



Higher Education



Student Support



in Scotland



2018-2019



Statistical summary of financial support provided to students by the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)



October 2019



SAAS Student Awards Agency Scotland
Funding your future

A National Statistics
Publication for Scotland



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2018-2019

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Post school learners in Scotland have the option of undertaking a wide range of learning including Further or Higher Education. The course chosen and the level of study will determine the type and level of funding available. The policy on what support is available is determined by the Scottish Government*.

The Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government that provides financial support** and advice to eligible students in Higher Education (HE) at university or college. SAAS administers student support arrangements for Scottish domiciled HE students, as well as European Union (EU) students studying in Scotland.

This report provides the main statistical findings on students who received financial support from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019. Each of the main funding schemes are presented separately: **full-time** students (split into **undergraduate** and **postgraduate** students in the accompanying tables), **nursing and midwifery** students and **part-time** students. Statistics of students receiving support through the **discretionary and childcare funds** in academic session 2017-2018 are also provided.



Data Sources and Supporting Documents

The information in this report is mainly based upon a data extract drawn from the live system in October 2019. Discretionary fund analysis is based upon 2017-2018 financial returns from Higher Education institutions. Both sources are administrative data sources, with statistics production being a secondary use of the data.

Two supporting documents to accompany this publication are available through the statistics page on the SAAS website:

- A policy background document setting out the key policies in place in the academic session 2018-2019; and
- Data tables containing all tables and figures included in this publication as well as definitions of terms.

See: https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm

*<https://www.gov.scot/publications/helping-meet-costs-learning-training-guide-funding-2019-2020/pages/7/>

Financial support covers non-repayable **bursaries and grants paid to students, the payment of **tuition fees**, or the provision of **fee loans** and **living cost grants**.

Schemes of Support

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019

📖 headline figures

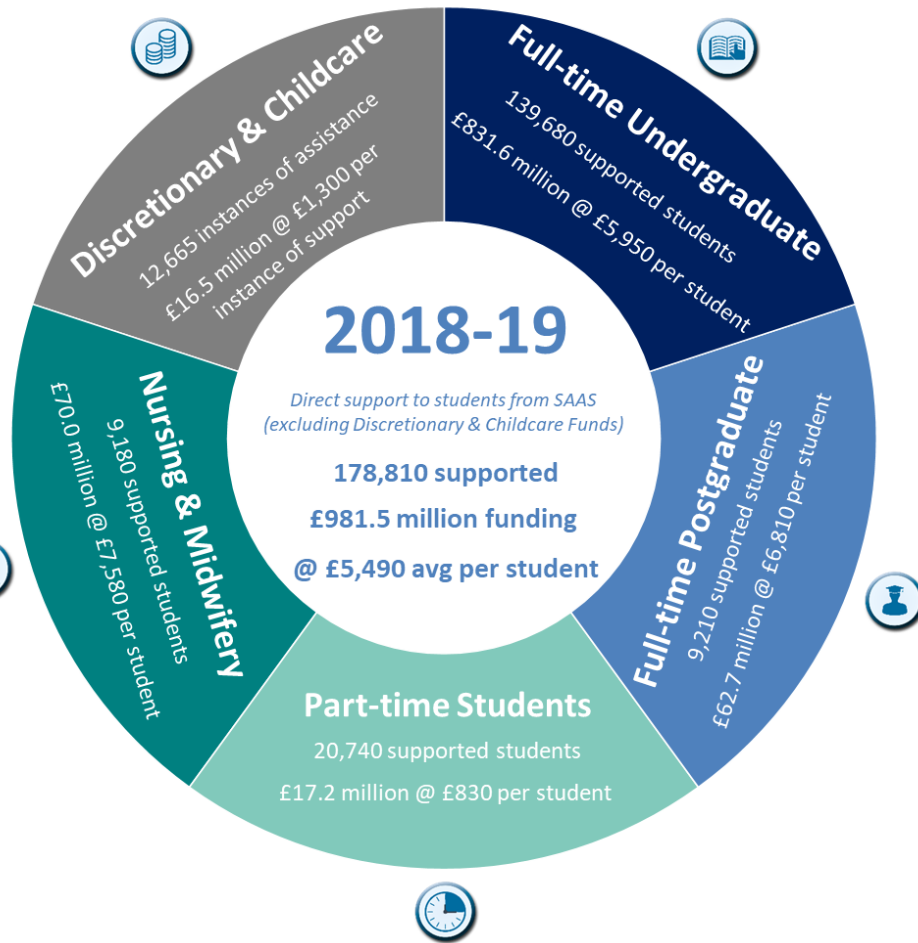


Figure 1: High level overview of the schemes that provide student support in academic session 2018-2019 (Discretionary and Childcare funds are for academic session 2017-2018)

