

Briefing Paper on Forward Planning for the Scholarships Budget

The Education Committee has identified the provision of overseas scholarships as one of the five priorities for Education in the 2019/20 financial year. This paper sets out the likely demands for scholarship funding in 2019 – 2022 and notes some changes from projections made in 2017.

Decisions requested

Members of the Education Committee are asked to:

- Note the information provided.
- Consider future funding requirements for overseas scholarships.

2017 Assumptions for Scholarship Planning

The costs for a scholarship student vary as they progress in their studies, largely because the St Helena financial year does not correspond to the academic year. For that reason, the financial impact of a scholarship student is not the same in each financial year in which costs are incurred, and the three years of study are costed across four financial years. In each budget year, consideration must be given to students at different stages of their educational journey and to the varying costs of each stage.

In 2017, those expectations as regards student numbers at each stage of study were as set out below:

Budget Year 18/19	
Yr1	1
Yr2	6
Yr3	0
New	5

Budget Year 19/20	
Yr1	5
Yr2	1
Yr3	6
New	4

Budget Year 20/21	
Yr1	4
Yr2	5
Yr3	1
New	6

Yr 1 – students in the middle of the first year of study at the start of the financial year and funded for the full financial year

Yr 2 – students in the middle of the first year of study at the start of the financial year and funded for the full financial year

Yr 3 – students in the middle of the first year of study at the start of the financial year and funded for the last half of the financial year

New – students starting in the September following the start of the financial year

Current Assumptions

Based on current information, the expectations for the current budget year and the three following years (2019 – 2022) are as follows:

Budget Year 18/19		Budget Year 19/20		Budget Year 20/21		Budget Year 20/21	
Yr1	1	Yr1	4	Yr1	3	Yr1	6
Yr2	6 (4)	Yr2	1 (2)	Yr2	4	Yr2	4
Yr3	0	Yr3	4	Yr3	1 (2)	Yr3	5
New	4	New	3	New	6	New	6

Changes include:

- One student who was initially approved for 2 years of funding but might have requested a third year of funding has returned to St Helena at the completion of his studies.
- One student who has just completed the second year of study is not continuing on to year 3. There is a possibility, however, that this student will request a third year of funding beginning in 2019/20, although this would require approval. This possibility has been factored into the assumptions.
- Fewer students than previously anticipated are likely to begin overseas studies in 2019.

Next Steps

The process of calculating the scholarships budget is complex. In addition to costs for tuition and stipends, the budget also takes into consideration accommodation and transit costs, various fees, administration costs, lump sum payments on behalf of students, costs for student support, and other factors. The timing of various payments is critical in determining actual budgets.

Work is currently underway to complete the costs which are likely to arise in future years based on current information.

At the same time, however, the change in how scholarship funding is managed, as proposed in previously discussed policy documents, has the potential to dramatically simplify the management process. It would be helpful, however, for the Education Committee to consider going forward what a reasonable allocation for scholarships might be, and how this funding can be best assured.