

Office for
Students



Recurrent funding for 2021-22

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Summary

1. This publication summarises the Office for Students' (OfS's) allocations of recurrent funding to higher education providers for the academic year 2021-22. Annex A to this document summarises the funding allocations for each provider and is available to download alongside this document as a separate file.¹
2. At the time of publishing, Annex A shows initial allocations for providers registered in the Approved (fee cap) category of the OfS Register on 8 July 2021. Updated versions of Annex A will be published periodically throughout the 2021-22 academic year,² including to reflect any further providers that become registered in this category between that date and 31 July 2022.
3. For the 2021-22 academic year, the overall grant we are distributing is £1,437 million. This consists of:
 - a. £1,266 million in recurrent grant
 - b. £21 million for national facilities and regulatory initiatives
 - c. £150 million in capital funding.
4. Non-capital grants have increased by £10 million (0.8 per cent) compared to the total originally announced for 2020-21, but have to support a 7 per cent increase in student numbers.³ This means that there is a reduction in the amount of funding per student that we are able to provide to universities and colleges. The total capital funding budget is the same as for 2020-21.
5. These recurrent grant allocations implement the decisions on changes to the OfS funding method on which we consulted earlier in the year.⁴ They reflect our grant settlement from government for the 2021-22 financial year (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022) and terms and conditions of grant the Secretary of State has applied to that grant.⁵
6. The total recurrent funding for providers announced initially in this publication is £1,221 million. The remaining £45 million comprises funding for Uni Connect (formerly the National Collaborative Outreach Programme) (£40 million), which is not part of the formula grants to

¹ Available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/recurrent-funding-for-2021-22/.

² The 2021-22 academic year refers to 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022.

³ The total originally announced for 2020-21 excludes £95 million in one-off grants that were made later in the year. These one-off grants comprise £10 million in recurrent funding to support increased student numbers following the decision to revert to centre-assessed grades for A-level and other Level 3 qualifications in summer 2020 (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/additional-funding-for-2020-21-and-monitoring-of-medical-and-dental-intake-targets-outcomes-of-consultation/) and £85 million in funding to address student hardship arising from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

⁴ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/consultation-on-recurrent-funding-for-2021-22/ and the outcomes of consultation at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/recurrent-funding-for-2021-22-outcomes-of-consultation/.

⁵ Guidance letters from the Secretary of State to the OfS are available at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/guidance-from-government/. The grant settlement for financial year 2021-22 was set out in the letter of 19 January 2021. Terms and conditions have been set out in letters of 25 March 2021 and 19 July 2021.

providers, and funding set aside for allocation to world-leading specialist providers following review later in the year (£5 million).

7. Changes to grant for individual providers compared with 2020-21 arise for two reasons:
 - a. Changes to OfS funding methods and budgets for 2021-22. The most significant contributory factors are:
 - i. The increase in the proportion of funding provided through the main high-cost subject funding allocation
 - ii. The reduction of 50 per cent to the rate of high-cost subject funding provided for subjects in the performing and creative arts and media studies
 - iii. The removal of the targeted allocation for students attending courses in London and of London weighting in the student premium funding methods
 - iv. The increase to the targeted allocation for specialist institutions.
 - b. Changes in student numbers at each provider relative to all others.
8. This publication is part of a suite of documents released as part of the July 2021 grant announcement, including:
 - a covering letter and recurrent grant tables for each provider
 - technical guidance that explains in detail how the figures in the recurrent grant tables are derived
 - 'Terms and conditions of funding for 2021-22' (OfS 2021.30).
9. All documents are available on the OfS website.⁶ This publication is of interest to anybody who wants to know about the recurrent teaching funding distributed by the OfS, but does not go into the detail of our funding methods. For further details, we recommend that you consult the documents listed above.

⁶ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/funding-for-providers/.

