

NHS WELSH BURSARY FOR HEALTHCARE COURSES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

September 2022 This FAQ does not apply for medicine or dentistry.



Section 1. Applying for the bursary and queries whilst studying
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Introduction:

The purpose of the NHS Wales Bursary 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. The Scheme is made available to students who have been offered places on Health Education Courses in accordance with the Terms and Conditions of the Agreement.

Here you will find answers to frequently asked questions regarding the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme.

If you cannot find the answer to your query in this document, and your query is about applying for the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme, please visit the NWSSP (NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership) Student Awards Services website for further information –

<https://nwssp.nhs.wales/ourservices/student-awards-services/information-for-students/log-in-completing-an-application/>

If your query relates to compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the NHS Wales Bursary, please send an email to HEIW - HEIW.bursary@wales.nhs.uk

Section 1. Applying for the bursary and queries whilst studying

NWSSP administers the bursary scheme and applications. There is detailed information about how to apply, who is eligible and timescales for submitting applications on their website –

<https://nwssp.nhs.wales/ourservices/student-awards-services/>

Which courses are eligible for the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?

Please see *Appendix 1* for list of appropriate courses.

Who can apply for the NHS Wales Bursary?

To qualify for NHS Wales financial support, you must be accepted for an NHS Wales funded place on a full or part time course in Wales.

If I am not from the UK, can I still claim for funding?

Irish nationals and those with settlement status are eligible. EU nationals starting their course before 01 August 2021 continue to be eligible for support.

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

No, you do not have to be a resident in Wales to access the bursary scheme. You will need to commit to study in Wales for the entirety of the course and to work in Wales for a set period after completion of your course.

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?

The NHS Wales Bursary is only available to those students who study in Wales and who have committed to work in Wales for the 'Required Period' of time on completion of the course.

If I am already receiving funding from Student Finance, can I still submit an application for the Bursary?

As per the NHS Wales Terms & Conditions, you will be asked to opt in or out of the bursary scheme. If you opt into the bursary scheme, you may only be eligible to apply for the reduced rate maintenance loan through the Student Loans Company alongside the NHS Wales Bursary. You will not be entitled to receive both the full student loan and full NHS Wales Bursary.

If you opt out of the scheme, you should apply for the full maintenance loan through the Student Loans Company. You will need to register your decision via the BOSS system so that you have a unique reference number (FRSL) to send to Student Loans Company as confirmation that you are not opting into the bursary scheme.

How much can I receive for the NHS Wales Bursary?

You may be eligible to receive the following funding each Academic Year:

- A Non-Means Tested Grant of £1000
- A Means Tested Bursary
- Tuition fees
- Additional Allowances i.e Dependents Allowance and Parental Learning Allowance, Childcare Allowance, Disabled Student Allowance.

You may also be eligible for a reduced student loan (subject to Student Loans Company Regulations)

What does 'Means Tested' and 'Non Means Tested' mean?

The Means Tested element of the Bursary is assessed against the total taxable income of your parent(s) (or parent and their spouse/partner/civil partner) or partner/ spouse as declared on the application and evidenced in the supporting documents provided.

The Non -Means Tested grant is not assessed against any taxable income and is a grant that is payable if all other eligibility criteria are met.

How do I apply for the bursary?

You can apply for your NHS bursary using the link below as soon as you have had a firm offer from your chosen University of a place and within ten weeks of commencing the course. Your application will not be accepted if it is beyond the ten-week deadline. Further information on how to apply can be found via the following link - <https://nwssp.nhs.wales/ourservices/student-awards-services/information-for-students/log-in-completing-an-application/>

I have previously had a Student Loan when I completed a course a few years ago, however if I wanted to take up a new course can I apply for the NHS Wales Bursary?

If you have not previously had funding through the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme, then you will be able to register and apply via the BOSS system.

If you have previously completed an NHS course and received an NHS Wales Bursary, you will not be eligible and you will need to find alternative funding for your new course.

If you previously received some funding but did not complete your course, you may be eligible to apply for the remaining funding payable. For example, a student started their course 1 September 2018 but withdrew 20 November 2018. The student received 3 months of bursary payments. The student has decided to start another course in September 2020. The student would need to self-fund part of their first year and would only be eligible for the additional 9 months bursary.

Can I apply for an NHS funded course if I already have completed a Degree?

You will be eligible as long you have not previously had funding through the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme. Students are eligible for a maximum of 3 years funding with NHS Wales (unless there are extenuating circumstances confirmed by the University) from the bursary.

