



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC Announcement

Reference: SFC/AN/01/2023

Issue date: 27/01/2023

Funding for counsellors in AY 2022-23 (August 2022 – March 2023)



Funding for counsellors in AY 2022-23 (August 2022 – March 2023)

Issue Date:	27 January 2023
Reference:	SFC/AN/01/2023
Summary:	Announcement of additional funding in Academic Year 2022-23 (August 2022 – March 2023) for counsellors in colleges and universities.
FAO:	Principals/Directors, Finance Directors, Chairs and Board Secretaries of Scotland’s colleges and universities, and the general public.
Further Information:	<p>CONTACT: Fiona Burns</p> <p>JOB TITLE: Assistant Director - Student Interests, Access and Pathways</p> <p>DIRECTORATE: Access, Learning and Outcomes Directorate</p> <p>TEL: 0131 313 6517</p> <p>EMAIL: fburns@sfc.ac.uk</p>

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Funding for counsellors in AY 2022-23 (August 2022 – March 2023)

Summary

1. I am writing to announce the allocation of funding in Academic Year (AY) 2022-23 (August 2022 to March 2023 only) to provide additional counsellors in colleges and universities. This funding has been allocated by the Scottish Government and is the last year of a four-year commitment.
2. We wish to recognise and thank the tertiary sector for their achievement in delivering additional counsellors. The sector has delivered around 89 FTE additional counsellors and associated counselling support over the funding period, exceeding the Scottish Government target of an increase of 80 FTEs by the end of AY 2022-23.
3. A further announcement will be made during the course of the current AY on funding for the remaining four months (April to July 2023).

Purpose of funding

4. In its 2018 Programme for Government (PfG) the Scottish Government committed to “providing more than 80 additional counsellors in Further and Higher Education over the next four years”, with an investment of around £20 million. SFC announced the first year of this funding in November 2019¹. The purpose and principles behind this commitment have not changed since the original announcement. This is the last year of funding of the four-year commitment.
5. The Scottish Government is currently producing a Student Mental Health Plan which will frame institutional action in this area going forward. The Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training chairs a stakeholder group to oversee this work and it includes representation from SFC, Sector Leaders, Colleges Scotland, Universities Scotland, NUS Scotland and key charities, organisations and agencies as well as key Scottish Government officials.
6. We recognise that institutions may not be in a position to maintain all the commitments supported by this funding to date and, as such, this funding and any unspent funding from AY 2021-22 may be used to transition to an affordable and sustainable embedded approach to mental health that meets the purpose and principles behind this four-year investment.
7. The total funding for counsellors to be received by the college and university sectors in

¹ [Funding for counsellors 2019-20](#)

AY 2022-23 (August 2022 to March 2023) is £2.025 million (m).

Funding allocations for AY 2022-23 (August 2022 – March 2023)

8. Funding for counsellors has been allocated to colleges and universities on the following basis:
9. Initial allocations are based on allocating monies to colleges and universities (with the exception of Sabhal Mòr Ostaig and Newbattle College which receive a proportionate sum due to both institutions having significantly low student numbers) so that one counsellor per institution/region can be recruited. There is additional funding for Glasgow, Highlands & Islands and Lanarkshire to account for all having more than one college in each region. Leftover money is then distributed to colleges and universities through the Scottish Government's model.
10. The Scottish Government's model uses a range of indicators which inform demand for counselling services, including student numbers at colleges and universities, student mental health declarations and regional mental health scores from health surveys. Allocations also account for factors that affect supply of counselling services, including the rural placing of institutions and institutions which have multiple campuses. The funding methodology can be found at [Annex A of the AY 2019-20 funding announcement](#).
11. A breakdown of the above funding for individual colleges and universities for AY 2022-23 (August 2022 to March 2023) is shown in Annex A of this announcement.

Funding allocations for AY 2022-23 (April 2023 – July 2023)

12. The Minister for Higher Education, Further Education, Youth Employment and Training wrote to Universities Scotland, Colleges Scotland and NUS Scotland on 22 December 2022 to confirm that the funding allocation for student counsellor support for Financial Year (FY) 2022-23 has been set at £4.0m.
13. SFC uses FY allocations from the Scottish Government and converts them into AY budgets for the sector. This means that some of this budget was already allocated for AY 2021-22, which left £2.025m for the period August 2022 until March 2023. The letter outlined the commitment to provide funding for the remainder of AY 2022-23 i.e. from April to July, and further clarity on this will be provided in due course from the Scottish Government. **SFC cannot allocate funds for April onwards until that clarity is provided.**
14. Once SFC receives confirmation of funding from April 2023 onwards, we will provide the final allocation of this funding. We will also issue a final baseline survey to capture the overall impact of this four-year investment. As outlined in paragraph 6, institutions may use this funding to transition to an affordable and sustainable embedded approach to mental health that meets the purpose and principles behind this four-year investment. For this reason, we recognise that some institutions may not be in a position to maintain

or embed their full commitment to counsellors outlined in previous baseline surveys.

Conditions of funding

15. This funding must only be used for the purpose(s) for which it is being allocated as outlined above. 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).
16. We expect institutions to work in collaboration with their students and student associations to ensure the provision of joined up and accessible mental health and counselling support which meets students' needs. We encourage institutions to sign up for NUS Think Positive's Student Mental Health Agreement project², which should be central to a whole-institution approach to mental health and counselling support.

Payment of funds

17. Universities and non-incorporated colleges will receive funding in one instalment in March 2023.
18. Incorporated colleges should draw down funding as required, with up to 100% of their funding allocation to be drawn down in FY 2022-23 (by the end of March 2023).

Acceptance of grant

19. Institutions are invited to formally accept this offer of funding by emailing Graeme Scotland, Senior Budgeting & Reporting Officer, email: gscotland@sfc.ac.uk by **17 February 2023**.

Further information

20. Please contact Fiona Burns, Assistant Director – Student Interests, Access and Pathways, tel: 0131 313 6517, email: fburns@sfc.ac.uk.



James Dunphy
Director, Access, Learning and Outcomes

² <https://www.thinkpositive.scot/projects/smha/>

Annex A: Funding allocation for August 2022 – March 2023

College/region allocation of funding for counsellors		
College/region	Total funding allocation*	No. of counsellors (FTE)**
Ayrshire College	£63,000	1.21
Borders College	£57,000	1.09
Dumfries & Galloway College	£59,000	1.13
Dundee & Angus College	£64,000	1.23
Edinburgh College	£67,000	1.28
Fife College	£67,000	1.28
Forth Valley College	£62,000	1.19
Glasgow Region	£136,000	2.60
Highlands & Islands Region***	£91,000	1.74
Lanarkshire Region	£91,000	1.74
Newbattle Abbey College	£13,000	0.25
North East Scotland College	£63,000	1.21
Sabhal Mòr Ostaig	£13,000	0.25
SRUC****	£74,000	1.42
West College Scotland	£66,000	1.26
West Lothian College	£60,000	1.15
Total	£1,046,000	20.03

* Numbers rounded to nearest £1,000.
 ** Rounded to the nearest 0.01 FTE counsellor.
 *** Includes funding for UHI's HE students.
 **** Includes funding for SRUC's HE students.

University allocation of funding for counsellors

Institution	Total funding allocation*	No. of counsellors (FTE)**
Aberdeen, University of	£56,000	1.07
Abertay University	£54,000	1.03
Dundee, University of	£58,000	1.11
Edinburgh Napier University	£57,000	1.09
Edinburgh, University of	£63,000	1.21
Glasgow Caledonian University	£60,000	1.15
Glasgow School of Art	£53,000	1.01
Glasgow, University	£67,000	1.28
Heriot-Watt University	£56,000	1.07
Highlands & Islands, University of the***	-	-
Open University of Scotland	£58,000	1.11
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	£54,000	1.03
Robert Gordon University	£56,000	1.07
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS)	£53,000	1.01
SRUC***	-	-
St Andrews, University of	£56,000	1.07
Stirling, University of	£57,000	1.09
Strathclyde, University of	£62,000	1.19
West of Scotland, University of the	£59,000	1.13
Total	£979,000	18.72

* Numbers rounded to nearest £1,000.

** Rounded to the nearest 0.01 FTE counsellor.

*** Funding for UHI's and SRUC's students included within college allocation.