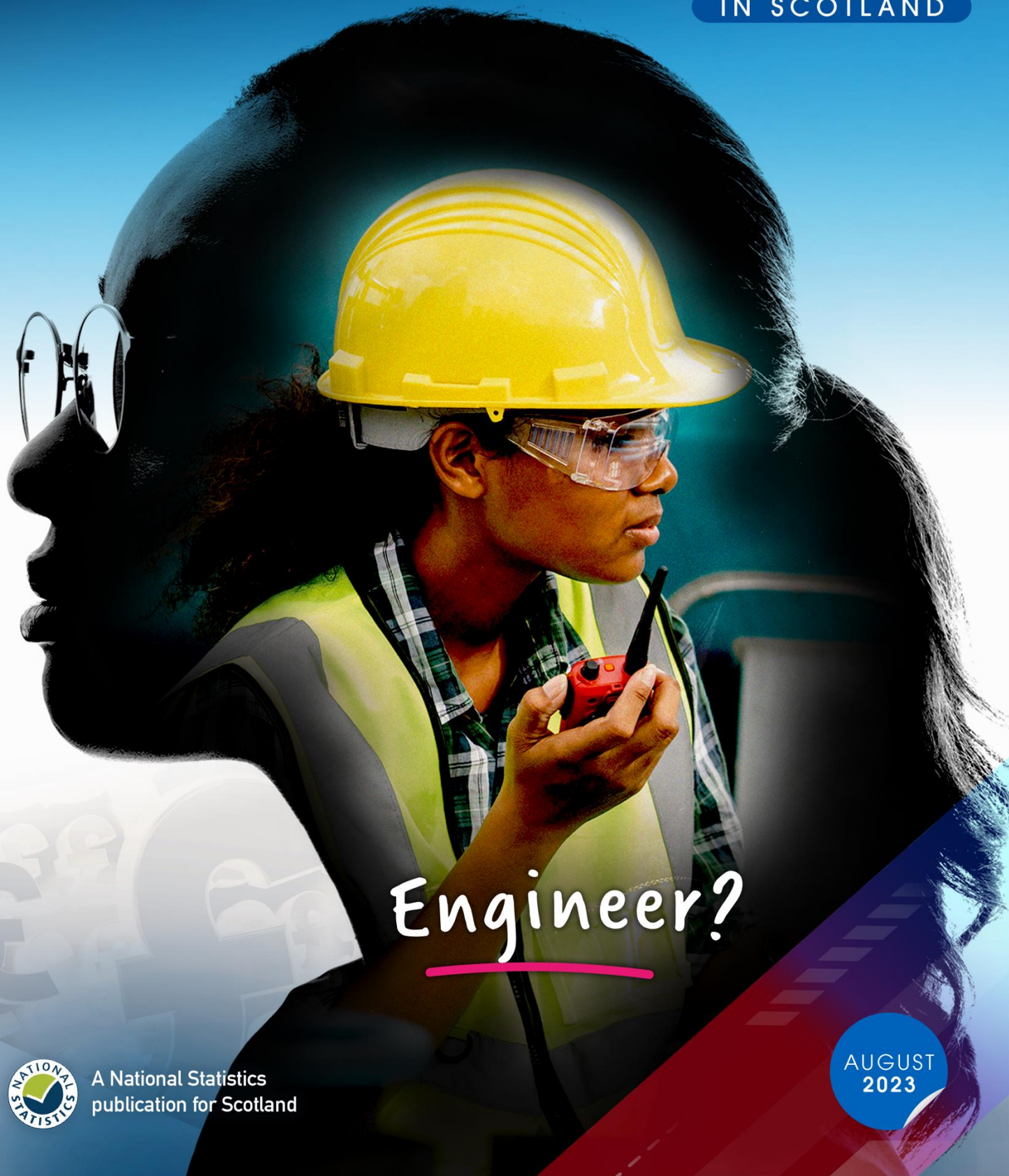


Higher Education Student Support

IN SCOTLAND



Engineer?



A National Statistics publication for Scotland

AUGUST
2023

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Introduction

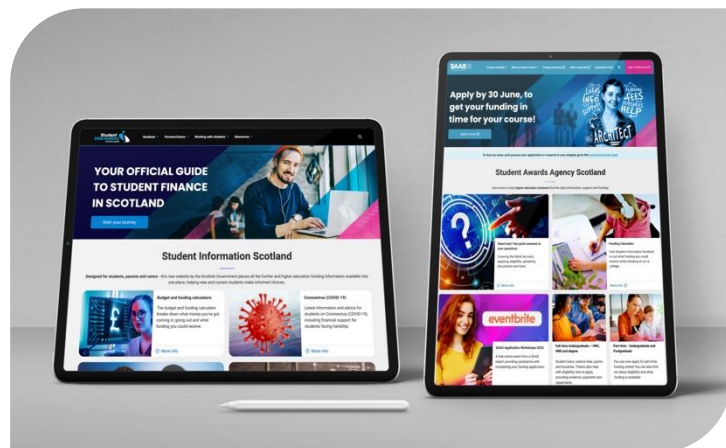
This publication provides a summary of financial support provided to students by the Student Awards Agency Scotland, August 2022

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. More information is available at [Student Information Scotland](#).

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 currently administers student support arrangements for Scottish domiciled HE students, as well as some European Union (EU) students studying in Scotland.

This report provides the main statistical findings on students who received financial support from SAAS in academic year 2022-23. 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.

Each of the main funding schemes are presented separately: full-time students (split into undergraduate and postgraduate students in the accompanying tables), paramedic, nursing and midwifery students and part-time fee grant students. Statistics of students receiving support through the Discretionary and Childcare Funds in academic year 2021-22 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 August 2023. Discretionary Fund analysis is based upon 2021-22 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 year 2022-23; and
- data tables containing all tables and figures included in this publication as well as definitions of terms.