Key Statistic

The number of students receiving direct support from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019:

178,810

Up 1.4% from 176,405 in academic session 2017-2018

SAAS provides direct support to students in Higher Education through four main funding schemes. In academic session 2018-2019, SAAS supported:

- **148,890** full-time students (pages [3-9](#));
Split into:
 - **139,680** were undergraduate students;
 - **9,210** were postgraduate students;
- **20,740** part-time students (page [10](#)); and
- **9,180** nursing and midwifery students (page [11](#)).

SAAS also provides financial support to students in financial difficulty through the Discretionary & Childcare funds (page [12](#)). There were **12,665** instances of assistance in the 2017-2018 academic session. These funds are administered by the institutions in Scotland, though SAAS determines the initial allocations of funds and evidences how funds have been used.

Summary

 full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland 2018-2019

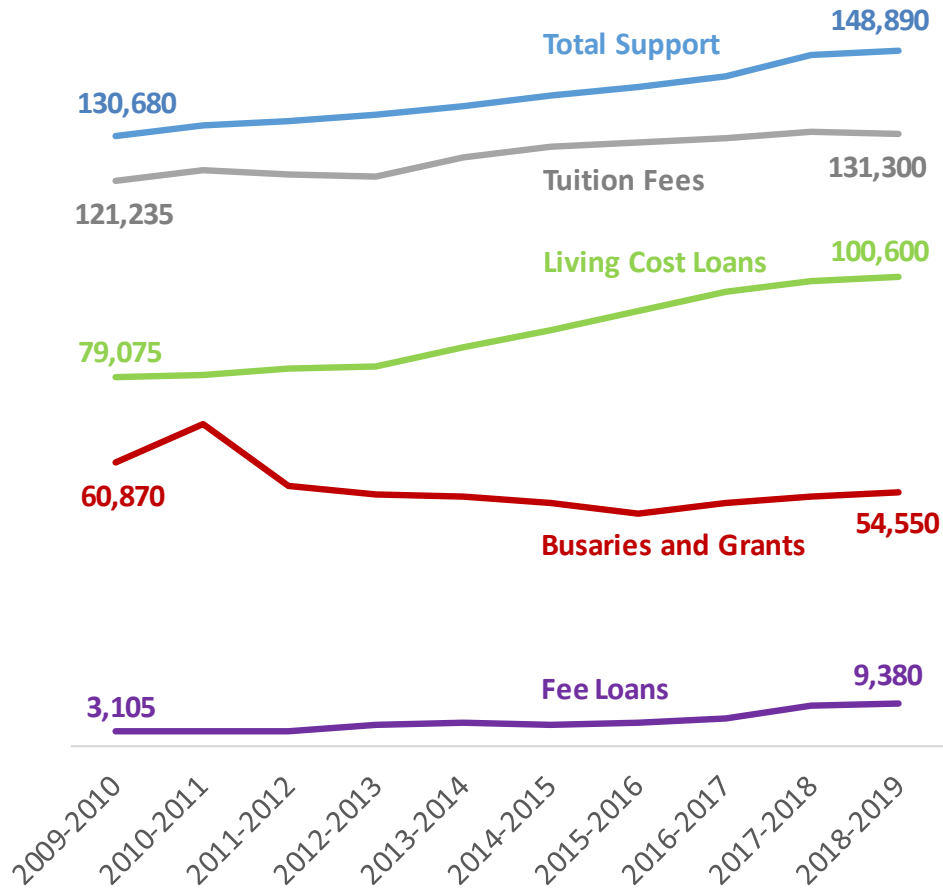


Figure 2: Numbers of students receiving different types of support from SAAS (2009-2010 to 2018-2019)

Key Statistic

The number of full time students receiving support in academic session 2018-2019:

148,890

Up 0.7% from 147,920 in academic session 2017-2018

The number of supported* full-time students has increased by **0.7%** between academic sessions 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 and by **13.9%** between academic sessions 2009-2010 and 2018-2019.

