



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

## National policy for further education bursaries 2020-21

**SFC Guidance**

Issue Date: 30 June 2020

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Issue date: 30 June 2020

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Summary: Explanation of the conditions for use of SFC college bursary funds in AY 2020-21.

FAO: Principals and Finance Directors of Scotland's colleges.

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## National policy for further education bursaries: AY 2020-21

### Introduction

1. This policy document stipulates the conditions of use of bursary funds allocated to colleges by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and sets out the rates for calculation for Academic Year (AY) 2020-21. This policy continues to support the strategic priorities and outcomes of SFC and the Scottish Government.
2. Student support funds are cash-limited. Students who are eligible for support from this funding are not automatically entitled to this support.

### Updates for AY 2020-21

3. The updates to the paragraphs and relevant sections of the guidance are set out in the annex to this announcement. The main changes are:
  - ***Increase in bursary maintenance rate***  
The annual bursary maintenance rate has been increased to a maximum of £4,581. Split over 43 weeks, this provides a new maximum weekly award of £106.53.
  - ***Care-experienced students – removal of age cap***  
There is now no upper age limit for the Care-Experienced Bursary. Therefore from AY 2020-21, care-experienced students aged 16 and over should be assessed for the Care-Experienced Bursary.

### Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

4. We are continuing to work through unprecedented times, given the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, and a rapidly shifting environment for students, staff, and the communities around us.
5. We are publishing our National Policy for Further Education Bursaries to provide advice for college Student Support practitioners who are looking ahead to the 2020-21 academic year. SFC is aware of, and fully appreciates, the particular efforts which those who work on Student Support are encountering during this pandemic and we will continue to work hard alongside the sector on how we can further support staff and students at this time.
6. These documents aim to provide a standard foundation upon which Student Support funding award assessments and decisions can be made by college staff. Where there is a need to provide additional or exceptional guidance in relation to COVID-19 aspects, we will continue to circulate this information directly to our established Student Support sector contacts, and publish it on the [COVID-19 page](#) of SFC's website.

## Further information

7. Please contact Caroline Leburn, Senior Policy Analysis Officer, tel: 0131 313 6660, email: [studentsupport@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@sfc.ac.uk).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. MacDonald'.

**Lorna MacDonald**  
Director of Finance

## Annex: Summary of updates to FE Bursary Guidance for AY 2020-21

<b>Fund Management &amp; Audit Information document</b>		
<b><i>Subject</i></b>	<b><i>Paragraph number(s)</i></b>	<b><i>Change to policy</i></b>
Fund Management	18	The overall bursary rate for AY 2020-21 is now a maximum annual award of £4,581 being split over 43 weeks, giving a new maximum weekly award of £106.53.
Attendance and Student Engagement	44-57	Guidance restructured: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To emphasise removal of the 100% attendance (excluding authorised absence) requirement.</li> <li>• To reinforce the use of information to ensure student engagement, progress and achievement of relevant course stages as well as attendance of classes.</li> </ul>

<b>Award Assessment document</b>		
<b><i>Subject</i></b>	<b><i>Paragraph number(s)</i></b>	<b><i>Change to policy</i></b>
Calculation of the previous student support funding received	7 (i)	Where students are applying for funding to support completion of their AY 2019-20 studies which were disrupted due to COVID-19, the calculation should disregard any previous funding received for the duration of their COVID-19 disruption.
Categories for which colleges can offer a maintenance allowance	10 & 19	Care-Experienced and Universal Credit bursary awards have been added to the list of categories.
Care-Experienced Bursary	44-48	Care-experienced students aged 16 and over should be assessed for the Care-Experienced Bursary. From AY 2020-21, there is no longer an age limit on the Care-Experienced Bursary award. Therefore students of any age above the minimum noted above, who meet the necessary conditions, will be eligible to apply for the award.

		<p>Additional terminology added to specific categories for Care-Experience to reflect the expansion of the award to older students.</p> <p>Removal of the reference to 'Adoption' as a category heading.</p>
FE Student Support Rates 2020-21	Annex A	Figures updated to reflect increase in bursary maintenance rate for 2020-21.
Study Costs – Average Sector Spend	Annex B	Figures updated to include 2018-19.
Study Costs – Average Sector Spend by Subject	Annex B	Figures updated to reflect the three year period AY 2016-17 – 2018-19.

<b>Advisors Notes document</b>		
<b><i>Subject</i></b>	<b><i>Paragraph number(s)</i></b>	<b><i>Change to policy</i></b>
Care-Experienced Summary and definitions	7-8	Updated definitions of the various types of care experience.
Legislation and categories of care which are eligible for Care-Experience assessment	9-17	Addition of <i>Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968</i> in consideration of older learners accessing the Care-Experienced Bursary and an updated summary of further legislation relevant to CE bursary assessment.
Specific Categories for Care-Experienced Bursary Eligibility	Annex B	Updated definitions and information on the specific types of care-experience that are considered to be eligible for FE Bursary.
Universal Credit student	56	A definition of the student/s in this maintenance award category has been added.