



**Further and
Higher Education
Childcare Fund
Guidance**

2019-2020



**The Scottish
Government**
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

USEFUL CONTACTS

Student Awards Agency Scotland

Saughton House
Broomhouse Drive
EDINBURGH
EH11 3UT
0300 555 0505
<http://www.saas.gov.uk/>

If you have any queries about eligibility or implementation of the regulations presented in this guidance, please contact the SAAS Policy Team who will be able to advise you further.

Saas_policy@gov.scot

Scottish Funding Council

97 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD
0131 313 6500
<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/>

The Students Loans Company Ltd

100 Bothwell Street
GLASGOW
G2 7JD
Freephone 0845 0738891
<http://www.slc.co.uk/>

The Scottish Government

Student Support and Participation Team
Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU
<https://www.gov.scot/>

College Policy Team

Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
ABOUT THE FUND	4
ELIGIBILITY	6
ELIGIBILITY TABLE	6
RESIDENCE	7
AGE	8
ATTENDANCE	9
PREVIOUS STUDY RULE/LINK TO TUITION FEE ELIGIBILITY	9
OTHER SUPPORT	9
ASSESSMENTS	12
HOW NEEDS ARE ASSESSED	12
ADVICE TO STUDENTS	14
FINANCIAL PROCESSES	15
DISBURSEMENT AND PAYMENT AMOUNTS	15
TREATMENT OF FUNDS BY INSTITUTIONS.....	16
ADMINISTRATION	16
ANNUAL AUDITED RETURNS.....	17
Q + A	18
LONE PARENTS CHILDCARE GRANT- HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS- Q + A.....	18
ALLOCATIONS AND METHODOLOGY Q + A	20
GENERAL Q + A	20

INTRODUCTION

These notes provide guidance to assist managers in the operation of the College and University Childcare Funds, which have been allocated to them by Scottish Ministers.

Colleges and universities should use these guidelines to assist them to devise suitable systems, for which they will be accountable, to undertake the receipt and disbursement of the Funds.

ABOUT THE FUND

Changes for 2019-20

- Students granted leave to remain in the UK as a victim of modern slavery including human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour will now be eligible to apply for the Discretionary Funds, see [page eight](#) for more information.
- Estranged students are now considered a priority group for childcare funding at FE and HE level.
- Priority groups should be applied with discretion to ensure assistance from the Childcare Fund would not negatively impact on their ability to claim, or continue to be entitled to, income related benefits
- Students in receipt of an Educational Psychology training grant as part of the two year MSc in Educational Psychology will not be entitled to support from the Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG) and Discretionary Childcare Funds.

Purpose of the College and University Childcare Funds

The College and University Childcare Funds sit alongside the FE and HE Discretionary Funds and are available to all **eligible** students with childcare responsibilities. The funds provide assistance with the cost of **formal registered childcare expenses**. They do not place limits on the amounts individuals can access and gives institutions the flexibility to determine award levels themselves.

However, it should be remembered that both FE and HE **eligible** Lone Parent students are **entitled** to a payment of **up to a maximum of £1,215 per year*** from the Childcare Funds and it is the institutions' responsibility to ensure that there are always funds available to make these payments to Lone Parents from the childcare funds.

*** These payments will be assessed taking account of other payments made for childcare costs from other sources.**

The college and university childcare funds have two elements, they are:

- **The Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG) element** which will be an entitlement payment of **up to £1,215 per year** to all **eligible** further and higher education students who are lone parents and who have formal registered childcare expenses while studying. **The LPCG is not income assessed.**

And

- **The Discretionary Childcare Funds** which all students may apply to for financial help with formal registered childcare expenses. Payments from the Discretionary Childcare funds will be made at the discretion of institutions and based on an assessment of need.

In addition, the Scottish Government, in conjunction with the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) and the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), produce one common guidance document across both sectors for distribution of childcare funds.

The college and university childcare funds will continue to sit alongside the Further Education Discretionary Funds (FEDF) and the Higher Education Discretionary Funds (HEDF). Separate guidance for the FEDF will be issued by the SFC, and SAAS will issue a separate guidance document for the HEDF.