With the exception of tuition fees, all components of support have increased in academic session 2018-2019 compared to 2017-2018. The largest percentage increase in student numbers since academic session 2017-2018 was for fee loans (up by **7.8%**). The largest monetary increase since academic session 2017-2018 was for living cost loans (increasing by £5.3 million from £528.4 million to **£533.6 million**).

*Supported students can be in receipt of any combination of bursaries and grants and/or fees and/or loans.

Fee Support

 full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019



Fee Support (tuition fees & fee loans)



Number of students: 140,680

Amount of support: £280.3 million

Average fee support per student: £1,990

Key Statistic

The number of full time students receiving fee support in academic session 2018-2019:

140,680

Up 0.3% from 140,240 in academic session 2017-2018

The majority of Scottish and EU domiciled students studying a full-time Higher Education course are eligible for fee support* from SAAS. In academic session 2018-2019, **94.5%** of supported students received fee support from SAAS.

A total of **£280.3 million** was paid out in fee support in academic session 2018-2019 (up from £278.0 million in academic session 2017-2018). **£222.9 million** was paid out for tuition fees (down from £223.5 million) and **£57.4 million** was paid out in fee loans** (up from £54.5 million). The majority of fee loans were paid out to postgraduate students (**5,895**). However, the average undergraduate fee loan awarded (**£8,620**) was almost double the average postgraduate loan awarded (**£4,660**).



Figure 3: Numbers of students receiving tuition fees or fee loans paid by SAAS (2009-2010 to 2018-2019)

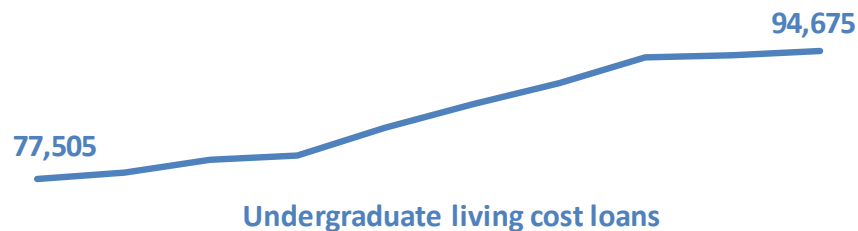
*In addition to tuition fee support from SAAS, public funds are also used to meet teaching and associated institutional costs for eligible students undertaking a higher education qualification at fundable institutions in Scotland.

**Fee loans are available for Scottish students studying in the rest of the UK and for postgraduate students studying an eligible course in the UK.

Living Cost Loans

 full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019



Living cost loans

Number of students: 100,600

Amount of support: £533.6 million

Average support per student: £5,300



Key Statistic

The number of full-time students authorised by SAAS for a living cost loan in academic session 2018-2019:

100,600

Up 0.7% from 99,895 in academic session 2017-2018

The number of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students who were authorised for a living cost loan in academic session 2018-2019 increased by **0.7%** compared to the 2017-2018 academic session. The total amount authorised was **£533.6 million** at an average of **£5,300** per student.

Undergraduate students from low income households may be entitled to additional income assessed loan amounts. There were **45,165** income assessed loans authorised, with a total value of **£276.7 million** and an average of **£6,130** per student.

It should be remembered that the loans authorised by SAAS will be different to the final take-up as recorded by the Student Loans Company (SLC)*.



Figure 4: Numbers of full-time students authorised by SAAS for a living cost loan (2009-2010 to 2018-2019)

*The payment of loans is administered by the Student Loans Company (SLC). Applications for loans are assessed by SAAS which determines the amount the student is entitled to and subsequently what is authorised for payment. The most recent estimates on take-up are published by SLC (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/student-loans-in-scotland-2018-to-2019>).

