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Francesca Osowska
Chief Executive
Scottish Funding Council
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Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

23 December 2025

Dear Francesca,

PRE-REGISTRATION BSc PARAMEDIC EDUCATION – AY 2026-27

As you will be aware, we are departing from our multi-year approach and are setting a student intake target for the BSc Paramedic Education programmes for one year only. This letter confirms to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) the Scottish Government's (SG) recommended intake target for these programmes in Academic Year (AY) 2026-27.

The total overall recommended intake target to paramedic education programmes will continue to be 335 Scottish domiciled students. Whilst this letter advises the SFC of SG's student intake recommendation for AY 2026-27 we will be proactively discussing future intake targets with stakeholders early in 2026.

I have set out below the Universities and intake targets for each institution. I note that over recruitment has occurred for five consecutive years and it is therefore important to stress to institutions that they should ensure they recruit students within the limits of their intake target.

University	Intake target for AY 2026-27
Glasgow Caledonian University	67
Queen Margaret University Edinburgh	67
Robert Gordon University	67
University of Stirling	67
University of the West of Scotland	67

As agreed, in AY 2026-27, SFC will model the required number of funded places for each new intake and for the continuing cohorts of eligible students. Subject to confirmation of the number of funded places each year, SG will transfer the required funding for each financial year.

SFC should monitor the paramedic education programme through their annual Early and Final Statistics Returns, collecting information on both the annual intake and total number of students enrolled on the programme.

We anticipate that performance monitoring of the delivery of the education programme will also be conducted by NHS Education Scotland (NES) as part of their commitment to provide leadership for the delivery of high-quality education, training and workforce development and to improve the range, quality and granularity of workforce data. NES will continue to collect information from universities on an annual basis, the results of which shall be reported to the SG. We will work collaboratively with NES and HEIs to continue to improve the reporting requirements.

Furthermore, I would like to take this opportunity to confirm, as per previous correspondence dated 9 October 2025, that we are changing the threshold for over-recruitment from 10% to 4% allowing HEIs to recruit no more than 3 additional students above their current target of 67, and the threshold for under recruitment is changing to 15%. This should only apply to the year one intake in 2026-27.

SFC should therefore recover funds for under-enrolment against intake targets and impose a penalty for over recruitment. In doing so, SFC should recover funds from universities who under-recruit eligible students against intake target by more than 15% and apply penalties to universities who exceed their intake target by more than 4%.

We recognise that this approach is inconsistent with other health-controlled subjects but given over recruitment of paramedic students has occurred for consecutive years and, we have an emerging surplus of paramedics, it is important that we seek to address this in the interim. The change in the tolerance thresholds is for one year only whilst work on the wider deployment of paramedics in community urgent care is undertaken and a more informed decision can be made in future.

The recommended intake in this letter is for 'Home Fee' students. Institutions are at liberty to accept rest of UK (rUK) and international students, but the SFC should not provide funding for these students, and universities must discuss any recruitment above the intake target with NES, the Scottish Ambulance Service and placement providers.

I would be grateful if the SFC can now make the necessary arrangements for the 2026-27 intake.

This letter is copied to Universities Principals, Heads of Schools of the relevant HEIs, the Council of Deans Health (Scotland), NHS Education for Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, Student Awards Agency Scotland, Director General Health and Social Care, Director General Education and Justice, Director of Learning and Director for Lifelong Learning.

Yours sincerely,



Rachael Dunk
Deputy Director
Chief Nursing Officer Directorate
Scottish Government