Distributing body of Fund by Student Type

	Discretionary Fund	Childcare Fund	Lone Parent Childcare grant (LPCG)
College FE Student	SFC (FE Discretionary Fund)	SFC (combined HE/FE Childcare Fund)	SFC (combined HE/FE Childcare Fund)
College HE Student	SAAS (HE Discretionary Fund)	SFC (combined HE/FE Childcare Fund)	SFC (combined HE/FE Childcare Fund)
University Student	SAAS (HE Discretionary Fund)	SAAS (HE Childcare Fund)	SAAS (HE Childcare Fund)

Discretionary Childcare Funding in Colleges

All **eligible** FE and HE student parents attending courses at college will be able to apply for help with registered childcare costs from the College Childcare Fund, at the discretion of their college.

Lone parent students will also be able to apply for **additional** help with registered childcare costs (over and above the Lone Parents Childcare Grant) from the College Childcare funds, at the discretion of their college.

Students with both Childcare and Discretionary Fund needs will continue to be able to access support from the main Discretionary funds as well as the Childcare Funds.

Discretionary Childcare Funding in Universities

Full-time eligible HE students attending university will be able to apply for help for registered childcare costs from the University Childcare Funds, at the discretion of their university.

Full-time HE lone parent students will also be able to apply for **additional** help with registered childcare costs (over and above the Lone Parents Childcare Grant) from the University Childcare funds, at the discretion of their university.

Students with both Childcare and Discretionary Fund needs will continue to be able to access support from the main Discretionary funds, as well as the Childcare Funds, at the discretion of their university.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility Table

Residence

Ordinary Residence

Non-UK EU Nationals

People Granted Discretionary Leave as a Victim of Modern Slavery

Forces Personnel

Other Residency Exceptions

Age

Attendance

Previous Study

Other Support

Maintenance Loan

Tuition Fee Loan

FE Bursary Funds

Postgraduate Students

Other Childcare Support available to students with childcare costs. – Scottish Domiciled Students

English Domiciled Students (HE students only)

Northern Irish Domiciled Students

Welsh Domiciled Students

Nursing and Midwifery Students

Mode of Study

Disabled Students

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

ELIGIBILITY TABLE

Eligible to apply:	The College Childcare Funds (FE Students)	The University and College Childcare Funds
<u>Domicile/residence</u>	Students must be eligible under the residency rules set out in Part 2 of Schedule 3 to the Education (Access Funds) (Scotland) (No.2) Determination 2018.	Students must be eligible under the residency rules set out in Part 2 of Schedule 3 to the Education (Access Funds) (Scotland) (No.2) Determination 2018.
<u>Age</u>	Must be past compulsory school leaving age	Must be past compulsory school leaving age

Eligible Courses	In addition to fundable courses, applicants must be fundable students. An explanation of 'fundable' may be found in the Funding Council's Guidance Notes .	Must be attending an eligible full-time course of study, as defined by SAAS. This includes postgraduate courses that qualify for tuition fee loan funding from SAAS.
Other Criteria	Colleges must ensure that they take account of the Regulations of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 and all childcare regulations when using the CCF to cover students' childcare costs. This act is at : www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2001/8/contents	Must have used full entitlement of all other available support such as student loan. HE lone parents should also have claimed the Lone Parents Grant from SAAS and have claimed Child Tax Credits and free nursery places etc., as provided by their local authority. Students must meet the eligibility criteria for tuition fees to be eligible for assistance from the Childcare Fund, apart from the Lone Parent Childcare Grant element.
Other Support	Students should have taken out any full free childcare entitlement available from the government and child tax credits, if applicable.	Must be paying registered childcare costs.
Priority Groups	Mature Students, Lone Parents, Students studying part-time, care-experienced students, student carers, estranged students (Where it would not negatively impact on their ability to claim, or continue to be entitled to, income related benefits).	Mature students, lone Parents, care-experienced students, student carers, estranged students, estranged students (Where it would not negatively impact on their ability to claim, or continue to be entitled to, income related benefits).

