

Performance and Resources Committee Meeting

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 8 June 2022
Paper Title	Student Funding Review 2021-22
Agenda Item	10
Paper Number	PRC6-G
Responsible Officer	Jim Godfrey, Finance and Resources Director
Status	Disclosable
Action	For Decision

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report provides an update of progress by college colleagues on the Student Funding Review.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:

- **Note** the progress to date, and
- **Consider** the student funding allocations for 2022-23 within the overall funding allocation.

3. Background

- 3.1.** Members will recall that the issue of student funding 2020-21 was discussed at its meeting in December 2021. It was agreed that the GCG Sustainable Institutions Group would discuss this matter further and report back to this committee. The following progress update was provided (by the colleges) to the last meeting of this committee:

“The GCG Sustainable Institutions Group (SIG) met on 4 March 2022 to discuss a review of Student Support Funding with a focus on gaining a clearer understanding of the reasons for the differing outturns for AY20/21 across the three Colleges. All three Glasgow Colleges did, to varying degrees, underspend the 20/21 student funding allocation necessitating a Regional clawback. 20/21 included several additional in year allocations and volatile demand due to the pandemic. These added increased complexity and difficulty in modelling estimated expenditure.

It was agreed that a Short Life Working Group (SLWG) would be set up to enable the Student Funding Leads within the three Colleges to collaborate and compare approaches in order to then brief members of the SIG accordingly. It is anticipated that some of the 20/21 variations may be linked to COVID19 and also possibly to wider Scottish Government/SFC policy changes, however it is difficult to make any definitive statement on this until data from all three Colleges has been collated and analysed.

Once the SIG has had an opportunity to review the findings of the SLWG, a summary paper will be provided to the GCRB Performance and Resources Committee in June 2022.”

4. Report

- 4.1.** College representatives met again in May 2022 and provided a further update to the GCRB finance and resources director. The following points emerged as a result of the meeting between college representatives:

- The last two years have been abnormal both in terms of operational activities and also student funding. Glasgow Kelvin College and Glasgow Clyde College have expressed the view that decisions should not be based upon these abnormal years.
- Some changes have recently taken place in organisational teams responsible for student funding. Glasgow Kelvin College have recently reorganised their teams and are currently analysing how the service should be delivered in the future.
- Further work needs to be undertaken by the colleges to analyse the policies, procedures and expenditure relating to student funding.
- There is a commitment amongst the three colleges to standardise student support funding across the region. With this in mind, colleagues within Glasgow Kelvin College and Glasgow Clyde College have expressed the view that funding should not be re-allocated until there is a consistency of student support across the region.

- In terms of the allocation of student funding for 2022-23, there is a difference of opinion between colleagues within the assigned colleges. Two alternative proposals have been put forward:
 - a. The allocation of student funding for each college is maintained at the level proposed within the indicative allocation.
 - b. City of Glasgow College advocate that there is a change in the allocation of funding, reflecting the increased student funding expenditure incurred by the college in recent years. Their proposal is that there is no reduction base allocation provided to City of Glasgow College in 2022-23 and that the regional reduction is shared between the other two colleges.
- The colleges have committed to maintaining student funding as a standing agenda item on the GCG Sustainability Group meetings. This will serve two purposes: it will allow the group to monitor progress of the short-life working group; and the colleges will share the student funding expenditure forecasts in a timely manner to enable an internal redistribution as appropriate.

5. Risk and Compliance Analysis

- 5.1. The provision of student funding supports learners to undertake, and complete, their learning outcomes. Therefore, the opportunity to enhance the way in which student funding is provided will help to address the risk that 'Fewer learners achieve positive outcomes' (Risk 007).
- 5.2. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

6. Financial and Resource Analysis

- 6.1. There are no direct financial implications regarding this paper. However, the review of student funding has clear financial implications for learners and these will be considered as part of the final report.

7. Learner, and Equalities, Implications

- 7.1. The provision of student funding supports all learners, including those most disadvantaged, to study at college.