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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Bursary 2 year 'tie in' and commitment to work in Wales Frequently Asked Questions.

INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Government through the NHS fund the education and training for a range of **health education courses**, (as specified in Appendix 1). There are a number of funding schemes of which one is the **NHS Wales Bursary Scheme**; the funding available through this scheme includes the following:

- the cost of tuition fees
- a bursary for living costs, including
 - a £1,000 non means tested grant,
 - a means tested bursary
 - In addition, students are supported for costs such as travel, accommodation (whilst on placement), Childcare, Disabled Student Allowance, Dependents Allowance and Parental Learning Allowance.
- If eligible, you will have access to a reduced student loan (subject to Student Loans Company Regulations)

This is collectively known as the **NHS Wales Bursary Scheme**. The purpose of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme ("the Scheme") is to provide financial support for students who are studying Health Education Courses and to incentivise them following qualification to work within the health care sector in Wales.

Students record their intent on the NWSSP Student Awards Services **Welsh Health Education Registration System**.

Students who commenced their studies in academic year from September 2017 and onwards, and, who committed to work in Wales for the two years following the completion of their course (different timescales apply for course longer or shorter than three years) accessed NHS funding as set out above to meet the cost of training.

When entering their programme Individuals who do not feel they can commit to this specified period of employment will not be eligible to receive the benefits of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme; however, they are able to study in Wales and access the following support:

- Welsh domiciled students, who do not wish to commit to work in Wales on completion of their course, have access to the standard student support package available from Student Finance Wales. **Please note that individuals who already have a first degree and are undertaking a pre-registration programme e.g. Physicians Associate, MSc/PG Dip Nursing, PG Dip Dietetics and PG Dip Occupational Therapy programmes are not eligible to apply for a reduced student loan, however they will have access to all other elements of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme.**

- Non-Welsh domiciled students, who do not wish to commit to work in Wales will continue to be eligible to study in Wales but will need to secure funding from an alternative source, this may include funding from the relevant funding body in their home country or self-finance etc.

Once students have received an offer of a training place from a NHS Wales agreed provider they decide whether they wish to commit to work in Wales prior to applying for either the NHS Wales Bursary or the standard student finance package.

Should students wish to take up the offer of funding from the Scheme, they will be required to sign the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme Terms and Conditions (“the Bursary Terms and Conditions”), a draft of which may be accessed here(insert link).

The next section sets out some further information in relation to the Scheme by way of some frequently asked questions together with our responses.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - FAQs

1. Which courses are eligible for the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?

Response

This applies for those courses identified in **Appendix 1**.

2. Is the commitment to work in Wales for 2 years on completion of my course, regardless of the length of my course?

Response

The duration of the commitment to work in Wales varies, depending on the duration of your course. For example if your course is for 3 years, the commitment to work in Wales is for 2 years upon completion of your course.

However the commitment to work in Wales upon completion of your course, would be lowered to 18 months if your course was only for 2 years.

See clause 10.1 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions which details the commitment duration required for each course (“Required Period”).

3. Do I have to be a Welsh resident to access the NHS Wales Bursary scheme?

Response

No.

4. I am Welsh and I want to study outside of Wales, can I access the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme if I commit to work in Wales on completion?

Response

No, the Welsh NHS bursary is only available for students studying in Wales and who have committed to work in Wales for the “Required Period” of time on completion of their course.

5. **Once I have accepted funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme can I change my mind and apply for a full student loan?**

Response

In normal circumstances you will not be able to change funding route. However in exceptional cases your application to change funding route will be considered through an appeals mechanism (*via the appeal process referred to under clause 14 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions*). On completion of your course you will be required to complete some time working in the NHS in Wales depending on the amount of bursary that you have received or you could repay the course fees you have received to date. This is specified in **Appendix 2 of this document**.

6. **What is the deadline for applying for funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?**

Response

You should apply for your NHS bursary -

(<http://www.nwsspstudentfinance.wales.nhs.uk/home>) as soon you have firmly accepted an offer from your chosen university. **The latest date for applying for funding is ten weeks after commencing the course.**

7. **What if I don't apply for the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme within the timeframe stipulated above?**

Response

You will not be able to apply for an NHS Bursary.

