

Wednesday 26 October 2022

To:

Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Higher Education

Lauren McNamara, Interim Chief Executive, Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS)

Lorraine Gray, Chief Executive, Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Karen Watt, Chief Executive, Scottish Funding Council

Iona Colvin, Chief Social Work Adviser

**Equality of Bursary Funding for Social Work Students
- Letter Signed by 316 Individuals**

We write as a group of over 300 social work students at universities across Scotland, supported by the Social Workers Union, the Scottish Association of Social Workers and 20 social work lecturers.

We have seen first-hand the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our fellow social work students.

As one student said on social media:

"We ended up needing to use food banks to live, I also had to stop doing some visits/sessions due financial difficulties. As it was too difficult to work while on placement. Having more of a bursary would have taken pressure off basic living needs as well as being able to complete it without any additional difficulties."

Many social work students come from deprived backgrounds. Yet, unlike nurses and paramedics, when social work undergraduates spend nine months on placements in their third and fourth years, there are no bursaries to help them.

This means social work students have to work full-time on a placement, study and work shifts or rely on foodbanks to make ends meet.

As another student commented:

"During placement I have had to work two jobs to be able to afford rent, food, travel and other bills. A social work bursary would have let me spend more time focusing on my studies and 120-day placement. Not all students have family who are able to financially support them. A lot of students are also unpaid carers who have caring responsibilities on top of studies and this affects their ability to pick up shifts."

This is unacceptable.

We call on the Scottish Government, SAAS and SSSC to make funding available to provide bursaries to all third and fourth year undergraduate social work students in Scotland. These bursaries should last for the full length of the nine-month placements and funded at parity to those bursaries for nurses and paramedics. There are currently c.983 3rd and 4th year students, which would each require c.GBP7,500 a year making the cost of this policy GBP7.4m. Additional, discretionary, bursaries would be welcome to cover the summer months when social

work students are not on placement, especially for those with care responsibilities.
[1]

For post-graduate students, there are bursary funds available. However, they are in desperate need of reform.

Presently, postgraduate students often have to be nominated for funding by their lecturers. This means that often older and wealthier lecturers are in a position to nominate (or not) often younger and poorer students for funding.

This is an untenable situation.

We call on the Scottish Government, SAAS and SSSC to reform funding for postgraduate social work students to ensure objective assessment criteria are used to assess the need for bursaries and that they should be funded adequately. We believe this may need an expansion to the total funding available, but would advise that further analysis is required to make more precise calculations.

Without reform we risk not having enough social workers in the future to meet the statutory roles they play, let alone enabling social workers to help “keep The Promise” to those in need and play a full role in ensuring Scotland is a fairer, safer place to live.

Indeed, with 20% of the social work workforce approaching retirement age and 25% leaving the profession within their first six years of starting, Scotland faces recruitment and retention challenges which this proposal will help address. [2]

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our proposals, other challenges facing students on social work placements and look forward to your response.

With the Scottish Government budget due to be presented to Parliament on 15 December, we hope you will understand the urgency of the issue and request a response by 4th November 2022.

Signed (in order of signature to the letter)

1. David Grimm, Glasgow Caledonian University
2. Lucy Challoner, Glasgow Caledonian University
3. Hannah Trickett, University of Stirling
4. Nicole Hendren, Glasgow Caledonian University
5. Niamh Strachan, Robert Gordon University
6. Nicola Mills, Glasgow Caledonian University
7. Arlene Mcgeachy, University of Stirling
8. Samantha McNeill, University of Stirling
9. Sarah Anderson, University of the West Scotland
10. Estelle Makwero, University of Strathclyde
11. Adam Sinclair, Glasgow Caledonian University
12. Ellie Smith, University of Strathclyde
13. Cherylanne Bryceland, University of Strathclyde
14. Adelle Hamilton, Glasgow Caledonian University

