

Annex D: Strategic investment proposals

Background

- 1 In October 2012 SFC invited universities to submit proposals for additional funded places in the areas of widening access, articulation, undergraduate skills for growth and taught postgraduate highly-skilled workforce (taught postgraduate skills).
- 2 These places were intended to contribute to changing the culture of recruitment from particular groups, and to enhance the availability of skilled graduates for important sectors of the Scottish economy.
- 3 After consideration of proposals from universities, SFC agreed the following distribution of places for 2013-14:
 - 727 undergraduate places for widening access to the most selective universities
 - 1020 undergraduate articulation places across 14 universities
 - 342 undergraduate places to support the energy and life sciences sectors
 - 815 taught postgraduate places focussed on skills for the key economic sectors (rising to 850 in 2014-15).
- 4 The taught postgraduate places will be embedded for AY 2014-15 and subsequent academic years, subject to future spending reviews.
- 5 SFC's intention is that the undergraduate places will increase year on year at the same institutions as the places were allocated in AY2013-14 until

2016-17. There will be a further 2089 places in each of AYs 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 rising to a total of 9,206 places (8,356 undergraduate, 850 taught postgraduate) by 2016-17 subject to recruitment from the targeted groups or type of courses agreed, at which point the places will be embedded into institutions' funding allocations. This will be subject to the outcome of subsequent spending reviews.

- 6 More information on the number of places allocated to each HEI can be found on our website under Sector Information; **Annex B Tables (Excel)** at <http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/OutcomeAgreements/OutcomeAgreementsOverview.aspx>

How places should be used

- 7 SFC expects that universities will continue to use the places for their original intended purpose in 2014-15 and beyond. Our specific expectations for each set of places are outlined below.

Widening access

- 8 HESA data shows that the most selective universities have consistently had a lower proportion of Scottish entrants from the most deprived backgrounds than their neighbours. Widening access places were therefore allocated to the most selective institutions to be used to recruit students domiciled in the most deprived 40 per cent of Scotland's postcode areas, based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).
- 9 The places were allocated on the condition that the total number of students from the most deprived 40 per cent postcode areas at each university must rise relative to the baseline, and the additional places must contribute to this increase. SFC intends that the places contribute to increases across the spectrum of the most deprived 40 per cent, rather than concentrated on the top end of this spectrum.
- 10 In addition to targeting these places to secure higher entrant numbers, universities were also required to put in place support for students to maximise the chance of their continued progression through HE.
- 11 Since the purpose of introducing the places is to allow selective institutions to give opportunity to students from deprived backgrounds as part of a wider contribution to culture change, institutions were not required to 'tag' individual students on entry as specifically taking up one of the places.

- 12 Outcome agreement targets for widening access should make reference to the contribution that the additional places will make to achieving these targets.
- 13 Some institutions may have continued to use the 2009 version of the SIMD database for recruitment to these places for 2013-14, as the places were awarded at the transition between the two datasets. We expect institutions to use the 2012 dataset for recruitment for 2014-15 onwards. We will take account of this transition in monitoring recruitment to the places.

Articulation

- 14 The articulation places allocated were used to increase the number of students articulating from college to university on a 2+2 or 1+3 model, where the student completes their first and/or second year of the course (at HNC/HND level) in college and subsequent years in university. The additional places were awarded on the condition that the students are given a guaranteed offer of progression on entry to college and, while in college, have associate student status with the university; and that the university transfer at least 75% of the gross funding for the places to the college to pay for the provision.
- 15 While institutions were not required to specify which subject areas, courses or areas of Scotland they would use the additional places to target, the places were primarily intended to support new articulation routes. The number of students recruited through these places is to be in addition to a baseline rather than a substitution for existing students entering through an articulation route. It was a requirement of the places that the students be recruited to start in year one in the college in 2013-14, rather than starting in the university in 2013-14.
- 16 Outcome agreement targets for articulation should make reference to the contribution that the additional places will make to achieving these targets.
- 17 Guidance on use of the places was issued in March 2013, available online at (http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Guidance_06032013_Articulation_scheme.pdf). Following queries from universities, we have also issued a Frequently Asked Questions document. This can be found at (http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Additional_articulation_places_scheme_Frequently_Asked_Questions.pdf)

Undergraduate skills

- 18 Places were allocated to support undergraduate courses in key sectors likely to have the greatest economic impact. The number of proposals for this incentive scheme was particularly high and SFC decided to focus the allocation of places

on areas likely to have the greatest impact on the energy and life sciences sectors.

- 19 Institutions specified which subject areas would be supported and the rationale for how these supported key sectors.
- 20 Outcome agreement ambitions for SFC strategic aims 3 and/or 4 (see Table 2 above) should make reference to the contribution that these additional places will make to achieving those ambitions. This should include a reference to the impact that universities expect to make with these places.

Taught postgraduate skills

- 21 Places were allocated to institutions to support a highly skilled workforce in support of a knowledge based economy, focussed on links with the key economic sectors. The decisions on which courses to support were based on the fit of proposals with the following key criteria:
 - Encourage academia – industry (or other public or third sector bodies) links by supporting taught postgraduate (TPG) provision that meets skills demands from the key sectors of Creative industries; Energy; Financial and business services; Food and drink; Life sciences; Sustainable tourism; and also Aerospace, defence and marine; Chemical sciences; Construction; Forest and timber technologies; and Textiles
 - Stimulate the provision of new courses designed with industry (or with other public or third sector bodies) and allow placements, where these are appropriate to the acquisition of additional relevant skills
 - Potentially, offer opportunities for part-time study on modular programmes.
- 22 SFC allocations to universities include a fee waiver, which means that enrolment on the courses should be free to Scots/EU students receiving a funded place on these courses.
- 23 Institutions specified in advance which courses the places would support and should recruit only to those courses. If universities are having problems with recruitment to the specified courses they should alert the outcome agreement manager at the earliest opportunity.
- 24 Outcome agreement ambitions for aims 3 and/or 4 should make reference to the contribution that these additional places will make to achieving those

ambitions. This should include a reference to the impact that universities expect to make with these places.

How SFC will monitor the places

- 25 In line with existing practice for strategic funded places, SFC will monitor recruitment to the additional places for access, articulation, skills and taught postgraduate skills for 2013-14 and beyond.
- 26 Since many of the places are intended to change the recruitment culture of institutions, it is important that any new places are not used to substitute for existing activity and SFC will therefore monitor against a baseline wherever possible. Acknowledging that different methods of analysis of data sources may have been used by individual universities in putting forward proposals for the places, we will agree the appropriate baseline – both in terms of the number used and the method used in arriving at the number - for each set of places with individual universities over the course of the summer.
- 27 We will monitor the use of the additional places through a combination of use of existing data sources – HESA and, if appropriate, the early statistics return – and the outcome agreement process, including the self-evaluation report and on-going discussions with universities. We will consult universities on any changes required to the early statistics return in the summer and release final guidance on monitoring later in 2013.
- 28 Specifically in relation to the taught postgraduate skills places, we will ask universities at the beginning of the 2013-14 academic session to report on the use of the places for specific courses.

Further information

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