8. **Once I have accepted a student loan can I change my mind and apply for funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?**

Response

In normal circumstances you will not be able to change funding route. However in exceptional cases your application to change funding route will be considered. If you would like to change funding route please ask your university to email HEIW.EdCommissioning@wales.nhs.uk with a rationale as to why you would like to change. Any such cases will then be considered on a case by case basis and a decision will be made by HEIW and communicated to the student. If the student concerned is unhappy with the decision, the student is entitled to appeal such a decision through an appeals mechanism as set out in Clause 14 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

9. **Will the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme or full student loan provide me with a greater income whilst studying?**

Response

This will depend on your individual circumstances; you will need to consider your eligibility for funding against the criteria for both systems:

www.nwsspstudentfinance.wales.nhs.uk/home

www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/

10. **If I receive the NHS Wales Bursary and I am asked to leave the course (eg, due to academic failure, placement failure, fitness to practice or ill health) or decide to leave the course as it is not the right course for me prior to its completion, will I have to repay funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?**

Response

No, you will not be liable to make any repayment. However please be aware of the following:

- a) By not completing your course you will not be eligible to receive registration to work as a healthcare professional.
- b) If you are a withdrawing final year student and complete your course elsewhere, at a later date, you will be liable to return the fees that you have received.

11. **I am in receipt of the student bursary package. What is the process for confirming my commitment to work in Wales on completion of the course?**

Response

In order to receive your bursary award, you would have confirmed electronically your commitment to work in Wales on completion of your course via the NWSSP website (*ie when you applied for the bursary?*).

12. **What is the Welsh Health Education Registration System?**

Response

This is the system where **ALL** students register their intention to undertake a health education course and where you will be asked whether you wish to commit to work in Wales on completion of your course.

The link is: www.nwsspstudentfinance.wales.nhs.uk/home

13. **What will happen if I do not register on the Welsh Health Education Registration System?**

Response

You will **NOT** be eligible to apply for the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and will not be eligible to apply for access to the Student Finance Wales arrangements.

14. **If I do not want to access the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme who do I apply to for student finance?**

Response

This will depend on the arrangements in your home country.

You will first have to register on the Welsh Health Education Registration System and confirm that you do not wish to commit to work in Wales on completion.

- If your home country is Wales you can apply to Student Finance Wales to access the student loans system www.studentfinancewales.co.uk. **Please note this does not apply to Physicians Associate PG Dip, MSc/PG Dip Nursing, PG Dip Dietetics and PG Dip Occupational Therapy courses.**
- If your home country is England please go to www.gov.uk/contact-student-finance-england
- If your home country is Scotland please go to www.saas.gov.uk
- If your home country is Northern Ireland please go to www.studentfinancenir.co.uk

15. **If I do not receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme can I access the NHS support system for travel and accommodation?**

Response

Yes as we want to ensure all students receive a positive experience of education in Wales.

16. **Am I entitled to a second student loan to undertake a health care course either in Wales or England?**

Response

If you are a Welsh resident you are only entitled to one student loan. You will need to contact the funding body in your home country if you live outside of Wales to determine what arrangements are available to you.

However you can access the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme even if you have had a student loan to undertake a first degree.

17. **How many courses can I receive an NHS Bursary for?**

Response

You are eligible to apply to the bursary scheme for the identified courses specified in **Appendix 1** of the Bursary Terms and Conditions. Students enrolled on undergraduate BSc pre-registration courses are eligible for a maximum of three years of funding unless they have mitigating circumstances confirmed by their university. If you change your course part way through your training and need more than three years to complete your training, then you will be required to self-fund the additional training required.

18. **If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme can I transfer to another course in the university?**

Response

This will have to be agreed with the university and the commissioners in advance. If the new course is funded by NHS Wales (ie is a course specified in **Appendix 1**) your funding may continue. If the course is not one funded by NHS Wales or all of the course places commissioned by Welsh Government are full, you will be classified as discontinuing your course and shall be liable to repay an element of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme.

