



Scottish Funding Council  
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

# SFC STATISTICS

Students Eligible for Funding 2019-20  
31 March 2020

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## Students Eligible for Funding 2019-20

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Summary: To inform stakeholders of the enrolments of students eligible for funding at Scottish Higher Education institutions in 2019-20

FAO: Principals of Scotland's universities

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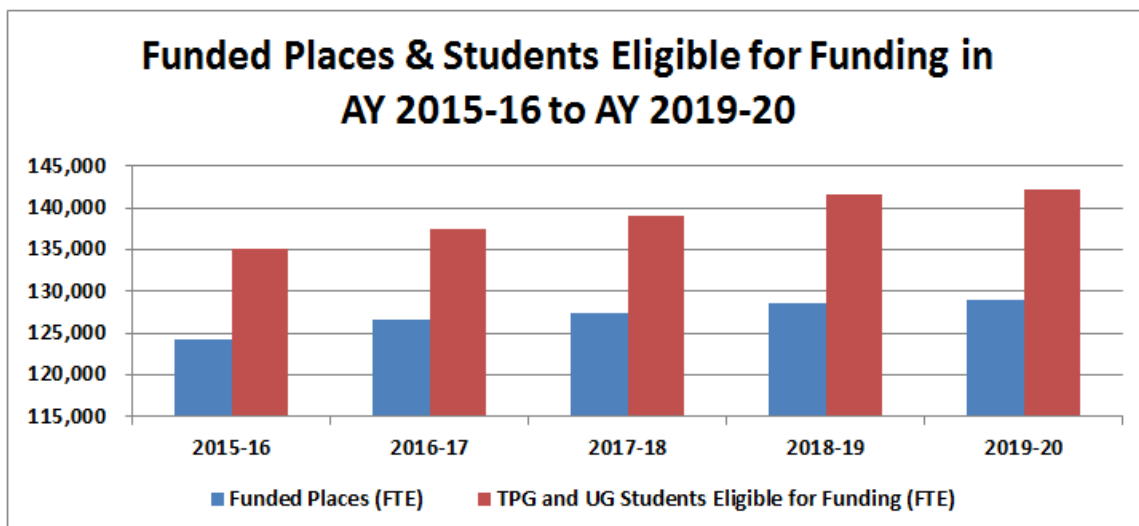
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## Executive Summary

- The total full-time equivalent (FTE) number of students eligible for funding (definition provided in paragraph 2) in 2019-20 was 149,655, an increase of 425 (0.3%) from the previous year.
- Between 2015-16 and 2019-20 there was an increase of 7,325 (5.1%) FTE students eligible for funding.
- Of the total FTE students eligible for funding in 2019-20, 86.4% were undergraduates, 8.6% taught postgraduates and 5.0% research postgraduates.
- Between 2018-19 and 2019-20 the FTE number of undergraduate students eligible for funding increased by 0.9%; taught postgraduates decreased by -4.5%; and research postgraduates decreased by -1.6%.
- Between 2015-16 and 2019-20 the FTE number of undergraduate students eligible for funding increased by 4.2%; taught postgraduates increased by 16.2%; and research postgraduates increased by 5.1%.
- For each of the past five years the FTE number of students eligible for funding has exceeded the number of funded places by at least 8.5%, see the graph below. Please see paragraph 23 for further details.





## Students Eligible for Funding 2019–20

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**149,655**

FTE\* eligible for funding



**5.1%** increase since 2015-16

**12,825**

FTE\* number of taught postgrads



**16.2%** increase since 2015-16



**15.0%**

the increase in the number  
of part-time students  
since 2015-16



**10.2%**

the percentage of eligible  
FTEs\*, over funded places  
in 2019-20

## **Introduction**

1. This report contains information on the numbers of students eligible for funding at the 19 higher education institutions (HEIs) funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in the academic year 2019-20 - see Appendix B. The figures shown are sector level aggregates.
2. In general, students eligible for funding are those for which institutions receive home fees, are not on full-cost recovery courses and on courses open to any suitably qualified applicant. Until 2012-13, a large majority of students from the rest of the UK (RUK) and the rest of the EU were eligible for funding. However, the 2012-13 academic session saw the introduction of deregulated tuition fees for RUK students entering undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses, and students paying such fees are not eligible for funding. There are no longer any continuing RUK students who started their courses prior to 2012-13 who remain eligible for funding.
3. Students not eligible for funding include those from outwith the EU, those on full-cost recovery courses and RUK students paying deregulated tuition fees. The figures, therefore, cover the majority of the students on the Scottish HEIs' mainstream courses. Appendix D contains a more detailed explanation of eligibility for funding.