The OfS recurrent grant

Introduction

10. This publication announces recurrent grant allocations for the academic year (1 August to 31 July) 2021-22. Unless otherwise stated, all years in this document relate to academic years. Rounding may cause differences between individual figures and totals in this document.
11. Providers received details of their grant allocations on 29 July 2021.
12. 'Recurrent funding for 2021-22: Outcomes of consultation' (OfS 2021.26) set out the decisions we have taken on the approach to funding for 2021-22, in the light of consultation and the terms and conditions of grant that the Secretary of State has placed on the funding available to us.⁷

OfS budget for the 2021-22 academic year

13. The 19 January 2021 statutory guidance letter from the Secretary of State did not show indicative funding levels for financial year 2022-23: these will be subject to the outcomes of the forthcoming spending review and confirmation from government. The guidance letter stated that:

'If the department's level of overall funding is decreased due to wider events or in order to cover other unavoidable financial pressures, the department may, within the framework set out by Parliament and the courts, need to make in-year adjustments to allocations to our Partner Bodies in order to meet budget reductions.'

14. To set budgets for academic year 2021-22, we have had to make assumptions about the funding that might be available for financial year 2022-23, because of the overlap between the two from April to July 2022. However, any future changes to the grant made available to us by government for financial year 2021-22, or that we have assumed will be available for financial year 2021-22, are likely to affect the funding we are able to distribute to providers in academic year 2021-22. This may necessitate revising allocations after they have already been announced.

15. The total grant we are distributing in 2021-22 is £1,437 million. This is broken down in Table 1.

Table 1: OfS grant to be distributed in 2021-22

Main elements of grant	Total (£M)
Recurrent grant	1,266
Funding for national facilities and regulatory initiatives	21
Capital funding	150
Total	1,437

⁷ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/recurrent-funding-for-2021-22-outcomes-of-consultation/. This followed our consultation at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/consultation-on-recurrent-funding-for-2021-22/ (OfS 2021.01).

16. In addition to the £1,437 million that we allocate directly, we also contribute £47 million to the knowledge exchange funding distributed to providers by UK Research and Innovation (through Research England) in the form of Higher Education Innovation Funding. This funding is allocated according to a method agreed with us. Its distribution is not shown in this publication.
17. The approach to capital funding for 2021-22 is set out in 'Capital funding for financial year 2021-22: Allocations and invitation to bid' (OfS 2021.27).⁸ Capital funding for providers will be distributed primarily through a bidding competition, but we are also making a small formulaic allocation to them. Its distribution is also not shown in this publication.

Recurrent grant for providers

18. Table 2 shows our recurrent funding for 2021-22, split by different elements of grant and compared against the totals for 2020-21.

Table 2: Recurrent grant budgets for academic year 2021-22 (£ millions)

Elements of recurrent grant	2020-21 budget	2021-22 budget	Percentage change to budget
Funding for high-cost courses	897	900	+0%
Of which:			
High-cost subject funding: price groups A and B; pre-registration nursing; computing and information technology; archaeology	656	737	+12%
High-cost subject funding: performing arts; creative arts; media studies	35	18	-49%
Nursing, midwifery and allied health (NMAH) supplement	23	27	+17%
Sub-total high-cost subject funding and NMAH supplement	715	782	+9%
Very high-cost STEM subjects	24	24	0%
Overseas study programmes	28	28	0%
Postgraduate taught supplement	8	8	0%
Intensive postgraduate provision	33	33	0%
Accelerated full-time undergraduate provision	4	4	0%
Students attending courses in London	65	0	-100%
Clinical consultants' pay	16	16	0%
Senior academic general practitioners' pay	1	1	0%
NHS pensions scheme compensation	5	5	0%

⁸ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/capital-funding-for-financial-year-2021-22-allocations-and-invitation-to-bid/.

Elements of recurrent grant	2020-21 budget	2021-22 budget	Percentage change to budget
Funding for student access and success	316	313	-1%
Of which:			
Premium to support successful student outcomes: Full time ⁹	150	154	+3%
Premium to support successful student outcomes: Part time	66	67	+0%
Disabled students' premium	40	40	+2%
Premium for student transitions and mental health	0	12	New
Uni Connect	60	40	-33%
Funding for specialist providers	43	53	+23%
Specialist institutions	43	53	
Total recurrent grant	1,257	1,266	+1%
One-off recurrent funding for high-cost subjects and NMAH supplement for 2020-21	10	0	
One-off funding for student hardship in 2020-21 allocated based on student premiums	85	0	
Total recurrent grant including one-off sums	1,351	1,266	

19. This publication is concerned with the distribution between providers of recurrent grants. Annex A summarises the funding allocations for each provider and is available to download alongside this document as a separate file. The headings for this table are defined in Annex B.