Please refer to clause 7 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

19. **If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme can I transfer to another course in Wales?**

Response

This will have to be agreed by both universities and the commissioner in advance. If the course is funded by the NHS (**Appendix 1**) your funding may continue. If the course is not one funded by the NHS you will be classified as discontinuing your course. You need to ensure that you have informed the University of your decision to transfer. If the new course is not one funded by the NHS the bursary payments will then cease. Please inform student awards if you continue to receive bursary payments after you have withdrawn. You will be required to repay any funding that you receive in error after your withdrawal date from the programme.

Please refer to clause 7 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

20. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme can I transfer to another course outside of Wales?

Response

You will be classified as discontinuing your course. You need to ensure that you have informed the University of your decision to transfer. Please inform student awards if you continue to receive bursary payments after you have withdrawn. You will be required to repay any funding that you receive in error after your withdrawal date from the programme. Please see response to question 10 if you are a final year student.

21. What is the time period within which I am expected to apply for jobs?

Response

For cohort Sept 2017 Nursing students and ODP, students are expected to follow the streamlining process see here for further information:

<http://www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk/student-streamlining-scheme>. AHP and Healthcare science students may apply for jobs at any time (see response to Q 24 for more detail). You are required by the Bursary Terms and Conditions have taken up suitable employment within 3 months of completing your course.. The date that you are notified of your award is the date set as completing your course. Please note that “taking up” suitable employment includes securing suitable employment. If the start date of the suitable employment is delayed outside of your control, you will not be pursued for repayment in the interim.

22. If I receive the NHS Wales Bursary, and I undertake an interruption of study, how will I be funded when I return?

Response

If you have an interruption of studies your bursary will cease. However the same funding arrangement will recommence on your return.

23. If I have received funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme what penalties will be applied if I do not fulfil my commitment to work in Wales on completion?

Response

You will be liable to repay an element/all of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme funding provided to date. Travel, additional accommodation, childcare costs, disabled students allowance, dependents allowance, and parental learning allowance will be excluded from this. See **Appendix 2** and clause 12 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions for further detail.

24. If I have been in receipt of funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme what will happen if there are insufficient jobs available in Wales. Will I be released from my obligation to work in Wales?

Response

HEIW will work with your university and employers within Wales. Every effort will be made to ensure suitable employment opportunities are available. Arrangements for 2020 will be:

- Graduating Nurse and Operating Department Practitioner (ODP) students will receive information regarding a streamlining process to match them with available appropriate jobs.

- Graduating AHP and Scientist students (apart from BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Nuclear Medicine / Radiotherapy Physics Neurophysiology Respiratory and Sleep) will be informed by NWSSP when appropriate jobs are available to apply for via NHS jobs between no later than the 19th April 2020. Start dates will be staggered depending on profession with an aim for employment to commence by December 2020.
- Given the small number of places commissioned graduating BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science Nuclear Medicine / Radiotherapy Physics Neurophysiology Respiratory and Sleep students will be managed on a case by case basis. Health Boards will be required to work directly with the university to align students to available positions.
- If students have not been successful in gaining suitable employment on either completion of the streamlining process for Nursing and OPD graduates **OR** after applying for three posts for AHP and scientist graduates, then students will be able to appeal to be released from the contractual requirement to work in Wales.
- Please note, nursing students will be required to fully engage in the Student Streamlining Process see here for further information: <http://www.nwssp.wales.nhs.uk/student-streamlining-scheme> and the two-week escalation period following Streamlining allocation. If by this stage nursing students have not secured a position, they will be required to engage in conversation directly with the Health Board/Health Boards they are able to work in to identify and try to mitigate any barriers to accepting a vacancy within that Health Board. If by this stage they have still not been able to secure a post, they will be able to appeal. (Please note, due to the high number of nursing vacancies across the majority of specialties in NHS Wales, it is anticipated that a student would be unable to secure a position due to exceptional circumstances only.)

25. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme what qualifies as employment in Wales?

Response

Suitable Employment must be based in Wales in the profession for which you have been trained.

Also working in Suitable Employment for an average (which may include more than one Suitable Employment role) of 22.5 hours per week, unless there are exceptional circumstances which may be agreed on an individual basis with the Commissioners.

Please see clause 11 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

26. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme, and on finishing the course commence another NHS Wales Funded training scheme, how does this affect my commitment to work in Wales?