## **Early Statistics Return**

4. The figures in this bulletin 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). As the figures are collected in-year they include a forecast element. Further information on the Early Statistics Return can be found in Appendices D, E and F.

## **Students eligible for funding in 2019-20**

5. The total FTE number of students eligible for funding in 2019-20 at the HEIs funded by SFC was 149,655 - see Table 1. Of this total:
  - 129,280 FTE (86.4%) were undergraduates.
  - 12,825 FTE (8.6%) were taught postgraduates.
  - 7,550 FTE (5.0%) were research postgraduates.
  - 18,275 FTE (12.2%) were part-time students.

### **Changes in students eligible for funding between 2018-19 and 2019-20**

6. Table 1 shows comparisons of the number of students eligible for funding between 2018-19 and 2019-20.
7. Changes between 2018-19 and 2019-20 include:
  - The total FTE number of students eligible for funding increased by 425 FTE (0.3%).
  - Full-time students remained at a similar level.
  - Part-time students increased by 355 FTE (2.0%).
  - Research postgraduate students eligible for funding decreased by 120 FTE (-1.6%).
  - Taught postgraduates decreased by 605 FTE (-4.5%).
  - Undergraduates increased by 1,150 FTE (0.9%).
8. The total numbers of undergraduate students eligible for funding is affected by consolidation policies - see Appendix C and paragraph 28 for further details.

### **Changes in students eligible for funding between 2015-16 and 2019-20**

9. Table 1 also shows trends in the numbers of students eligible for funding over the last five years, from 2015-16 to 2019-20.
10. Between 2015-16 and 2019-20 there was an increase in the total number of students eligible for funding of 7,325 FTE (5.1%).
11. The FTE number of Scottish and other EU full-time undergraduate students eligible for funding has increased by 4,470 (4.0%) from 111,200 to 115,670 between 2015-16 and 2019-20, while the FTE number of Scottish and other EU full-time taught postgraduate students eligible for funding has increased by 1,625 (21.0%) from 7,720 to 9,345 (see Table 1 for figures – full-time less continuing RUK).
12. Other changes between 2015-16 and 2019-20 include:
  - Full-time students eligible for funding increased by 4,940 FTE (3.9%).
  - Part-time students increased by 2,390 FTE (15.0%).
  - Research postgraduate students eligible for funding increased by 365 FTE (5.1%).
  - Taught postgraduates increased by 1,790 FTE (16.2%).
  - Undergraduate students increased by 5,165 FTE (4.2%).

## Subject areas

13. Table 2 shows the FTE number of students eligible for funding split by the subject areas used for the Early Statistics Return. See Appendix F for more details of the subject information collected in the Early Statistics Return.
14. For taught postgraduates and undergraduates the subject areas are split into controlled and non-controlled. The controlled subject areas are defined to be those subjects for which the Scottish Government sets intake targets. The controlled subject areas are:
  - Medicine (undergraduate).
  - Dentistry (undergraduate).
  - Initial Teacher Education (Bachelors of Education and Postgraduate Diplomas of Education (PGDE) courses).
  - Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration (taught postgraduate and undergraduate).
15. The controlled subjects accounted for 19,500 FTE (13.7%) of the total FTE number of taught postgraduate and undergraduate students eligible for funding in 2019-20. Of the taught postgraduates 23.8% were studying a controlled subject (3,050 FTE), principally PGDE courses. The controlled subject areas made up 16,450 FTE (12.7%) of the total FTE number of undergraduate students eligible for funding in 2019-20.
16. The non-controlled undergraduate subject areas are split into STEM and other subjects. The STEM subjects consist of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. See Appendix F for further details. The uptake of STEM subjects is considered important for Scotland's international competitiveness. For this reason SFC allocated an additional 300 funded places for STEM provision each year from 2012-13 to 2015-16.
17. Of the 112,830 FTE undergraduate students eligible for funding in the non-controlled subjects in 2019-20 the number enrolled on STEM subjects was 44,935 FTE. The proportion of non-controlled undergraduate students eligible for funding in the STEM subjects in 2019-20 is 39.8%, down from the 40.6% in 2018-19 and also a decrease from the 41.0% in 2015-16. The fall in the STEM proportion is partly due to two institutions reclassifying some of their provision from being STEM to being in the other subject areas. The first institution did so in 2016-17, covering about 545 FTE students, while the second did so in 2019-20 and this was estimated to effect around 115 FTE. Please see note 4 in Appendix A for further details.
18. The number of undergraduates on STEM subjects decreased by 680 FTE (-1.5%) between 2018-19 and 2019-20 while the other undergraduates in the