If you 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 you can apply for the NHS Wales Bursary.

Does the bursary scheme allow me to transfer to another course in the same University?

This will have to be agreed with the university and the commissioners in advance. If the new course is funded by NHS Wales (see Appendix 1), your funding may continue. If the course is not one funded by NHS Wales or all 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

Does the bursary scheme allow me to transfer to another course/University during my course?

This will have to be agreed by both universities and the commissioner in advance. If the course is funded by the NHS (see Appendix 1) and with a University in Wales, your funding may continue. If the course is outside of Wales or 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. It is your responsibility to inform student awards if you continue to receive bursary payments after you have withdrawn. If you do not, you may be required to repay any funding that you receive in error after your withdrawal date from the programme

Can I change my mind and opt out of the Bursary scheme?

You have 10 weeks from the start of the course to change your mind. You should contact NWSSP via email - abm.sas@wales.nhs.uk to confirm your decision.

After the 10-week deadline, 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 HEIW will inform you of their decision.

If I leave the course (due to academic failure, placement failure, fitness to practice or ill health) or decide to leave the course before you finish, will I have to repay funding from the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme?

No, you will not be liable to make any repayment. However please be aware by not completing your course you will not be eligible to receive registration to work as a healthcare professional and if you are a final year student and complete your course elsewhere you will be liable to return the fees that you have received.

If I need to repeat a year what are the consequences?

If you are required to complete additional years to complete your course due to academic failure, this is not funded by the bursary, and you will need to source alternative funding yourself. There is provision to apply for additional support on a case-by-case basis, if the reasons for repeating a year are not due to academic failure for example, ill-health. You should apply to Student Awards Service.

I've withdrawn from my course, am I liable to repay any bursary as per the NHS Wales Terms & Conditions?

Under the NHS Wales Terms & Conditions, if you have withdrawn part way through a course you will not be liable to make repayment. However, 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

Can I apply for both student finance and the NHS Wales Bursary?

If you receive the bursary, you will be able to claim the reduced rate maintenance loan from Student Loans Company alongside the full bursary package. You are not entitled to claim the full loan and the full NHS bursary.

Can I switch funding route part way through my course?

This is possible on a case-by-case basis. If you want to change your funding route, the HEI will need to contact HEIW.EdCommissioning@wales.nhs.uk and provide a rationale as to why you would like to change part way through their programme. This is then considered by HEIW and a decision is made. It is not possible to change funding route part way through an academic year as the tuition fee will be paid to the HEI at the beginning of the year. If you transfer funding during your studies, schedule 2 of the Terms and Conditions sets out the repayment that will accrue for the first or second year of your course.

I have decided to opt out of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme and want to apply for the full maintenance loan with Student Finance. My Student Finance states I am in receipt of the bursary. What do I do?

Students have 10 weeks from the start of the course to opt in or out of the NHS Wales Bursary Scheme

I have a query regarding the NHS Wales Terms and Conditions of the Bursary. Who do I contact?

If you wish to discuss the T&C's you can contact the HEIW bursary team using the email HEIW.Bursary@wales.nhs.uk

Section 2. Recruitment.

What support is available to help me find employment at the end of my course?

Streamlining (SSP)

Nursing, Midwifery and ODP students will be supported by NWSSP to be matched to suitable vacancies using a process known as streamlining. This process has been in operation for several years. Around six months before you are due to complete your course the NWSSP Student Streamlining team (SSP) will contact HEIs and work with students and Health Boards to commence the SSP process which will ensure that all students can select their preferences for employment on completion of their course.

On an annual basis, SSP will operate for Physician Associates and will be reviewed at the end of each academic year to determine if SSP continues or there is a return to open recruitment (see below)

Open Recruitment

Health Boards and Trusts determine their service needs via workforce plans so they can recruit to ensure viable, safe, and effective services in their localities. Health Boards and Trusts will place their posts onto the NHS Website (Trac) on a continual basis. AHP and HCS Bursary students should source posts by opening an account on the NHS website and follow the instructions and application process in the adverts

Health Boards hold recruitment and job fairs to inform new graduates of the opportunities within their organisation. Attending these events is a good way for students to learn more about possible jobs and to meet service managers. NHS websites have information about vacancies and hold contact details for following up any posts of interest.

