

SG POLICY UPDATE

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Access Delivery Group with regular updates on related policy developments within the Scottish Government. ADG members should notify SG officials of any additional policy areas that they would like to see covered within the update going forward.

Review of Student Support

The independent Review of Student Support, chaired by Jayne-Anne Gadhia, CEO Virgin Money, launched in October 2016. This is a joint review of both Further (FE) and Higher Education (HE) student support with the remit focussed on ensuring that the entire system is equitable, fair and supports all students throughout their learner journey.

The Review Group membership is as follows:

Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)	Paul Lowe
NUS Scotland	Vonnie Sandlan - until June 2017 Phillip Whyte - until June 2017 Linda Somerville Luke Humberstone
Colleges Scotland	Shona Struthers
Young Scot	Louise Macdonald
Headteacher	Annag Maclean (Castlebay High)
Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)	Angela Toal
Scottish Funding Council (SFC)	Dr John Kemp
Universities Scotland	Alastair Sim
Scottish Youth Parliament (and current student)	Erin McAuley MSYP
IPPR Scotland	Russell Gunson
Money Advice Scotland (CAB)	Yvonne MacDermid OBE
UNISON	John Gallacher

Over the course of the Review's work this year, four sub-groups, chaired by members of the main Review Group, were established. These included; Product Design; Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and Financial Literacy, Benefits and Support and; Effective Administration and Delivery.

The Review Group have engaged extensively with students via focus groups at colleges and universities across Scotland, a student survey earlier this year and a formal consultation which ran from June to August 2017. Just under 100 responses were received on the Consultation with findings influencing the final report.

The Review is now in the final stages with the Group having met for the final time on 26th October ahead of final reporting later this year.

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Scottish Attainment Challenge

The Scottish Attainment Challenge is about achieving equity in educational outcomes by focussing on closing the poverty- related attainment gap.

Through the Scottish Attainment Challenge we have committed £750m over the course of this parliament. To date this funding has enabled schools and local authorities in areas of high deprivation to employ a range of staff. This includes Educational Psychologists, Home School Link Workers, Mental Health Counsellors and Speech and Language Therapists. This funding also supports a wide range of interventions aimed at improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.

The Attainment Scotland Fund provides £50m targeted support to local authorities and schools with the highest concentrations of primary-aged pupils living in deprivation. The focus of the Fund is on primary schools and targeted improvements in literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing as the foundations for learning. The Attainment Scotland Fund focuses on three programmes:

- Challenge Authorities provides targeted support to local authorities with the largest concentration of primary-aged pupils living in deprived areas as well as a number of national programmes including staffing supply and capacity, professional learning and school leadership. The Challenge Authorities are Glasgow, Dundee, Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, Clackmannanshire and North Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.
- Schools Programme - provides support for schools with the highest concentration of children living in SIMD 1&2 (> 70% of children in primary school and > 20% secondary schools attached to challenge primary clusters), outwith the identified Challenge Authorities. There are 72 schools (46 primary schools and 28 secondary schools).
- Pupil Equity Funding of £120m in 2017/18 will benefit every council area in Scotland. It is available for headteachers to use for additional staffing or resources that they consider will help raise attainment. National Operational Guidance has been published to help schools most effectively invest their Pupil Equity Funding to improve the educational outcomes of children affected by poverty. Local authorities will issue complementary guidance about how the funding will operate locally.

This is alongside a number of wider national programmes including staffing supply and capacity, professional learning and school leadership

This will provided a total of £170 million for 2017/18 towards our commitment to allocate £750 million during the course of this Parliament through the Attainment Scotland Fund.

A consultation for measuring the gap and milestones towards closing it issued on 4 October 2017. This proposes eight key outcome measures that reflect key stages in the 3-18 year old learner journey and details the gaps we are looking to close.

The consultation ends on 20 November 2017 and the intention is to confirm our approach to measuring the gap within the 2018 Improvement Plan, which will be published in December.