Schemes of Support

Headline Figures

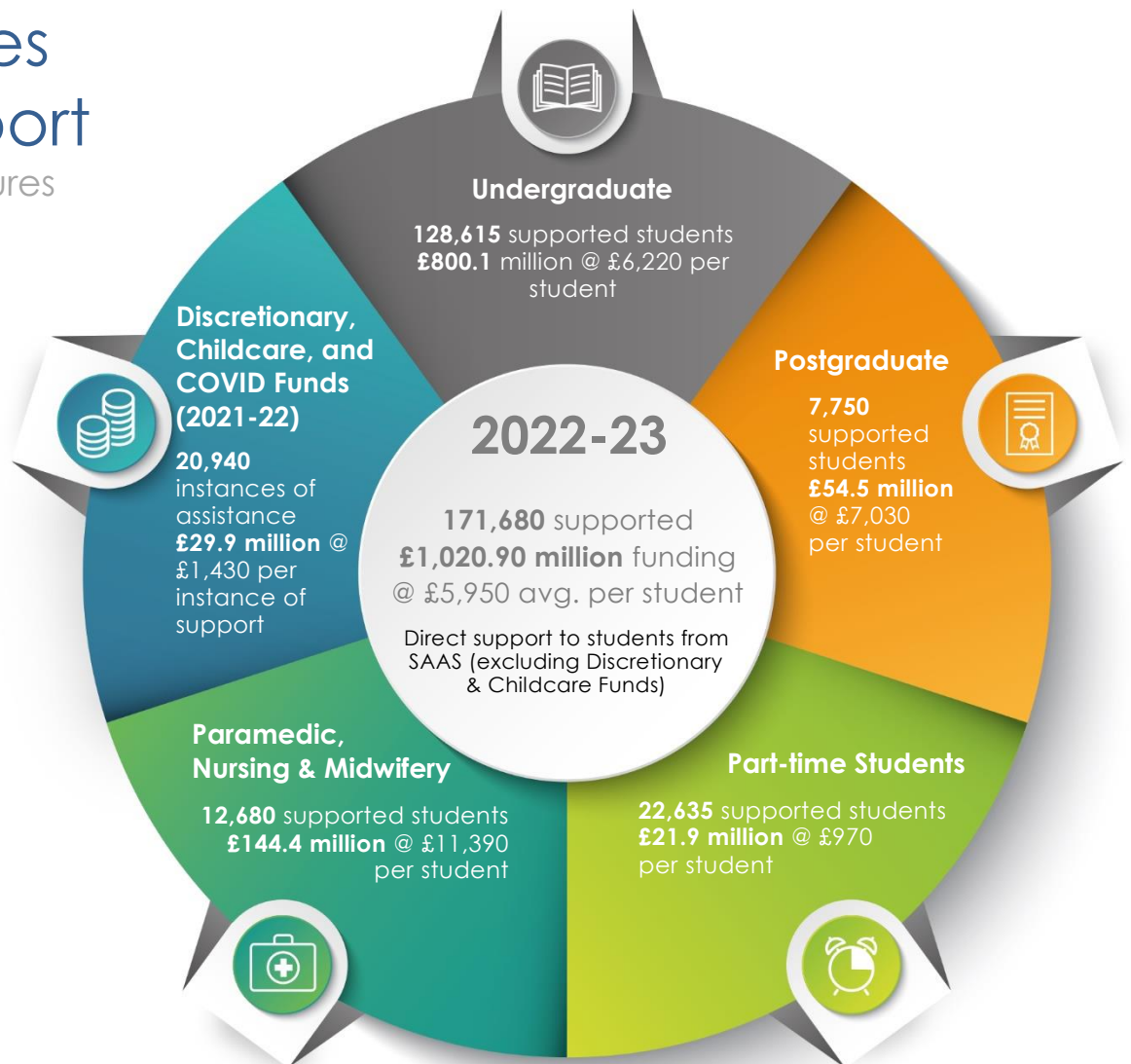


Figure 1: High level overview of SAAS' student support schemes, 2022-23 (Discretionary and Childcare funds are for academic year 2021-22).

Note: Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students are included in Postgraduate breakdowns.

SAAS provides direct support to students in Higher Education through four main funding schemes. In academic year 2022-23, SAAS supported:

- 136,360 students on the full-time scheme:
 - 128,615 were undergraduate students;
 - 7,750 were postgraduate students;
- 22,635 part-time students; and
- 12,680 paramedic, nursing and midwifery (PNMSB) students.

SAAS also provides financial support to students in financial difficulty through the Discretionary & Childcare Funds. There were 10,845 instances of assistance across these funds combined (and 10,095 in COVID Discretionary Funds), in 2021-22.

Discretionary Funds are administered by the institutions in Scotland, though SAAS determines the initial allocations of funds and evidences how funds have been used.

Key Statistic

Number of students receiving direct support from SAAS in academic year 2022-23:

171,680

This is a decrease from 179,665 in academic year 2021-22.

Summary

Full-time

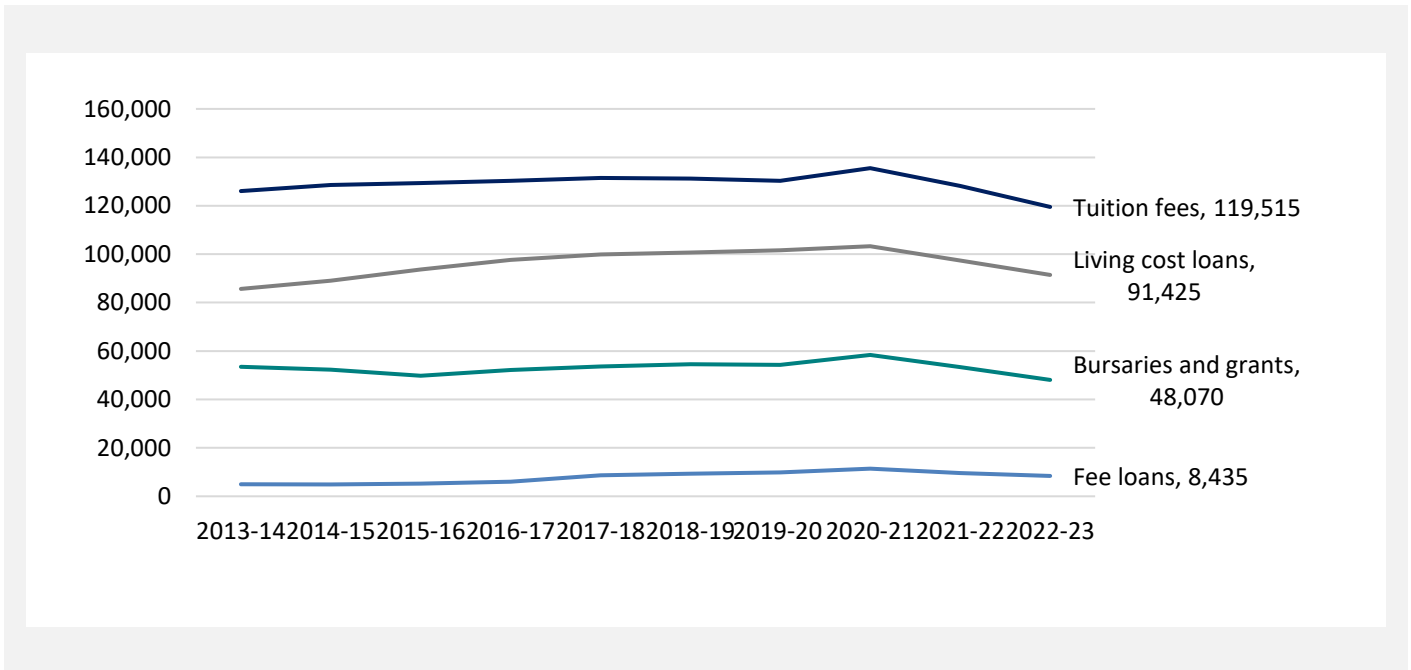


Figure 2: Number of full-time students receiving support from SAAS by type of support (2013-14 to 2022-23).