RESIDENCE

Ordinary Residence

To be eligible to apply for support from the Discretionary Funds, you must meet the following conditions:

- Be ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for the three years immediately before the relevant date (the first day of the first academic year of the course). If you fall short of being ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands for the three year qualifying period, even by one day, you will not be eligible to apply for support under the normal residence conditions, AND
- If you are not a UK or other EU national, you must have 'settled status' in the UK (as set out in the Immigration Act 1971) on the relevant date, AND
- Be ordinarily resident in Scotland on the relevant date. We will not treat you as being ordinarily resident in Scotland if your main purpose in coming here has been to receive fulltime education and that you would have otherwise been living elsewhere.

Non-UK EU nationals

A person who is a non-UK EU national (or the family member of such a person) is eligible to apply for support from the Discretionary Fund, provided they meet the following conditions:

- Be ordinarily resident in Scotland on the first day of the first academic year of the course, AND
- Has been ordinarily resident in the UK and Islands throughout the immediately preceding three year period (provided that if that residence has been wholly or mainly for the purpose of receiving full time education, the person was ordinarily resident in the EEA or Switzerland immediately before the 3 year period).

Non-UK EU Nationals who are only eligible for fees only support from SAAS are not eligible to receive support from the Childcare Fund.

People Granted Discretionary Leave as a Victim of Modern Slavery

If you have been granted Discretionary leave due to being identified as a victim of modern slavery you will be eligible to apply to SAAS for funding providing you meet the conditions set out below:

- Have been granted Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK due to being identified as a victim of modern slavery including human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour: and
- Have been ordinarily resident in the UK since they were granted this status; and
- Are ordinarily resident in Scotland on the relevant date.

Forces Personnel

Under the temporary non-resident arrangements, forces personnel are treated as being resident in the country in which they were ordinarily resident before they “signed up/enlisted”. If they are ordinarily resident in Scotland but are serving overseas, they would also be eligible. Family members of serving forces personnel are also considered eligible in the country in which the serving forces personnel was ordinarily resident before they signed up/enlisted.

Other Residency Exceptions

If a student is not eligible for support under the general residence conditions, they may still be eligible to apply to the Childcare Fund for support under one of the exceptions to the ordinary residence conditions. Detailed information about the exceptions to our residency criteria can be found on our website at <https://www.saas.gov.uk/forms/residence.pdf>. If you need further clarification on residency eligibility, please contact the [SAAS Policy Team](#), who will be happy to assist you.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

AGE

Students entering FE and HE courses before they have reached their official school leaving date are not eligible to apply for support from the Childcare Funds.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

ATTENDANCE

Institutions must be satisfied that students are attending/undertaking an appropriate course of education and that their attendance/ participation and progression is satisfactory and in line with any other national or local guidance on this issue.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

PREVIOUS STUDY RULE/LINK TO TUITION FEE ELIGIBILITY

HE Students must meet the eligibility criteria for tuition fees to be eligible for assistance from the Childcare Funds. However, you can still award the Lone Parent Childcare Grant element to eligible students who are not receiving tuition fee support due to previous study rules.

There are currently no previous study rules that would have an effect a FE student's eligibility for assistance from the Childcare Funds.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

OTHER SUPPORT

Maintenance Loan

Student loans are an integral part of the system of student support. Students who are eligible for a maintenance student loan are, of course, free to decide whether to take out a loan and, if so, how much to borrow.

However, a full-time student must have taken out a student living cost loan and applied for the full amount to which they are entitled before receiving help from the Childcare Fund. Institutions should contact SAAS if they are unsure whether a student has applied for their maximum maintenance loan entitlement.

Tuition Fee Loan

Students do not have to take out the tuition fee loan, in order to apply to the Childcare Fund (for example, the course may attract a fee from SFC). However, universities should consider why someone had not taken out the tuition fee loan, and whether that decision was impacting on their request for Childcare support.

For example, if a student chose to pay their own fees and not take out a tuition fee loan; does that impact on their need to cover childcare costs from elsewhere?

FE Bursary Funds

In further education, students can apply for FE bursary funds.