15. William Russell, University of Strathclyde
16. Emma Quinn, Glasgow Caledonian University
17. Elaine Madden, University of the West Scotland
18. Sharon Lowell, University of the West Scotland
19. Kenny Roulston, University of the West Scotland
20. Gordon Macmillan, University of the West Scotland
21. Lindsay Thomas, University of the West Scotland
22. Jacqueline Richford, University of Strathclyde
23. Kristal Kennedy, University of Strathclyde
24. Lauren Robinson, University of Strathclyde
25. Darren Newall, University of Strathclyde
26. Jen Robertson, University of Strathclyde
27. Karyn Robb, Glasgow Caledonian University
28. Lorraine Campbell, University of the West Scotland
29. Kelly Patterson, University of the West Scotland
30. Kerry Taylor, University of the West Scotland
31. Emma Mclurg, University of the West Scotland
32. Mark Fulton, University of the West Scotland
33. Arron Gibson, University of the West Scotland
34. Ogbe Oriakhi, University of Strathclyde
35. Laura Fitzsimmons, Glasgow Caledonian University
36. Kyra Waters, University of the West of Scotland
37. Emma Sarah, Glasgow Caledonian University
38. Jamie-Lee Glasgow, Caledonian University
39. Jennifer Buckley, Glasgow Caledonian University
40. Amy Campbell, Glasgow Caledonian university
41. Alexandra Dykes, Glasgow Caledonian university
42. Jennifer Rankin, Glasgow Caledonian University
43. Amy Fraser, Glasgow Caledonian University
44. Adejoke Adeniran, University of the West of Scotland
45. Lauren Mcghee, University of the West Scotland
46. Jasmine Day, University of the West Scotland
47. Graeme McLaren, University of the West Scotland
48. Simone Wallace, University of the West Scotland
49. Claire Anne Ogilby, University of the West Scotland
50. Kullen Macdonald, University of the West Scotland
51. Ashley Thomson, University of the West Scotland
52. Chantelle Trickovic, University of the West Scotland
53. Craig Heads, University of the West Scotland
54. Ara Munn, University of the West Scotland
55. Nicola Taylor, University of the West Scotland
56. Katherine O'Hara, University of the West Scotland
57. Kyra Waters, University of the West Scotland
58. Jenni Mclurkin, University of the West Scotland
59. Elle Forbes, University of the West Scotland
60. Zoe Wallace, University of the West Scotland
61. Chloe Louise Clelland, University of the West Scotland
62. Gemma Mairder, University of the West Scotland
63. Stacey Mcfadyen, Glasgow Caledonian University
64. Chloe Duff, University of Strathclyde

65. Caitlin Mcglaughlin, University of the West Scotland
66. Shannon Mckay, Glasgow Caledonian University
67. Alyssia McMullen, University of the West Scotland
68. Morgan Eaton, University of Strathclyde
69. Joanna Duff, Glasgow Caledonian University
70. Robyn Lafferty, Glasgow Caledonian University
71. Cora Leigh Greig, Glasgow Caledonian University
72. Rachel Kelly, Glasgow Caledonian University
73. Norma Corrie, University of Edinburgh
74. Hayley Court, University of the West Scotland
75. Sobia Ahmed, University of the West Scotland
76. Bethany Mcurdo, University of the West Scotland
77. Janice chamber, University of the West Scotland
78. Kara Liddell, University of the West Scotland
79. Lewis Charney, Glasgow Caledonian University
80. Lauren Christie, Glasgow Caledonian University
81. Ocean Quinn, Glasgow Caledonian University
82. Freya Macaleese, Glasgow Caledonian University
83. Lisa Kyle, Glasgow Caledonian University
84. Rebecca Dalby Bowler, Glasgow Caledonian University
85. Lauren Stewart, Robert Gordon University
86. Meg McCormack, Glasgow Caledonian University
87. Aimee O'Connell, Glasgow Caledonian University
88. Megan Morrison, University of the West Scotland
89. Rebecca Larmour, University of the West Scotland
90. Keegan Tracey, University of Dundee
91. Rachel Young, Glasgow Caledonian University
92. Callum McDougall, Glasgow Caledonian University
93. Harry McCarron, Glasgow Caledonian University
94. Erin O'Byrne, Glasgow Caledonian University
95. Daisy Moore, Glasgow Caledonian University
96. Leila Strachan, Glasgow Caledonian University
97. Carla Scahill, Glasgow Caledonian University
98. Fiona McHugh, Glasgow Caledonian University
99. Holly Evans, Glasgow Caledonian University
100. Natalie Innes Glasgow Caledonian University
101. EmmaLee Nicholls Glasgow Caledonian University
102. Amy Parker, University of Strathclyde
103. Jamie Lovell, University of Dundee
104. Chloe Stewart, University of Dundee
105. Lauren Bruce, University of Stirling
106. Lisa Aikman, University of Stirling
107. Christina Kinney, University of Stirling
108. Claire Taylor, Robert Gordon University
109. Michaella Mckechnie, University of the West Scotland
110. Anne Clark, University of Stirling
111. Pamela McGonagle, University of Strathclyde
112. Annabel Macinnes, University of Strathclyde
113. Mia Crawford, University of Strathclyde
114. Charlene Foster, University of Strathclyde