The number of supported full-time students has decreased by 7.1% between academic years 2021-22 and 2022-23. In total, £854.6 million in support was provided to full-time students in 2022-23, at an average of £6,270 per student.

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

Student numbers for all types of support have decreased between academic year 2021-22 compared to 2022-23. The largest percentage decrease in student numbers since academic year 2021-22 was for fee loans (down by 12.7%), which also saw the largest monetary percentage decrease (decreasing by 10.2% from £58.7 million to £52.8 million). Longer-term trends show a decrease of 0.7% in supported full-time students over the ten-year period between academic years 2013-14 and 2022-23.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time students receiving support in academic year 2022-23:

136,360

This is a decrease of 7.1% from 146,745 in academic year 2021-22.

Fee support

Full-time

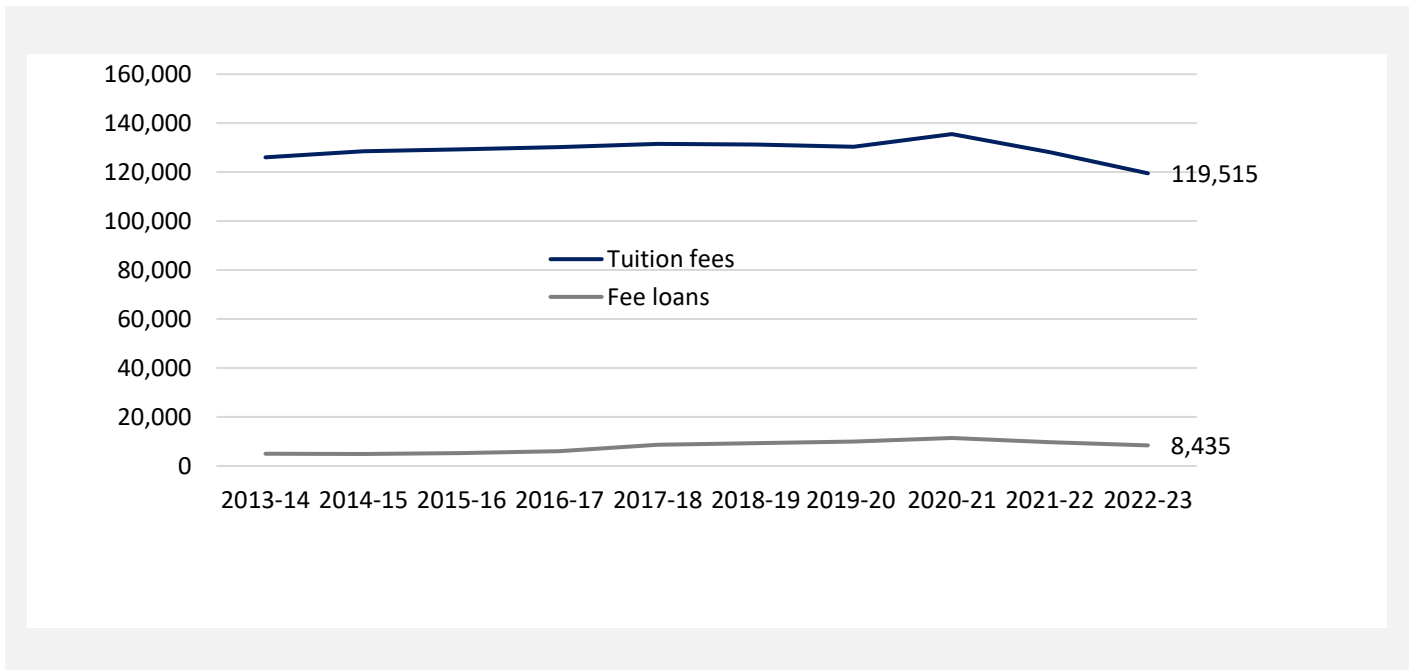


Figure 3: Number of full-time students receiving tuition fees or fee loans paid by SAAS (2022-23)

The majority of Scottish domiciled students, as well as some continuing EU domiciled students, that are supported by SAAS for a full-time Higher Education course are eligible for fee support. In academic year 2022-23, 93.8% of supported full-time students received fee support from SAAS.

A total of £258.3 million was paid out in fee support in academic year 2022-23 (down from £278.3 million in academic year 2021-22). Of this, £205.5 million was paid out for tuition fees (down from £219.6 million) and £52.8 million was paid out in fee loans (down from £58.7 million). The majority of fee loans (58%) were paid out to postgraduate students. However, the average undergraduate fee loan awarded (£8,810) was more than double the average postgraduate fee loan (£4,360). 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.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time students receiving fee support in academic year 2022-2023:

127,950

Down 7.2% from 137,820 in academic year 2021-2022.

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.