20. The initial distribution of recurrent funding to providers announced in Annex A of this publication totals £1,221 million. The difference from the total of £1,266 million in Table 2 comprises funding for Uni Connect (£40 million), which is not part of the formula grants to providers, and funding set aside for allocation to world-leading specialist providers following review later in the year (£5 million).

21. Recurrent grant allocations are made to providers that are registered with the OfS in the Approved (fee cap) category. The initial release of Annex A summarises the allocations of recurrent grant for all such providers on the Register on 8 July 2021.

22. Subject to providers meeting all eligibility criteria for funding and our having sufficient funds available, we will provide formula-based recurrent grants to eligible providers that become registered between 8 July 2021 and 31 July 2022. Such grants will be reduced pro rata to reflect the number of days in the 2021-22 academic year before it becomes registered in this category. We will not reduce allocations already announced to providers in order to extend funding to other providers.

⁹ The funding for the three student premiums for 2021-22 incorporates the distribution of £5 million to be earmarked to address student hardship.

23. We will periodically publish updates to Annex A through the 2021-22 academic year, to reflect updated allocations or the inclusion of any further providers that become registered through the year.

Changes to funding for 2021-22

24. OfS 2021.26 set out our decisions on the approach to recurrent funding for 2021-22, including information on budgets and rates of grant for different elements of our formula allocations. We will publish later an updated version of our guide to funding for 2021-22.
25. Our total recurrent budget for providers for 2021-22 of £1,266 million is an increase of £10 million (0.8 per cent) compared with the total originally announced for 2020-21, but has to support an increase of nearly 83,000 (7 per cent) in full-time equivalent student numbers (FTEs).¹⁰ This means that there is a reduction in the amount of funding per student that we are able to provide to universities and colleges.
26. Table 3 summarises the changes to the average unit of recurrent funding per full-time equivalent (FTE) student in the period 2018-19 to 2021-22.¹¹ The unit of funding is calculated by dividing the recurrent funding for providers and Uni Connect by the total fundable FTEs counted in the formula allocations for the relevant year.¹² The figures in real terms (at academic year 2020-21 prices) use an estimate of the GDP deflators for academic years 2019-20 to 2021-22, derived from the forecast deflators for financial years 2019-20 to 2022-23 published in March 2021.¹³

¹⁰ The total originally announced for 2020-21 excludes £95 million in one-off grants that were made later in the year. These one-off grants comprise £10 million in recurrent funding to support increased student numbers following the decision to revert to centre-assessed grades for A-level and other Level 3 qualifications in summer 2020 (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/additional-funding-for-2020-21-and-monitoring-of-medical-and-dental-intake-targets-outcomes-of-consultation/) and £85 million in funding to address student hardship arising from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

¹¹ This table has been updated since it was published as Table 4 of OfS 2021.01, to reflect an overall increase of 585 to the intake targets for pre-registration courses in medicine and dentistry for 2021-22, compared with those previously planned (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/funding-for-providers/health-education-funding/medical-and-dental-target-intakes/), plus a small number of other minor changes to the data for providers, including new registrations in the Approved (fee cap) category.

¹² The figures for 2020-21 include one-off sums of £95 million (£10 million for additional student numbers and £85 million for student hardship). These one-off sums offset the cut to recurrent grant implemented for 2020-21 (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/funding-for-2020-21-ofs-board-decisions/), albeit that there was a shift from funding that supports providers' teaching costs to funding for distribution to students facing hardship.

¹³ Available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp. The GDP deflator for the 2021-22 financial year is forecast to be negative and this explains why the value of the unit of funding for academic year 2021-22 is higher in real terms than cash terms.

