

Hardship & Childcare Funds for Non-advanced Programmes (National Qualification programme)

What additional help is available?

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) provides two funds that offer additional support to Further Education (FE) students:

- Childcare Fund (CF)
- Further Education Discretionary Fund (FEDF)

These funds are part of the overall student finance package.

Are all students entitled to assistance from these funds?

There are very clear eligibility rules which are detailed below. You must satisfy all the rules before you can be considered for assistance. It is possible that you may be eligible for support from one or more of the funds.

These are discretionary funds and it should be noted:

- They are targeted at students whose need is greatest.
- Not all eligible students will receive payments.
- Applicants will need to provide evidence of their income and spending commitments so that priority can be given to those in greatest need.
- Payments towards general living costs may have implications for a student's entitlement to DSS benefits.

What are the priorities?

The **CF** is to be used for registered or formal childcare only.

Lone parents are a particular priority though full time and part time students can also be helped.

The main priority of the **FEDF** is to help students in particular need.

This is likely to mean those who have lost entitlement to Housing Benefit, those who have left care or are estranged from their parents, students not fully supported under bursary policy, individuals facing a crisis, etc. Other causes of hardship will also be considered.

How much might I receive?

It is difficult to say at the moment, as it will depend on the number of applicants and the particular circumstances of each individual. It is also possible that initial awards will have to be reviewed at a later date depending on the availability of funds. It is hoped that the CF will be able to meet all the costs of formal childcare for eligible students.

The **FEDF** maximum payment is £3,500.

It should be noted that these are maximum levels and each application will be treated on its own merits and will be subject to satisfactory attendance levels of 85%.

How can I check if I am eligible?

Contact Student Funding Officer on 01387 860251 who will be able to tell if you are eligible for support from one of the funds. If you are eligible, you will be sent an application form which you must complete in full and return with the necessary evidence.