Living cost loans

Full-time

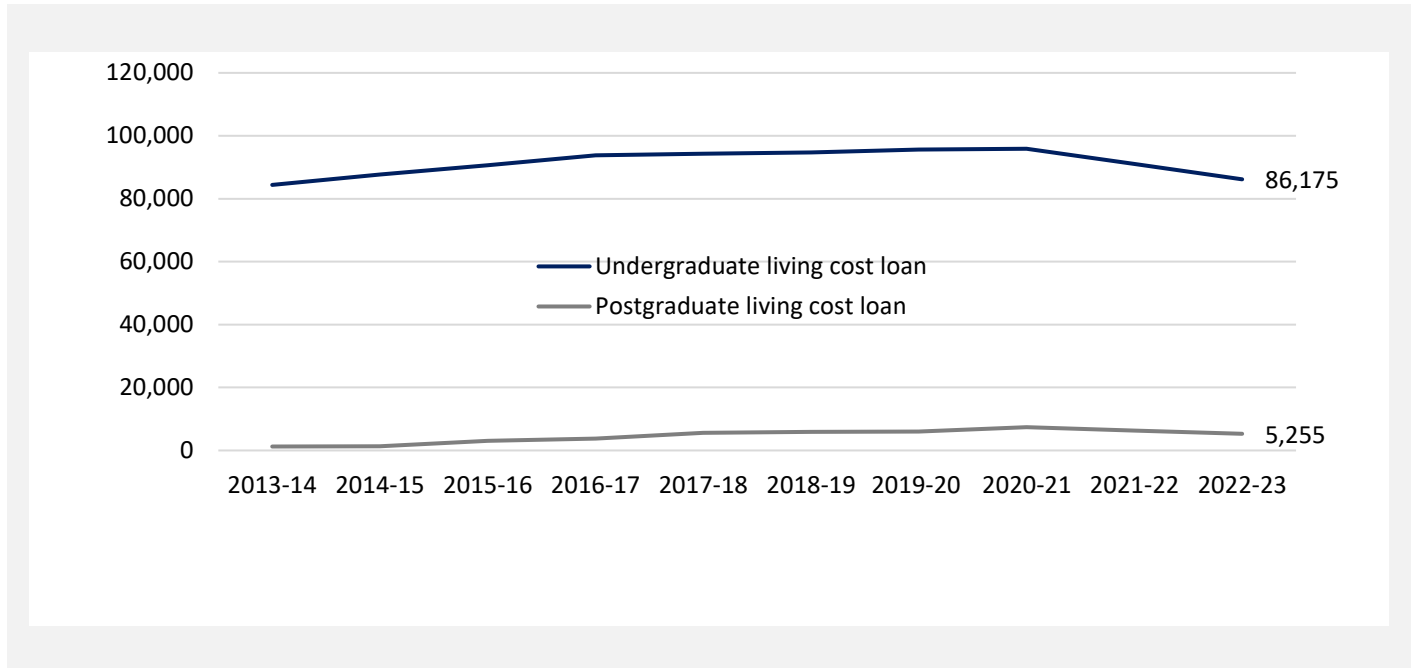


Figure 4: Number of full-time students authorised by SAAS for a living cost loan (2013-14 to 2022-23)

The number of full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students who were authorised for a living cost loan in academic year 2022-23 decreased by 6.1% compared to the 2021-22 academic year. The total amount authorised in 2022-23 was £511.1 million at an average of £5,590 per student.

Undergraduate and Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students from low income households may be entitled to additional income assessed loan amounts. There were 36,290 income assessed loans authorised, with a total value of £235.5 million and an average of £6,490 per student.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time students authorised by SAAS for a living cost loan in academic year 2022-2023:

91,425

down 6.1% from 97,375 in academic year 2021-2022.

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). 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](#).

Domicile

Full-time

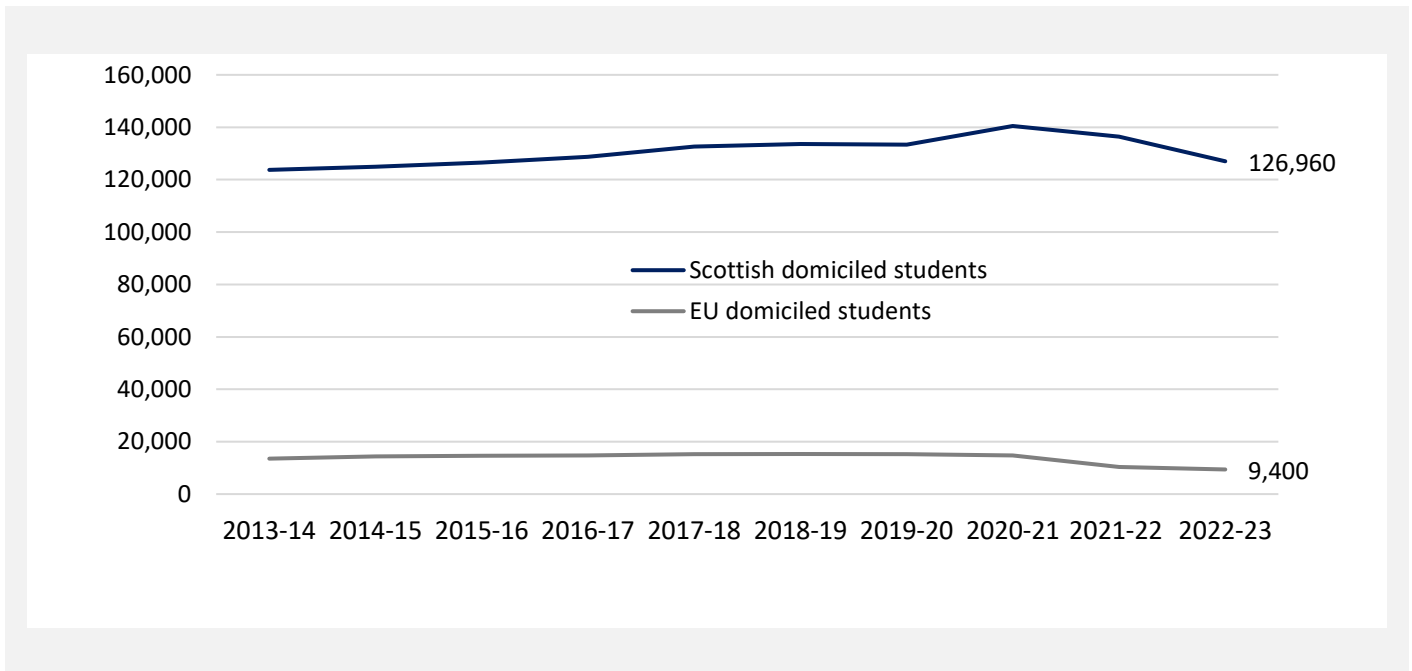


Figure 5: Number of EU domiciled full-time students supported by SAAS (2013-14 to 2022-23)

Domicile is considered to be the country that a person is assessed as being their permanent home. The majority of full-time students supported by SAAS are Scottish domiciled. There were 126,960 Scottish domiciles supported in academic year 2022-23 receiving £822.1 million in support.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time EU students receiving support from SAAS in academic year 2022-2023 for undergraduate tuition fees or postgraduate fee loans only:

9,400

The way in which EU students are reported in this publication has changed. Up to 2020-21, EU domiciled students would typically only be eligible for a fees only support package. Previously EU domiciled students were identified using a self-reported 'EU student' flag, with all other students reported as Scottish domiciled. Due to new 'post-Brexit' funding eligibility from 2021-22 for EU nationals in Scotland with settled or pre-settled status, the funding eligibility for those self-reporting as EU has changed. To omit those receiving funding via these new routes, figures from 2022-23 have been restricted to those in receipt of undergraduate tuition fees or postgraduate fee loans only.