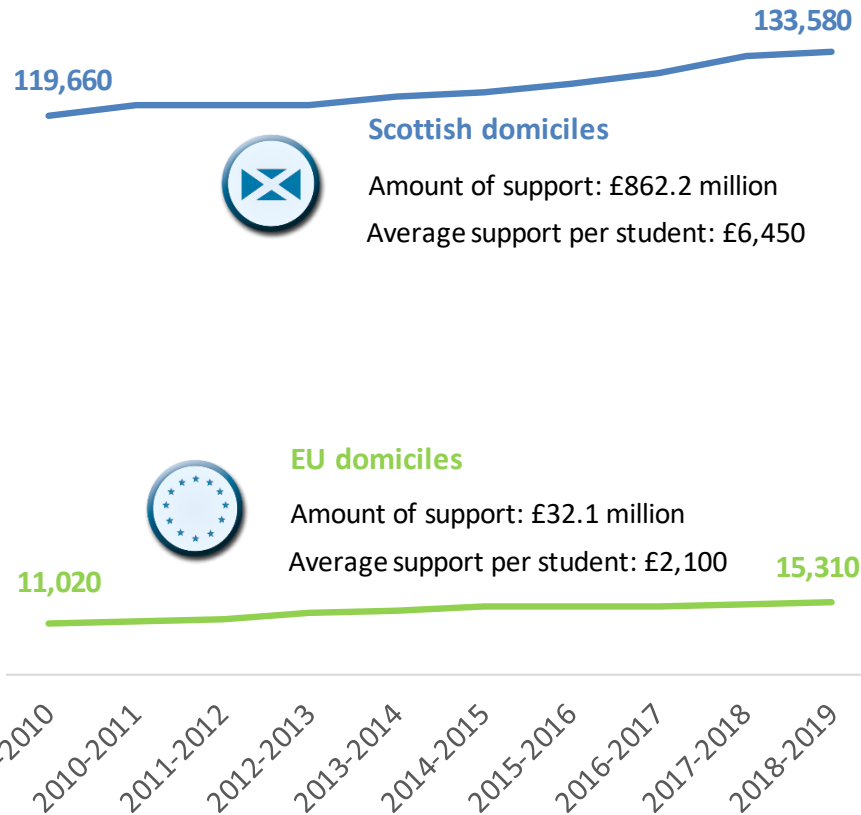


Figure 5: Numbers of EU domiciled students supported by SAAS (2009-2010 to 2018-2019)

Key Statistic

The number of EU students receiving support from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019:

15,310

Up 0.5% from 15,240 in academic session 2017-2018

The majority of full-time students supported by SAAS are Scottish domiciled*. There were **133,580** Scottish domiciles supported in academic session 2018-2019 receiving **£862.2 million** in support.

EU domiciled students make up **10.3%** of the full-time student population supported by SAAS and received **£32.1 million** in support in academic session 2018-2019.

EU domiciled students would typically only be eligible for a fees only support package. However there are some exceptions to this, evidenced in EU students receiving on average **£2,100** of support. See table FT.2 in the Data tables for full breakdowns https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

*Domicile is considered to be the country that a person is assessed as being their permanent home.

Bursaries & Grants

 full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019



Amount of support: £80.3 million

Average support per student: £1,470

Dependants' Grant
240 (£0.6M)

Care Experienced Bursary
840 (£6.4M)

Adhoc payments
1,095 (£0.7M)

Lone Parents' Grant
3,210 (£3.8M)

Disabled Students' Allowance
4,895 (£9.7M)

Independent Students' Bursary
19,180 (£15.8M)

Young Students' Bursary
30,825 (£43.4M)

Figure 6: Numbers of students receiving a bursary and/or grant from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019 broken down by bursary type

Key Statistic

The number of students receiving a bursary and/or grant from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019:

54,550

Up 1.7% from 53,620 in academic session 2017-2018

Non-repayable bursaries and grants* are available to help students who meet certain criteria access education. The number of full-time students receiving a bursary and/or grant in academic session 2018-2019 increased by **1.7%** compared to academic session 2017-2018. The total amount awarded was **£80.3 million** at an average of **£1,470** per students.

Around one fifth (**81.6%**) of the total amount of bursary and grant support paid was through the three bursaries: Young Students Bursary providing **£43.3 million**; Independent Students Bursary providing **£15.8 million**; Care Experienced Bursary providing **£6.4 million**. See table FT.3 in the Data tables for full breakdowns

https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

*Further information on bursaries and grants can be found on page 3 in the policy background document which accompanies this publication https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm

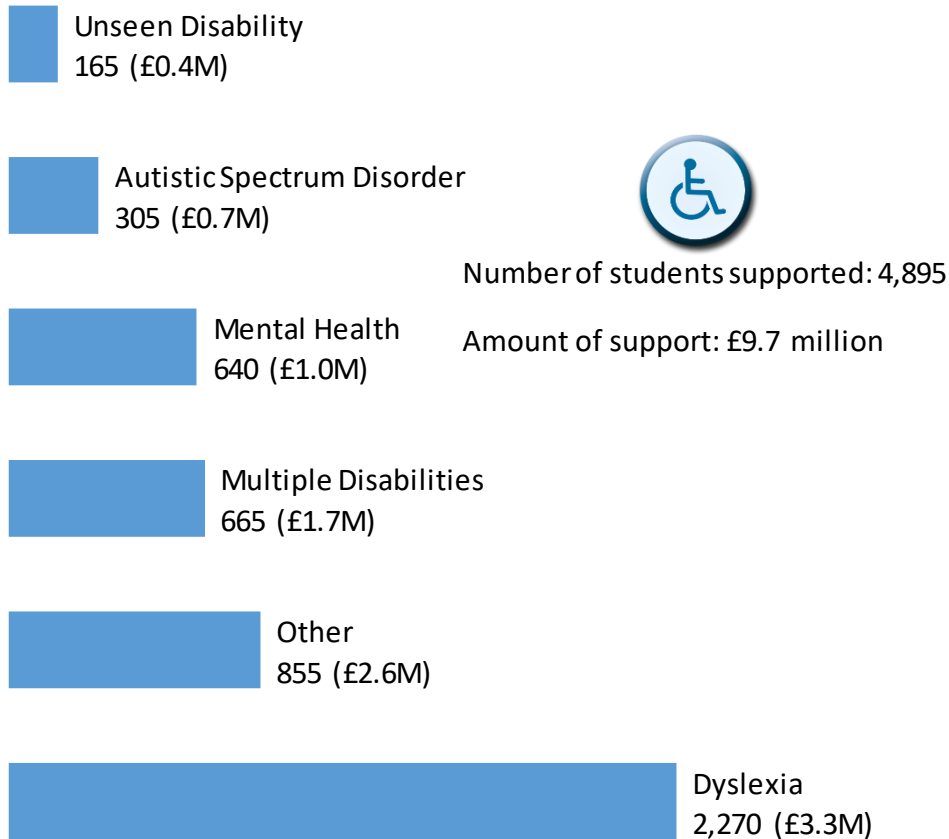


Figure 7: Numbers of students receiving Disabled Students' Allowance from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019 broken down by disability type*

Key Statistic

The number of students receiving Disabled Students' Allowance from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019:

4,895

Up 5.2% from 4,655 in academic session 2017-2018

The number of full-time students who received Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) in academic session 2018-2019 increased by **5.2%** compared to academic session 2017-2018. The total amount awarded was **£9.7 million** at an average of **£1,990** per student. The amount paid is dependent on the specific needs and circumstances of the student applying.

Dyslexia has historically been the single largest reason for students receiving DSA support. In academic session 2018-2019, **2,270** students received **£3.3 million** in DSA support associated with their dyslexia. There were **2,625** students receiving **£6.4 million** in DSA support for a disability other than dyslexia. See tables FT.3 and FT.4 in the Data tables for further information https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

*Information on disability is only captured for those students claiming DSA support from SAAS. The number of students with disabilities in higher education is likely to be higher than the number recorded here. This is for a variety of reasons including students who may be sufficiently supported through their institution, or others who may choose not to disclose their disability.