This fund is for full-time students and is means tested depending on age, family circumstances and income. This fund is cash limited and students who meet the eligibility criteria may not necessarily receive funding

Postgraduate Students

'Taught' Postgraduate Diplomas and Masters courses now attract a living cost loan and a tuition fee loan from SAAS. Eligible students must take out their full living cost loan before accessing support from the Childcare Fund. Students in receipt of an Educational Psychology training grant as part of the two year MSc in Educational Psychology will not be entitled to support from the Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG) and Discretionary Childcare Funds.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

Other Childcare Support available to students with childcare costs. – Scottish Domiciled Students Only

Type of Support	Description	Further Information
Tax Credits.	<p>Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will pay Child Tax Credit to those responsible for at least one child, whether or not they are in paid work.</p> <p>Students who are working or have a partner who is working may be eligible for Working Tax Credit. Where both members of a couple work at least 16 hours per week, Working Tax Credit can include help with registered childcare costs.</p> <p>Universal credit will replace Tax Credits over the next few years. Universal credit can help with childcare costs for people in work, and provides financial support for parent students who have a low income.</p>	<p>Further information on Tax Credits is available at https://www.gov.uk/benefits-credits/tax-credits or by calling 0345 300 3900</p>
Free School Meals	Students who are in receipt of Child Tax Credit or some other benefits may also be eligible for free school meals.	Students should contact their own local authority for more information
Lone Parent Grant	HE Students who are widowed, divorced, separated or single with at least one dependent child are eligible for the Lone Parent Grant from SAAS. Institutions should ensure that they have claimed their full entitlement of Lone Parent Grant from SAAS when assessing any need for support through the Childcare Funds.	Further Information can be found on the SAAS Website.

English Domiciled Students (HE students only)

HE English domiciled students studying in Scotland may be able to receive a Childcare Grant from their funding body if they are using certain types of childcare:

- Childcare provided by child-minders, nurseries and play schemes registered by the Care Inspectorate.
- Childcare provided by out-of-school-hours clubs registered by the Care Inspectorate on school premises and run by a school or a local authority.
- Childcare provided by an approved foster carer. (The care must be for a child who is not being fostered by the foster carer.)
- Childcare provided in the child's own home by (or introduced through) childcare agencies, sitter services and nanny agencies which are required to be registered by the Care Inspectorate.

These students would **not** then qualify for assistance from the College or University Childcare Fund, **although they would continue to be eligible for assistance from the general Discretionary Funds.**

The types of childcare that qualify for the English HE Childcare Grant have been extended to include other forms of childcare which qualify for the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC) administered by HMRC. This means that childcare in Scotland and Northern Ireland which counts as qualifying childcare for the WTC childcare element, now also counts as qualifying childcare for the Childcare Grant.

Northern Irish Domiciled Students

Northern-Irish domiciled students studying in Scotland may be able to receive support towards childcare from the Northern Irish Government. More information can be found here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/childcare/childcare-benefits-tax-credits-and-other-help-working-parents>

Welsh Domiciled Students

Welsh domiciled students studying in Scotland may be able to receive support towards childcare from the Welsh Government. More information can be found here:

<https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/childcare/help-paying-for-childcare/?lang=en#content>

Nursing and Midwifery Students

Students supported under the Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary Scheme are not entitled to help from the Childcare Funds. However, they may be eligible for help towards their childcare costs from the Nursing and Midwifery Discretionary Fund which is administered by SAAS on behalf of Scottish Government Health Directorate. Further information on the fund can be found on the [SAAS website](#).

[Return to Chapter index](#)

ASSESSMENTS

How Needs Are Assessed

Factors for Consideration in the Assessment of Need

Lone Parent Childcare Grant

Advice to Students

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

HOW NEEDS ARE ASSESSED

Colleges and universities are best placed to decide who, based on need, should receive support from the Childcare Funds. However, you may wish to consider the guidance below when assessing a student's eligibility for funding from the childcare funds. **Please note that this is guidance only and colleges and universities may have their own procedures in place for assessing eligibility.**

In the needs assessment, colleges and universities must consider what evidence to get to confirm a student's financial position.