non-controlled subject areas increased by 1,250 FTE (1.9%). The decrease in STEM subjects is partly due to an institution reclassifying some of its provision from being STEM to being in the other subject areas and this is estimated to have covered around 115 FTE students. Without this reclassification the percentage decrease in STEM subjects would have been around -1.2%, while the increase in the other subjects would have been around 1.7%.

### **Comparison of students eligible for funding and funded places between 2015-16 and 2019-20**

19. SFC and the Scottish Government provide an allocation of funded places annually to each institution for taught postgraduate and undergraduate students. Details of funded places can be found in [Annex B on the SFC website](#).
20. Table 3 shows comparisons of the number of funded places for taught postgraduate and undergraduate students with students eligible for funding for 2015-16 to 2019-20.
21. Changes between 2018-19 and 2019-20 include:
  - Funded places increased by 0.2% from 128,690 to 128,930.
  - Students eligible for funding increased by 0.4% from 141,560 to 142,105.
22. Changes between 2015-16 and 2019-20 include:
  - Funded places increased by 3.7% from 124,315 to 128,930.
  - Students eligible for funding increased by 5.2% from 135,145 to 142,105.
23. In each year the HEI sector as a whole filled their funded places and recruited additional students eligible for funding by the undernoted amounts and percentages:
  - 2015-16 by 10,830 (8.7%).
  - 2016-17 by 10,815 (8.5%).
  - 2017-18 by 11,675 (9.2%).
  - 2018-19 by 12,870 (10.0%).
  - 2019-20 by 13,175 (10.2%).
24. By recruiting in excess of their number of funded places HEI's only receive the tuition fee income for the additional students. Historically institutions were required to recruit more students than funded places in order to contribute to a sector planning target set by the Scottish Government. Institutions made a commitment to at least maintain places for Scottish students and have looked to increase opportunities for students from the more deprived areas in line with Scottish Government priorities. SFC set consolidation numbers to limit the

numbers of students in the controlled and non-controlled subject areas. Institutions face financial penalties if they exceed their consolidation numbers by more than the specified tolerance thresholds. Please see Appendix C for details of the consolidation policies.

### **Deregulated tuition fees and continuing rest of UK students**

25. In general, RUK students entering undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses from 2012-13 onwards are liable to be charged deregulated tuition fees. RUK students paying deregulated tuition fees are not eligible for funding.
26. As an indication of the effect this is likely to have had on the numbers of RUK students previously eligible for funding, it is worth noting that the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) records indicate that there were around 18,800 FTE RUK students eligible for funding on full-time undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses at the Scottish HEIs in 2011-12. However, not every student from the rest of the UK who started a course from 2012-13 onwards would have had to pay the deregulated tuition fees, as some would have been eligible to pay the same fees as Scottish and other EU students. For instance, some RUK students will have dual RUK / EU status.
27. RUK students who started their programmes prior to 2012-13 were not liable to pay deregulated tuition fees and could still be classified as being eligible for funding. The RUK students who were not liable to pay deregulated tuition fees because they started their courses prior to 2012-13 but who would have been liable if they had started their courses from 2012-13 onwards were called continuing RUK students. The numbers of continuing RUK students is now zero.

