

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL
REPORT

To: Education (Resources) Sub-Committee	Subject: Further Education and Higher School Bursaries Performance Review 1997/98
From: Director of Education	
Date: 17 May 1998	
Ref: MM/KF/FB	

Summary

This report reviews the budget performance of the further education and higher school bursaries during financial year 1997/98. It also includes an analysis of attendance figures during session 1997/98.

Recommendations

The education (resources) sub-committee is recommended to:

- (a) to note the performance of the further education and higher school bursaries budget for financial year 1997/98
- (b) request the submission of further performance reports to future meetings of the sub-committee.

Members wishing further information about this report should contact

Michael O'Neill, Director of Education, on 01236 812337, or
Murdo Maciver, Head of Service, on 01236 812269

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Higher School and Further Education Bursaries - Performance Review 1997/98

Report by the Director of Education

1 Background

- 1.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Education Authorities Bursaries (Scotland) Regulations 1995 give education authorities the power to award bursaries to persons in education over the school leaving age.
- 1.2 The policy framework adopted by authorities takes account of the legal regulations and COSLA guidelines. This includes the following principles:
- (a) support to be available for all approved full-time courses up to but not including Higher National Certificate and for approved part-time courses .
 - (b) the basic entitlement to a higher school bursary for up to 2 years and support for one further course of study.
 - (c) no support to be made by the local authority where alternative funding is available to the student. This includes courses at the incorporated further education colleges and courses supported by the Students Award Agency for Scotland.
 - (d) students must fulfill specific residential requirements.
 - (e) the bursary may include support for fees, maintenance, study expenses and travel. The level of award will take account of age, residential arrangements, travel requirements, marital status, dependent responsibilities, personal income and parental income.
 - (f) payments will be dependent on satisfactory conduct, progress and attendance.
- 1.3 In 1997 the education committee approved a more demanding level for satisfactory attendance for bursary support to 90% rather than the previous 80% threshold. The attendance of students is monitored over a 10 week period and students who fail to reach the attendance threshold are deducted 8 weeks maintenance from their bursary award.
- 1.4 This report looks at the impact of the change in the attendance threshold and the effect on the bursaries budget in 1997/98.

2 Bursary Awards in 1997/98

Table 1 is a detailed analysis of the awards and payments made in 1997/98

Awards	Number of awards	Budget 1997/98	Estimated Expenditure 1997/98
Higher school Bursaries	1311	813,770	768,128
Further Education Bursaries	12	210,800	110,887

- 2.1 Overall it is expected that the bursaries budget will be underspent by £ 145,555. It should be noted that the underspend is largely the result of bursary awards which were withdrawn because the bursary holder did not meet the 90% attendance threshold.

3 Attendance

- 3.1 Table 2 details the number of bursary applications that were stopped due to unsatisfactory attendance in the three reporting periods in 1996/97 and the number that would have been stopped if the attendance threshold had been 90%. Also indicated is the number of bursaries stopped in 1997/98 when the threshold for attendance was 90%.

Table 2 An analysis of attendance of students in receipt of higher school bursaries.

Attendance Periods	Session 1996/97					Session 1997/98		
	No. of App's	No. less than 80% Attendance	% Stopped	No. less than 90% Attendance	% less than 90% Attendance	No. of App's	No. Stopped	% Stopped
August - October	746	101	14%	297	40%	864	248	29%
October - January	1081	144	13%	350	32%	886	282	32%
January - March	1240	173	14%	349	28%	1311	273	21%

- 3.2 The following conclusions can be drawn from a comparison between the 2 years:

- (1) more bursaries were withdrawn in 1997/98, for example in the January-March periods the comparison are 21% - 1997/98 and 14% in 1996/97
- (2) the attendance of bursary holders improved in 1997/98. 21% (273) students did not meet the 90% attendance threshold in the period January to March compared to 28% (349) students in 1996/97.

4. **FE Bursaries**

FE Bursaries were awarded in session 1997/98 to:-

- 10 students attending dance courses
- 1 student attending a special needs course
- 1 student attending Auchincruive Agricultural College

Attendance for all 12 students was generally good. Only 2 students had deductions made to their bursary awards due to poor attendance in one of the reporting periods.

5. **Recommendations**

- (1) to note the performance of the further education and higher school bursaries budget for financial year 1997/98
- (2) to request the submission of further performance reports to future meetings of the sub-committee.

Michael D'Neale

MM/KF
13 MAY 1998