

Teaching Bursary in Scotland Equality Impact Assessment - Results

July 2023

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Title of Policy	Teaching Bursary in Scotland.
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy	To incentivise career changers to undertake a one year Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) to train in the hard to fill teaching subjects - Physics, Maths, Technical Education, Computing Science, Chemistry, Home Economics and Gaelic as a secondary subject, and Gaelic medium across all secondary subjects and in primary.
Directorate: Division: team	Learning Directorate: Workforce, Infrastructure and Digital.

Executive summary

The previous STEM bursary scheme provided 150 bursaries of £20,000 to incentivise career changers into teacher training in the hardest to fill STEM subjects: - Physics, Maths, Technical Education, Computing Science, Chemistry and Home Economics. The scheme has been extended to include Gaelic as a secondary subject, Gaelic medium across all secondary subjects and in primary and renamed to the Teaching Bursary in Scotland. The criteria remains the same.

Background

The previous Deputy First Minister announced on 8 October 2017 that the Scottish Government would introduce a bursary of £20,000 to attract career changers to undertake a one year professional graduate diploma in teacher training in the hardest to fill teaching subjects: Maths, Physics, Computing Science, Technical Education. The scheme was extended in 2018 to include Chemistry and again in 2019 to include Home Economics.

The 2023 scheme has now been extended to include Gaelic as a secondary subject, Gaelic medium across all secondary subjects and in primary and renamed to the Teaching Bursary in Scotland.

Applicants need to have been in paid employment for at least 36 months out of the last 84 months (including career breaks and any periods of furlough). Applicants who can evidence they have been in receipt of Carer's Allowance for 36 months out of the last 84 will also be deemed to meet the employment eligibility criteria.

Applicants need to hold a 2.1 degree or meet the minimum initial teacher education (ITE) entry requirement with a relevant masters qualification, the content of which would make them suitable to teach Maths, Computing Science, Technological Education, Physics, Chemistry, Home Economics, Primary Education in Gaelic Medium, Gaelic as a Language/Subject at Secondary School Level or Gaelic Medium across all Secondary Subjects.

Normal entry requirements for PGDE ITE also apply. Including exceptions, applicants ordinarily need to have been out of full-time education since 30th September 2020.

Applicants must have an offer of a place on a PGDE ITE programme at a Scottish university before applying.

The Scope of the EQIA

The scope of this EQIA is to assess and highlight any direct or indirect impact of the scheme on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Key Findings

The Scottish Government is mindful of the three needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

When the STEM bursary scheme policy was first introduced, we ensured that equality issues were identified throughout the development process and we were mindful of the definition of protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act 2010 and guidance provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

An EQIA was prepared in February 2018, reflecting the relevant considerations from the policy development stage. In 2021 an EQIA was developed to allow a change to the bursary criteria.

As we are changing the scheme with effect from 5 June 2023, we have prepared a new EQIA to ensure that the policy continues to promote the three needs of the public sector equality duty. The evidence remains the same.

Data

The Teacher Census (Summary Statistics for Schools in Scotland, 13 December 2022) was used for any key data required in considering protected characteristics of age and gender – especially gender as 65% of the existing secondary school teacher workforce is female.

Age

The key purpose of the scheme is to enable career changers to undertake a one year (PGDE) in an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) course in Scotland that leads to the award of registered teacher status in the hardest to fill STEM subjects and Gaelic. In our discussions to develop a definition of career changer for the bursary criteria we were mindful to avoid either direct or indirect discrimination in relation to age. Whilst we are keen to encourage wider work experience into the profession, we considered that 36 months employment was the fairest minimal requirement that we might deem as reasonable to define as a career. Any longer might make younger candidates out with

scope, but a minimum period of experience is necessary to ensure that we attract high calibre candidates. In addition, we have built in flexibility by defining the months that a candidate must have been in work as 36 out of the last 84 to enable those who may have had career breaks for whatever reason to come within scope. We also ensure carers are included as eligible applicants, as long as a carer can evidence that they have been in receipt of carers allowance for 36 months out of the last 84 months. Applicants must have spent at least 36 months out of full-time education (excluding those who have completed three years of a remunerated PhD which includes teaching experience). The purpose of this is once again to ensure that the scheme attracts genuine career changers rather than candidates who are looking to continue their education.

Race

We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching Bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic. It could perhaps advance equality of opportunity and foster good relation by bringing people into teaching. The criteria for the scheme has been developed in line with the SAAS residency criteria for funding. In addition, an exemption for the requirement to evidence employment has been built into the scheme for those with refugee status.

Disability

We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching Bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic. Anecdotal evidence does however indicate that disabled people may be less able to take up part time employment to support themselves during full-time courses. The bursary could advance equality of opportunity by encouraging disabled people to enter teaching and may also foster good relations by increasing workforce diversity.

It therefore seems likely that the bursary could have a positive impact in attracting disabled professionals with to undertake a career change into the teaching profession. Students will apply for PGDE courses in the normal way through existing university processes.

Sex

There is currently a gender imbalance in the teaching profession and marked differences in the characteristics of the primary and secondary.

	% Female	% Male
Teachers - primary	89%	11%

Teachers - secondary	65%	35%
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The teaching bursaries apply to the hardest to fill subjects and will apply equally to any eligible individual regardless of gender. We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic as the criteria applies to all individuals. However, as people with caring responsibilities are predominantly women and are less likely to be able to work to support themselves during full-time study, it seems likely that the bursary could advance equality of opportunity for female candidates. On the other hand, it is possible that the requirement to have been in employment for 36 out of the last 84 months may have a disproportionate adverse impact on women, given that more women than men are likely to take time out of work for childcare related reasons. To the extent that the policy might be considered indirectly discriminatory, we consider that it can be objectively justified. It is expressly aimed at career changers, with the stated objective of encouraging people into the teaching profession for certain key subjects. The purpose of the bursary is to ease the transition from giving up paid employment to undertake a year of teacher training. The eligibility criteria allows scope for career breaks for 48

months in the last 84 months, which is considered to be proportionate. We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching Bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic.

Sexual Orientation

We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching Bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic.

Religion or belief

We are not aware of any evidence that indicates the Teaching Bursary criteria could impact positively or negatively on this protected characteristic.

Introduction of Gaelic

An Island Community Impact Assessment (ICIA) template was developed for a decision on whether a full ICIA was required. In preparing the ICIA we concluded that there will not be a “significantly different” impact from this extension on island communities, therefore a full ICIA is not required.

Conclusion

The Teaching bursary in Scotland has not identified any direct or indirect unlawful discrimination on people with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.



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Edinburgh
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