

THE STATES OF DELIBERATION
of the
ISLAND OF GUERNSEY

19th March, 2025

Proposition No. P.2025/26

Committee for Education, Sport & Culture

BLANCHELANDE COLLEGE, ELIZABETH COLLEGE & THE LADIES' COLLEGE: FUTURE FUNDING
ARRANGEMENTS

AMENDMENT

Proposed by: Deputy J Dyke
Seconded by: Deputy A Matthews

And to add the following proposition:

“5. To direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to present to the States no later than the end of the academic year 2025/2026 for implementation in 2027/28, a series or range of options to introduce a bursary or open access programme to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College (“the Colleges”) in secondary education for students in Years 7 to 13, allocated between the Colleges and subject to agreement with each College in respect of the number of pupils and admissions policy applicable to the funded places.

The range of options must include an option to provide financial assistance by way of a sliding scale of up to 100% of fees according to a means test based on family circumstances for at least 30 places per annum.

The range of options presented shall allow for variations of the total number of places to be funded, covering a range of revenue costs and the degree to which each option seeks to open access to the Colleges up to pupils from all backgrounds.”

Rule 4(1) Information

- a) The proposition contributes to the States' objectives and policy plans consistent with the Education Strategy, but in particular to the “Equity, Safety and Inclusivity” objective articulated by the phrase: “Pivotal to our Education Strategy is fairness.” The proposition fits in with to all pieces of the strategy well with contributions to “Meeting the needs of our community”, “High quality learning & excellent outcomes” and “Outstanding leadership and governance”

- b) In preparing the proposition, some consultation has been undertaken with the Colleges and with the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, and a draft version has been seen by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- c) The proposition has been submitted to His Majesty's Procureur for advice on any legal or constitutional implications.
- d) There are no direct financial implications of carrying this proposal into effect as all preparatory work can be carried out internally with existing resources and in partnership with the Colleges.
- e) Drafting advice has been sought from the States' Greffier.

Explanatory note

This amendment does not seek to impose any financial arrangement for the funding of the Colleges, but instead directs the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to return to the States with proposals that will enable States funding for a limited number of places at the Colleges.

The number of places to be proposed is requested as a series of options, in a range, and the amendment allows for flexibility such that different allocations for each College, should each institution have differing capacity or other constraints on availability.

Bursary schemes

Bursary schemes are commonplace in independent schools and their operation is well understood. In essence, funding is available to meet fees that would otherwise be payable by parents of eligible students. Typically, funding is provided by donation or other fundraising activity. A variety of conditions are often applied to direct funds towards prospective students that meet some specified criteria.

Open Access

Open Access is a term used to describe a bursary funded by governments, with the specific aim of opening access to independent schools to families who would otherwise not be able to afford the fees.

Application in Guernsey

This Amendment seeks to adapt proposals that have been made in the UK for open access to the unique situation in Guernsey. The Colleges have historically been and remain an integral and integrated part of Guernsey's education system. The presence and success of the Colleges is widely considered a key enabler for the island's economy. However, the ending

of the previous scholarship scheme which operated alongside the 11+ in a selective education system has created a situation where access to the education they offer is restricted to fee-paying students, which is considered by the Committee for Education, Sport and Culture to be a cause of social segregation in the education ecosystem. Enabling a form of Open Access would increase social mobility and reduce social segregation.

Means tested funding

Means testing for bursary schemes is a mechanism where fees can be funded for students from a wide range of backgrounds. Factors including household income, expenditure, assets, the number of children in a household, loans, debts and financial commitments can be taken into account.

This allows students from non-privileged backgrounds to access the same education opportunities as those from privileged backgrounds. A sliding scale means mid-income families can receive partial funding, making a co-payment for the remainder, such that no family will be denied the opportunity to attend.

This is distinct from scholarship schemes, such as was previously available in Guernsey for access to both the Colleges and to the Grammar School. Scholarships generally fund 100% of the cost of education regardless of income or ability to pay, leading to criticism that wealthy individuals can gain access to education opportunities for free. This is not a feature of means-tested support, which is targeted at those on low or middle levels of income.

Admissions policy

The amendment does not specify how eligibility for places would be determined, but an admissions policy (applicable to funded placements) can specify a wide variety of factors to take into account.

The extent to which the policy could prioritise students from disadvantaged backgrounds, “looked after” children, or those with Additional Learning Needs, has not been specified, to give the greatest degree of flexibility when defining a policy.

The guiding principle is to enable access to the Colleges based on merit rather than ability to pay. In reality, an element of academic selection is likely, as funded places are likely to be substantially over subscribed. Testing need not be on the basis of general ability, as subject specific attainment could be decided, to facilitate talented pupils from all backgrounds to enter the island’s top performing schools.

Revenue funding

The revenue requirements for and source of States funding have been intentionally omitted from this Amendment, as detailed requirements would be specified for a range of options when presented to the next States in 2025/6.

At a theoretical maximum level, the requirement for fully funding 30 places annually would start at approximately £450k in the first year of operation, and step up to £3.2m after seven

years (not accounting for inflation and assuming all places were 100% funded and that all sixth-form placements are used)

Realistically, to account for a quantity of part-funded places, the total requirement for 30 places would likely be considerably reduced, for example if the average place funds fees at 50% then the revenue requirement would become £225k in the first year and £1.6m after seven years (in real terms).

The equivalent cost of educating 30 students in the state system is £301,950 and the equivalent cost for seven years £2,113,650 using the values supplied by ESC in paragraph 8.12 of the Policy Letter.

The potential of part-funded placements to introduce new funding to the education system, in the form of partial co-payment of fees for mid-income families who are assessed as able to afford some (but not all) of the full fee amount. In general terms, this can equate to a net saving for the revenue budget requirement for education, and a more efficient use of limited States resources.