

Falkland Islands Government – Further Education Funding Policy
Approved by Executive Council on 26th July 2022

1. Purpose

The Falkland Islands Government (FIG) provides funding for certain individuals to undertake further education (FE) courses. The purpose of this funding is to increase the level of skills and qualifications across the population of the Falkland Islands and to broaden the horizons of young people. To receive funding, an applicant (or in the case of a young person under 18, their parent) must have permanent legal status (Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit) and have been ordinarily resident in the Falkland Islands for at least 12 months before the start date of the course.

This document sets out information around:

- Who is eligible for funding
- What courses are eligible for funding
- Where courses can be taken
- What funding covers
- Conditions of funding
- Safeguarding
- Review of decisions

Note: Individuals who are employed by FIG on overseas terms may qualify for FE funding for dependent children as part of their employment package. Please refer to the relevant HR policy for further detail.

2. Who is eligible?

In order to receive funding for FE courses under this policy, individuals must meet a number of criteria. There are criteria that must be met at the date of application and further requirements to be met at the date the course starts.

2.1 Legal status

FE funding is only available to individuals with either Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit who are ordinarily resident in the Falkland Islands. Applications must be made by October half-term for courses commencing in the next academic year.

An individual who has applied for Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit can submit an application for FE funding, but funding will be withdrawn if Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit has not been granted by the date the course starts.

An applicant under the age of 18 will be eligible if either the applicant or a parent of the applicant has Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit.

2.2 Age

FE funding is available to young people aged 19 or under at the date of submitting an application.

Applications by individuals under the age of 18 must be signed by a parent or other person who has parental responsibility for the applicant (the term 'parent' is used in this respect throughout this document). That parent will have legal obligations in relation to the funding provided, including liability to repay any funding if the conditions of funding have been breached.

2.3 Careers advice

As part of the application process, individuals will be asked to meet with a career's advisor at Falkland College or Falkland Islands Community School to discuss their goals and options. Advice will be provided on the range of courses and educational institutions available, and information will be given on careers in the Falkland Islands, including current and anticipated skills shortages.

2.4 Ordinary residence

To receive funding, individuals must be ordinarily resident in the Falkland Islands when the course commences, have been ordinarily resident for a period of at least 12 months before the date the course commences and continue to be ordinarily resident throughout the course.

If the individual is under 18, the same requirements apply to the parent who signed their application i.e. they must also have been ordinarily resident for 12 months on the day their child's course started and continue to be ordinarily resident while the student is taking the course.

A person is deemed to be ordinarily resident for these purposes if they normally live in the Falklands (apart from temporary or occasional absences) and their residence in the Falklands is lawful and voluntary and for settled purposes as part of the regular order of their life for the time being, whether for short or long duration.

Where a young person has been educated outside the Falklands Islands for some or all of the 12 months period immediately before starting their further education course, they will in most cases be regarded as ordinarily resident in the Falkland Islands but it will depend on the particular circumstances of the case.

2.5 Qualifications

FE funding will only be provided to individuals who have achieved qualifications that meet the published minimum entry requirements for the intended course.

Where a student has not achieved at least a grade 4 in English and Maths at GCSE, they will be required to continue studying these subjects during the term of their FE funding until the grades or their equivalents are achieved.

3. What courses are funded

FE funding is provided for “approved courses”. Approved courses are full-time courses of up to two years in length that provide the next stage of education, following GCSE’s or other equivalent level qualifications available to students in the Falkland Islands during their compulsory school education.

Examples of approved courses include:

- A levels
- T levels
- Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers
- International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Business and Technology Education Council qualifications

In England, these are classified as ‘Level 3’ qualifications. FIG will assess equivalence with Level 3 qualifications when deciding whether a course qualifies for funding.

FE funding is not available for:

- Courses below Level 3, except for in exceptional circumstances. These are vocational courses. The relevant Level 3 course can only be accessed via a Level 2 vocational course that cannot be delivered on the Falkland Islands, or for resits of Maths and English GCSEs
- Courses above Level 3, such as university degrees – please refer to the Higher Education Funding Policy for further information
- Apprenticeships – please refer to the Apprenticeship Funding Policy for further information
- Students aged over 19 and wanting to study a FE qualification – please refer to the Community Development Scheme for funding options.

4. Where courses can be taken

Funding can be granted for an approved course at any educational institution, in the UK or elsewhere in the world, that meets FIG’s minimum standards. These standards require evidence of high levels of safeguarding and student care as well as high standards of teaching and educational outcomes. Online courses for students remaining in the Falkland Islands are eligible for funding.