### **Consolidation of controlled and non-controlled subject areas**

28. The Scottish Government has consolidation policies to limit the numbers of students in the controlled and non-controlled subject areas. Appendix C gives details of the Scottish Government's consolidation policies for controlled and non-controlled subject areas for 2019-20.
29. In order to adhere to the consolidation policy for non-controlled subject areas, an institution's total enrolments of full-time Scottish and other EU undergraduates in these subject areas should not exceed its consolidation number by more than 10%.
30. The sector total of the institutions' non-controlled consolidation numbers for 2019-20 was 97,352. [Further details of consolidation numbers for 2019-20](#) can be found in Table 5 on the SFC website.
31. The total FTE number of full-time undergraduate Scottish and other EU students in the non-controlled subject areas, derived from the Early Statistics

Return as at December 2019, was 99,275, which is 2.0% above the consolidation number. Thus the sector as a whole has adhered to the Scottish Government's consolidation policy for full-time undergraduates in the non-controlled subject areas.

32. In order to adhere to the consolidation policy for controlled subject areas, an institution's enrolments in a controlled subject area should not exceed its consolidation number by more than 10% or 10 FTE places, whichever was the larger, with the exception of dentistry where an institution's enrolments should not exceed its consolidation number by more than 5%. At sector level, the percentage difference between the FTE number of enrolments, which include RUK students not eligible for funding, and the sum of the institutions' consolidation numbers for each controlled subject area were:
- Medicine (+0.2%).
  - Dentistry (+0.6%).
  - Primary Initial Teacher Education (+2.5%).
  - Secondary Initial Teacher Education (-16.7%).
  - Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration (+1.5%).
33. The sector as a whole has therefore adhered to the Scottish Government's consolidation policy for all of the controlled subject areas.

### **Rounding of data**

34. Figures in the tables and text have been rounded independently to the nearest 5, which is why there may be some slight differences between totals and the apparent sums of their component parts. Percentages are derived from the rounded figures.

Table 1: Students eligible for funding, 2015-16 to 2019-20: Level and mode of study (1)

Level of Study / Mode of Study	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Percentage change from 2018-19 to 2019-20	Percentage change from 2015-16 to 2019-20
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE		
<b>Research postgraduate</b>							
Full-time	6,055	6,315	6,470	6,505	6,365	-2.2%	5.1%
Part-time	1,130	1,245	1,230	1,165	1,185	1.7%	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,185</b>	<b>7,560</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>7,670</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>-1.6%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
<b>Taught postgraduate</b>							
Full-time	7,815	8,865	9,420	9,710	9,345	-3.8%	19.6%
<i>Of which: Continuing FLUK (2)</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>
Part-time	3,215	3,525	3,470	3,720	3,480	-6.5%	8.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,035</b>	<b>12,385</b>	<b>12,890</b>	<b>13,430</b>	<b>12,825</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
<b>Undergraduate</b>							
Full-time	112,575	113,300	114,115	115,095	115,670	0.5%	2.7%
<i>Of which: Continuing FLUK (2)</i>	<i>1,375</i>	<i>530</i>	<i>360</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>
Part-time	11,540	11,800	12,110	13,030	13,610	4.5%	17.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>124,115</b>	<b>125,095</b>	<b>126,230</b>	<b>128,130</b>	<b>129,280</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>All Levels of Study</b>							
Full-time	126,440	128,475	130,005	131,310	131,380	0.1%	3.9%
<i>Of which: Continuing FLUK (2)</i>	<i>1,470</i>	<i>585</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>	<i>-100.0%</i>
Part-time	15,885	16,565	16,815	17,920	18,275	2.0%	15.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142,330</b>	<b>145,040</b>	<b>146,820</b>	<b>149,230</b>	<b>149,655</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and as a result figures may not sum to totals. Percentages are calculated from rounded values.