Deprivation Analysis

full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019

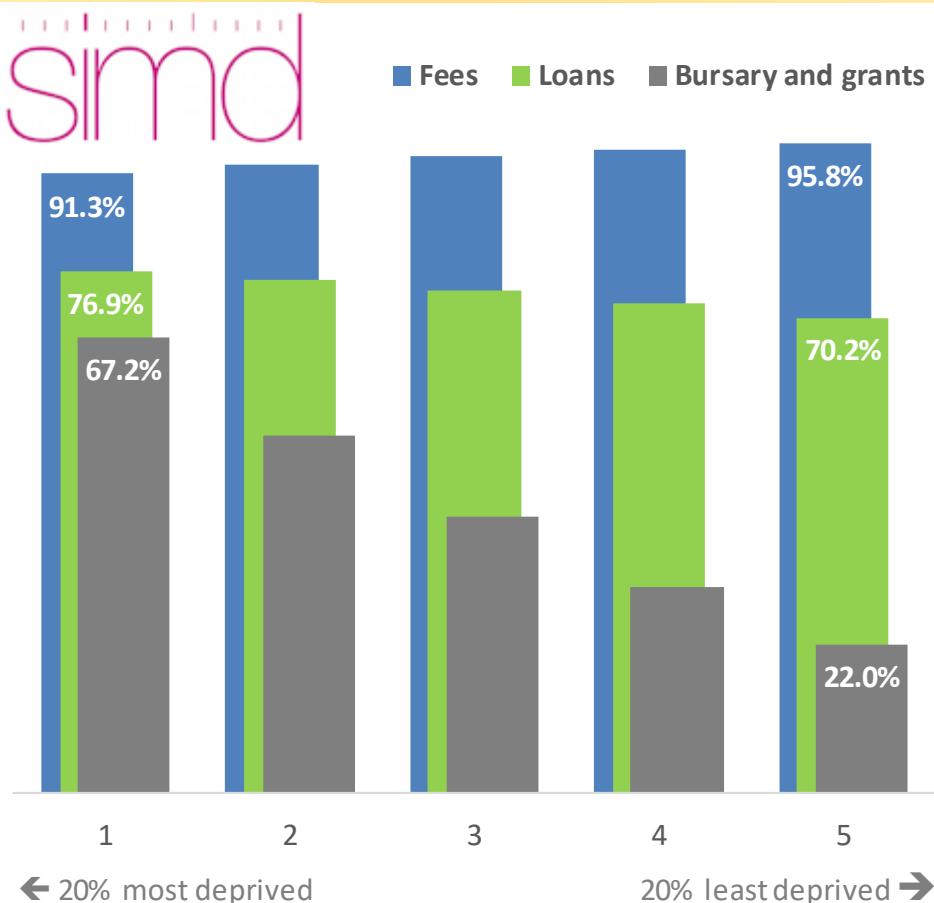


Figure 8: The percentage of students within each SIMD quintile receiving fees, living cost loans and bursaries & grant support in academic session 2018-2019

Key Statistic

The number of students coming from the 20% most deprived areas in academic session 2018-2019:

22,340

Up 3.3% from 21,635 in academic session 2017-2018

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is a widely used measure in evidencing the extent to which institutions are becoming more inclusive of students from deprived areas in Scotland.

Students from the most deprived areas of Scotland receive more support per student (£7,100) than students from the least deprived areas of Scotland (£5,820). Figure 8 shows that students from the most deprived areas (67.2%) are more likely to receive a bursary and/or grant than those from less deprived areas (22.0%). See table FT.5 in the Data tables for full breakdowns https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

*Analysis is based on those students where the provided address is a valid Scottish postcode. Address is that provided by the student and may not necessarily reflect where the permanent residence is e.g. term time address could be provided. As such, the analysis may not reflect actual residence circumstances of the students.

2019-2020 Analysis

 full-time

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019

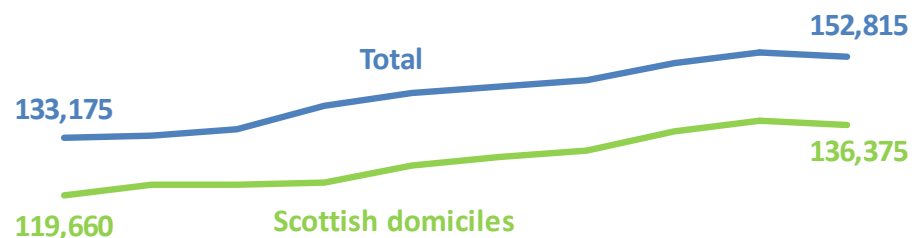


Figure 9: The number of applications for full-time support received by September each year broken down by domicile of student (2010-2011 to 2018-2019).

Key Statistic

The number of applications for academic session 2019-2020 received before September 2019:

152,815

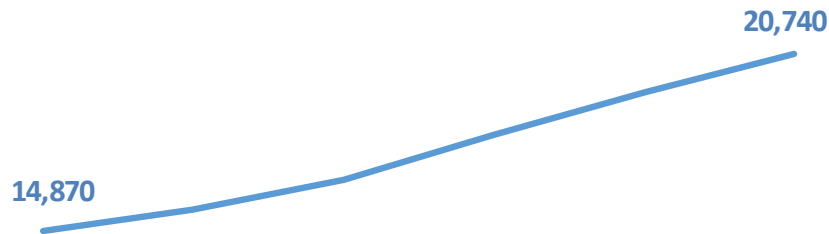
Down 0.9% from 154,175 in academic session 2017-2018

This section provides an early indication of applications received for academic session 2019-2020 for the full-time undergraduate and postgraduate schemes.

In academic session 2018-2019, **93.3%** of applications had been received by September 2018. Of the **165,140** applications received by the end of 2018-2019, **148,840** resulted in students receiving support from SAAS (**90.1%**).

