



## ICAS Foundation – Supporting Information for Universities

The ICAS Foundation is a registered Scottish charity (SC034836) which aims to widen access and increase diversity, creating employment routes into the accountancy sector for talented young people from low-income backgrounds. We do this by finding and nurturing individuals who face social, financial and other barriers to achieving their academic potential.

**Over the last 10 years, the ICAS Foundation has supported over 300 students and awarded over £2.1 million in funding.**

Our Nurturing Talent programme (<https://www.icasfoundation.org.uk/what-we-offer/icas-foundation-programme>) is our key initiative and provides ongoing support for up to 4 years including bursary funding, individualised mentoring, and help in securing internships and graduate jobs. We also provide practical support in areas including interview skills, CV writing and employer engagement.

The first bursaries in this programme were awarded in 2013. We encourage students to apply to the ICAS Foundation at point of entry, to ensure we can provide the greatest benefit during their time at university, however we will accept applications from students at any point of their studies - we generally accept a small group of current students each year, particularly if their personal circumstances have unexpectedly changed since starting their studies.

Our focus is on supporting academically talented students (contextualised based on personal circumstances) who may otherwise find it difficult to first access and then maintain a place at university to study accounting or finance. We track a range of widening access criteria across our applications pool (including household income, SIMD, gender and ethnic diversity) to ensure that we are supporting students from a range of backgrounds, so that we can meet our ambition to increase the diversity of the accountancy profession.

- By providing financial support, we help students prioritise their studies and focus on their academic achievements, reducing the requirement for excessive part time employment during term time.
- Our mentoring programme offers students one-to-one support to manage their studies and personal development, encouraging students to benefit from the university's internal student support programmes while reducing the potential for students to exit university before the conclusion of their degree programme due to personal or financial pressures.

Our key eligibility criteria are:

- UK citizens or UK residents with leave to remain (including refugees / asylum seekers)
- Holding an unconditional or conditional offer to study an accountancy or finance related subject at university (with 50% or more relevant modules where undertaken as a joint degree).
- A household income of under £34,000 – for Scottish students, assessed via their SAAS Young Student Bursary level.
- Not in receipt of similar financial support – students are asked to self-declare this. *We aim to support students who are in demonstrable need of financial support to successfully complete their university studies, so generally do not support students who have access to alternative funding.*

The ICAS Foundation currently works with all Scottish universities and two ICAS-accredited universities in England to actively promote the Nurturing Talent programme. We are actively looking to expand the number of universities we work with through the development of formal match-funding partnerships, to ensure we can expand our programme on a sustainable basis.

The programme is promoted through multiple channels:

- **Through universities:** we work with appropriate university contacts to promote the programme while applications are open, usually via Widening Participation / Admissions teams for incoming students, and Accountancy / Finance departments for current students. We also support university events (schools outreach, applicant open days etc) by providing flyers or attending where helpful.
- **Through schools:** each year, we contact every state school in Scotland directly to promote our programme, so that details can be shared with students applying to Accounting / Finance programmes.
- **Through relevant organisations:** we stay in regular contact with relevant organisations supporting young people in Scotland, and share information about our programme which can be directed to appropriate individuals.
- **Through scholarship promotion:** the ICAS Foundation features in the SAAS Register of Educational Endowments and on the Scholarship Hub.
- **Through promotional activities and social media:** the Foundation also undertakes promotion through its own channels including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as featuring in the ICAS CA Magazine distributed to over 20,000 Chartered Accountants worldwide.

### Working Together to support students

Over the coming years, our strategy will be to develop formal partnerships with universities, accounting firms and other organisations to ensure a financially stable platform for growing the number of students we can support.

We currently have multiple formal match-funding agreements with universities in Scotland, allowing us to support more students at those specific institutions. We have provided an example below of how these agreements can be structured, based on accepting four new match-funded students per year, each on a four-year degree basis and receiving our maximum bursary of £2,500 per year (or £10,000 per student over the course of their degree):

Agreement Year	No of New Students per year	New ICASF Financial Commitment (total)	New University Financial Commitment (total)	Existing ICASF Financial Commitment (total)	Existing University Financial Commitment (total)	Total Potential Value of Student Funding
1	4	£20,000	£20,000	£0	£0	£40,000
2	4	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£20,000	£80,000
3	4	£20,000	£20,000	£40,000	£40,000	£120,000
4	4	£20,000	£20,000	£60,000	£60,000	£160,000
5	4	£20,000	£20,000	£80,000	£80,000	£200,000

We know from our current university partners, that this match-funding arrangement is seen as an excellent way to maximise the value of their internal available bursary funding, as well as offer bursaries to more students in a time where student demand for additional financial support is significantly increasing.

Each of our university partnerships is flexible to meet the needs of both organisations, and our primary focus is on ensuring that we can support more incoming university students to successfully achieve an excellent degree outcome, and progress into the accountancy career of their choice.

### Find out more

Website: <https://www.icasfoundation.org.uk/>

Meet our students: <https://www.icasfoundation.org.uk/what-we-offer/meet-our-students>

For more information or to have an informal discussion about how your institution can work with us, please contact Sanjay Singh, Director of the ICAS Foundation, at [Ssingh@icasfoundation.org.uk](mailto:Ssingh@icasfoundation.org.uk)