



**Saturday
School Ltd.**

The Saturday School Scholarship

fuelled by

Di Maggio's

1. Introduction

In December 2022, Saturday School Ltd (SSL) was awarded £2200 from the DiMaggio's Restaurant Group. This led to the formation of the [Saturday School Scholarship](#): a programme to support, educate and inspire young people studying National 5 or Higher subjects in school or college. The first year of this scholarship delivered incredible success for the 6 young people taking part and whilst year 1 focussed on the subject of Chemistry, the scholarship will support learners with a range of subjects going forward.

In August 2023, SQA exam results were published and for all learners in Scotland, Higher Chemistry showed a national pass rate of 78%, with 56% gaining a grade A or B, 33% of which gained an A. Our scholarship programme has performed well beyond these national statistics with Saturday School Scholars achieving a 100% pass rate in their final SQA exam, and 80% gaining a grade A or B, 60% of those attaining an A.

Recommendation 1:

SSL will reapply for funding at the end of academic year 2023 with the aim of continuing the programme into year 2, supporting more young people and taking on new scholars. As with year 1, we will ideally offer the current scholars studying N5 the opportunity of support with Higher Chemistry should they choose to continue with the subject at school. SSL would like to explore the possibility of greater funding to increase the number of scholars it can support and also increase the number of classes and subjects scholars can attend; branching into Maths, English and potentially other sciences.



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The scholarship has allowed me to build confidence going into the final exam and gain extra help which I wouldn't have had access to if it wasn't for the scholarship.



2. Scholarships at Saturday School

The Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by Di Maggio's is one of three highly impactful scholarships being delivered by SSL – run alongside [The Catherine McEwan Foundation Scholarship](#) and [The RSC Scholarship](#).

[Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by Di Maggio's](#) offers learners fully funded attendance at 5 Weekly Lessons and 2 Grade Booster Days in N5/H Chemistry, delivered by fully qualified Chemistry Teachers of SSL. It also gives them unlimited 24/7 access to online learning support via Google Classroom.

[Weekly Lessons](#) cover areas such as:

- Bonding and properties of materials, Chemical formulae
- Periodicity and trends in the periodic table
- The Mole and concentration calculations
- Chemical bonding and Intermolecular forces
- Alkanes, alkenes, cycloalkanes, alcohols, Isomers, energy from fuels
- Oxidising and Reducing Agents
- Energy from fuels, calculations based on equations, Chemical analysis
- Equilibria
- Getting the most from reactants

[Grade Booster Days](#) 1 and 2 offer a two-part cumulative full course review of Chemistry in preparation for the scholar taking their N5 or Higher exam in the SQA exam diet, typically April/May each year.

Recommendation 2:

In academic year 2023/24 Saturday School will launch its new delivery site in Edinburgh Napier University and therefore will offer a second geographical location - in addition to the longstanding location in The Glasgow Academy - for scholars to learn with us, opening up scholarship applications/opportunities to even more young people in more parts of Scotland.



It's been the most helpful type of support I've ever had with school, the classes are great, the teachers are super friendly and it's overall just an amazing environment. It's such a good scholarship!

3. Publicising the opportunity and the application process

Saturday school uses a range of media to communicate the opportunity to learners:

- Direct emails to all schools within relevant geographical reach of SSL
- Social media output on Twitter and Facebook
- Upgraded and new pages on the SSL website
- Sharing on teacher channels such as Strontium
- Email campaigns to existing parents and students of Saturday School.

Scholars applied using a Google Form designed by SSL staff, linked to the Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by Di Maggio's. A personal statement, parent/carer statement and teacher supporting statement were required before a scholar is considered.

Recommendation 3:

Should repeat funding be achieved to deliver year 2, then continued promotion of the scholarship will continue as per the approach listed above. Complacency will be avoided and increased efforts will be made to attract new scholars from the East of Scotland (see recommendation 2) who may be less aware of the offer and who will benefit from the opening of our second centre in Edinburgh. Further, the support of year 1 Scholars in an ambassadorial role for the programme is also proving highly effective in a range of ways. Continued support from DRG to share the offer is most welcome.



The scholarship was great and I think it should be continued to be offered to pupils in their senior phase at school. It has motivated me to continue working hard in chemistry and has made me more sure in my abilities, I'm confident I will perform well in my final exam.

4. Scholars

There were 6 young people taking part in the Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by Di Maggio's, representing a range of SIMD deciles, ethnic identities and pre-scholarship working grades. From the original applications completed, all were female, this remained the same for the final chosen group. The cohort for year one represents six schools across West/Central Scotland.