Table 2: Students eligible for funding, 2015-16 to 2019-20: Level of study by subject area (1)

Level of Study / Subject Areas	2015-16 FTE	2016-17 FTE	2017-18 FTE	2018-19 FTE	2019-20 FTE	Percentage change from 2018-19 to 2019-20	Percentage change from 2015-16 to 2019-20
<b>Research postgraduate</b>	7,185	7,560	7,700	7,670	7,550	-1.6%	5.1%
<b>Taught postgraduate</b>							
<b>Controlled subject areas</b>							
Initial Teacher Education	2,150	2,405	2,505	2,730	2,665	-2.4%	24.0%
Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration	100	135	195	255	385	51.0%	285.0%
<b>Non-controlled subject areas</b>	<b>8,785</b>	<b>9,845</b>	<b>10,195</b>	<b>10,450</b>	<b>9,770</b>	<b>-6.5%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,035</b>	<b>12,385</b>	<b>12,890</b>	<b>13,430</b>	<b>12,825</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>
<b>Undergraduate</b>							
<b>Controlled subject areas</b>							
Medicine	3,065	2,885	2,790	2,900	3,080	6.2%	0.5%
Dentistry	620	555	515	485	485	0.0%	-21.8%
Initial Teacher Education	3,180	3,195	3,165	3,335	3,390	1.6%	6.6%
Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration (3)	8,380	8,825	8,925	9,155	9,495	3.7%	13.3%
<b>Non-controlled subject areas</b>							
STEM subject areas (4)	44,665	44,635	45,200	45,615	44,935	-1.5%	0.6%
Other subject areas	64,205	65,005	65,630	66,645	67,895	1.9%	5.7%
Of which: Full-time Scots/Other EU (for Consolidated)	96,485	97,535	98,450	99,235	99,275	0.0%	2.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>124,115</b>	<b>125,095</b>	<b>126,230</b>	<b>128,130</b>	<b>129,280</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>142,330</b>	<b>145,040</b>	<b>146,820</b>	<b>149,230</b>	<b>149,655</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5 and as a result figures may not sum to totals. Percentages are calculated from rounded values.

**Table 3: Comparison of Funded Places with Taught Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students Eligible for Funding, 2015-16 to 2019-20 (1)**

SFC and Scottish Government Funded Places for Taught postgraduate and Undergraduate students

Funded places / Students eligible for funding	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Percentage change from 2018-19 to 2019-20	Percentage change from 2015-16 to 2019-20
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE		
<b>Funded places (5)</b>	124,315	126,670	127,445	128,690	128,930	0.2%	3.7%
<b>Taught postgraduate and undergraduate students eligible for funding</b>	135,145	137,485	139,120	141,560	142,105	0.4%	5.2%
<b>Percentage difference between students eligible for funding and funded places</b>	8.7%	8.5%	9.2%	10.0%	10.2%		

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 5. Percentages are calculated from rounded values.

## Appendix A: Notes for tables

Note No.	Table(s) Note Relates to	Note
1	1,2,3	<p>The numbers of students eligible for funding exclude, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students from outwith the EU.</li> <li>• Rest of UK students paying deregulated tuition fees.</li> <li>• Students on courses financed from other public sources e.g. places funded by local health boards for their staff.</li> <li>• Students on courses which are closed to general applicants or are provided on a full cost recovery basis e.g. courses funded by businesses for their staff.</li> <li>• Many students on Continuing Education courses which are not funded by SFC.</li> </ul> <p>As the figures are collected in-year they include a forecast element. For 2019-20 the forecast element accounts for 2.4% of the total figures.</p>
2	1	<p>Rest of UK (RUK) students starting taught postgraduate and undergraduate courses from 2012-13 onwards were liable to pay deregulated tuition fees. Students paying such fees are not eligible for funding.</p> <p>The RUK students who were not liable to pay deregulated tuition fees because they started their courses prior to 2012-13 but who would have been liable if they had started their courses from 2012-13 onwards are defined as being continuing RUK students. Such students remain eligible for funding. In 2019-20 the numbers of continuing RUK students are now at zero.</p>
3	2	<p>Prior to 2014-15 Honours nursing pre-registration provision was not controlled.</p> <p>SFC phased in the controlling of this provision over the four-year period 2014-15 to 2017-18, with students who started on Honours nursing courses from 2014-15 onwards being counted under the controlled nursing and midwifery pre-registration student numbers. The FTE number of Honours nursing pre-registration students eligible for funding classified as controlled was 245 in 2014-15, 455 in 2015-16, 660 in 2016-17 and 845 in 2017-18.</p>