Response

The employment period of the first course will be waived if you undertake a second NHS Wales funded training course (ie one of those courses set out in Appendix 1) e.g. Health Visiting straight away. However, at the point of completing the second course you will be required to work in Wales for a 2 year period.

Please refer to clause 8 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

27. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and I leave my employment in Wales before 2 years would I have to repay anything?

Response

Yes, this will be calculated on the sliding scale, as set out in **Appendix 2**, to reflect the amount of time you will have worked in Wales.

Please see clause 10 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

- 28. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and I change employment in Wales during the first 2 years does this have any implications?**

Response

Providing it meets the requirements as set out in question 25 above then there will be no implications.

- 29. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and become pregnant during the first 2 years following completion and am on maternity leave are there any implications?**

Response

If you are in suitable employment as identified above and are on maternity leave it will have no effect on your agreement. If you have yet to commence employment your requirement to work in Wales will be deferred for 1 year. This will be considered via an appeals process.

- 30. If I receive funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and I suffer ill health and am unable to work during the first 2 years following completion what are the implications for me?**

Response

This will be considered on a case by case basis via an appeals process. You will be required to submit medical evidence and dependent on the circumstances it is likely that your requirement to work in Wales will be postponed.

- 31. If I become liable to repay all or part of the funding, I received from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme how will this be managed?**

Response

The debt becomes repayable in full within 3 months of being notified of your degree award by the University. It is the individual's responsibility to fund such a repayment. However, if you request an extended repayment period you will be asked to contact a debt charity to work with you in order to establish an affordable repayment plan. This will be reviewed by the appeals process and can then be considered and accepted or re-negotiated.

Please refer to clause 12.4 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.

- 32. How will I be informed of the requirement to repay my debt?**

Response

HEIW will write to you informing you of the amount that you owe (as calculated in accordance with **Appendix 2**) in addition to instructions of how to apply for an extension (as outlined in Q 31) or appeal against the repayment.

If you do not respond within 28 days HEIW will issue you with an invoice due for repayment within 90 days for the amount you owe (as specified in **Appendix 2**).

- 33. What are grounds for appeal against repayment of the debt?**

Response

Please refer to clause 12.5 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions, which makes reference to the following circumstances:-

- Insufficient suitable jobs available in Wales
- Unsuccessful in securing a post following the recruitment process set out in Q24.
- Ill Health meaning that you can no longer work in the profession for which you have been trained.
- Caring responsibilities that would restrict your ability to work in Wales.

34. What evidence will I be required to provide to appeal against my requirement to work in Wales on completion of the programme?

Response

- Copies of job applications **NB** please note that the appointing manager for the posts for which you have provided evidence of unsuccessful application will be contacted to verify that you have participated in the full recruitment process.
- Medical evidence of your ill health such as a letter from a Healthcare professional.
- Where appropriate medical evidence of a dependant.
- Evidence that is specific to your situation which may be requested by the appeals panel to verify your claims.

35. How will I know that my requirement to work in Wales has been completed and I have met my contractual requirements?

Response

HEIW will write to you inform you that you have met the contractual requirement to work in Wales.

Courses and location of delivery

Course	Provision in Wales	Current Provider	Courses funded by Welsh Government and subject to the commitment to work in Wales
BSc Paramedic Science	Yes	Swansea University	Yes
DipHE Dental Hygiene	Yes	Cardiff University	Yes
BSc in Dental Hygiene & Therapy	Yes	Cardiff University	Yes
BSc/BN Adult Nursing	Yes	Bangor University Cardiff University Swansea University University of South Wales	Yes
BSc/BN Child Nursing	Yes	Bangor University Cardiff University Swansea University University of South Wales	Yes
BSc/BN Mental Health Nursing	Yes	Bangor University Cardiff University Swansea University University of South Wales	Yes
BSc/BN Learning Disability Nursing	Yes	Bangor University University of South Wales	Yes
BMid Midwifery	Yes	Bangor University Cardiff University Swansea University University of South Wales	Yes
MSc/PG Dip Nursing**	Yes	Swansea University Bangor university	Yes
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Cardiac Physiology	Yes	Swansea University	Yes
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Audiology	Yes	Swansea University	Yes
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Respiratory and Sleep Science	Yes	Swansea University	Yes
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Neurophysiology	Yes	Swansea University	Yes
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Nuclear Medicine & Radiotherapy Physics	Yes	Swansea University	Yes