115. William Russel, University of Strathclyde
116. Claire Mcdonald, University of Strathclyde
117. Cheryl Bentley, University of Strathclyde
118. Jessica Sharp, University of Strathclyde
119. Liana Bell, University of Strathclyde
120. Morgan Campbell, University of Strathclyde
121. Aleksandra Jadwyszczok, University of Strathclyde
122. Gemma irons, University of Strathclyde
123. Demi Gardner, University of Strathclyde
124. Courtney Chisholm, University of Strathclyde
125. Jemmy Mccarthy, University of Strathclyde
126. Stefanie Morrison, University of Strathclyde
127. Collette Craig, University of Strathclyde
128. Carla Herbert, University of Strathclyde
129. Lea Ann Pew, University of Strathclyde
130. Tami Clelland, University of Strathclyde
131. Sophie Brownlie, University of Strathclyde
132. Claire Haswell, Glasgow Caledonian University
133. Sarah Lyon, Glasgow Caledonian University
134. Darren McCourt, University of Stirling
135. Chloe Cairney, Glasgow Caledonian University
136. Ashleigh Park, Glasgow Caledonian University
137. Georgina Cawdron, Glasgow Caledonian University
138. Kyra Geals, Glasgow Caledonian University
139. Defne kaya, Glasgow Caledonian University
140. Olivia Mistry, Glasgow Caledonian University
141. Aimee Gilmour, Glasgow Caledonian University
142. Aimee Livingstone, Glasgow Caledonian University
143. Sophie Pama, Glasgow Caledonian University
144. Hannah Randall, University of Edinburgh
145. Jacqueline Frood, University of Strathclyde
146. Lynsey Mcarthur, University of Strathclyde
147. Amy Owens, University of Edinburgh
148. Kayleigh Mooney, Glasgow Caledonian University
149. Kerry Mcmillan, Glasgow Caledonian University
150. Alison Kane, Glasgow Caledonian University
151. John Whiteside, Glasgow Caledonian University
152. Eirinn Elizabeth, Glasgow Caledonian University
153. Lindsay Ann, Glasgow Caledonian University
154. Courtney Louise, Glasgow Caledonian University
155. Eva Dibble, Glasgow Caledonian University
156. Lauren Wilson, Glasgow Caledonian University
157. Cora-leigh Greigh, Glasgow Caledonian University
158. Josh Mccoll, Glasgow Caledonian University
159. Tino Domboka Glasgow Caledonian University
160. Carolann Jane, Glasgow Caledonian University
161. Anne Lorna, Glasgow Caledonian University
162. Lacey Gray, Glasgow Caledonian University
163. Justine Mclevy, Glasgow Caledonian University
164. Sarah Melvin, Glasgow Caledonian University