FIG will accept as evidence of these standards being met an Ofsted grade of ‘good’ or higher, or an equivalent inspection rating if the institution is not in England. Institutions that are not able to satisfactorily evidence high levels of safeguarding, student care, teaching, and educational outcomes will not be approved for FE funding.

If an institution’s standards decrease over the period of an individual’s course of study, FIG will continue to provide funding (provided that other eligibility

requirements and conditions continue to be met) to completion of the course at that institution, or will support the student to transfer to a different institution if desired.

5. What funding covers

FE funding is available for:

5.1 Cost of attending an educational institution

Periodically, FIG sets a maximum annual contribution towards the cost of attending an educational institution for the purposes of undertaking an FE course. These costs include a deposit to secure a place at the institution, the cost of boarding facilities, if provided, and any tuition, course or exam fees. This does not cover the cost of additional materials or activities, such as field trips. Funding for such additional costs must be applied for separately – further information on this is provided below.

Funding is only provided up to the actual cost, even if this is less than the maximum contribution, and suitable evidence may be required. Where the student is in receipt of other, external, funding in relation to the FE course, for example a scholarship or bursary from another organisation, FE funding will not be provided to cover the same expense. For example, if a bursary is awarded specifically to cover the full cost of boarding, FE funding from FIG will not be provided for the cost of boarding. If that bursary were to cover part of the cost of boarding, FE funding from FIG would cover the remaining cost, up to the maximum contribution. It is the student's (or parent's, if the student is under the age of 18) responsibility to inform FIG of any external funding that has been received. Failure to do so may be considered a breach of the conditions of funding and may result in a reduction, cessation, and/or reclaiming of funding.

Funding for boarding or accommodation outside of a school boarding facility will be considered. For example, it may be appropriate to arrange a homestay (either commercial or arranged through family or other connections). Any such alternative accommodation proposals must be approved by FIG. FIG will only approve such arrangements if it is satisfied that they will provide adequate safeguarding provisions. FIG will not fund independent accommodation rentals under the FE Policy.

FE funding will not be provided to contribute to the costs of a student living at home with a parent.

The current maximum contribution per year is currently set to match the boarding costs at Peter Symonds College. This has been set to reflect the higher end cost of a UK home student attending a UK state boarding school. Individuals who hold a British passport and who have Falkland Islands Status or a Permanent Residence Permit qualify as UK home students.

5.2 Travel costs

FE funding for courses delivered overseas include a travel element, to meet the cost of a return flight between the Falklands Islands and the place of study two times per academic year. The maximum funding level is the cost of equivalent journeys to/from the UK by the airbridge. Any travel costs above that amount in any academic year must be covered by the individual.

The cost of FIGAS fares to and from Stanley as part of the student's travel to and from the educational institution will also be covered where the individual being funded lives in Camp.

All flights must be booked through the Education Department.

An additional allowance of £45 is provided up to four times per year to cover the cost of travel to/from the overseas airport/terminal and the educational institution for each funded flight or other funded transport. This funding is a fixed payment irrespective of the actual cost incurred. The amount of this allowance is reviewed periodically by FIG.

5.3 Insurance

Students in receipt of FE funding have automatic travel and medical insurance from FIG when travelling directly to their educational institution to take up their studies and returning to the Falkland Islands on a flight funded as part of the FE funding. Details of what this automatic insurance covers can be found by contacting the Education Department. This cover does not extend to any other journey that students make during the period of their FE course.

Students are advised to take out additional personal insurance to cover additional journeys and personal possessions.

5.4 Freight

A freight allowance of up to £60 will be available once to students who have successfully completed a two-year course of study. This is to provide for the return of personal goods to the Falkland Islands. This allowance is provided as a reimbursement and evidence of payment must be provided.

5.5 Student maintenance allowance

FE funding includes a weekly student allowance. This allowance is normally paid in monthly instalments in advance. Provision of allowances may cease in the event that a student:

- has an unauthorised absence without reasonable cause
- is not punctual for lessons
- fails to submit work as and when required for their course
- has a disciplinary sanction awarded against them by the educational institution.

Allowances are reviewed periodically by FIG. Students will be notified of any changes to the amount of the allowance before the start of the academic year. The allowance the year is £125 a month (September to mid- July)

5.6 Costs of materials, field trips etc.

Students may apply for FE funding to cover additional costs associated with FE courses. Examples of such costs might include field trips, special materials, or support for special educational needs. Matters that will be taken into consideration include:

- The impact of the request on the student's overall outcomes of the FE course
- The relevance of the request to the skills needs of the Falkland Islands
- The availability of alternative sources of funding

Any applications for funding to cover additional costs must be made and determined in advance of the costs being incurred.

