



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC CONSULTATION

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Consultation on ceasing publication of Students Eligible for Funding



Consultation on ceasing publication of Students Eligible for Funding

Issue Date:	5 August 2024
Reference:	SFC/CN/02/2024
Summary:	This consultation seeks views on our proposal to cease publication of the Students Eligible for Funding statistical publication.
FAO:	Principals / Chairs / Finance Directors / Strategic Planning in in Scotland's universities, and the general public.
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Consultation on ceasing publication of Students Eligible for Funding

Introduction

1. This document seeks views on the proposal to cease publication of the Students Eligible for Funding statistical publication.
2. We welcome comments from our stakeholders and anyone with an interest in the issues raised in this document. Our consultation period will run from 5 August 2024 to 2 September 2024.

Recommendation

3. The following table summarises our proposal:

Recommendation/Proposed changes

- 1) We propose to cease publication of the Students Eligible for Funding statistical publication with immediate effect, cancelling the publication of the 2023-24 statistics.
- 2) The statistics will be shared with the sector and Scottish Government as management information.
- 3) The statistics will be available on request to other interested parties.

Students Eligible for Funding data

4. The figures in the publication are taken from SFC's Early Statistics Return. The Early Statistics are aggregate numbers of students eligible for funding, expressed as full-time equivalents (FTEs).
5. As the figures are collected in-year they include a forecast element.

The drivers for change

6. In late 2023, SFC commissioned a review of its statistical publications. During the review, interviews were conducted with user groups from colleges, universities, Scottish Government and other organisations. Users were asked to provide their feedback on the current suite of publications produced by SFC.
7. Within the feedback received, several users highlighted concerns about the forecast element of the publication and the potential for third parties to over-interpret the data.
8. None of the feedback received during the review indicated a strong requirement for the statistics to be published.

9. While the value of the published statistics was questioned, some users proposed that provision of summary data to the university sector and Scottish Government analytical team would fulfil the needs of interested parties, as management information (not as official statistics) available upon request.

Annex A – Response form

Part 1 – Respondent information

Responses should be supplied by completing the online form.

Please note that we are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would, therefore, have to consider any request under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise. We will make all responses available publicly. If you ask for your response not to be published you should mark clearly any parts of your response that you wish us to treat as confidential, subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

Name:

Organisation:

Position/job title:

Does your response represent the views of a specific organisation or are you writing in an individual capacity?

Part 2a – Questions for stakeholders concerned with the Students Eligible for Funding publication

1. Do you agree/disagree with the proposal to cease publication?

Agree Disagree Unsure

Please provide your reasoning:

Part 2b – Questions for university respondents only:

1. To what extent do you use the data on students eligible for funding for your own internal operational or monitoring purposes?

2. In what ways would you wish the provision of management information to the sector to differ from the published statistics?

3. Any other comments text box.