EU domiciled students (receiving undergraduate tuition fees or postgraduate fee loans only) made up 6.9% of the full-time student population supported by SAAS and received £32.5 million in support in academic year 2022-23.

Bursaries and grants

Full-time

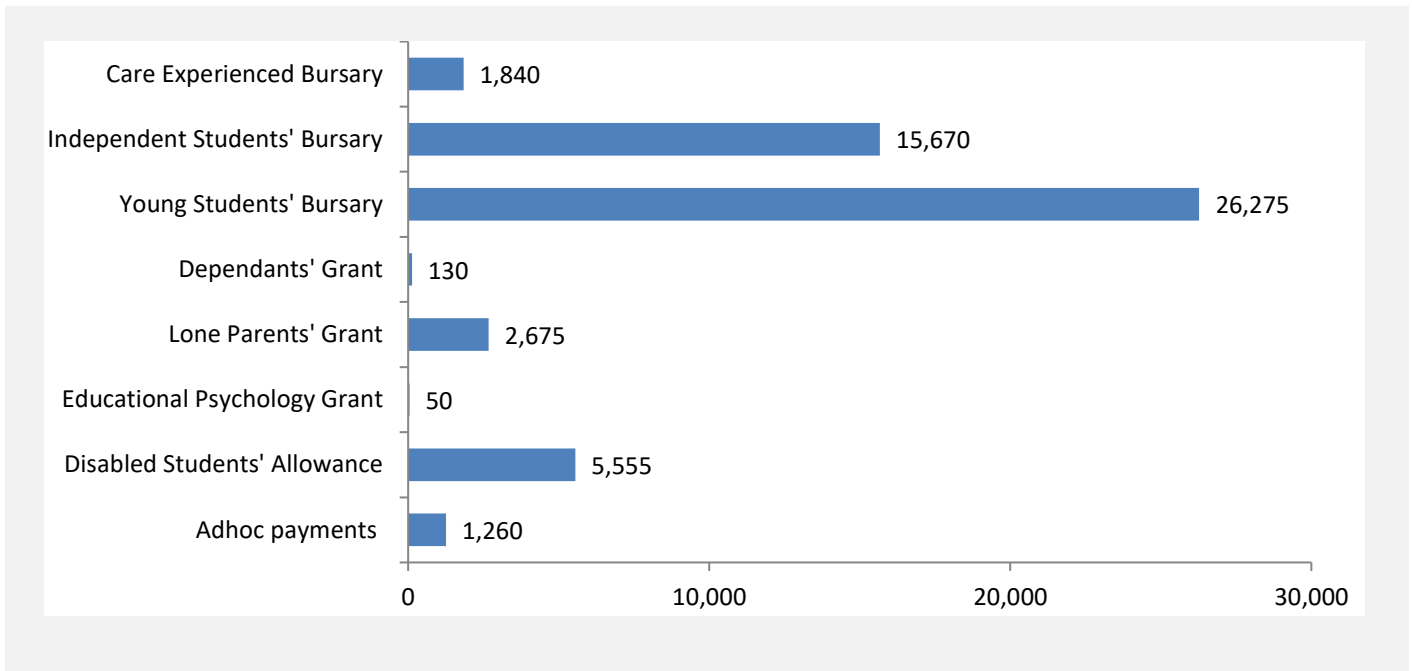


Figure 6: Number of full-time students receiving a bursary and/or grant from SAAS by bursary type, 2022-23

The number of full-time students receiving a bursary and/or grant from SAAS in academic year 2022-23 is 48,070. This is a decrease of 9.8% from 53,305 in academic year 2021-22.

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 year 2022-23 has decreased by 9.8% from the previous year. The total amount awarded decreased by £6.2 million to £85.2 million. An average of £1,775 per student was provided in 2022-23.

Around four fifths (79.7%) of the total amount of bursary and grant support paid was through the three bursaries: Young Students Bursary (£39.5 million); Independent Students Bursary (£14.7 million); Care Experienced Bursary (£13.8 million).

See Table FT.3 in the [supplementary data tables](#) for full breakdowns.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time students receiving a bursary and/or grant from SAAS in academic year 2022-23:

48,070

This is a decrease of 9.8% from 53,305 in academic year 2021-22.

Further information on bursaries and grants can be found in the [accompanying policy background document](#).

Support for disability

Full-time

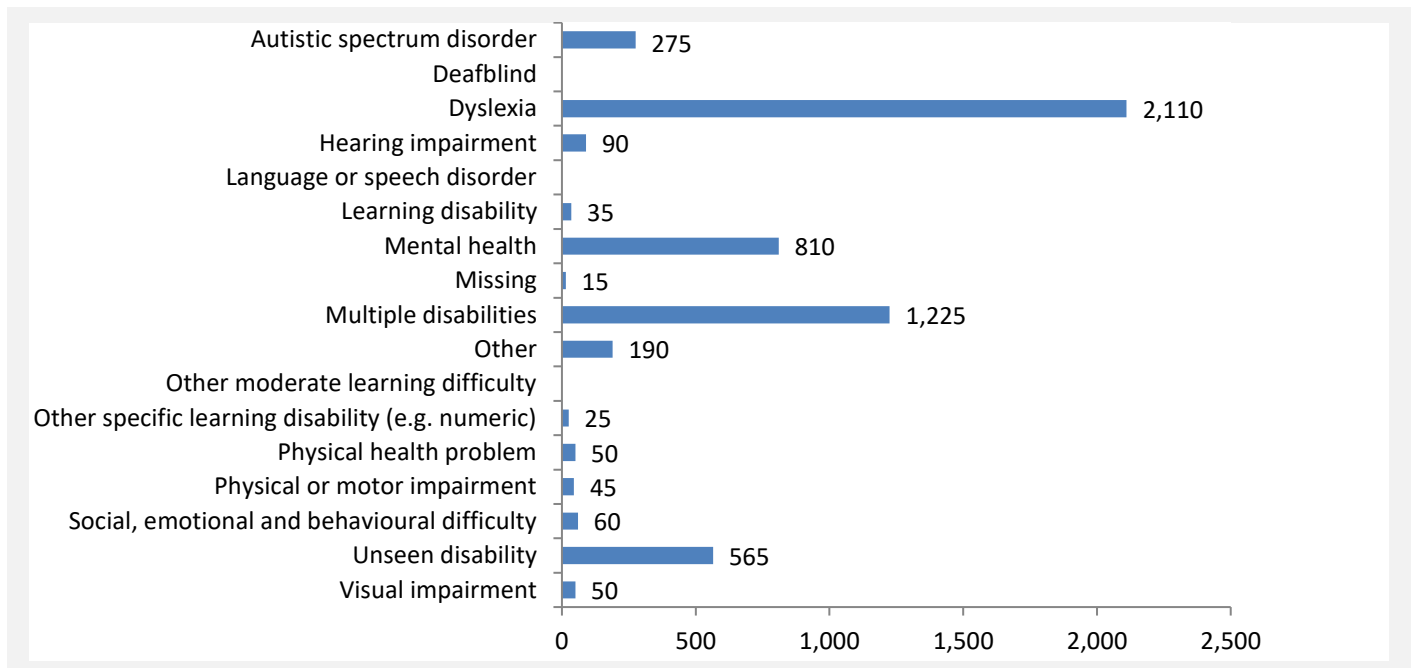


Figure 7: Number of full-time students receiving Disabled Students' Allowance from SAAS by disability type, 2022-23