Other ways to source jobs

Bursary students can work outside of the NHS providing they are working in Wales, within the profession that they have trained for and work a minimum of 22.5 hours per week. Local authorities and other non-NHS employers have websites where jobs are advertised. If a bursary student is pursuing this route for employment, it is advisable to check with the HEIW bursary team that the roles are compliant with the T and Cs.

HEIW has a dedicated webpage for AHP and HCS students to find jobs. This job portal has direct links with NHS organisations in Wales.

Am I guaranteed a job?

There is no guarantee that you will be successful in securing a job especially in professions where there is high demand for limited vacancies and in certain locations. HEIW and its partners, working with Health Boards and Trusts aim to have sufficient vacancies available but local circumstances will always be the key driver for ensuring that sufficient vacancies exist and recruitment offers are made by the employers including agreeing terms and conditions and start dates.

Do I have to work in a specific part of Wales?

There is no requirement for you to work in a specific part of Wales and as a new graduate you will be encouraged to identify different parts of Wales in which to start your career. It is advisable to consider different Health Boards and Trusts to match your particular aspirations, personal circumstances and longer-term plans. It is possible to work with more than one employer, particularly if your profession uses sessional work. Check with the HEIW bursary team who can advise further.

Do I have to work in the NHS Wales, or can I work in a Local Authority and private establishments?

On a case-by-case basis, you can request that your contract if outside of the NHS will meet the terms of the bursary contract. You will need to contact the HEIW bursary team. For example, employment within local authorities and some charitable organisations if operating in Wales is acceptable. A general rule is that you must secure a post in the profession that you were trained for, work in Wales and work for a minimum of 22.5 hrs per week. Although we expect your employment to be full time. We strongly advise you to check with the HEIW bursary team if you are considering starting or moving to a non NHS role prior to making any decision.

What happens if I am unable to find a job?

After three months of completing your course or sooner if you have real concerns and you have had three rejections on application to suitable jobs you can contact HEIW bursary team to discuss your circumstances and complete a Review . If your course uses SSP to help you find jobs you will be expected to use this process after which if you remain without a firm offer, you can complete a Review. Contact HEIW.bursary@wales.nhs.uk . As part of the Review process, the SSP team will be asked to confirm that you fully participated in the SSP process and were unsuccessful in being matched to a job offer.

If I am released and secure a post within Wales in the future will the tie- in still apply?

There is no expectation once released, to return to Wales, although if suitable posts become available, having trained in Wales you may consider returning. If so, you will not be subject to the bursary tie-in.

When will I know when my Bursary tie in ends?

If you have found employment in Wales, the bursary team will contact you to let you know when your commitment to the terms and conditions starts and will end. This is calculated depending upon the course that you have completed and the start date of your employment. Prior this this you will be asked to complete an exit questionnaire and on receipt you will be issued with a confirmation letter.

Part three. Complying with the Bursary Terms and Conditions

It is advisable to contact the HEIW bursary team if you have any doubts about your ability to comply with the terms and conditions of the bursary scheme.

If I change employment in Wales during the first 2 years does this have any implications?

Providing it is suitable employment and continues to be based in Wales in the profession for which you have been trained and for an average (which may include more than one Suitable Employment role) of 22.5 hours per week your commitment to the bursary T and Cs remain unchanged. You will need to inform the HEIW bursary team who will update their records to maintain contact with you and if there is a lapse in employment, your final completion date will need to be adjusted. If in doubt, please check with the HEIW bursary team.

If I suffer ill health and am unable to work during the first 2 years following graduation what are the implications for me?

You will need to request a review of your case using the HEIW request for a Review form which can be downloaded from the HEIW webpage. <https://heiw.nhs.wales/education-and-training/undergraduate-education-for-health-professionals/nhs-bursary/> . We would look in the first instance to assess what support if any, you have received from your employer or general practitioner to help you remain in work and to improve your physical and/or mental health

If I have caring responsibilities that prevent me from working in Wales, what do I do?

If your caring duties have increased or changed since accepting the bursary, this may make it difficult to accept a post or continue to work in Wales. If this is the case or following graduation new or increased caring responsibilities fall to you, then you can apply for a Review of your circumstances to consider next steps.

Part four. How to request a Review of your circumstances

You can request a Review of your circumstances following completion of your course. Several outcomes are possible following the Review.

- You may be released from your contractual obligations,
- you may receive an extension and support to find employment; or
- you may be required to repay the costs of tuition fees of the bursary scheme. If this is the case, you will not be required to repay travel, additional accommodation, childcare costs, disabled students allowance, dependents allowance, and parental learning allowance.