Table 3: Changes to the average unit of OfS funding for providers for academic years 2018-19 to 2021-22

	Total recurrent budget (£ millions)	Total fundable FTEs	Unit of funding: Cash terms	Unit of funding: Real terms	Percentage change to unit of funding in real terms since 2018-19
2018-19	1,290	1,147,863	£1,124	£1,215	-
2019-20	1,303	1,200,151	£1,086	£1,131	-6.9%
2020-21	1,352 ¹⁴	1,222,683	£1,106	£1,106	-9.0%
2021-22	1,266	1,305,587	£970	£981	-19.3%

27. Within the overall budget:

- a. The various elements of funding that support high-cost courses increase overall by £3 million (0.3 per cent), from £897 million to £900 million:
 - i. The largest element of this, high-cost subject funding, has increased by £63 million (9 per cent) to £755 million. Within this, the rate of funding for subjects in price groups A, B and for the new price group C1.1 (covering computing and IT, archaeology and pre-registration nursing courses) has increased by 4 per cent, while the rate of funding for the new price group C1.2 (covering performing and creative arts and media studies) has reduced by 50 per cent.
 - ii. The targeted allocation for students attending courses in London has been removed. This allocation totalled £65 million in 2020-21.
 - iii. We are maintaining in cash terms the rates of funding for the nursing, midwifery and allied health supplement. Because of increases in student numbers, the budget has increased by 17 per cent to £27 million.
 - iv. The budgets for other targeted allocations have been maintained in cash terms.
- b. Funding for student access and success has reduced overall by £3 million (1 per cent) from £316 million to £313 million. Within the total, we have:
 - i. Allocated £40 million for Uni Connect, a reduction of £20 million compared with 2020-21.
 - ii. Provided £5 million additional funding to address student hardship. This has been allocated through the existing student premiums for full-time undergraduates (£3.8 million), part-time undergraduates (£0.5 million) and disabled students (£0.8 million). Excluding that hardship funding, the budgets for those student premiums have otherwise been maintained in cash terms.

¹⁴ Including one-off £95 million funding.

- iii. Provided £12 million through a new student premium to support students transitioning into higher education and mental health.¹⁵
- c. We are increasing by £10 million (23 per cent) from £43 million to £53 million, the targeted allocation for world-leading specialist providers.

Recurrent funding outcomes for providers

28. Changes to grant for individual providers compared with 2020-21 arise for two reasons:

- a. Changes to OfS funding methods and budgets for 2021-22. The most significant contributory factors for individual providers are:
 - i. The increase in the proportion of funding provided through the main high-cost subject funding allocation.
 - ii. The reduction of 50 per cent to the rate of high-cost subject funding provided for subjects in the performing and creative arts and media studies.
 - iii. The removal of the targeted allocation for students attending courses in London and of London weighting in the student premium funding methods.
 - iv. The increase to the targeted allocation for specialist institutions.
- b. Changes in student numbers at each provider relative to all others. In broad terms, providers whose student numbers have not increased as much as the sector average are likely to receive a reduced share of the total funding. This will, however, depend on their mix of students between different types of courses and student characteristics.

29. When we issued 'Consultation on recurrent funding for 2021-22', we provided modelling of the impact on providers if all our proposals were to be accepted and reflecting changes to their student numbers since the previous year. The following commentary on impacts on providers is an update to the commentary that accompanied that earlier modelling. While the overall effects are very similar, there are a number of reasons for changes for providers compared with that earlier modelling. These include:

- a. The use of 2019-20 individualised student data to identify the student characteristics that inform the full-time and the disabled students' premiums. The earlier modelling instead used the 2018-19 individualised student data that informed our funding allocations for 2020-21.
- b. The decision to assign archaeology to price group C1.1 instead of C1.2, following the terms and conditions of grant applied by the Secretary of State in his statutory guidance letter of 19 July 2021.

¹⁵ A further £3 million to support these areas is being allocated as part of the funding for national facilities and regulatory initiatives, including through the recent competition for funds provided by the Department of Health and Social Care (see www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/funding-for-providers/mental-health-funding-competition/). The distribution of that £3 million is not shown in this publication.

- c. The allocation of 585 additional intake targets for pre-registration courses in medicine and dentistry for 2021-22, compared with those previously planned.¹⁶
- d. Changes to data for individual providers, including changes to providers' registration in the Approved (fee cap) category, since the modelling was produced.

