Q: Other School allocations (I believe this is the additional student experience funds allocated in 2019/20) – is this funding definitely continuing in 2020/21?

A: This is things such as Moodle and your IT allocations and your one off student experience allocation in 1920. Additional student experience funds were available last year. We currently don’t have a provision for this in the coming year, however discussions are currently underway regarding this, and additionally to this further funding may be available dependant on student recruitment in the autumn, as it was last year. For the moment, please plan on the basis that this was one-off in 19/20.

Q: Staff Research Fund – is the amount per faculty member going to be confirmed by the School shortly, otherwise we can’t accurately forecast this?

A: we were going to increase a lot, but this has been put aside for now. Some have been suspended for 1 year. Please plan on the assumption that this in unchanged for 20/21. This should be confirmed by the School shortly.

Q: RIIF allocation - as this fluctuates year to year can Research & Innovation forecast this (as departments cannot)?

A: Yes, just leave in line with 1920 for now and we can adjust once we have these figures from Research and Innovation.

Q: How will my RIIF carryforwards work in 20/21?

A: RIIF carry forward follows the same policy as always - submission of annual report and approval of carry-forward by Simon Hix/Research Committee.  We can’t confirm whether Simon Hix/Research Committee would approve carry-forwards as freely as in the past or might apply a higher standard this year and next.

*Q: Can Faculty spend Staff Research Funds unspent from 19/20 in 20/21? I understand that they cannot, because of the “no brought forward balances” rule. But can you confirm this is the case.*

*A: No, there is no freeze on SRF and Personal OSF carryfowrards. However please keep in mind that the conditional hiring freeze restrictions will still apply.*

*Q: Does the same apply to personal outside research funds?*

*A: Please see answer above*

Q: More clarity as to what exactly is required by Friday (and practical guidance as to how to achieve this) would be appreciated, especially given that a) some Depts have not previously undertaken their budgeting in this way and b) FPA have not to date responded to queries about this in a timely manner. An extension to the deadline would, therefore, be appreciated.

A: Best to discuss directly with your FP&A Manager with regards how to do this. this is not intended to be a difficult exercise, we just want a rough idea of your expenditure for next year. The easiest way to do this will be to look at your spend in 1920, and adjust for things which you know have changed. If you feel you are not receiving responses from FP&A in a timely manner, please escalate this to me so I can resolve. If you require an extension, please let you’re FP&A Manager know – this is not intended to cause unnecessary stress, we understand this is a busy time for everyone across the School.

Q: I have one general question about the freeze on carry forwards.  We know that the amount allocated for GTA/GTs is unlikely to be sufficient.  We hope this will be increased because of the two further resignations and a secondment, but we may need to dig into our outside funds to make up any shortfall.  The problem is that it is very difficult to predict our costs at this stage because we don’t know how many classes we will to deliver.  Can we have some assurance that the freeze will be relaxed if necessary?

A: yes of course – it is a conditional freeze so if it turns out later in the year, once student numbers are known, that you need to draw on your carry forward balances this is something which can be discussed with your FP&A Manager and agreed.  Things should be a lot clearer in the autumn once student numbers are known.  The purpose of this exercise is to get a rough idea of our costs for next year, but is not intended to be an inflexible plan. It sounds however like we should look into whether we need to change your GTA/GT allocation for next year now based on the 2 changes mentioned– can you follow up with Ioannis, we can revise if needs be.

Q: Some of my income and expenditure comes from endowments, how can this be factored in?

A: Please let us know and we can add new lines to show the budget and expenditure lines e.g. “expenditure from endowment” and separate from the existing line. Budgets for next year will be calculated at 4% of the balance for permanent endowments, and in line with the gift agreement for expendable endowments – please discuss the specifics with you FP&A Manager.

Q: Will the School be contributing towards some of the COVID-19 costs when they return to campus (e.g. health and safety related costs like masks)? They were unsure of how to quantify/ control the costs.

A: This will be part of the work being done by the return to campus working group. Please leave these out of the budget on the assumption this sort of one-off COVID related expenditure with regards return to campus will be organised centrally. Doing this centrally will help ensure consistency across School.