4	2	<p>STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Further information on the STEM subjects is available in section 8 of the <a href="#">Early Statistics Return 2019-20</a>.</p> <p>Two institutions reclassified some of their provision from STEM to the other subject areas. The first did so in 2016-17, covering around 545 FTE students while the second did so in 2019-20 and this is estimated to have covered around 115 FTE students</p> <p>Assuming the numbers had remained at a similar level then without these reclassifications the percentage change in STEM subjects between 2018-19 and 2019-20 would have been around -1.2% (-1.5% unadjusted) while the percentage change between 2015-16 and 2019-20 would have been around 2.1% (0.6% unadjusted). Similarly the percentage change between 2018-19 and 2019-20 in the other non-controlled subjects would have been around 1.7% (1.9% unadjusted) while that between 2015-16 and 2019-20 would have been around 4.7% (5.7% unadjusted).</p>
5	3	<p>In general the funded places shown are taken from the final published main grant letters or Outcome Agreements, and do not take account of any subsequent adjustments. An exception to this is 134 additional places allocated in 2016-17 for nursing which have been included. Also the addition of 15 demand-led strategic funded places in 2017-18. Scottish Government allocated an additional 139 places for Initial Teaching Education for 2018-19 after the final Outcome Agreement funding allocations had been published.</p>



## **Appendix B: Higher Education Institutions funded by SFC in 2019-20**

Aberdeen, University of  
Abertay Dundee, University of  
Dundee, University of  
Edinburgh Napier University  
Edinburgh, University of  
Glasgow Caledonian University  
Glasgow School of Art  
Glasgow, University of  
Heriot-Watt University  
Highlands and Islands, University of the  
The Open University in Scotland  
Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh  
Robert Gordon University  
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland  
SRUC  
St Andrews, University of  
Stirling, University of  
Strathclyde, University of  
West of Scotland, University of the

## Appendix C: Consolidation and under-enrolment

1. The Scottish Government has consolidation policies to limit the numbers of students in the controlled and non-controlled subject areas. The controlled subject areas cover medicine, dentistry, initial teacher education and nursing and midwifery pre-registration provision for which the Scottish Government sets intake targets.
2. To ensure that institutions conform to the consolidation policies, SFC sets each institution separate consolidation numbers for the non-controlled subject areas and for each of the controlled subject areas, which the institutions are not expected to exceed. Recognising that planning student numbers is subject to some uncertainty SFC allows institutions certain leeway, called the tolerance threshold, within which an institution can exceed a consolidation number without facing a potential financial penalty for doing so. For 2019-20 the tolerance threshold was 10% for the non-controlled subject areas and 10% or 10 FTE, whichever is the higher, for the controlled subject areas of medicine, initial teacher education and nursing and midwifery pre-registration. For the controlled subject area of dentistry the tolerance threshold was 5% for 2019-20.
3. The non-controlled consolidation number relates only to Scottish and other EU students eligible for funding.
4. The Scottish Government introduced consolidation limits for the controlled subjects for the first time in 2012-13. These limits were introduced because over-recruitment in controlled subjects can lead to problems for workforce planning and for access to guaranteed training places, or jobs in the case of nursing and midwifery, after graduation. As the controlled consolidation policy relates to workforce planning, rest of UK are included in the consolidation limits.
5. SFC assigned each institution a consolidation number for 2019-20 for each of the following controlled subject areas:
  - Medicine.
  - Dentistry.
  - Primary Initial Teacher Education (includes Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)).
  - Secondary Initial Teacher Education (includes PGDE).
  - Nursing and midwifery pre-registration.
6. Further information on the consolidation policy and information on the [standard conditions of grant](#) attached to the allocations of funding for the higher education institutions for 2019-20 is available on SFC's website.