Table 1 – A breakdown of demographics, characteristics and attainment grades:

Scholar <i>names removed</i>	Decile (SIMD)	Student gender identity	Student ethnic identity	Level of study	Learning barrier, disability, ESOL	Pre- scholarship working Grade	Final SQA exam grade
1	8	Female	British Pakistani	H	No	B	A
2	7	Female	White Scottish	H	Carer	C	A
3	7	Female	British White	H	No	B	A
4	2	Female	Asian/British	H	No	C	B
5	5	Female	White Scottish	N5	Carer	B	B
6	2	Female	African	H	No	C	C

The data above shows a pass rate of 100%, with 80% gaining a grade A or B, and 60% attaining an A. Significantly, there was a rise in the attainment of 66% of scholars, while 33% achieved their predicted working grade. Some students have gained an A grade having been at B, and in one case a C has been transferred into an A. For our Scholars, the exam pass rate in Chemistry sits at 100%, this is compared to a national pass rate of 78%.

Recommendation 4:

SSL welcomes the thoughts of DRG in terms of how well the cohort meets the aim in helping those from underrepresented and underserved communities gain success with their education in line with their social corporate responsibility and how the above results satisfy attainment targets for learners. If year 2 funding is awarded then work will be done with teachers, schools and families to understand the gender imbalance in applications. It is great that SSL are helping to attract more girls into STEM but recognise the need to continue to provide opportunities for boys too. Work will also be done to ensure more schools and young people are made aware of the offer.

5. STEM Ambassadors supporting the scholarship

The Chemistry Department at the University of Strathclyde has generously and enthusiastically supported the Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by DiMaggio's. Led by Dr Fraser Scott, an enhanced approach to support the scholars was devised as they reached their final SQA exams. In May 2023, two Postgraduate Researchers volunteered their time to join the Higher Chemistry Grade Booster Days. Their support was invaluable and served not only as an inspiration to the young people in the classroom but also offered another expert to support the young people in key curricular content as they approached their exams. Follow-up support has also been offered to scholars by the STEM Ambassadors such as:

- Tours of the university chemistry department and Laboratories
- Support with completing UCAS applications
- Career and study advice
- General coaching and mentoring



University of
Strathclyde
Glasgow



“It was great to engage with the secondary students at the Grade Booster session and help answer questions in preparation for their upcoming chemistry exam. I look forward to future events and other opportunities to take part as a STEM ambassador.”

Emma, Postgraduate Researcher in Chemistry and STEM Ambassador

“Scholarships for Saturday School have a really positive effect on the community which is local to the University of Strathclyde and we are delighted that we can help with transitioning these young people into Higher Education”

Professor Debbie Willison, Deputy Associate Principal (Online Learning) and Vice Dean Academic (Science)

Recommendation 5:

If year 2 funding is awarded, we will increase the involvement of STEM Ambassadors who work and study in scientific fields and act as highly inspirational role models. Scholars will be offered the opportunities listed above and we will also aim to offer careers talks/visits to industry.

6. Data capture

At the end of the scholarship, The Saturday School Scholarship fuelled by Di Maggio's scholars were asked to take part in a survey to capture feedback on how the programme impacted on them. The feedback from scholars, for the first year running, is incredibly positive, with some notable points below:

- 40% of Scholars agree, and 50% strongly agree, that the scholarship sends a message that "Chemistry is for everyone".
- A combined 100% of Scholars agree (40%), and strongly agree (60%), that the scholarship is "promoting inclusion and diversity in Chemistry".
- 80% of scholars state that the programme is positively changing the perceptions on who can work and study in Chemistry.
- 70% of scholars strongly agree and 30% agree, that the scholarship is increasing their confidence in Chemistry.
- 100% of scholars say the programme is improving their knowledge, understanding and problem-solving skills in chemistry, with 70% showing a "remarkable increase".
- 100% of scholars have increased their grades in class tests and coursework with 90% stating that the programme will improve their final grade in the SQA exam.
- 100% of scholars can now envisage a future in Chemistry for themselves, with 60% saying the scholarship has made them "more likely" to do so.

7. Next steps

This report will be published and shared online in September 2023. Saturday School will continue to develop this and other existing scholarships whilst seeking funding to add new offers to the scholarship portfolio. It is hoped that in the years to come, SSL will have a broad suite of scholarship offers which support many more young people.

For more information on any aspect of this report or the wider work of Saturday School Ltd, contact info@saturdayschoolscotland.com or visit www.saturdayschoolscotland.com.