If the number applying by September follows the same proportion as academic session 2018-2019 then SAAS may expect to receive around **164,405** applications for academic session 2019-2020. Of these, around **148,180** may expect to receive financial support.

See table FT.6 in the Data tables for further information
https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.



Amount of support: £17.2 million
Average support per student: £830

Key Statistic

The number of part-time students receiving support from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019

20,740

Up 6.5% from 19,470 in academic session 2017-2018

Students undertaking an undergraduate level course or a two year Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) on a part-time basis may be eligible for payment of their tuition fees under the Part-time Fee Grant (PTFG) scheme.

The number of part-time students supported by SAAS in academic session 2018-2019 increased by **6.5%** compared to academic session 2017-2018. The total amount of support awarded was **£17.2 million** at an average of **£830** per student.

The majority of part-time students are female (**72.9%**). Over three quarters of all part-time students are aged over 25 (**26.7%**); however, the age profile variation for both male and female students is broadly similar.

Figure 10: Numbers of part-time students supported by SAAS (2013-2014 to 2018-2019*)

*There were two forms of part time support which were bought together in academic session 2013-2014 to create a single system of part-time support. Data prior to the 2013-2014 academic session is not shown, but are available in tables PT.1 and PT.2 in the Data tables https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

Nursing & Midwifery Students

Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019

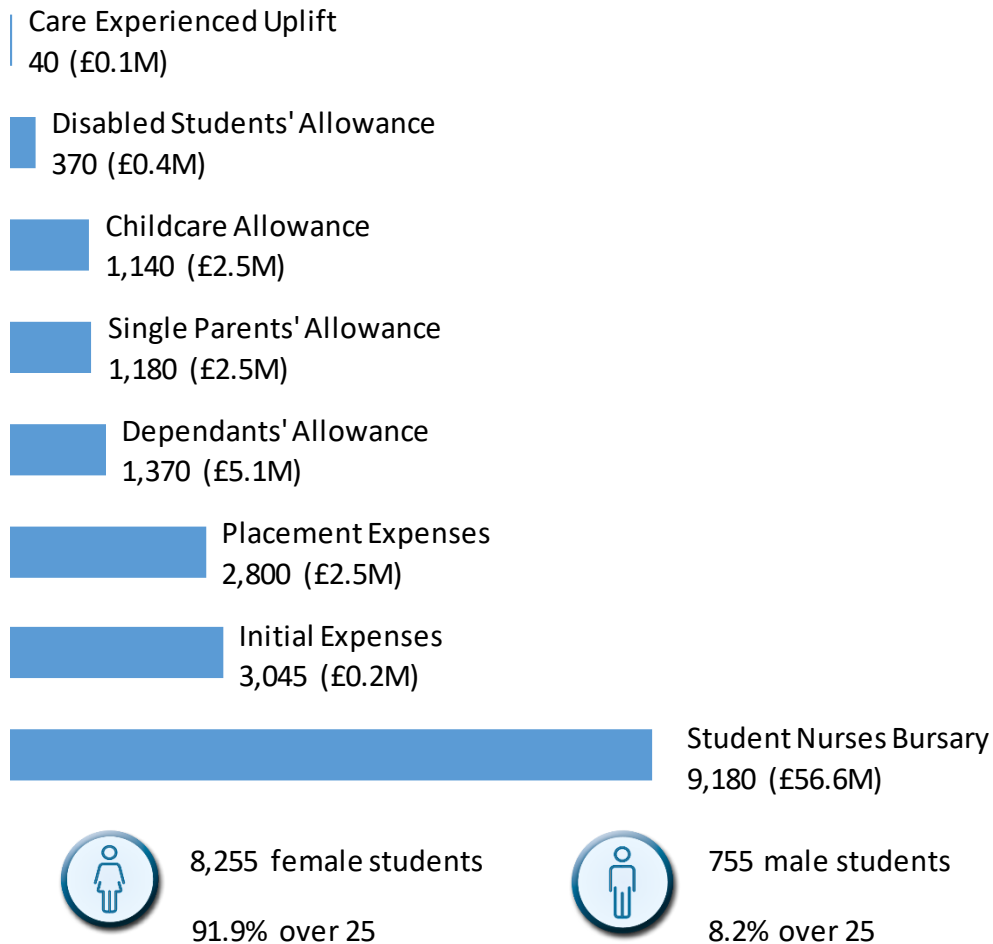


Figure 11: Numbers of nursing & midwifery students receiving different types of support from SAAS (2018-2019)

Key Statistic

The number of nursing and midwifery students receiving support from SAAS in academic session 2018-2019:

9,180

Up 1.9% from 9,015 in academic session 2017-2018

SAAS administers the full-time Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary (NMSB) scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government Health and Social Care Directorate.