165. Thandeka Dube, Glasgow Caledonian University
166. Rhona Easton, University of Stirling
167. Haruka Uemura, University of Stirling
168. Kirsty Mcquillan, University of Stirling
169. Jodie Doon, University of Stirling
170. Pamela Hunter, University of Stirling
171. Kimberley Duthie, Robert Gordon University
172. Sarah Hermione Gray, University of Stirling
173. Rebecca Milton, University of Edinburgh
174. Louise Thompson, Glasgow Caledonian University
175. Amy Graham, University of Stirling
176. Emma French, University of Stirling
177. Morbheinn Catherine Hendry, University of Stirling
178. Eva McCulloch, University of Stirling
179. Samantha O'Donnell, University of Stirling
180. Lorraine Martin, University of Strathclyde
181. Colette Abissi, University of Edinburgh
182. Becky Cobban, University of Edinburgh
183. Gemma Preston-O'Neil, University of Edinburgh
184. Rachel Frater, University of Edinburgh
185. Laura Black, University of Edinburgh
186. Kirsty McGowan, University of Strathclyde
187. Paris Mooney, University of Strathclyde
188. Jacqueline Mackie, University of Strathclyde
189. Daniyaal Ali, University of Strathclyde
190. Ewan Mclellan, University of Strathclyde
191. Ann-Marie Pearson, University of Strathclyde
192. Emma Alexander, University of Strathclyde
193. Hayley Snelgrove, University of Strathclyde
194. Lindsay Howard, University of Edinburgh
195. Eve Griffiths, University of Strathclyde
196. Rob Robinson, University of Edinburgh
197. Charlene Foster, University of Strathclyde
198. Tamara Duncan, University of Edinburgh
199. Ailsa Phaup, University of Strathclyde
200. Carla Hunt, University of Strathclyde
201. Divine Nsakala, University of Strathclyde
202. Beth Shields, University of Edinburgh
203. Mark Hardy, University of Edinburgh
204. Steven Thomson, University of Strathclyde
205. Lizzy Treacy, Robert Gordon University
206. Christy Bruce, University of Edinburgh
207. Kimberley Radford, University of Edinburgh
208. Elan Caldwell, Glasgow Caledonian University
209. Chloe Gillon University of Strathclyde
210. Kirsty Fake, Robert Gordon University
211. Nicola Johnston, Robert Gordon University
212. Fiona Drummond, University of Strathclyde
213. Leah Phillips, Glasgow Caledonian University
214. Monica Blake, Robert Gordon University

215. Olivia Jordan, University of Strathclyde
216. Tom Calcluth, University of Strathclyde
217. Julie Spence, Robert Gordon University
218. Erin Sneddon, University of Edinburgh
219. Rowan Kewley, University of Edinburgh
220. Lauren Guthrie, University of Strathclyde
221. Jennifer Devoy, Glasgow Caledonian University
222. Abby Bisset, Glasgow Caledonian University
223. Emma Slessor, Robert Gordon University
224. Leah West, University of Strathclyde
225. Keira Macarthur, University of Strathclyde
226. Fred Liu, University of Edinburgh
227. Nancy Donaldson, University of Strathclyde
228. Sonu Maramangalam, University of Strathclyde
229. Stephanie McGreevy, University of Strathclyde
230. Jessica Beverland, University of Edinburgh
231. Beverly Hatcher, University of Edinburgh
232. Mhari-Ann Brosnan, University of Strathclyde
233. Fay Whay, University of Strathclyde
234. Kirsty Macaloney, University of Strathclyde
235. Danielle McCourt, University of Strathclyde
236. Lynn Bohme, University of Strathclyde
237. Laura Mcnamee, University of Strathclyde
238. Jade Morrison, University of Strathclyde
239. Princess Ekwealor, University of Strathclyde
240. Nicole Wason, University of Strathclyde
241. Nicola Johnston, University of Strathclyde
242. Kate Lee Millar, University of Strathclyde
243. Jenna Henry, University of Strathclyde
244. Duncan Helm, University of Strathclyde
245. Diane Colgan, University of Strathclyde
246. Laura Macrae, University of Edinburgh
247. Jamie Bryant, University of Edinburgh
248. Sarah Hill, University of Edinburgh
249. Helen Jones, University of Edinburgh
250. Hannah Prior, University of Edinburgh
251. Tamara Duncan, University of Edinburgh
252. Vicki Fleming, University of Edinburgh
253. Laura Black, University of Edinburgh
254. Heather Macaskill, University of Edinburgh
255. Cammy Rae, University of Edinburgh
256. Ruth Giblin, University of Edinburgh
257. Nicole Gilfillan, University of Edinburgh
258. Sarah Mahmood, University of Edinburgh
259. Joanna Robinson, University of Edinburgh
260. Kyla Mcpherson, University of Edinburgh
261. Caly Mcpherson, University of Edinburgh
262. Amy Montgomery, University of Strathclyde
263. Lisa Queen, University of Edinburgh
264. Beth Shields, University of Edinburgh