30. The initial allocations at Annex A announced in July 2021 show an overall increase to recurrent grant for providers of £24 million (2 per cent) compared with 2020-21. Table 2 shows a net increase of £9 million to recurrent grant (disregarding the one-off sums distributed for 2020-21), but this incorporates a reduction to funding for Uni Connect of £20 million, meaning that the total increase to recurrent funding distributed to providers is expected to be £29 million. The difference compared to the increase shown in Annex A of £24 million is attributable to the £5 million that we will distribute later in 2021-22 in the light of the review of specialist provider funding. The comparison in Annex A between funding for 2021-22 and funding for 2020-21 does not take account of the one-off grants for 2020-21, totalling £95 million, that were made during the year.

31. The initial allocations at Annex A show funding allocations for the 338 providers registered with the OfS in the Approved (fee cap) category in time for inclusion in the July 2021 grant announcement. Of these, three have zero allocations for both 2020-21 and 2021-22, because they do not have any OfS-fundable FTEs. A further four were not funded in 2020-21, but are funded for the first time for 2021-22. Of the 335 providers with a non-zero funding allocation for 2021-22 announced in July 2021, 138 (41 per cent) have an increase compared with 2020-21 (including the four providers that are new to funding for 2021-22) and 197 (59 per cent) have a reduction. Table 4 summarises the number of providers with 2021-22 allocations that (as at July 2021) have increases or reductions compared with 2020-21, according to the size of that 2020-21 allocation. It shows that providers with smaller funding allocations in 2020-21 (which are commonly further education and sixth form colleges) are more likely to have reductions for 2021-22. There are two main reasons for this:

- a. These providers generally account for a declining proportion of total FTEs in the HESSES20 data.
- b. These providers also tend to have few students in the subjects that attract high-cost subject funding, which is the element of grant that has the biggest budget increase.

Table 4: Numbers of providers with increases or decreases in funding compared with 2020-21, split by size of total 2020-21 OfS allocation

Size of provider's recurrent funding allocation for 2020-21	Total number of providers	Number with an increase for 2021-22	Number with a reduction for 2021-22
Up to £100,000	69	19	50
>£100,000, up to £250,000	59	14	45
>£250,000, up to £500,000	48	11	37

¹⁶ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/funding-for-providers/health-education-funding/medical-and-dental-target-intakes/.

Size of provider's recurrent funding allocation for 2020-21	Total number of providers	Number with an increase for 2021-22	Number with a reduction for 2021-22
>£500,000, up to £1,000,000	32	9	23
>£1,000,000, up to £5,000,000	48	28	20
>£5,000,000, up to £10,000,000	38	26	12
>£10,000,000	41	31	10

32. Because increases in funding tend to be in larger providers (which also have the larger increases in student numbers), a significant majority (72 per cent) of the OfS-fundable FTEs countable for 2021-22 are at providers that have an increase in total recurrent funding (disregarding the one-off allocations for 2020-21) – albeit that the average rate of grant per FTE is reduced (see Table 3).
33. As at July 2021, there are 79 providers in the Approved (fee cap) category in London, of which one has a zero allocation in both 2020-21 and 2021-22. Of the remaining 78 providers, 12 have a net increase and 66 a reduction. Of those with a net increase, eight are providers in receipt of the targeted allocation for specialist providers, which has had a pro rata increase of 11.5 per cent and two are new to OfS funding for 2021-22. The net reduction to providers in London is £48 million.
34. Thirty providers have an increase of over £1 million (the two largest being of over £6 million). These providers are spread across all government regions except London. Between them, these 30 providers account for a net increase of £60 million. Twenty providers have reductions of over £1 million (the largest being of over £5 million). Nineteen of these providers have previously been in receipt of London weighting and account for a net reduction of £45 million.