For example:

- instead of a single bank account balance, monthly statements may better indicate this.
- Evidence regarding student loan support or entitlement to the new Care Experienced Students Bursary (to evidence their circumstance e.g. a copy of the loan agreement/award letter)
- FE students may already have provided similar information whilst being assessed for bursary eligibility.

When assessing applications, details of the student's weekly income (including their partner's income where applicable) and expenditure should be provided where appropriate.

Information that may typically be required from students to support their application is detailed below as a guide.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Gross Income/Earnings from Employment	Mortgage/Rent
Pension Income	Council Tax
Benefits Income*	Formal Childcare Costs
Income from Rent/Lettings	Bank Loan Repayments
Career Development Loan	Food/Housekeeping
Scholarship Income	Gas/Electricity
Child Support Payments	Child Support Payments
Student Loan	
Living Cost Grants (other than Disabled Students Allowance (DSA))	

* excluding Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Institutions may ask students to provide any other information which they believe is relevant to the application.

For Example:

- marital status
- number of dependent children and their ages
- whether the student is a homeowner or tenant
- any outstanding debts incurred prior to the start of the course
- whether the student has savings etc.

For both FE and HE students, it is for colleges and universities to decide what evidence is required in order to verify the information provided by the student. However, in the interests of prudence and value for money, they should examine a random sample of cases to compare estimated expenditure with actual expenditure incurred. Students should therefore be informed that they may be asked to provide proof of actual expenditure later in the year. Institutions must remember, however, that payments from the Childcare Funds should only be made when the student has applied for their full maintenance student support and supplementary grant entitlement (if eligible).

Factors for consideration in the assessment of need

- Whether the claimed deficit between income and expenditure constitutes real need and cannot reasonably be reduced to a manageable level by the student.
- Whether the payment should be in instalments or in the form of a short term repayable cash advance and the frequency with which payments to individuals should be made and entitlement reviewed.
- The availability of support from alternative sources, e.g. bursaries, assistance from SAAS, assistance from another UK funding body (for students from England, Wales and Northern Ireland), DWP Benefits, Career Development Loans or similar schemes.
- The circumstances of students and types of need prevalent locally and any existing local schemes for improving access.
- In considering requests for support from the Funds from students who have temporarily suspended their studies through illness or who may be experiencing difficulty in finding a placement in industry as an essential part of their course, institutions should first check whether the student continues to be registered as a student. They should also take into account the prospect of the student resuming his or her course and the availability of support from other sources

Lone Parent Childcare Grant

Lone parent students who have to pay all or part of the cost for registered or formal childcare can receive up to **£1,215** a year, depending on the cost of childcare from their college or university childcare fund. "Formal" childcare includes child-minders, after-school clubs and providers of day-care and education. (If full childcare costs are paid from other sources a student should **not** apply for this grant.)

The Lone Parents Childcare Grant is not income assessed but a student must provide evidence that they are a lone parent with registered or formal childcare expenses and details of funding for childcare from any other sources. *Please see [Annex A](#) for a suggested form that you may find useful for this purpose.*

FE Students might provide:

- a copy of the front page of their tax credit award and the relevant page which shows they have made a claim as an individual
- a copy of a letter from the Department for Work and Pensions which shows that they receive benefit as a lone parent.
- Details of their childcare provider and confirmation of how much they pay.

If Lone parents (in both FE and HE) have childcare costs in excess of the maximum LPCG, they can also apply for additional help with childcare costs to the Discretionary Childcare Funds. In such cases, lone parents should be assessed for Discretionary Childcare Funding in the same way as other students. Please see below:

[Return to Chapter index](#)

ADVICE TO STUDENTS

Colleges and universities may receive enquiries about assistance from the college and university Childcare Funds before courses actually start. Those administering these Funds may advise prospective eligible students of the amount which they will receive on starting their course, especially lone parents' entitlement to the LPCG.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

FINANCIAL PROCESSES

Disbursement and Payment Amounts

Treatment of Funds by Institutions

Appeals, Applications and Decision-Making Process

Publicity

Treatment by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of payments from both funds

Administration

Allocation and Payment of Funds

Transfer and Carry Forward of Funds- Colleges

Transfer and Carry Forward of Funds- Universities

Annual Audited Returns

Colleges: Required by SFC

Universities Required by SAAS

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

DISBURSEMENT AND PAYMENT AMOUNTS

Assistance from the College and University Childcare Funds may be given in the form of a direct payment to the student or to a nominated third party, for example, a childcare provider.