265. Jessica Anne Stewart, University of Stirling
266. Tracy Reid, Robert Gordon University
267. Donna Yesilyurt, University of Stirling
268. Caitlin McKerron, University of Strathclyde
269. Beth Barr, University of Strathclyde
270. Megen McLean, University of Strathclyde
271. Ashley LeBlond, University of Strathclyde
272. Jessica Nichols, University of Strathclyde
273. Jo Brown, University of Strathclyde
274. Jennifer Cook, Robert Gordon University
275. Archana Magar, University of Strathclyde
276. Laura Hutton, University of the West Scotland
277. Louise Craig, University of the West Scotland
278. Kelly Ann Stewart, University of the West Scotland
279. Catherine McIntyre, University of Strathclyde
280. Emily Kathleen, Robert Gordon University
281. Joanne Jones, University of Strathclyde
282. Ebony Lynch, Glasgow Caledonian University
283. Ashton Skobel, University of Strathclyde
284. Sean McHugh, University of Strathclyde
285. Susan Docherty, University of Strathclyde
286. Caroline Murray, University of Strathclyde
287. Shannon Mckay, Glasgow Caledonian University
288. Courtney Innes, Glasgow Caledonian University
289. Darryl Marshall, Glasgow Caledonian University
290. Toni Morrison, University of Edinburgh
291. Courtney Coyle, Edinburgh Napier University
292. Kayleigh Robertson, Glasgow Caledonian University
293. Maya-rae Stewart, University of Dundee
294. Rhiannon Marie Ritchie, Robert Gordon University
295. Kirstin Lyle, University of Stirling
296. Laura Mcdade, University of Strathclyde
297. Rebecca Melville, University of Stirling
298. Alexander McDonald, University of Stirling
299. Rebecca Keenen, Stirling University
300. Phillipa viret, Robert Gordon University
301. Mark Kolek, University of Strathclyde
302. Laura Sinclair, Robert Gordon University
303. Nicola kirsop, University of Strathclyde
304. Stephanie Urcott, Robert Gordon University
305. Natasha crowe Robert Gordon University
306. Breagha wyllie, Glasgow Caledonian University
307. Wendy Norton, University of the West Scotland
308. Emma Higgins University of Strathclyde
309. Logan neely, Glasgow Caledonian University
310. Rebecca Hume, The Open University
311. Alannah Gibbons, University of Strathclyde
312. Emma Stait, University of Strathclyde
313. Meghan Travers, University of Strathclyde
314. Gavin Heron, University of Strathclyde

315. Gillian Howard, University of Strathclyde
316. Danielle Pullen, Glasgow Caledonian University

Supported by...

John McGowan, General Secretary, Social Workers Union

Alison Bavidge, National Director, Scottish Association of Social Workers

The following social work lecturers (in order of signature):

1. David McKendrick Lecturer in Social Work, Glasgow Caledonian University
2. Louise Mackellar, Lecturer in Social Work, Glasgow Caledonian University
3. Sahmeena Ali, Lecturer in Social Work, Glasgow Caledonian University
4. John Devaney, Professor of Social Work, University of Edinburgh
5. Rona Gray, Lecturer, Glasgow Caledonian University
6. Paula Gow, Lecturer in Social Work, University of the West of Scotland
7. Moira Godfrey, Lecturer in Social Work, University of the West of Scotland
8. Scott Grant, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of the West of Scotland
9. Robin Sen, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Edinburgh
10. Mary Mitchell, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Edinburgh
11. Natalia Farmer, Lecturer in Social Work, Glasgow Caledonian University
12. Sally Paul, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of Strathclyde
13. Graham McPheat, Principal Teaching Fellow in Social Work, University of Strathclyde
14. Autumn Roesch-Marsh, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, University of Edinburgh
15. Cara Jardine, Senior Lecturer in Social Work and Social Policy, University of Strathclyde
16. Sandra Engstrom, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Stirling
17. Peter Yates, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Edinburgh
18. Sangeeta Chatterji, Lecturer in Social Work, University of Edinburgh
19. Pearse McCusker, University of Edinburgh
20. Sara Hitchin, Placement Co-ordinator, University of Stirling

Copied to: Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Economy, Deputy First Minister, General Secretary of the Social Workers Union, Director of the Scottish Association of Social Workers and the key organisers of this letter.

Notes

To arrange a meeting, please contact David Grimm at

SocialWork@gcstudents.co.uk and copy in simon.francis@campaigncollective.org.

[1] Nurses bursaries are for GBP10,000 a year, but last a full year due to placements lasting a full year. Social work placements typically last nine months, but may require year round applications / awards, which would need to be considered by funding organisations. There are 1,966 social work students in Scotland ([SSSC](#)).

[2] *Setting the Bar*, Social Work Scotland, May 2022

<https://socialworkscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Setting-the-Bar-Full-Report.pdf>