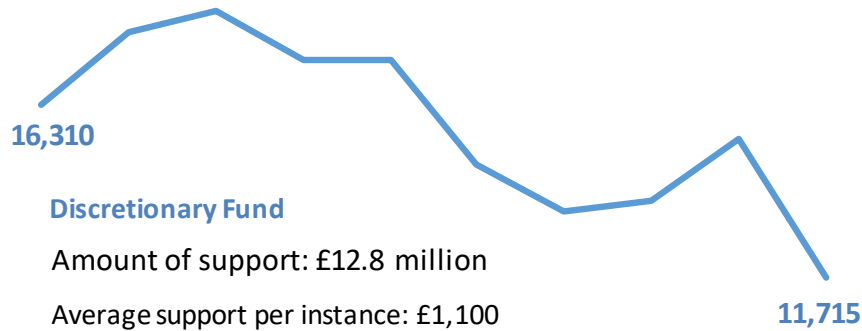
For the NMSB scheme, the total amount of support awarded was **£70.0 million** at an average of **£7,620** per student in academic session 2018-2019. The Student Nursing Bursary provided over four fifths (**81.0%**) of the total amount of NMSB support (**£56.6 million**). The dependents allowance was the next largest expenditure (**£5.1 million**).

The majority of students supported through the NMSB scheme in academic session 2018-2019 were female (**91.9%**). Nearly half of all NMSB students were over the age of 25 (**44.5%**), with male students in particular being more likely to be aged over 25 (**61.9%** of male students compared to **44.5%** of female students). See tables N.1 to N.3 in the Data tables for full breakdowns https://saas.gov.uk/about_us/statistics.htm.

Discretionary & Childcare Funds



Higher Education Support in Scotland
2018-2019



Key Statistic

The number of instances of discretionary fund support in academic session 2017-2018*:

11,715

Down 24.1% from 15,425 in academic session 2016-2017

The discretionary fund provides financial support to students who have difficulty entering Higher Education for financial reasons, or have financial difficulties while they study. There were **11,715** instances of assistance in academic session 2017-2018, providing **£12.8 million** of support at an average of **£1,100** per instance. Discretionary fund support was most typically provided for general living expenses – issued **9,445** times at an average of **£1,140** per instance.

A separate discretionary childcare fund is available for students to apply for help towards registered or formal childcare costs. There were **950** instances of support in academic session 2017-2018, providing **£3.7 million** of support at an average of **£3,870** per instance.

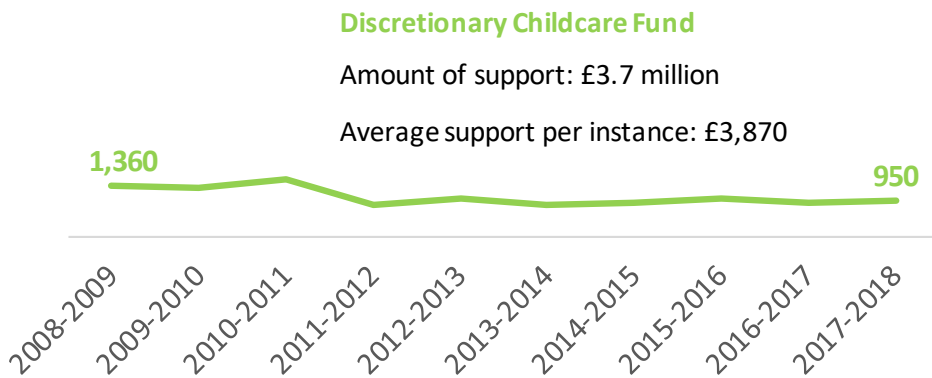


Figure 12: Instances of support from the discretionary and discretionary childcare funds (2008-2009 to 2017-2018)

*Discretionary and childcare fund analysis is based upon financial returns from institutions. The most up to date returns available at the time of publication is for academic session 2017-2018.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical publication:

- May be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors and may be subject to a charge. Please contact saasstats@gov.scot for further information.

Complaints and suggestions

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Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.



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Published by the Student Awards Agency Scotland, 29 October 2019

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