When institutions choose to make direct payments to students they must ensure that students use the money for its intended purpose. It is up to individual institution to decide how best to monitor this proof for example, request receipts to show that the money has been passed to their childcare provider. Institutions should make it clear to students what their responsibilities are for example that they must use the money to pay their childcare provider immediately.

There is no limit to what an institution can award each student from the Childcare Funds. However, institutions should remember to retain enough funds to help as many student parents as possible and to ensure that there are always enough funds to pay the LPCG to eligible students.

Childcare costs will only be met to cover the time a student is studying.

For example:

If a student is attending college for only three days we would not cover costs of nursery provision for five days.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

TREATMENT OF FUNDS BY INSTITUTIONS

Appeals, Applications and Decision-Making Process

Institutions should have an appeals procedure in place for cases where students have applied unsuccessfully for help from the Childcare Funds. This procedure should be clear and students should be informed of their right to appeal. It will be for each college and university to resolve any appeals internally with individual students about the award of a payment from the funds.

Colleges and universities should have a transparent application and decision-making process. Again it will be for each institution to ensure that they have their own arrangements in place.

Publicity

Institutions are responsible for publicising the availability of these funds to their students.

Treatment by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of payments from both funds

Payments from the Funds will be disregarded as long as they are not intended for general living costs and do not, therefore, duplicate provision from the benefits system.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

ADMINISTRATION

Allocation and payment of funds

Universities will be notified by the end of June of the amount allocated to them for the Childcare Funds and funds will be distributed in August and February.

College funds will be notified in the college outcome agreement funding announcement and colleges can draw down these funds monthly as required.

The College and University Childcare Funds will include the allocated budget for LPCG for HE students. Colleges and universities will also be advised of the number of HE Lone Parents who have previously received the LPCG and SFC will advise colleges of the average number of lone parents who have received help from their discretionary childcare funds in previous years.

Transfer and carry forward of funds- Colleges

Colleges can transfer money between funds. They are encouraged to do so to enable them to effectively meet the needs of their students and their community. When using childcare funds to meet shortfalls in bursary funds, this must meet the conditions of the bursary policy in full.

Colleges cannot use Childcare funds for students who are not eligible. Colleges should also ensure that they have met the childcare needs of students who are already being supported at the college before considering using these funds for bursary purposes.

Use of bursary funds

Colleges may use bursary funds as Childcare funds. **The maximum amount of bursary funds that can be spent as CCF is half of the CCF allocation for the year.**

The original childcare allocation must be **fully committed** before bursary funds are used.

Where a college has used some of its bursary funds as CCF but has not spent its childcare allocation in full the SFC will not consider those bursary funds as spent unless previous permission has been granted. The unspent bursary funds will, as a result, be subject to a claw back under the bursary claw back rules.

Colleges will be required to report spend on childcare funds for FE and HE separately and any funds transferred should be recorded as spend under FE or HE childcare funds in the college audited student support return.

Colleges must account for their total spend on each fund, including transferred money, in their audited statements. Colleges cannot carry forward any of their Childcare Funds, into the following academic year.

Transfer and carry forward of funds- Universities

Universities can transfer money between funds to make best use of their allocations of Childcare and Discretionary funds and need not ask permission from SAAS before doing so. However, they will be asked to account for transfer of funds in their audited statements.

Universities will not be allowed to carry forward any of their Discretionary Funds, including Childcare Funds.

ANNUAL AUDITED RETURNS

Colleges: required by SFC

Colleges will be required to report their Childcare fund spend within SFC's FES 4 return. Colleges will also be required to send their audited aggregated student support returns for Childcare Funds to SFC. Returns relating to the 2018-19 allocations of Childcare Funds should be submitted by 5 October 2019.