Funding for national facilities and regulatory initiatives

35. We aim to provide as much as possible of our recurrent funding through allocations to providers. Further funding of £21 million supports national facilities and regulatory initiatives, the same total as for 2020-21. This is provided for specific purposes and to promote change that cannot easily be achieved through other routes. Table 5 shows the budgets for 2021-22.
36. This funding supports activity such as the National Student Survey and facilities such as Jisc (which funds development and champions the use of digital technologies in UK education and research). It also supports our Challenge Competitions, which facilitate projects in specific areas where the higher education sector is not serving students as effectively as it could.

Table 5: Funding for national facilities and regulatory initiatives 2021-22

Funding stream	Budget (£M)
Provision of student information	3.0
Challenge Competitions	11.3
Jisc	5.2
Professional and operational services	1.5
Total	21.0

Terms and conditions of OfS funding for 2020-21

37. Our 'Terms and conditions of funding for 2021-22' (OfS 2021.30) are also being published in July 2021.¹⁷ Providers should consult that document for full information on the terms and conditions attached to recurrent funding.

Further information

38. Providers requiring further information should contact recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk.

¹⁷ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2021-22/.

Annex A: Recurrent grants for academic year 2021-22

1. This annex is available to download as an Excel file alongside this document at www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/recurrent-funding-for-2021-22/. The table lists the recurrent grants for the academic year 2021-22 by provider.

Annex B: Description of columns used in Annex A

1. Providers are listed by legal name, with trading names also listed. A hidden column in the Excel file identifies the government region for each provider.
2. **'Funding for high-cost courses'** shows the total of our allocations that support the extra costs associated with teaching particular types of courses. Hidden columns show the breakdown between the allocations that make up this total. As at July 2021, the total is £899.5 million, comprising:
 - a. £755 million for the main high-cost subject funding allocation
 - b. £27 million for the nursing, midwifery and allied health supplement
 - c. £24 million for very high-cost science STEM subjects
 - d. £28 million for overseas study programmes
 - e. £8 million for the postgraduate taught supplement
 - f. £33 million for intensive postgraduate provision
 - g. £4 million for accelerated full-time undergraduate provision
 - h. £16 million for clinical consultants' pay
 - i. £1 million for senior academic general practitioners' pay
 - j. £5 million for NHS pensions scheme compensation.
3. **'Funding for student access and success'** shows the total of our allocations to providers that support student access and success for particular student groups (this does not include the separate funding allocated to Uni Connect partnerships). Hidden columns show the breakdown between different allocations. As at July 2021, the total is £273 million.
4. Part of the funding allocated through the student premiums for full-time undergraduates, part-time undergraduates and disabled students is identified as funding for student hardship. To ensure all the funding figures in the columns of Annex A are mutually exclusive, we have shown figures for those three premiums that exclude the element attributable to the new student hardship allocation, the total for the latter being shown in a separate column. Table B1 summarises how the different elements of student premium funding contribute to the overall total, with **figures in bold** matching totals in the columns of Annex A. Although student hardship funding is calculated using varying proportions of the full-time, part-time and disabled students' premiums, it is provided as a single overall allocation.

Table B1: Student premium funding for 2021-22 (as at July 2021)

Student premium	Allocation excluding hardship funding (£M)	Hardship funding (£M)	Total including hardship funding (£M)
Premium to support successful student outcomes: full-time (main allocation)	131.1	3.3	134.4
Premium to support successful student outcomes: full-time (supplement)	19.0	0.5	19.5
Premium to support successful student outcomes: part-time	66.3	0.5	66.8
Disabled students' premium	39.7	0.8	40.5
Premium for student transitions and mental health	12.0	0	12.0
Total student premiums	268.2	5.0	273.2

5. **'Funding for specialist providers'** shows our targeted allocation for world-leading specialist providers. The total allocated in July 2021 is £48 million. A further £5 million will be distributed later in the year to reflect the outcomes of a review that will primarily inform funding for specialist providers from 2022-23.
6. **'Total funding'** is the sum of the columns described above.
7. Annex A also provides comparisons with recurrent funding provided for the 2020-21 academic year.
 - a. **'2020-21 Total recurrent grant'** shows the OfS recurrent funding for each provider for the 2020-21 academic year.
 - b. **'Percentage difference to 2020-21 grant'** shows the percentage difference between **'Total funding'** and **'2020-21 Total recurrent grant'**.



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