WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING
BY DEPUTY V. LI OF ST. HELIER NORTH
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 2nd NOVEMBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2026

Question

"In relation to expenditure on student finance support for higher education, will the Minister advise –

(a) the budget allocated and actual expenditure on student finance, shown separately from other funding for education and lifelong learning, in the years 2018, 2024 and 2025 and state the –
  (i) forecast expenditure for 2026; and
  (ii) the funding allocated within the Proposed Budget 2027-2030 (P.73.2026) for years 2027 to 2030;
(b) the assumptions underlying the funding allocations for the years 2028 to 2030, including expected student numbers, annual uprating of grants, allowances and income thresholds, and how academic-year costs are apportioned across calendar-year budgets;
(c) expenditure on tuition fee grants, maintenance grants and other allowances, including for clinical students, disabled students and interview allowances for each year from 2024 to 2026; and
(d) the amounts and rationale for any underspend in the years 2018 to 2026 and whether any such underspend was carried forward, reallocated within the department, or returned to the Consolidated Fund?"

Answer

(a)

Year*	Budget Allocated (£)	Actual Expenditure (£)
2018	10,558,000	9,955,000
2024	16,032,000	13,779,000
2025	16,396,000	12,663,000

(a i)

Year*	Forecast Expenditure (£)
2026	13,000,000

(a ii)

Year*	Funding Allocated (£)
2027	16,130,000
2028	16,559,000
2029	16,699,000
2030	16,699,000

*Budget and expenditure are presented by fiscal calendar year.

(b)

2028 to 2030 assumptions

Expected student numbers

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Estimated Student Numbers	1,258	1,295	1,247	1,321

*Years are expressed in academic years

Student number forecasts are derived using historical participation rates for Year 11 and A Level students progressing from further education into higher education (HE).

These rates are applied to projected cohorts of forthcoming school leavers to estimate future HE entrants.

A similar methodology is used to forecast mature student enrolments and students returning following a gap year.

Current Year 1 enrolment data is then used to model continuation and retention trends, enabling projections of student numbers from the point of entry through to course completion across subsequent years of study.

Annual uprating of grants, allowances and income thresholds

	2027	2028	2029	2030
Grant: Tuition Fees	£10,050	£10,312	£10,589	£10,865
Grant: Maintenance	2.3%	2%	2%	2%
Allowances:	2.3%	2%	2%	2%
Income Thresholds	4.6%	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%

*Years are expressed in academic years

Tuition Fees are taken from data published by the UK Government on expected changes to university fee caps in 2026 and the percent increase of 2.68% in 2027. This percentage has also been assumed in future years' rises.

Maintenance Grants are inflated by UK CPI, as this index closely reflects the living costs incurred by the majority of students in receipt of Student Finance grants. The percentages are taken from the published OBR report as these give a best estimate for future periods.

Allowances are also increased in the same manner as Maintenance Grants.

However, actual changes to grants are based on nominal changes in CPI as published in the September Indices.

Income Thresholds are forecast to increase in line with forecasted average earning percentages published by the Fiscal Policy Panel Spring Forecast as these give a best estimate for future periods.

However, actual changes to threshold are now based on nominal changes in income as published in the Index of Average Earnings Report by Statistics Jersey each August.

How academic-year costs are apportioned across calendar year budgets

Forecast costs are apportioned in equal thirds across the three academic terms. i.e. for the 2026-7 academic year, the Autumn Term is incurred in 2026 whilst the Spring and Summer Term captured in 2027.

(c)

Expenditure on tuition fee grants, maintenance grants and other allowances

(£)	2024	2025	2026 (forecast)
Tuition Fees	8,751,000	8,236,000	8,592,000
Maintenance Grants*	4,733,000	4,157,000	4,317,000
Other allowances*	295,000	270,000	91,000
Total	13,779,000	12,663,000	13,000,000

*Other allowances disabled students and interview allowances. Maintenance Grants include values for clinical students.
***Expenditure is presented by fiscal calendar year.

(d)

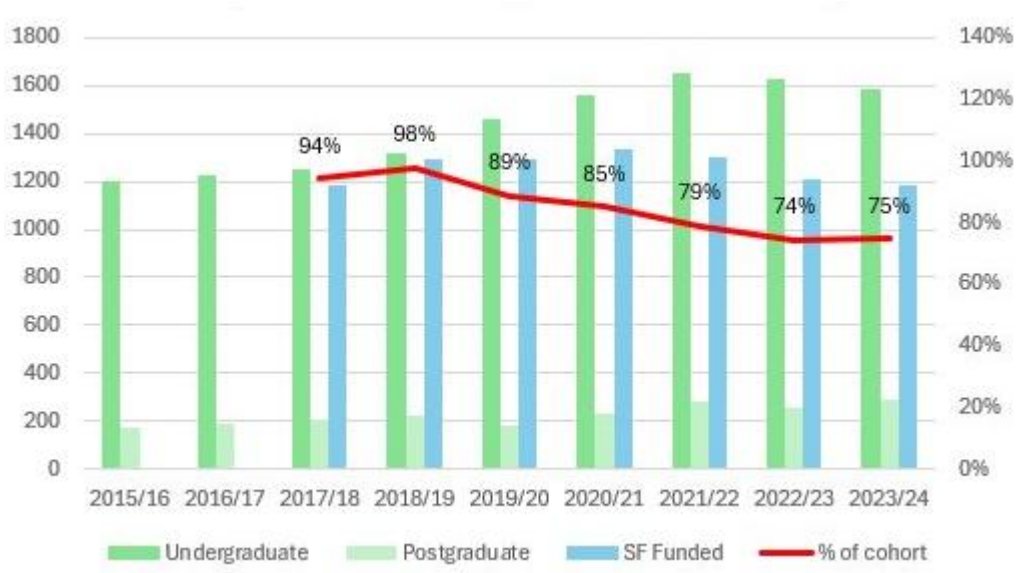
Amounts underspent

Year	Underspend (£)
2018	604,000
2019	27,000
2020	988,000
2021	1,364,000
2022	1,655,000
2023	986,000
2024	2,253,000
2025	3,733,000
2026	2,770,000

Rationale for underspend

Significant changes to the student finance scheme were made in 2018, which predicted levels of students in receipt of student finance support to reach 1,600 per year. However, in the years following student levels have fluctuated in the region of 1,150-1,350.

Whilst absolute numbers of students pursuing university degrees in the UK has remained stable, the percentage of the cohort in receipt of student finance support is declining.



* Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data

** The above graph reflects UK reported data only. Similar statistical reports are not collected for the rest of the world however, based on current trends in student finance applications for study elsewhere, the number of individuals studying outside of Jersey and the UK are considered to represent a very small proportion of the overall cohort.

In the 2025 Academic year, all thresholds were uplifted by 5.2% to reflect average income increases for that year. This increased the full award threshold for fees up to income under £115,720 rather than £100,000 and the upper threshold from £200,000 to £210,400.

Use of underspend

No underspend in any given year was carried forward. Carrying forward underspends require exceptional permission in accordance with the Public Finance (Jersey) Law 2019 which was neither sought nor granted.

The budget forms part of the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department's Head of Expenditure limit. After seeking and being granted permission from the Treasury Minister, unused budget allocated for student finance would firstly be used to offset overspending areas within the department before being returned to the Consolidated Fund.