The number of full-time students who received Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) in academic year 2022-23 increased by 6.1% compared to academic year 2021-22. The total amount awarded was £11.9 million (up 10.3% from 2021-22) at an average of £2,150 per student in receipt of support.

The amount paid is dependent on the specific needs and circumstances of the student applying. These figures do not include full-time DSA recipients who are self-funding and not accessing any other student support, nor those that are part-time. DSA recipients on the Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary scheme are shown [separately](#).

Key Statistic

Number of full-time students receiving DSA from SAAS in academic year 2022-2023:

5,555

Up 6.1% from 5,235 in academic year 2021-2022.

Dyslexia has historically been the single largest reason for students receiving DSA support. In academic year 2022-23, 2,110 students received £3.6 million in DSA support associated with their dyslexia. There were 3,445 students receiving £8.3 million in DSA support for a disability other than dyslexia. See Tables FT.3 and FT.4 in the [supplementary data tables](#) for further information.

Note: Figures presented for DSA are published for supported full-time students (and separately for those on the PNMSB scheme. Students who are in receipt of DSA but are self-funding and not accessing any other student support or on a part-time fee grant will not be included in the student numbers or contribute to the monetary amounts shown in these statistics. 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

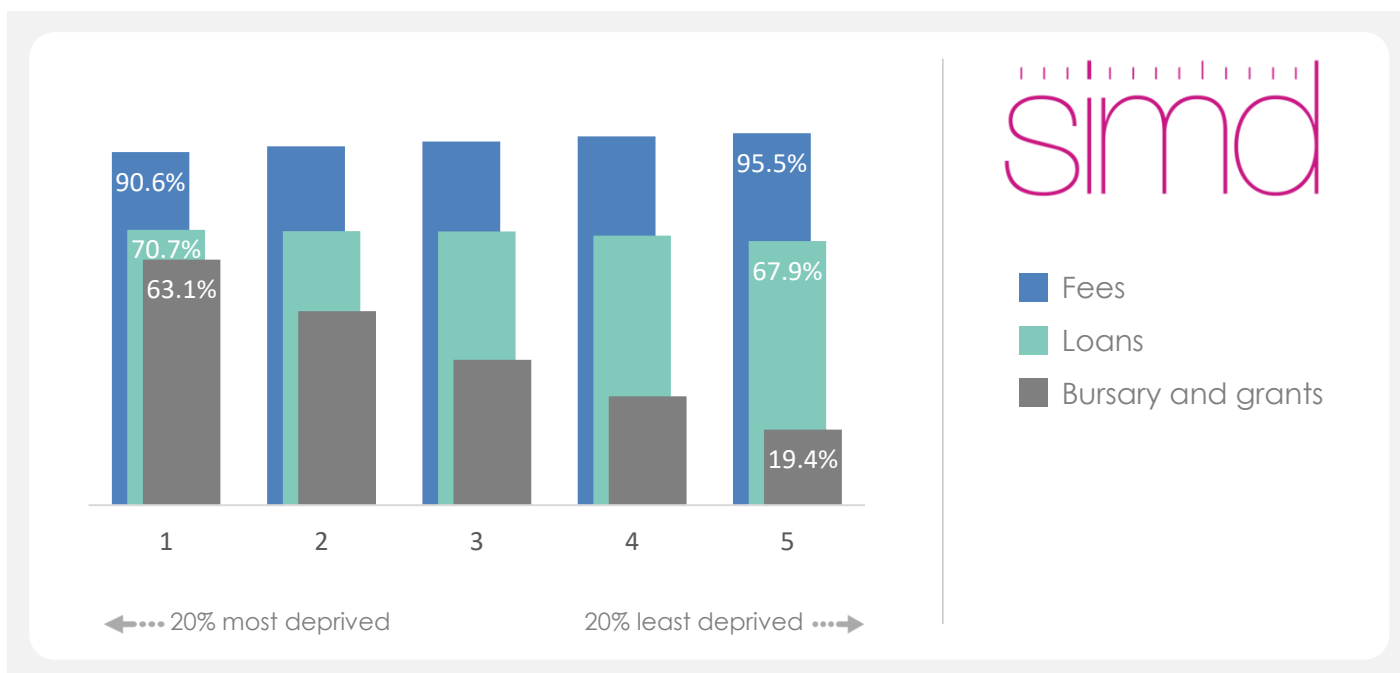


Figure 8: The percentage of full-time supported students receiving fees, living cost loans and bursaries & grant support by SIMD quintile, 2022-23.

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. Analysis is based on those students where the provided address is a valid Scottish postcode.

Addresses provided by the student may not necessarily reflect their permanent residence, e.g. term time address could be provided. As such, the analysis may not reflect actual residence circumstances of the students.

Supported students from the 20% most deprived areas of Scotland (SIMD20) received more monetary support per student (£7,050) than students from the least deprived areas of Scotland (£5,980) in 2022-23.

Figure 8 shows that SAAS supported students from the most deprived areas (63.1%) were more likely to receive a bursary and/or grant than those from less deprived areas (19.4%). See Table FT.5 in the [supplementary data tables](#) for full breakdowns of all SIMD quintiles.

Key Statistic

Number of full-time SAAS supported students from SIMD20 in academic year 2022-2023:

21,245

Down 7.1% from 22,870 in academic year 2021-2022.

Note: 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.