6. Non-British students

6.1 Individuals without a British passport applying for funding for courses in the UK
Falkland Island Students without a British passport can study in the UK, but they will incur additional costs that will not be included in the funding available from FIG. For example, they may incur increased accommodation costs as they will not be eligible for the same UK home students rate as students who have British passports.

Individuals who do not hold a British passport (including a British Overseas Territory Citizen passport) also need a visa to study in the UK. Their choice of institutions will be limited, as the educational institution must be permitted by the UK Government to sponsor migrant students.

6.2 Financial assistance with immigration expenses

Financial support may be available for visa or for other non-Falkland Islands immigration-related expenses, at the discretion of the Director. The Director will take into consideration the individual's prospects successfully meeting all the other requirements for FE funding.

FIG provides careers advice is available on the options open to non-British students.

7. Conditions of funding

All individuals who successfully apply for FE funding are required to sign a funding agreement as a condition of receiving the funding. If the individual is under the age of 18, a parent will also be required to sign the funding agreement. This agreement sets out the conditions that the young person must comply with during their course. Breach of the conditions may result in funding being terminated and repayment may be claimed by FIG from the student or, if appropriate, their parent.

7.1 Behaviour

FIG expects students to apply themselves fully to their course and meet high standards of personal and academic behaviour and reserves the right to terminate funding and reclaim any sums paid to or for the benefit of any student who does not meet these standards. Students are expected to comply with the policies of the educational institution they attend and uphold the reputation of the Falkland Islands.

7.2 Personal data

Signing the funding agreement also gives FIG permission to share the student's personal data with the educational institution and other agencies. This includes giving and receiving information about the student, such as reports on the student's attendance, behaviour, and progress from their educational institution and boarding/accommodation provider.

Information may also be shared with other agencies including KEMH, a FIG contracted guardian service, and FIGO, for the purposes of providing emergency assistance and to fulfil FIG's duty of care (see below).

7.3 Breach of condition

If the Director of Education is satisfied that the terms of the funding agreement are not being met, the Director may give written notice to the student, and to the parent if the student is under the age of 18. The notice will include:

- particulars of the breach of the funding agreement
- the action that must be taken by the student to remedy the situation
- the action that will be taken by FIG if the issue is not resolved.

If the issue is not resolved, the Director may

- stop or reduce funding
- reclaim funding already provided.

8. Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of students is a primary concern of FIG. Although students are expected to seek assistance from their educational institution or boarding/accommodation provider in the first instance, FIG makes additional arrangements to provide emergency support to students.

8.1 Safety plan

Students must have an approved safety plan in place before departing for their educational institution. A safety plan sets out the arrangements in place and resources available to students for pastoral care and to prevent, identify, and address any safeguarding issues that may arise. This must be shared electronically with the Education Office.

The safety plan must include details of an emergency contact or, if the student is under the age of 18, the guardian appointed by their family in the country where their educational institution is located.

8.2 Appointment of guardian for under 18s

Each student under the age of 18 must have a guardian. This guardian acts as a parent and will be contacted by the education provider if a student needs parental support. It is vital the guardian understands this role and its importance.

8.3 Emergency Guardian Service

FIG will also arrange an emergency Guardian Service, which does not replace a family appointed guardian but is provides an emergency back-up for example if the family guardian is hospitalised. Details of the emergency contact/ guardian will be shared by FIG with any organisation FIG commissions to provide emergency services to students. The Emergency Guardian Service will be available to provide support for students who are under 21 but does not replace the need for the family to make arrangements for a local guardian/ emergency contact.

8.4 Falkland Islands Government Office in UK

Falkland Islands Government Office (FIGO) in London will provide emergency assistance to students in the UK in the event that they are not able to access appropriate support elsewhere.

Contact details for FIGO are:

- Phone – 0207 222 2542
- Email – recruitment@figo.gov.fk

9. Reviews

If an individual's application for funding is rejected or funding is reduced or stopped, the individual (or a parent if the individual is under 18) can apply for a review of that decision by the Board of Education.

The outcome of the review may be:

- The decision is upheld
- The decision is overturned and a new decision is substituted
- The decision is referred back to the original decision maker for reconsideration

Any requests for review must be made within four weeks of being informed of the original decision. The person undertaking the review may request additional information or submissions from the parties.