



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

Funding for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing 2020-21

SFC Announcement

Issue Date: 18 December 2020

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Reference: SFC/AN/21/2020

Summary: Announcement of additional funding in Financial Year 2020-21 for student mental health and wellbeing support in colleges and universities.

FAO: Principals/Directors, Finance Directors, Chairs and Board Secretaries of Scotland's colleges and universities.

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Funding for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing

Summary

1. I am writing to announce the allocation of additional funding in Financial Year (FY) 2020-21 to provide additional mental health and wellbeing support for students in colleges and universities. This funding has been provided and allocated by the Scottish Government.

Purpose of the funding

2. We recognise that the current COVID-19 emergency has impacted the mental health and wellbeing of students, particularly those living in campus accommodation and/or in isolation. On Friday, 6 November 2020, the Scottish Government announced additional funding of £1.32 million to help colleges and universities to further support student mental health, wellbeing and welfare at this time.
3. This funding is in addition to and separate from the funding that institutions have received for the recruitment of additional counsellors, announced in September 2020¹. That funding should continue to be used to build and support counselling provision.
4. We are committed to flexibility in the use of this additional funding. Each institution's needs and circumstances at this time are different, and this funding should be used where it will have the greatest impact for your students. Examples of how you may wish to use this funding include (but are not limited to):
 - Additional wellbeing support for students, which could include:
 - Additional staff time to identify potential welfare issues in students, implement relevant intervention pathways and escalate to clinical intervention if required.
 - Additional welfare support checks. Such checks can identify emerging mental health issues, as well as wider welfare concerns such as access to food deliveries and other necessities.
 - Increased mental wellbeing drop-in chats online. This could also include non-therapeutic Mental Health support phone lines.
 - Proactive and preventative initiatives that help promote positive mental health and wellbeing within the student population, including online social activities in collaboration with Student Associations.

¹ http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/announcements_sfcan162020/Funding_for_counsellors_2020-21.pdf

- Securing access to online or virtual mental health and wellbeing services, including peer support to help prevent social isolation.
 - Providing practical welfare support for students. This may include access to food and other necessities for those in isolation; financial advice and support; and increased support for international students to contact family and support services abroad. Institutions should also ensure that they identify more vulnerable groups of students who made need greater access to support, such as estranged and care experienced students, and students with disabilities.
 - Increased investment in Residence Life teams in student accommodation, to allow them to provide further wellbeing and welfare support and crisis intervention.
 - Specific support for student welfare over the 2020-21 Winter Break is of great importance, with an increased number of students likely to be staying in their university, Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) and college accommodation over that period. All college and university students should receive early, clear advice on staying safe and have the necessary support in place over the holiday period. We expect institutions to have this support in place in anticipation of this funding being received in January.
5. We would encourage institutions to work closely with their Students Associations in developing and providing mental health and wellbeing support for their students, and to co-create services where possible. More than 30 student associations will also be receiving further additional funding to provide welfare support for students in colleges and universities, as announced on 11 December 2020². Further guidance for this funding will be published in the New Year.
 6. We recognise the excellent work that is already taking place in colleges and universities to support students' mental health and wellbeing at this time, and that you may already have some of the above actions in place. The purpose of this funding is to further support institutions to enhance the assistance they can offer students and to allow this to be expanded where needed.
 7. The total additional funding to be received by the college and university sectors in FY 2020-21 is £1.32 million.

Funding allocations

8. Funding has been allocated to colleges and universities using a similar methodology to the one applied for the additional funding for counsellors in AY 2019-20 and 2020-21.

² <https://www.gov.scot/news/extra-funding-for-student-associations/>

9. These allocations were based on a range of factors including: student numbers, mental health and wellbeing indicators, and geography. The main difference for this allocation is that the previous first step in which each college/region and university is allocated funds to hire at least one counsellor has been removed. However, as a minimum, each institution/region has been provided with at least £500.
10. A breakdown of funding for individual colleges/regions and universities is shown in **Annex A**. The methodology flowchart diagram can be found in **Annex B**.

Conditions of funding

11. This funding must only be used for the purpose(s) for which it is being allocated; that is, for the provision of additional mental health and wellbeing support for students. SFC retains the right to audit relevant institutional documentation to satisfy itself that this is the case and the institution undertakes that it will provide such assistance as SFC reasonably requires.
12. All institutions (or in the case of a multiple college region the Regional Strategic Board) should provide a brief outline plan on how they intend using their funding to Emma Roberts, email: eroberts@sfc.ac.uk. To collect this information, we will update the baseline survey for the Counsellor funding announced in September 2020 for institutions to include a short paragraph on how these separate mental health funds have been used, and their impact on students. This survey will be published early in the New Year, and will provide further details on submission deadlines.

Payment of funds

13. Funding for universities and non-incorporated colleges will be paid in equal instalments in January, February and March 2021. Incorporated colleges should draw down funding from their allocations, as required, over the same period.

Acceptance of grant

14. Institutions are invited to formally accept this offer of funding by writing to Graeme Scotland, Senior Budgeting & Reporting Officer, email: gscotland@sfc.ac.uk by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

Further information

15. Should you require any further information, please contact Fiona Burns, Assistant Director - Access & Outcomes, tel: 0131 313 6517, email: fburns@sfc.ac.uk or Emma Roberts, Policy/Analysis Officer tel: 0131 313 6570 or email: eroberts@sfc.ac.uk.

L. MacDonald

Lorna MacDonald
Director of Finance

Breakdown of funding for individual colleges/regions and universities

Colleges/Region	Total funding allocation*
Ayrshire College	£43,000
Borders College	£19,000
Dumfries & Galloway College	£27,000
Dundee & Angus College	£51,000
Edinburgh College	£53,000
Fife College	£58,000
Forth Valley College	£32,000
Glasgow Region	£121,000
Highlands & Islands Region***	£101,000
Lanarkshire Region	£47,000
Newbattle Abbey College**	£500
North East Scotland College	£46,000
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig**	£1,500
SRUC****	£37,000
West College Scotland	£47,000
West Lothian College	£24,000
Total	£708,000
*Numbers rounded to the nearest £1,000.	
**Numbers rounded to nearest £500.	
*** Includes funding for UHI's HE students.	
**** Includes funding for SRUC's HE students.	

Universities	Total funding allocation*
Aberdeen, University of	£30,000
Abertay University	£12,000
Dundee, University of	£42,000
Edinburgh Napier University	£30,000
Edinburgh, University of	£76,000
Glasgow Caledonian University	£50,000
Glasgow School of Art	£7,000
Glasgow, University of	£94,000
Heriot-Watt University	£29,000
Highlands & Islands, University of the**	-
Open University Scotland (OUS)	£35,000
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	£12,000
Robert Gordon University	£26,000
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	£4,000
SRUC**	-
St Andrews, University of	£25,000
Stirling, University of	£30,000
Strathclyde, University of	£66,000
West of Scotland, University of the	£44,000
Total	£612,000
* Numbers rounded to the nearest £1,000.	
** Funding for UHI's and SRUC's HE students are included within the college/region allocation.	

Flow diagram of funding methodology

Figure 1: Flow diagram of methodology for student mental health funding allocations

