

STEM Bursary Advisory group

Thursday 28 November 2019

Note of meeting

Attendees

Stephanie Walsh	Team Leader, Education Workforce Unit, Scottish Government (Chair)
Angela Felvus	Senior Policy Officer, Education Workforce Unit, (Secretariat)
Stuart Robb	Head of Education Workforce Unit
Frank Creamer	STEM and Numeracy Policy Manager
Lynda McShane	STEM Programme Executive, Skills Development Scotland
Cindy Cannon	National Operations Manager, Skills Development Scotland
Dr Helen Gorman	Curriculum Leader for Science and Technology, McLaren High School
Nicola Dickie	Chief Officer, Children and Young People, COSLA

Apologies

Paul McGuinness	NTP Performance and Operations Manager, Skills Development Scotland
Ian Rivers	Chair of the Scottish Council of Deans of Education

Note

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed the members to this year's STEM Bursary group. Apologies were received from Paul McGuinness and Ian Rivers.

2. Group remit (paper 01/1)

The remit of the group was accepted. The chair confirmed that the scheme would run in 2020/21 although finer details will be dependent on the budget. UK elections may impact on this.

3. Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) evaluation of the 2019/20 scheme (paper 01/2)

This report provided a summary of the intake figures for the 2019/20 scheme including awards and profiles. 111 bursaries had been awarded for the 2019/20 scheme. The following challenges were encountered under the current eligibility criteria:

Level of qualification:

The requirement to hold a 2:1 Honours degree (or above) or meet the minimum ITE entry requirement with a Masters at SCQF Level 11 qualification was problematic for some potential applicants with a 2:2 degree.

Employment criteria

There were challenges around the requirements for applicants evidencing a minimum 150 hours of paid work at the point of applying for the bursary.

Repeat applications

SDS highlighted that they had a few scenarios where applicants who had dropped out of the scheme had resubmitted applications.

4. Discussion on the criteria for 2020/21 scheme

Level of qualification

Although it was recognised that changing the criteria to a 2.2 would create challenges for the scheme, there may be justification in doing so for particular personal circumstances. The group was asked to consider what such circumstance might entail. Further discussions to continue.

Employment criteria

The group agreed to review this criteria for the coming scheme.

Repeat applications

The group agreed that once an applicant had been approved for the scheme they would not be allowed to reapply for the scheme if they dropped out. The terms and conditions would be amended to reflect this.

Actions:

- SDS to consider the employment criteria for next meeting.
- Group to consider exceptional circumstances for consideration of lowering the 2:1 threshold.
- SG to provide doodle poll for next meeting

5. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 29 January, 10:00 am, Victoria Quay.