Course	Provision in Wales	Current Provider	Current Courses funded by Welsh Government and subject to the commitment to work in Wales
BSc (Hons) Healthcare Science - Biomedical Science - Blood, Infection, Cellular and Genetics	Yes	Cardiff Metropolitan University	Yes
BSc Diagnostic Radiography	Yes	Bangor University Cardiff University	Yes
BSc Therapeutic Radiography	Yes	Cardiff University	Yes
BSc/PG Dip** Dietetics	Yes	Cardiff Metropolitan University	Yes
BSc/PG Dip** Occupational Therapy	Yes	Cardiff University Glyndwr University(BSc route only)	Yes
BSc Operational Department Practice	Yes	Cardiff University	Yes
BSc Physiotherapy	Yes	Cardiff University Glyndwr University	Yes
PG Dip ** Physiotherapy	Yes	Bangor University	Yes
BSc Podiatry	Yes	Cardiff Metropolitan University	Yes
BSc Speech & Language Therapy	Yes	Cardiff Metropolitan University	Yes
PG Dip/MSc Physicians Associate Studies **	Yes	Bangor University Swansea University	Yes

** Individuals who already have a first degree and are undertaking a pre-registration programme at MSc/PG Dip level will have access to the NHS bursary package but **no access to the reduced student maintenance loan.**

Schedule 2: Repayment Schedule – UK Students

REPAYMENT SCHEDULE IN ACCORDANCE WITH NHS WALES BURSARY SCHEME FUNDING AGREEMENT

Amount of Funding repayable ***	
3 year course	2 year course

1	Completes Health Education Course but does not work in Wales in accordance clauses 10.1, 10.3 and 12.1.2 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.	£25,500	£17,000*
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2	Leave Suitable Employment as set out in clauses 10.4 and 12.1.3 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions prior to fulfilling the employment commitment.		
	i Leave within the first 6 months	£25,500	£17,000
	ii Leave after 6 months but before 1 years' service completed	£19,125	£12,750
	iii Leave after 1 year but before 18 months service completed	£12,750	£8,500
	iv Leave after 18 months but before 2 years' service completed	£8,500	NIL
	v Leave after 2 years' service	NIL	NIL

3	Transfer funding options part way through the Health Education Course as set out in clauses 9.2 of the Terms and Conditions.		
	i During or at the end of the first year of your Health Education Course you can elect to either a) pay back the sum of £8,500 or b) work in Suitable Employment in Wales for 8 months on completion of your Health Education Course.	£8,500	£8,500
	ii During or at the end of the second Year of your Health Education Course you may elect to either a) pay back the sum of £17,000 or b) work in Suitable Employment in Wales for 18 months on completion of your Health Education Course.	£17,000	£17,000

Schedule 3: Repayment Schedule – EU Students who have not been domicile within the UK for a period of three years prior to the submission of their funding application

REPAYMENT SCHEDULE FOR EU STUDENTS: IN ACCORDANCE WITH NHS WALES BURSARY SCHEME FUNDING AGREEMENT

Amount of Funding repayable	
3 year course	2 year course

1	Completes Health Education Course but does not work in Wales in accordance clauses 10.1, 10.3 and 12.1.2 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions.	£22,500	£15,000*
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2	Leaves Suitable Employment as set out in clauses 10.4 and 12.1.3 of the Bursary Terms and Conditions prior to fulfilling the employment commitment.		
i	Leave within the first 6 months	£22,500	£15,000
ii	Leave after 6 months but before 1 years' service completed	£16,875	£11,250
iii	Leave after 1 year but before 18 months service completed	£11,250	£7,500
iv	Leave after 18 months but before 2 years' service completed	£7,500	NIL
v	Leave after 2 years' service	NIL	NIL

3	Leave course as set out in clauses 8.1 and 12.1.1 of the Terms and Conditions.		
i	During first year	£7,500	£7,500
ii	During second Year	£15,000	£15,000
iii	During third year	£22,500	n/a

* This excludes PG Dip Dietetics as separate funding model applies