## **Under-enrolment**

7. SFC may recover funding if institutions under-enrol and fall short of the target number of SFC funded places. The tolerance threshold for under-enrolment against funded student places for the non-controlled subject areas is 2%. This threshold applies to the total funded places for Scots and EU students within the non-controlled subject areas. For controlled subjects the tolerance threshold is 3%. This threshold applies to funded student places for Scots, EU and continuing RUK students at a course level for controlled subjects.

## Appendix D: Background information

### Eligibility for funding

1. Students whose places are **eligible for funding** are those who satisfy the inclusion criteria of SFC's main methods of determining allocations of funding. Generally, this means those who are:
  - Domiciled in Scotland or elsewhere in the EU, or are rest of UK students not paying deregulated tuition fees.
  - For which institutions receive home fees.
  - Taking courses that are funded by SFC and open to any suitably qualified applicant.
2. These figures, therefore, cover the majority of the students on SFC-funded institutions' mainstream courses.
3. Among the students whose places are **not eligible for funding** are those:
  - From outwith the EU.
  - RUK students paying deregulated tuition fees.
  - On courses that are financed from other public sources.
  - On courses which are closed to general applicants, e.g. a course provided solely for the employees of a particular firm.
  - On any other cost recovery courses, for which the income from the fees paid by the students, plus any funding from any sources other than SFC, covers, or is intended to cover all of the costs of provision, including an appropriate share of the institutions' overheads, such as central administration, buildings, heating, etc.
4. The figures therefore exclude many courses such as those in-service teacher training courses that are funded by the local education authorities and many students on continuing education courses.

## **Early Statistics Return**

5. The figures in this bulletin come from SFC's Early Statistics Return, which asked institutions to provide FTE student numbers, including forecasts of enrolments expected later in the academic year, excluding students who withdrew shortly after the start of the course. The forecasts of the numbers of enrolments later in the academic year, after the census date of 1 December for the Early Statistics Return, were necessarily subject to some uncertainty.
6. For the purposes of the return, students were classified using the following categories.

### **Level of study**

- Research postgraduate.
  - Taught postgraduate.
  - Undergraduate.
7. Appendix E includes a definition of each level of study.

### **Subject areas**

8. The subject information collected in the Early Statistics Return relates to the subject areas used by SFC for monitoring for under-enrolment against allocations of funded places and for adherence to the consolidation policies (see Appendix F).

### **Mode of study**

- Full-time.
  - Part-time.
9. Appendix E includes a definition of mode of study.
  10. The notes of guidance for the [Early Statistics Return 2019-20](#), including a description of the FTE conversion factors used, can be found on SFC's website.

## **Appendix E: Categories used in the Early Statistics Return**

### **Level of course**

#### ***Research postgraduate***

1. Postgraduates mainly engaged in research whether or not they receive any formal teaching. This includes students taking taught Masters Degrees designed specifically as training in research methods and intended as preparation for advanced supervised research.

#### ***Taught postgraduate***

2. Postgraduates attending courses which are mainly taught, including graduate certificates and diplomas, although they may require students to complete a dissertation. All students on Professional Graduate Diplomas of Education (PGDE) courses are included, as are all students on award-bearing in-service teacher education courses, apart from a few who are research postgraduates, as above.

#### ***Undergraduate***

3. All those students, other than postgraduates, eligible for inclusion in the Early Statistics Return. This includes those taking undergraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates, HNDs, HNCs and other advanced courses.

### **Mode of study**

#### ***Full-time***

4. For the purposes of this return, a full-time course, or research study, involves the student in an average of at least 21 hours study a week, including private study, for periods of more than 24 weeks per year or, in the final year, for 24 weeks or less if the earlier years met the definition of full-time.

#### ***Part-time***

5. All other courses including short full-time courses with an overall course length of 24 weeks or less, i.e. full-time courses whose total length of course is less than or equal to 24 weeks.
6. Further information is contained in the notes of guidance for the [Early Statistics Return 2019-20](#), available on SFC's website.