2023-24 early analysis

Full-time

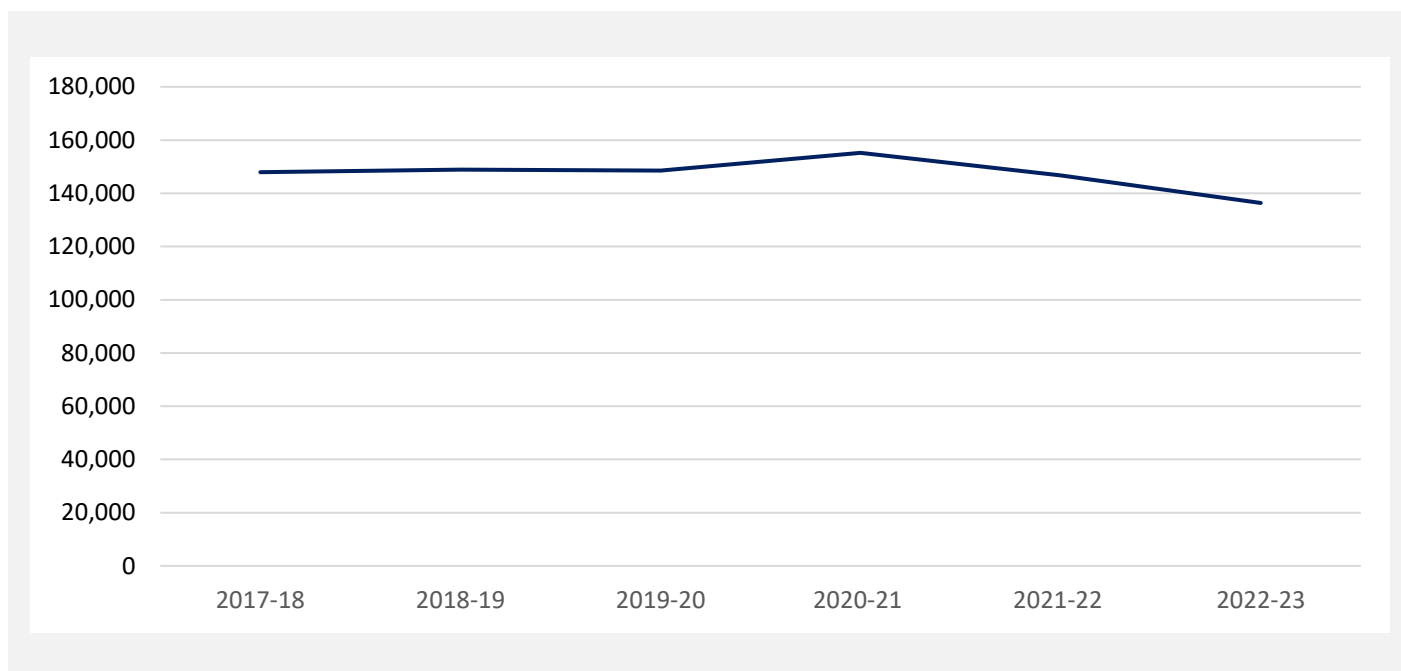


Figure 9: Number of supported students by end of session, 2017-18 to 2022-23.

This section provides an early indication of applications received for academic year 2022-23 for the full-time undergraduate and postgraduate schemes.

In academic year 2022-23, 85.3% of applications had been received by August 2022. Of the 152,825 applications received by the end of 2022-23, 136,360 resulted in students receiving support from SAAS (89.2%).

Key Statistic

The number of full-time applications for academic year 2022-23 received before August 2022:

122,150

Down 6.3% from 130,380 in academic year 2021-2022.

In academic year 2023-24, there have been 122,150 applications received by August 2023.

See Table FT.6 in the [supplementary data tables](#) for further information.

Part-Time Fee Grant

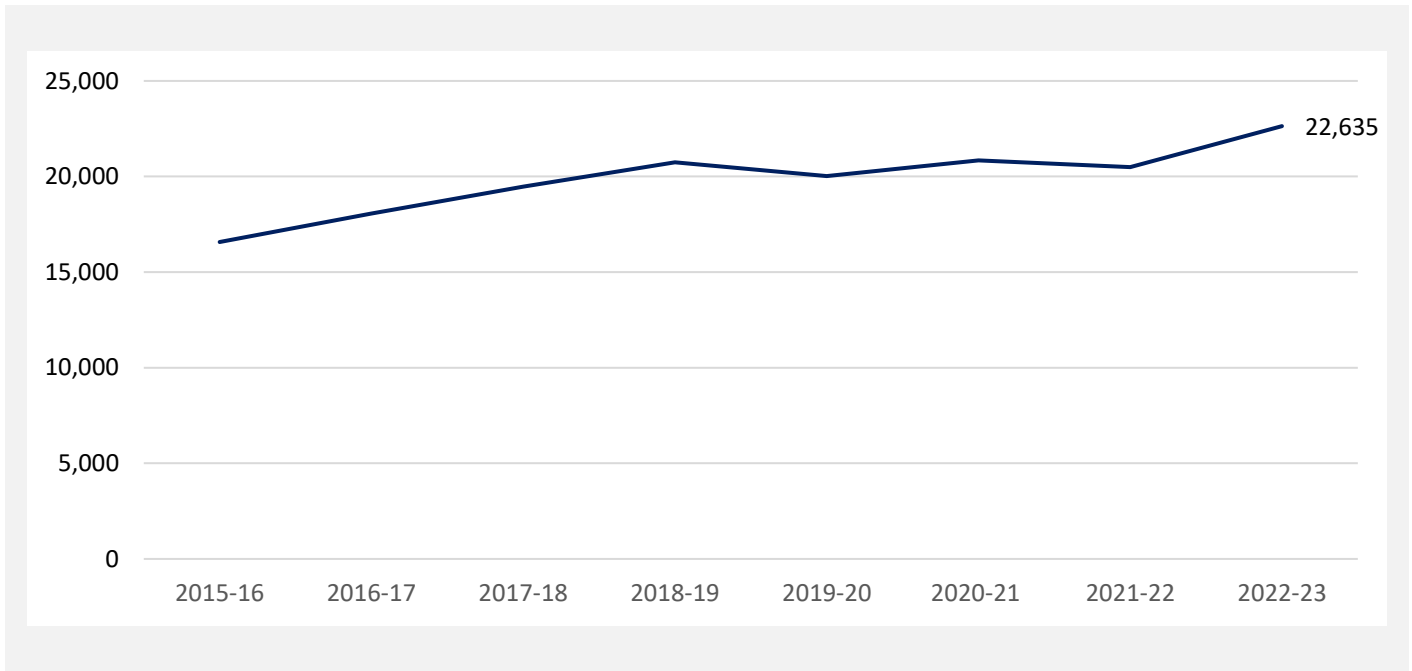


Figure 9: Number of part-time students supported by SAAS (2013-14 to 2022-23)

The number of part-time students supported by SAAS in academic session 2022-23 increased by 10.4% compared to academic session 2021-22. The total amount of support awarded was £21.9 million at an average of £970 per student.

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.