HEIW will consider releasing you from the commitment on a case-by-case basis. Circumstances that may be appropriate are:

- insufficient suitable jobs available in Wales within 3 months of completion of your course
- you engaged fully in the recruitment process organised by HEIW and NWSSP

for your profession but remain unallocated to a post (NWSSP will share Streamlining Recruitment information with HEIW)

- you cannot take up a position for which you trained due ill health that cannot be resolved or managed over a period of time to enable you to remain in or commence employment
- caring responsibilities for an immediate family member that commenced or changed during your studies and would restrict your ability to remain working or start working in Wales.

If you think that you meet any of these criteria, you must complete a Request for a Review.

How do I ask for a Review?

You can request a Review by accessing a HEIW bursary Request for a Review Form which can be accessed <https://heiw.nhs.wales/education-and-training/undergraduate-education-for-health-professionals/nhs-bursary/>. HEIW commits to completing this Review within 28 days of receipt of sufficient information to complete the Review. You will be informed in writing of the outcome of the Review.

What if I do not agree with the outcome of the Review?

If you do not agree, you can request an Appeal of the Review decision. Information on the Appeal policy, guidance on how to Appeal and the Request for an Appeal form can all be accessed <https://heiw.nhs.wales/education-and-training/undergraduate-education-for-health-professionals/nhs-bursary/> HEIW operates an Appeal process in line with other appeal processes within HEIW.

What is the process if I need to repay an element of the bursary?

If you need to repay all or part of your bursary tie-in you can do so by contacting the HEIW bursary team on HEIW.bursary@wales.nhs.uk There are details in appendix 2

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>TYPE AND LENGTH</u>	<u>CURRENT PROVIDER</u>
ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONS		
Dietetics	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff Metropolitan University Wrexham University
	PG Dip – Full Time	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Occupational Therapy	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University
	BSc – Part Time	Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
	PG Dip/MSc – Full Time	Cardiff University
Paramedic Science	BSc – Full Time	Wrexham University Swansea University
Physiotherapy	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff University Wrexham University
	BSc – Part Time	University of South Wales
	PG Dip/MSc – Full Time	Bangor University Cardiff University
Podiatry	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Speech and Language Therapy	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff Metropolitan University Wrexham University
HEALTHCARE SCIENCE: PTP		
Audiology	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Cardiac Physiology	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Clinical Engineering (Rehabilitation and Medical Engineering)	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Diagnostic Radiography	BSc – Full Time	Bangor University Cardiff University
Life Science – Blood, Infection, Cellular and Genetics	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Neurophysiology	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Nuclear Medicine	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Radiotherapy Physics	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
Operating Department Practice	BSc – Full Time	Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
Radiotherapy and Oncology	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff University
Respiratory and Sleep Science	BSc – Full Time	Swansea University
NURSING AND MIDWIFERY		
Adult	BSc/BN – Full Time	Aberystwyth University Bangor University Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
	BSc/BN – Part Time (Part time Bursary available however most)	Aberystwyth University Bangor University Swansea University

	students are NHS employed with salary backfill funding)	University of South Wales Wrexham University
	MSc/PG Dip – Full Time	Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
Child	BSc/BN – Full Time	Bangor University Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
	MSc/PG Dip – Full Time	Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
Mental Health	BSc/BN – Full Time	Aberystwyth University Bangor University Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
	BSc/BN – Part Time (Part time Bursary available however most students are NHS employed with salary backfill funding)	Aberystwyth University Bangor University Swansea University Wrexham University
	MSc/PG Dip – Full Time	Cardiff University Wrexham University Swansea University University of South Wales
Midwifery	BSc/BN – Full Time	Bangor University Cardiff University Swansea University University of South Wales
Learning Disability	BSc/BN – Full Time	Bangor University Swansea University University of South Wales
Dispersed Nursing	BSc – Full Time (Some students are NHS employed with salary backfill funding)	Bangor University Swansea University
Distance Nursing	BSc – Full Time	Bangor University
OTHER		
Dental Hygiene and Therapy	BSc – Full Time	Cardiff University
Dental Hygiene	HE Cert – Full Time	Bangor University Cardiff University
Physician Associate	MSc/MPAS – Full Time	Bangor University Swansea University

Appendix 2

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*
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. During or at the end of the first year of your Health Education Course you can elect to either		
	i 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