Q: Why are we asking Depts/Service divisions to fund equipment for home working?

A: doing this allows local autonomy and greater flexibility. We also want to minimise cash out the door before October, when we will know better what our position might be. These should be charged to your 19/20 budgets in order to ensure there is no delay in getting equipment out to the staff who need it.  If the cost of this equipment will cause you budgetary issues in 19/20, please do get in touch with your FP&A Manager and we will work with you to resolve this as soon as possible. Hopefully this will be mostly resolved before the year end, however if it continues into early 20/21, please discuss with your FP&A Managers if it causes you budget issues next year.

Q: Can we capitalise home working equipment instead of expensing from our budgets?

A: The savings we are required to make across the School need to be real cash savings – capitalisation is a financial accounting decision, which does not affect the real cash outflow.

Q: For “Outside fund income excluding DRU's” – it has been assumed in the budget that this income will remain the same for next year. If the income included for this year, were one-off amounts, should the Departments should be adjusting the 20/21 figure downwards to reflect this?

A: yes please

Q: My Department has a project funded by HEIF. The costs are included in the actuals “Non CSB staff cost – academic” in 19/20, but the related income has not been included. Should the HEIF costs be excluded or should the Income for the current year be included. Is this fund source also part of the frozen carry forward for next year?

A: HEIF is still under discussion, I’d exclude the costs and income for now. HEIF income is recognised in line with expenditure so no carry forward issue here. HEIF expenditure should be agreed separately with Research Division.

Q: The SRF balance doesn’t appear to be being cut like the rest of the allocations. Is this correct? Good news if so!

A: yes – no cuts to SRFs

Q: The GTA budget line – this is the spend of the School budget they’re being allocated on row 5, but the row heading is ‘Non CSB GTA/GT cost’ and the comment says ‘\*\*FY 20/21 GTA cost is total GTA cost across CSB and Non CSB areas’ which is a bit confusing as the row above (CSB GTA/GT cost) is blank for 2020/21. If it’s a school allocation would this not be CSB? Some Depts spend quite a lot of their subs/replacement teaching on GTAs but I’m assuming that non-CSB GTA spend would be picked up on row 24, which we’re asking Depts to confirm?

A: This is the agreed GTA budget for 20/21, which Departments have agreed (or are in the process of agreeing) with Ioannis. This should cover all your GTA/GT expenditure for next year, so should allow you to not use any of your non-CSB funds.

Q: We have some academics who have for several years received external funds for contributing/research. They’re due to receive the last amount shortly but obvs won’t be able to spend this and some previous funds this year. Is it ok to let them know that these funds will be available to spend next year (in line with what we’re currently saying about people’s Personal Outside Funds) rather than being frozen like most Dept b/fwd balances?

A: yes this is fine as they are research balances and personal to academics so not effected by the freeze. However, we would encourage as minimal expenditure fromt his as possible until we know the situation next year.

Q: we made commitments from our 20/21 Summer School balances (eg to pay for scholarships) before the Summer School was cancelled and before the freeze on b/s balances – what should we do?

A: we understand a commitment has been made here – please include in your draft budget and mark as such and we will need to then assess the overall impact eg if a draw on b/f balances is required.

Q: I wanted to ask for a steer to help with planning for 21/22. At this stage should we still advertise that new scholarships will be available for entry in 21/22?

A: when would you normally start to advertise 21/22 scholarships (ie when do we need to decide this by)?  At the moment we are working on the assumption that things will be back to normal in 21/22, so you would get your normal Summer School income to support this cost. However, we should not be making any formal offers until further information is available about our cash situation for 21/22.

Q: for the “Teaching Buyouts”, is there any restriction as to what these funds can be used for? Can it only be used for replacement/substitute teaching or can it be used by the departments to fund other department activities next year i.e. non staff cost? Could it be also be used to cover any additional GTA costs?

A: these should be used for teaching as in line with usual guidance.  However, if you would like to use for an alternative non-staff purpose as a one off, please include this request in your draft budget figures for 20/21 and we can consider exceptions on a case by case basis.