2,538	£2,926	£71
Further Education Childcare Fund	£520,355	159	£3,273	£80
Higher Education Childcare Fund	£465,905	96	£4,853	£118
Further Education Hardship Fund	£910,182	1,544	£589	£14
Higher Education Hardship Fund	£920,371	667	£1,380	£34
Total Expenditure	£10,243,346*	5,004	n/a	n/a

*Externally Audited October 2019

4.1. Further Education (FE) Bursaries

Table 1 shows that over 72% of student support funds are spent on Further Education (FE) Bursaries.

Although most students may be eligible to receive a FE Bursary (eligibility includes residency), not all students will do so as FE Bursaries are means tested against parental income and will vary from a maximum of approx. £3,700 p.a. to £0. This contrasts dramatically with Higher Education (HE) students who, if eligible, will receive a £4,750 loan as a minimum regardless of parental income, rising to £7,750.

Table 1 shows that the average FE Bursary provided to students at City of Glasgow College is £2,926 which equates to around £71 per week and is less than half of what HE students can expect via their student loan. It goes without

saying that most students struggle with money, however FE students continue to be worse off than their counterparts on HE courses.

4.2 Further Education and Higher Education Discretionary Childcare Fund

Combined expenditure on childcare for FE and HE groups was £986,260 with 74% of this funding supporting students who are also lone parents. Glasgow City has the highest rate of lone parents of all 32 Scottish local authorities with 4 in 10 families with children being lone parent families, and wide neighbourhood differences across the city.

With lone parent figures in Scotland expected to rise over the next 25 years, lone parents continue to be a priority group. ([Understanding Glasgow](#), Glasgow Indicators Project, 2017). Lone parents are also the guardians of the next generation, and the Scottish Government has recognised the importance of Childcare and Early Years Strategies in both providing quality childcare in Scotland and providing opportunities for lone parents to train and work in this area

4.3 Further Education and Higher Education Discretionary Hardship Fund

Combined expenditure on hardship payments for FE and HE groups was £1,830,553. The number of students supported from the FE Fund (1,544) is higher than the HE Fund (667) which reflects the higher number of FE students in hardship.

4.4 Other Funds

In addition to the above funds, the College has also sourced three additional support funds for Maritime students; John Mather Trust totalling £4,000, Salvesen Trust totalling £24,000 and Navigation Fund totalling £20,000. These funds primarily target training cadets who have no access to Bursary/SAAS funding.

5. Student Financial Support in Scotland: Independent Review (2017)

The [Independent Review](#) reported in November 2017, and some recommendations such as a non repayable Care Experienced Bursary for FE and HE students at £8,100 is now in place. However, other more controversial recommendations such as the recommendation to offer student loans to FE students have still to be enacted. The NUS and other support groups oppose this recommendations and we will continue to monitor progress.

6. Annual Increase in Support Funds

Annual expenditure on student support continues to increase by approximately 9% annually. This can be attributed to various widening access and inclusion initiatives such as targeting those from SIMD10 and care experienced students. For example, total expenditure related to students who are care experienced is likely to increase in 2019/20 by £200,000 as a result of both the higher number of students disclosing they are care experienced, and the increase in the amount of Bursary awarded which has doubled from £4,000 to £8,000 per annum with protection from means testing.

7. Impact and Implications

The College has been awarded an additional £552,000 through the In Year Redistribution exercise and our current projections show that we will meet our student support commitments within budget.

Further widening access initiatives, either internally or externally via the Scottish Government, could impact further upon resources and ability to predict spend with accuracy; and if implemented in full, the recommendations of the Independent Student Support Review to award student loans to FE students, could have far reaching implications for the college and sector.