SFC [Guidance Notes](#) provides guidance on completing the FES returns. More detailed audit guidance will be issued by SFC later this year.

Universities: required by SAAS

Each year, when funds are allocated and paid by SAAS, Fund Accounts returns for the previous academic year are distributed to institutions for completion and submission to SAAS by 31 October. Each institution will provide SAAS with:

- Audited income and expenditure Fund Accounts for the preceding academic year, signed/authorised by the Principal and independent Auditor;
- Details of Funds expenditure;
- Repayment of any unused Funds, as recorded in the return.

Please see **the guidance for HE Discretionary Funds for this and also for details of the in-year re-distribution.**

[Return to Chapter index](#)

Lone Parents Childcare Grant Higher Education Students

Allocations and Methodology

General

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

LONE PARENTS CHILDCARE GRANT- HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS- Q + A

What are the differences between the Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG) and the Lone Parents Grant (LPG)?

The LPCG and the LPG are two different sources of funding for lone parents. The table below summarises the differences in the grants, with further information included in this Q + A.

Grant	Non/Income Assessed	Administered By	How Much	Who Can be Assisted
Lone Parents Childcare Grant (LPCG)	Non-Income Assessed	College or University (Childcare Fund provided by Scottish Government)	Up to £1,215	Lone parent students who have to pay all or part of the cost for registered or formal childcare
Lone Parents Grant (LPG)	Income Assessed	SAAS (part of student's original funding application)	Up to £1,305	Single, widowed, divorced, separated or your civil partnership has dissolved, and you have at least one dependent child (including children you act as carer for).

Will lone parent HE students still have to apply to SAAS for the LPG before they can be considered for the LPCG?

Yes, funding managers should ask that lone parent HE students apply to SAAS for their LPG **before** they can be assessed for the LPCG and other funding for childcare.

What is classed as 'Registered Childcare'?

Childcare providers must be registered with the Care Inspectorate. Individual child minders must also be registered but nannies do not have to. However, the Childcare Fund can be used by students who use nannies that are recruited through agencies that are registered with the Care Inspectorate.

Is this extra information we need to obtain from the student?

In previous years, funding managers had to ensure that lone parent students had applied to SAAS for their lone parent grants before being considered for discretionary childcare funding. Now, they need only ensure the student is a lone parent. This could include evidence of their LPG award from SAAS. **However, please remember that even if a lone parent student has not received the LPG, perhaps because they were means tested 'out' of receipt, they are still eligible to apply for LPCG.**

Isn't this extra work for funding managers?

Funding managers have always had to assess a student's eligibility for childcare funding and every institution has its own method of assessment. Lone parents should not be income assessed on the first £1,215 (LPCG element) of funding they may be eligible to receive to help them with childcare expenses. But, if a lone parent applies for funding, over and above the LPCG maximum, they should be assessed in line with your institution's policy in order to establish eligibility for help from the Discretionary Childcare Funds.

Will every HE LPCG receive a payment of £1,215 towards their childcare expenses?

No, it depends how much a lone parent student is paying for formal registered childcare and how much help they are receiving from other sources. For example, if a full time HE lone parent student has to pay for after school care for a child, totalling £1,200 during term time, and the student is not receiving help from other sources then the student would only be entitled to a LPCG of £1,200. Another lone parent student may be paying £3,000 for a registered child minder who looks after her child during term time. The student is not receiving help from elsewhere but is only entitled to the maximum LPCG of £1,215. She can, however, apply for additional help from the Discretionary Childcare Funds.

What are the eligibility criteria for the LPCG?

In higher education, a student must be attending an eligible full time course of study. They should have claimed the LPG from SAAS and have claimed Child Tax Credits and free nursery places etc. as provided by their local authority. Lone Parent students need **not** meet the eligibility criteria for tuition fees to be eligible to apply for the LPCG. That is, a student who is not receiving tuition fee support due to previous study rules can still apply for the LPCG **but they would not be eligible to apply for further funding from the childcare funds.**

Will there be extra funding to help us pay HE students the LPCG?