## Appendix F: Subject areas

1. The subject information collected in the Early Statistics Returns from 2014-15 onwards is that required by SFC to monitor for under-enrolments against allocations of funded places and for adherence to the consolidation policies. Undergraduate enrolments in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects are also collected as SFC made allocations of additional funded places for provision in these subject areas from 2012-13 to 2015-16. The uptake of STEM subjects is considered important for Scotland's international competitiveness.
2. The STEM subjects are defined in terms of the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) subject codes that institutions used to record subject information in their Student returns to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). The subject information is recorded in the 'Subject(s) of Course' fields in the HESA returns. These are the subjects of the overall qualification (for example, those specified in a named award) that the student is aiming for, and not the subjects that the student happens to be studying in a particular year. For example, students aiming for a degree in physics are counted wholly under 'STEM subjects', even though the current year may include studying business or languages. The table at the end of this annex shows which JACS codes are defined as STEM subjects.
3. For the 2019-20 HESA Student Return JACS is being replaced by the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) as the subject coding scheme. However, for the Early Statistics Return for 2019-20 the subject areas were still defined using the JACS codes. This was partly to recognise that institutions might still be developing their systems to report subjects using HECoS. This also gives SFC the opportunity to use the HESA Student Returns for 2019-20 to identify any issues resulting from using HECoS, in particular the effect it has on the classification of provision between STEM and other subjects.

### More than one subject of course aim

4. Students can have up to three subjects of course aim recorded in their HESA returns to take account of students studying for joint and combined degrees. In some cases, the different subjects will belong to the same subject category (STEM, Other Subjects), so a student can be allocated to that subject category. In cases where a student has subjects of course aim in both subject categories, the student's FTE is apportioned as follows:
  - **Balanced combination** (for example, a degree in Mathematics and French). Each of the two subjects forms at least 40% of the overall programme of study. In such cases 50% of the FTE is allocated to STEM subjects and 50% to the other subjects.

- **Major / minor combination** (for example, a degree in engineering with business studies).

One subject is dominant, forming 60% or more of the programme of study and the minor subject forms between 25% and 40%. Any component of less than 25% is ignored for the purposes of recording combinations of the subjects of the overall course aim. In such cases 67% of the FTE should be counted to the subject category containing the major subject and the remaining 33% to the subject category containing the minor subject.

- **Three subjects of course** (for example, a degree in politics, philosophy and economics).

All three subjects form between 25% and 40% of the overall programme. In such cases a third of the student's FTE should be counted against the subject categories associated with the three subjects.

5. Further information on the subject areas can be found in the notes of guidance for the [Early Statistics Return 2019-20](#), available on SFC's website.



Subject areas for undergraduates for 2019-20

Subject Area	JACS Subject Classification	
	Code	Subject Group / Principal Subject
<b>Controlled Subject Areas</b>		
Clinical Medicine	A3	Clinical Medicine
Clinical Dentistry	A4	Clinical Dentistry
Pre-clinical Medicine	A1	Pre-clinical Medicine
Pre-clinical Dentistry	A2	Pre-clinical Dentistry
Nursing and Midwifery Pre-registration	B7	Nursing (part of this provision)
B.Ed. Primary / Music / PE / Technology	X1	Education (part of this provision)
<b>Non-Controlled Subject Areas</b>		
STEM Subjects	C D	Biological Sciences Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and Related Subjects
	<i>Excluding</i> D1	<i>Excluding</i> <i>Pre-clinical veterinary</i> <i>medicine</i>
	D2	<i>Clinical veterinary medicine</i> <i>and dentistry</i>
	F	Physical Sciences
	G	Mathematical Sciences
	H	Engineering
	I	Computer Sciences
	J	Technologies
Other Subjects	All other subject codes <i>Including</i> D1	<i>Pre-clinical veterinary</i> <i>medicine</i>
	D2	<i>Clinical veterinary medicine</i> <i>and dentistry</i>

## **Appendix G: Other statistical publications dealing with aspects of Scottish higher education**

### **Scottish Funding Council**

1. Other [publications produced by SFC relating to higher education](#) are available on SFC's website.

### **Scottish Government**

2. The Scottish Government publishes some [information on higher education in Scotland](#).

### **Higher Education Statistics Agency**

3. The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) publishes higher education statistics for the UK as a whole. Some of its publications contain [figures for individual HEIs in Scotland](#).