

Student Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Extra Weeks (Long-Course) Funding from 2026/27

This FAQ is published by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW). It is intended to help students understand how extra weeks (long-course) support will operate from 2026/27.

1. What has changed from academic year 2026/27?

From 2026/27, students in receipt of an NHS Wales Bursary can no longer receive extra weeks (long-course) funding through Student Finance Wales maintenance loans.

Instead, support for additional weeks of study is provided through the NHS Wales Bursary.

2. Why has this change been made?

The change corrects a regulatory error so that:

- support is provided on a non-repayable basis wherever possible; and
- students do not receive overlapping or duplicate funding from different systems.

This correctly aligns how student finance policy and the NHS Wales Bursary work together.

3. Why do students say they are worse off than previous years?

From academic year 2024/25, regulations changed to make eligible, full-time, Welsh-domiciled NHS Wales Bursary Students eligible to apply for the full amount of non means tested maintenance loan from Student Finance Wales. This replaced the Reduced Rate of Maintenance Loan that was previously available and resulted in a significant increase in the support available to NHS Wales Bursary students.

Consequently, the change also meant eligible, full-time, Welsh-domiciled NHS Wales Bursary Students were able to claim non means tested extra weeks (long-course) support via Student Finance Wales, when previously this had been claimed through the NHS Wales Bursary only. In practice this meant that students were potentially receiving double funding. This was an unintended consequence of the policy change.

The position has been corrected so that students are directed to claim extra weeks support through the NHS Wales Bursary. While the NHS Wales Bursary extra weeks support may be lower than the additional Student Finance Wales loan payments seen in

2024/25 and 2025/26, it is means tested and is not repayable. From academic year 2026/27, all extra week's support will be paid via the NHS Wales Bursary route only.

Extra Weeks Allowance – NHS Wales Bursary

If your course runs for more than 30 weeks, you may be entitled to an Extra Weeks Allowance, as illustrated below:

Living arrangements	Amount per extra week (maximum)
Parental home	Up to £56
Elsewhere	Up to £84
London (medical and dental students only)	Up to £108

The Extra Weeks Allowance is means tested and we recognise some students will be disappointed that support will be paid through the NHS Wales Bursary from 2026/27 only, particularly where this results in a lower amount than the additional Student Finance Wales loan payments seen in 2024/25 and 2025/26. This change corrects an unintended consequence of the 2024/25 regulatory changes and does not affect support already paid to students in previous academic years.

SFW will not be treating the previous extra weeks support as an overpayment and students will not have to make early repayments.

4. Can I switch from the NHS Wales Bursary to Student Finance Wales instead?

No. Once your course has started and passed the first ten weeks, your funding route is fixed for the duration of your studies (unless you need to repeat a year which your Bursary lead will discuss with you at the time).

This means you cannot:

- switch from NHS Wales Bursary funding to Student Finance Wales later in your course; or
- change funding routes in later years¹.

This rule has been in place for many years and applies to all students.

¹If you experience an exceptional change in your circumstances; you can request an individual review. Reviews are considered on a case by case basis and do not guarantee a change to your funding.

5. Is overall support for NHS Wales Bursary students lower?

No. Overall, NHS Wales Bursary students continue to receive a range of support, including:

- full tuition fees paid on a non-repayable basis (subject to workforce commitments)
- access to the full rate of maintenance support from Student Finance Wales
- a means tested bursary for living costs and a non-means-tested grant; and
- additional bursary allowances for eligible students, such as Dependents Allowance, Childcare Allowance, Disabled Student Allowance etc.

The issue relates specifically to extra weeks support and the correction of an unintended consequence of the 2024/25 regulatory changes. From 2026/27, extra weeks support is correctly claimed through the means tested, non-repayable NHS Wales Bursary rather than through Student Finance Wales maintenance loans.

6. What will happen in future years?

The Welsh Government will use the responses to the NHS Wales Bursary consultation (which closed in January 2026) to inform future policy for the NHS Wales Bursary.

7. Who can I contact if I need advice about my individual situation?

If you need advice about your own funding, contact NHS Wales Bursary Student Awards Services:

Email: abm.sas@wales.nhs.uk

Telephone: 029 21 500 400

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm.

They can provide guidance based on your personal circumstances.