The LPCG budget for higher education students attending college will be allocated by the Scottish Funding Council as part of the colleges' childcare funds. For HE lone parent students at university, SAAS will allocate the LPCG budget directly to the universities as part of their childcare funding. The institutions will be advised of the percentage of funds that has been included for the LPCG payments.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

ALLOCATIONS AND METHODOLOGY Q + A

What are the allocations of HE Childcare discretionary funds based on?

The allocations are based on statistical information provided by SAAS, HESA and FES.

We have money left over from last year – what can we do with it?

Institutions cannot carry forward any of their previous year's allocation. Funds in excess of this should be returned as part of the in-year redistribution process.

Can I move money from my FE childcare funds to my HE childcare ones?

There is no longer any distinction between FE and HE childcare funding allocations to Colleges – the funds are allocated collectively as childcare funding. Colleges cannot transfer money from their HE Childcare Fund into their main HE Discretionary Fund.

GENERAL Q + A

Why pool the FE and HE Childcare funds in the college sector?

It was clear from our research and consultation with our stakeholders that there is traditionally an under spend of childcare funding in the HE sector while the FE sector struggles to meet the demand for assistance with childcare expenses. It seemed sensible to pool all available resources in colleges so that any excess in one can support the other, therefore benefitting more students.

Will childcare funding come from both the SFC and SAAS to the colleges?

No, the allocation for HE childcare funding for students studying HE courses at college will be allocated to the colleges by the SFC as they normally do.

Will colleges have to keep separate accounts for FE and HE childcare funding?

No, colleges can pool the funds into one account. However, funding managers will have to keep records of who is assisted from the funds and how much is paid and whether the student is FE or HE. This way we can continue to monitor the funding allocations across the sector.

Can part-time HE students apply for help from the Childcare Fund?

No, part-time HE students cannot access the Childcare Funds whether at college or university. However, they can apply to the main Discretionary Fund for help with childcare costs.

[Return to Chapter index](#)

Annex A – Application for Lone Parent’s Childcare Grant

If you have more than one childcare provider, you must fill in a separate form for each of them. Please therefore make the relevant number of copies of this form. Please also use black ink to fill in the form.

Section A: Your personal details

Name:	SAAS reference number: «students ref no»
Date of birth:	Your National Insurance No:
University or college:	

Section B: To be filled in by the student

Please give us details of the registered or formal childcare costs you expect to pay during the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. If your course begins in January or April, the 12 month period we need information for will begin on 1 January and 1 April respectively. The childcare provider you use must be registered with the Care Inspectorate in Scotland and must provide their registration number in the box provided. We will not pay for informal childcare, for example, a friend or relative. **Please note that we regularly ask childcare providers to confirm that your child/children is/are registered with them. You must advise us immediately if you change childcare provider or of any change in your circumstances that may affect your entitlement to this grant. If we have paid you more than you are entitled to, we will ask you to pay this back. If you make a false claim, we will seek prosecution.**

We cannot help you with your childcare costs if you are getting them paid in full from another source. For example, your college or university. We will take the payment you expect to receive from other sources from your childcare costs for the year. If you expect to receive a payment from your local authority for pre-school education, you should tell us how much you expect this to be, even if you are still waiting to claim this back from the authority.

Childcare costs for the year: Please enter the total cost of registered or formal childcare that you expect to pay.	£
Childcare costs you expect to receive from other sources: Please enter the total childcare costs you expect to receive from other sources.	£
Total childcare costs: Please enter the total childcare costs for one childcare provider, less what you expect to receive from other sources.	£

Details of children	Date of Birth
Children's Full name	

Section C: To be filled in by your childcare provider

I confirm that I have agreed to provide childcare to the named child/children above and I will advise you immediately of any change to this. (Please note that it would be helpful if you could keep a record of when the above child/children are in your care and the cost of this care, as we may ask you for this information sometime in the future).

Name, address and telephone number of registered (or approved) childcare provider:

Name or Company Name

Address.....

Telephone number

My Care Inspectorate registration number is	C	S	2	0	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Manager or Proprietor’s
 Name:.....Signature: Date: