



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoinachaidh na h-Alba

## Funding for digital learning in colleges for AY 2021-22

# SFC Announcement

Issue Date: 6 July 2021

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Reference: SFC/AN/24/2021

Summary: Announcement of, and guidance on, additional funding for colleges in AY 2021-22 for digital learning.

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

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## Funding for digital learning in colleges for AY 2021-22

### Summary

1. I am writing to confirm and provide guidance on the allocation of additional funding in Academic Year (AY) 2021-22 for digital learning in colleges. This funding has been provided by the Scottish Government and was announced as part of the [College Final Funding Allocations for AY 2021-22](#).

### Background/context

2. The lockdowns and public health advice associated with COVID-19 have impacted significantly on the delivery of teaching, with the majority of students learning remotely since March 2020. SFC recognises the efforts the sector has made in the expeditious switch to online delivery and we expect the need for high quality digital, online and blended learning delivery to continue in AY 2021-22 and beyond.
3. We would expect colleges to use these funds to enable a step change in the role of digital in their learning and teaching offer and the support needed to access it.
4. Following the Scottish Government's 2021-21 budget announcement, SFC [published](#) its final college funding allocations for AY 2021-22 on 27 May 2021. This publication included the allocation of £5 million for digital learning, with funding allocated in proportion to colleges' share of student activity (credit) targets.

### Purpose of funding for digital learning

5. This funding is to support colleges' ongoing transition towards the provision of increased digital learning and should be used for new investment in IT infrastructure and services which:
  - advances the college/region digital strategy;
  - progresses the vision established in the [Digital Ambition for Scotland's Colleges](#) as jointly published by Colleges Scotland and the College Development Network; and/or the recommendations in the 2020 [IT infrastructure reviews](#) undertaken by Jisc; and
  - enables the digital/blended teaching and learning model.
6. Within the above parameters, colleges/college regions should utilise this funding in accordance with their own particular needs. The following areas have been identified as examples of appropriate uses for this investment:
  - Wi-Fi 4G/5G connectivity

- Conferencing facilities
- Lecture capture
- Interactive screens
- Software licensing
- Enhanced cyber security, e.g. Security Information & Event Management (SIEM)
- Development costs, e.g. training, consultancy, etc.
- Migration to or upgrading of Cloud services
- Data centre costs
- Network upgrades/resilience

### **Student digital poverty**

7. A further announcement on addressing digital poverty will be made in due course.

### **Funding allocations**

8. This additional funding has been allocated in proportion to colleges'/college regions' share of student activity (credit) targets for AY 2021-22. A breakdown of funding for individual colleges/regions is shown in [Annex A](#).

### **Payment of funds**

9. Incorporated colleges should draw down funding from their allocations, in line with need, over AY 2021-22. Non-incorporated colleges will be paid in two equal instalments in August 2021 and October 2021.

### **Reporting**


10. Colleges/college regions will be expected to provide a short end-of-year report detailing how they have utilised their allocation of funding in line with the guidance set out above and how it has supported the transition to high quality digital, online and blended learning delivery. Colleges should send their report to David Beards, Senior Policy Officer (email: [dbeards@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:dbeards@sfc.ac.uk)) by 31 July 2022.

### **Conditions of funding**

11. This funding must only be used for the purpose(s) for which it is being allocated. SFC retains the right to audit relevant college documentation to satisfy itself that this is the case (and the college undertakes that it will provide such assistance as SFC reasonably requires).
12. Colleges must meet the reporting requirements of this funding.

### Further information

13. Should you require any further information, please contact David Beards, Senior Policy Officer, email: [dbeards@sfc.ac.uk](mailto:dbeards@sfc.ac.uk).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. MacDonald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L'.

**Lorna MacDonald**  
Director of Finance

## Funding for digital learning in colleges for AY 2021-22

### Breakdown of funding for individual colleges/college regions

College/Region	Allocation
Ayrshire College	£360,175
Borders College	£73,922
Dumfries & Galloway College	£88,828
Dundee & Angus College	£309,780
Edinburgh College	£541,856
Fife College	£382,128
Forth Valley College	£247,719
Glasgow Region	£1,110,355
Highlands & Islands Region	£324,357
Lanarkshire Region	£523,904
Newbattle Abbey College	£2,659
North East Scotland College	£380,732
Sabhal Mor Ostaig	£2,305
SRUC	£65,651
West College Scotland	£457,706
West Lothian College	£127,923
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,000,000</b>