

PE1429/B

**PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF PE1429
QUESTIONS ARISING FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

TUESDAY 15 MAY 2012

The Scottish Government / Saltire Scholarships

- What are your views on what the petition is seeking?
- The Committee notes that the Saltire Scholarships are available across four priority countries. Please set out the reasons why availability is confined to these four countries.
- What consideration is the Scottish Government giving to expanding the programme to other countries?

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS 1 AND 2

The Scottish Government recognises the positive benefits that inward student mobility brings to our economy, the contribution it makes to our society and how it can enrich our culture. The recognition of these benefits is demonstrated through the funding of a number of scholarship schemes, including Scotland's Saltire Scholarships.

The primary aim of the Saltire scholarship programme is to raise the profile of Scotland as a place to live, work and study in key overseas markets, in line with the Scottish Government's International Framework, and to showcase the best of Scottish higher education. The scholarships are designed to support the promotion of Scotland as a Learning Nation and a Science Nation and link to the priority sectors of creative industries, life sciences, technology, financial services and renewable and clean energy.

The scholarships were launched in April 2009. 200 awards of £2,000 are offered annually on a matched funding basis between the Scottish Government and Scottish Higher Education Institutions.

Initially awards were targeted at students applying for one-year Masters courses in the fields of creative industries, life sciences, technology, financial services and renewable and clean energy. However, the programme is subject to frequent review, demonstrated by the extension to include one year of an undergraduate or PhD course also, across the same subject fields, from academic year 2012/13.

The scholarships are allocated across the Scottish Government's key priority countries as set out in the Scottish Government's International Framework – Canada, China (including Hong Kong), India and the USA. These countries have been identified as priority countries for Scottish international engagement, primarily to support the Scottish Government Economic Strategy. The Saltire Scholarship programme therefore contributes to the Scottish Government's wider strategy of international engagement.

The Scottish Government also funds a number of other inward scholarship schemes:

Scholarships for Excellence – providing funds to top researchers to come to Scottish Universities to undertake their PhD. The Scottish Government pays 50% of their fees and the university waive the remaining fees. To date the Scottish Government has provided funding for 6 scholars in Scotland studying at Edinburgh University and Glasgow University.

Fulbright Scholarships - providing £70,000 per annum for scholars to and from the USA.

Commonwealth Scholarships – providing £50,000 per annum for PhD scholars from "developed" Commonwealth countries to study in Scotland as part of a UK wide programme.

Scottish Universities International Summer School: Saltire Scholarships
The Scottish Government provides funding for three overseas academics to attend the summer school, study Scottish Literature and return to teach it in their home country.

International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience – providing £105,000 per annum for inward and outward international work experience opportunities for young scientists, engineers and architects, assisting employers and students in over 80 countries, as part of a UK wide programme.

RESPONSE TO QUESTION 3

There are no current plans to broaden the nationality criteria for the Saltire Scholarship programme. However, the programme will remain under review to ensure it continues to contribute to the Scottish Government's International Framework and Economic Strategy.