Key Statistic

Number of part-time fee grant students supported by SAAS in academic year 2022-2023:

22,635

Up 10.4% from 20,500 in academic year 2021-2022.

In 2022-23, the majority of part-time students were reported as female (71.6%), while 27% reported as male (1.4% did not report their sex). Over three quarters of all part-time students were aged over 25 (76.6%) and the age profile variation for both male and female students was broadly similar.

Note: 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 this is not shown, but are available in Tables PT.1 and PT.2 in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Paramedics, Nursing & Midwifery

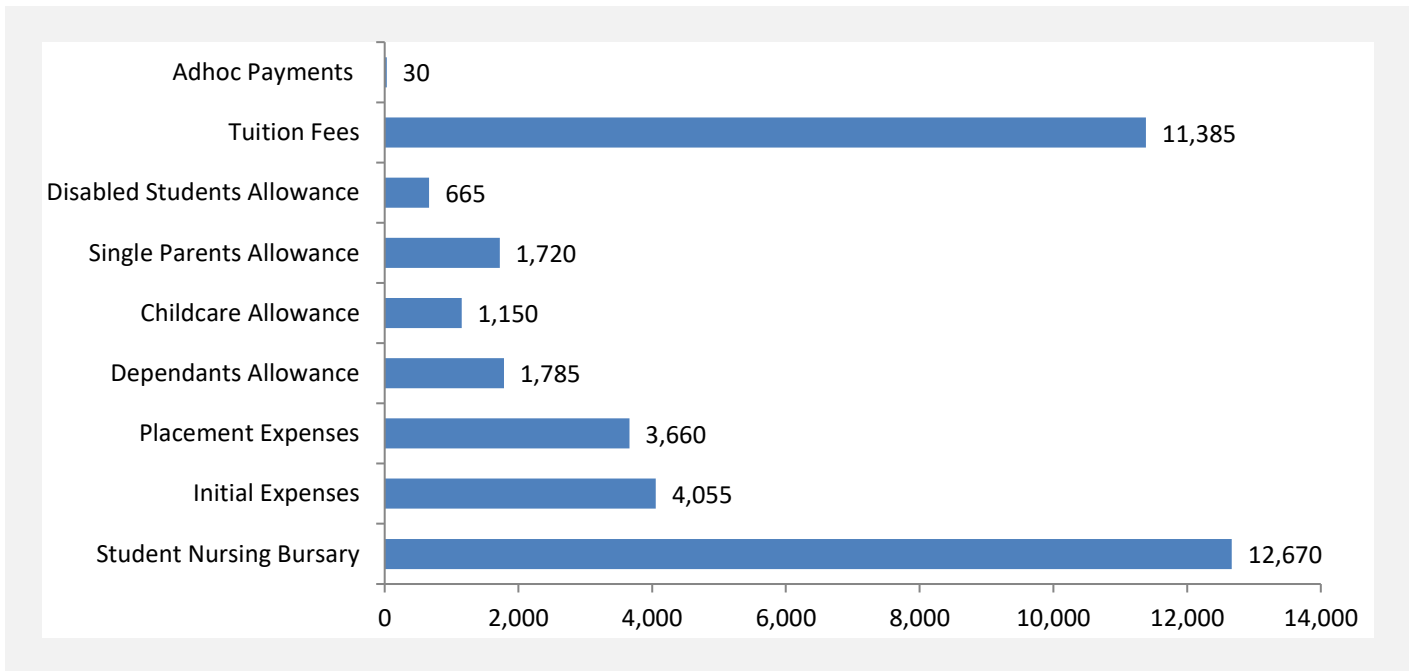


Figure 11: Number of students receiving support from SAAS through the Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary scheme by type of support, 2022-23

SAAS administers the full-time Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary (PNMSB) scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government (SG) Health and Social Care (HSC) Directorate. For the PNMSB scheme, the (provisional) total amount of support awarded was £144.4 million at an average of £11,390 per student in 2022-23.

The Student Nursing Bursary provided around three-quarters (74.6%) of the total amount of PNMSB support (£144.4 million). Tuition fees, provided by SAAS rather than the Scottish Funding Council from 2022-23, was the next largest expenditure (£20.7 million).

Key Statistic

Number of students receiving support from SAAS through the Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary scheme in academic year 2022-23:

12,680

This is an increase of 2.2% from 12,405 in 2021-2022.

The vast majority of students supported through the PNMSB scheme in 2022-23 were female (90.3%). Just over half of all PNMSB students were over the age of 25 (52.2%), with male students in particular being more likely to be aged over 25 (61.9% of male students compared to 51.2% of female students). See Tables N.1 to N.3 in the [supplementary data tables](#) for full breakdowns.

Paramedic students on eligible courses in Scotland were able to apply for the scheme from 2022-23. More information can be found in the [accompanying policy background document](#).

Figures for the most recent year are provisional as a small number of January intake students may not have completed a full year of support.

Discretionary & Discretionary Childcare Funds

Discretionary and Childcare Fund figures are sourced from financial returns from institutions. The latest returns available at the time of publication is for academic year 2021-22. 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 10,090 instances of assistance in 2021-22 through the main Discretionary Fund, providing £15.5 million of issued support at an average of £1,530 per instance. A student may have more than one instance of assistance. Discretionary fund support was most typically provided for general living expenses – issued 8,135 times.

A separate discretionary childcare fund is available for students at Scottish Higher Education Institutions to apply for help towards registered or formal childcare costs. There were 755 instances of support in 2021-22 through this fund, providing £2.6 million of support at an average of £3,460 per instance.

In June 2021, an additional £17 million was made available to institutions for distribution in response to financial difficulties presented by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There were 10,095 instances of assistance in 2021-22 through these funds, with a total of £11.8 million issued to students at an average of £1,170 per instance of assistance.

A separate Paramedic, Nursing and Midwifery Student Bursary (PNMSB) Discretionary Fund is also issued to institutions by SAAS on behalf of the Scottish Government's Chief Nursing Directorate, to provide additional support to students in financial difficulty. In 2021-22 this fund was £1.0 million. Figures on the spend of these funds are not included in this publication.

Key Statistic

Instances of Discretionary Fund (incl. Childcare, COVID-19) support in academic year 2021-22:

20,940

This is a decrease of 23.9% from 27,500 in 2020-2021.



Further Information

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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.

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A National Statistics Publication for Scotland

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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.

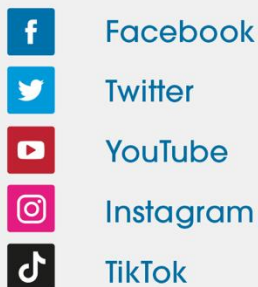


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