



SFC Guidance

Additional articulation places scheme Frequently Asked Questions

Issue date: 18 July 2013

Summary: The following frequently asked questions have arisen about the SFC Articulation scheme for academic year 2013-14.

FAO: Principals and directors of Scotland's colleges and universities

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SFC Articulation scheme, 2013-14

The following frequently asked questions have arisen about the SFC Articulation scheme for academic year 2013-14. Responses to these questions are provided. Universities and colleges are asked to note that these FAQs are intended to assist universities and colleges in the delivery of this new scheme for 2013-14 only, and that we intend to apply the guidance as issued in March 2013 for future years.

Frequently asked questions

1. Q: How should the student enrol on the scheme?

A: The scheme has been designed so that the student should enrol on a degree programme, but will spend one or two years at college in the first instance. By doing this, the student will attract the appropriate fee from SAAS.

2. Q: The scale of our articulation under this scheme and our existing model means that it is impossible for us to identify individual students. What are the consequences if we cannot identify individual, named students from day one?

A: We are providing additional funding at the HE rate for these students, and a guaranteed offer of a place at university is a pre-requisite of receiving the funding. We expect colleges and universities to work together to identify and support the students through their studies, including offering 'associate student status' to ensure that articulation happens.

Universities should identify students from day one, however should a student not progress and that place is therefore not filled, the college and university should fill the place with another articulating student from the college.

3. Q: If a student is enrolled at college, what fee will they attract?

A: If a student is enrolled at college, or enrolled on an HN programme at university, they will attract a fee of £1,285 from SAAS.

4. Q: If the student is enrolled at university, but will undertake the first one or two years at college, what fee will they attract?

A: In this instance, the student will attract a fee of £1,820.

5. Q: How will the fee be received if a student is enrolled at college?

A: If the student is enrolled at college, as long as the student applies for their fees from SAAS, the college will receive the fee.

6. Q: My university and college are following the SFC guidance and courses will be classed as degrees. How will this affect the funding route?

A: With the new articulation routes, it will be down to how individual universities present these courses to SAAS. All colleges and universities have to declare their courses annually with the Student Loans Company and SAAS picks up the data from them. If they register these courses as four-year university degrees then they would attract the normal higher tuition fee from SAAS. However, if in 2013-14, the programme is registered as two individual courses, i.e. HND at college or university: two-year degree at university, then SAAS can only pay the lower fee in the first two years.

7. Q: If a student registers on the programme as two separate courses (i.e. two years in college, two years at university) will it impact on any other financial elements for the student?

A: The Student Support and Services teams in colleges and universities should be able to direct students as to how this will affect them. However, as an example, if a student has to register on an HND at college or university, then onto a two-year degree as opposed to a four-year university degree, they may have to pay Council Tax during the summer months.

8. Q: If the college receives the fee, how is the university expected to pass on 75% of the gross funding to the college?

A: If the college receives the fee then SFC expects the university to pass on to the college sufficient funding to make up 75% of the gross amount. SFC will compensate the university for any instances where the actual income they receive falls short of the amount SFC expects them to receive.

9. Q: Is there a worked example for this?

A: The university has 1 FTE in price group 5 (£6,500 gross), and the student is registered at college. The college is expected to receive 75% of the gross price,

i.e. £4,875, while the university is expected to receive the remaining 25%, i.e. £1,625. In deriving allocations of teaching grant, SFC assume the place would attract tuition fee income of £1,820, meaning the SFC teaching grant allocated for the place is £6,500 - £1,820 = £4,680. However, if the student is registered at the college then the tuition fee income received would be £1,285. To ensure that both the university and the college can receive the amount of funding they were expected to, SFC will increase the teaching grant for the university by the difference between the assumed and actual tuition fee income i.e. £1,820 - £1,285, or £535.

10. Q: How will SFC gather data to ensure that universities receive the appropriate amount of funding for this scheme?

A: We will collect data in our Early Statistics returns in December/January to ensure that institutions do not lose out on funding.

11. Q: How should these students be reported to SFC?

A: As these places are funded at the HE rate universities should record these students in their HESA returns. While these students are at college they will also be recorded in the college's FES records. Students should be recorded as fundable in the HESA records and as non-fundable in the FES records.

12. Q: If these students are to be recorded as degree students, how will this impact on our entry standards, and our performance indicators?

A: The scheme has been designed so that the students are funded at the HE rate, and thus we expect these students to be classed as degree students. We expect universities to undertake a joint recruitment process with colleges and ensure that there is sufficient support for students to ensure that articulation takes place.

13. Q: When the students are in college, we have no control over what happens in colleges and this could affect our performance indicators relating to progression.

A: As above, we expect universities and colleges to work together to ensure that appropriate support is in place to ensure that articulation takes place. As this is a new scheme, paid for by HE money, SFC needs to be able to track the progress of students and thus the success of the scheme.

If a student applies through college in the first instance, this student will eventually need to be recorded in the HESA returns. SFC needs to be able to track students and to track the success of the scheme and the use of the funding associated with it.

Where places are not filled by college entrants, the default position should be for the university to fill the place with another articulating student from a college.

14. Q: If a student leaves after first or second year from college, do we record these students as withdrawn with an HNC or HND from the university programme, as these students need to be reported to HESA?

A: Yes.

15. Q: How will SFC monitor places?

A: As we have already set a baseline or target for articulation to take place, we will use the data collected to check if that level of articulation is taking place. If an institution falls short of their target/baseline, whether we continue to allocate the same number of places will form part of the negotiation for the next outcome agreement.

16. Q: If we meet our target for articulation, but don't fill our additional places, will clawback apply?

A: We will look at the data returned by the university and engage with the university and colleges for an explanation about any under-enrolment. Any clawback to be applied will inform part of the discussions for the outcome agreement for the forthcoming academic year.