

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS WISHING TO CLAIM EXCESS PRACTICE PLACEMENT TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES.

If you are a NHS Commissioned student who has to undertake a practice placement you may be entitled to have the cost of journeys between your term time residence and the practice placement site (which is not part of your University), reimbursed. Practice Placement involves training in hospitals or community health services rather than a classroom. The cost of travel to the practice placement site **MUST** be greater than the normal travel cost from your term time residence to college.

Who can claim?

You may claim if you have been awarded a full NHS funded Bursary as long as you are not receiving either:

- A 'European Fees only' Award
- An 'Assessed Fees only' Award

If you are in receipt of the above awards then you are only entitled to have your fees paid and do not receive a Bursary, so you may not claim any costs associated with a practice placement.

How can I tell if I am entitled to claim?

If you are a NHS Funded student, you will receive a Notification of Award Letter from NHS Bursaries that will detail the amount and type of Bursary you will receive. You should check this letter to see that you are neither a 'European Fees Only' nor 'Assessed Fees Only' award holder. You should also look to see if there is any amount detailed as a "travel disregard". If you do have travel disregard, this means that you will be in receipt of a "0.00" award and it is considered that you must pay the amount detailed as the travel disregard from your own resources to cover any practice placement expenses you may incur. You may still submit claims but **no** additional payments can be made to cover practice placement travel and/or accommodation expenditure until the total of your claims exceed that of the travel disregard.

What travelling expenses may I claim?

If you meet the above eligibility criteria, you may be entitled to help with any additional travelling costs you incur whilst attending a practice placement. **The cost of travelling to and from your placement MUST BE in excess of your normal daily travel costs between your term-time address and place of study.**

If your practice placement travel costs are greater than your normal daily travel, you may claim the gross amount of the costs incurred. For example:

- Term-time residence to normal place of study = £3.00 per day
- Term-time residence to placement site = £2.50 per day

No claim allowed as the cost of travelling to the placement is less than your normal travel costs.

- Term-time residence to normal place of study = £3.00 per day
- Term-time residence to placement site = £7.50 per day

You may claim £7.50 per day. As the cost of travelling to the placement is greater than your normal travel costs, you may claim the gross (i.e. total) cost of travel.

- Term-time residence to normal place of study = £3.00 per day
- Term-time residence to placement site = £3.00 per day

No claim allowed as the cost of travelling to the placement is equal to and not in excess of your normal travel costs.

- Term-time residence to normal place of study = £3.00 per day
- Practice placement residence to placement site = £4.00 per day

You may claim £4.00 per day. As the cost of travelling to the placement is greater than your normal travel costs, you may claim the gross (i.e. total) cost of travel

- Term time residence to normal place of study = £3.00 per day
- Clinical placement residence to placement site = £3.00 per day

No claim allowed as the cost of travelling to the placement is equal to and not in excess of your normal travel costs.

You may also claim for any additional mileage/travelling costs, if you have to travel in the community to other clinical placement sites, and/or to a patient's home address if you are not given free transport by a tutor.

You should use the cheapest form of transport available for your journeys, taking full advantage of any free and concessionary schemes. If you travel by public transport you may claim

- the costs of your fares (including carriage of luggage and bicycles)

You will need to keep all receipts (i.e. bus/train tickets) and attach these to your claim form as proof of the journeys undertaken.

If you normally have no costs associated with your daily travel to college, because you walk or receive free travel, you should detail the mileage or public transport costs for the journey.

Can I use my own motor vehicle?

Normally, you will be expected to use public transport. If you choose to use your own motor vehicle you may only claim the cost of travelling by public transport where this is less than the appropriate mileage costs.

If public transport is unavailable or unsuitable for placement travel, you should gain agreement from your University, in advance of your placement, that they will certify that you have to use your own motor vehicle. You will also need to get confirmation from your insurers that you have adequate cover for all costs and claims, that no liability is placed on your University or any NHS body, and notify your University accordingly. If you have this confirmation, you may claim the following mileage rates:

- Bicycle 6.2 pence per mile
- Motor vehicles up to 125cc 16.2 pence per mile
- Motor vehicle over 125cc 23 pence per mile

If, as well as yourself, you drive another NHS funded student to the placement site, you may claim an extra 2 pence per mile for each additional student. This student must be eligible to claim placement travel expenses. You will need to provide details of the passenger at Section 7 of your claim.

Car Parking & Tunnel / Bridge Tolls

You may claim back the cost of car parking and tunnel / bridge tolls if combined with your mileage, this makes the daily cost in excess of your normal daily cost to University. **Please note we do not reimburse car parking or tunnel / bridge tolls where mileage is not being claimed.**

Community Mileage

Additional mileage / travel costs may be claimed for if you have to travel in the community to other Practice Placement sites, and / or to patient's home addresses if you are not given free transport by a tutor. We do not require individual addresses; only give daily mileage totals in Section 6b.

Car Hire

This can be claimed for if this was the cheapest way of conducting your placement. If this is the case then you will need to obtain a letter from your University, which officially certifies that

this is the cheapest way of travelling to and from your placement.

You can only claim:

- the cost of hiring the car
- the cost of any petrol that you may have put into the car
- the cost of any car parking / tunnel tolls

You CANNOT claim the mileage rate of 23 pence per mile when using a hire / pool car.

Can I travel by taxi?

No. The costs of airfares and taxis are not allowable unless, exceptionally, your University certifies that they were unavoidably incurred, and reimbursement of taxi fares will be limited to the maximum motor vehicle rate (i.e. 23 pence per mile). The cost of tips, refreshments, sleeper berths and phone calls, and of any other expenses which are related to your placement, are not able to, and will not be reimbursed.

Can I claim for any extra accommodation costs whilst on placement?

You can claim Excess Accommodation costs if you live away from your term time address whilst on placement and are obliged to meet both the costs of your placement accommodation and of retaining your term-time accommodation. You will need to provide proof of these costs and the periods that they cover. You will be reimbursed for the total cost of your practice placement address, up to a maximum of 110% of your term time address cost.

If you normally reside with your parents during term time the cost of your term time address is nominally set at £20.00 per day (£30.00 per day for institutions in the London area) and payment will be made at this rate, if appropriate. If you move to the parental home for the purposes of attending your placement you **will not** be able to claim dual accommodation costs.

You can also claim the cost of one return journey each week between these addresses.

For the cost of maintaining your term-time address:

If you pay rent on your accommodation please provide:

- Photocopies of your Full Tenancy Agreement that covers the dates you were on placement

If you own your own home, i.e. pay a monthly mortgage please provide:

- A photocopy of your annual Mortgage Statement. The reason we require your annual mortgage statement is because it will show the full address of the property and a detailed breakdown of your monthly payments.

Please note that under the NHS Bursary Scheme only rent and mortgage payments are deemed as maintenance, so you will not have to provide proof of council tax and other household bills.

For the cost of maintaining your Practice Placement address:

- Official receipts showing the amount(s). If possible, these should at least show your name, the address of where you stayed and the dates. This information should be on an invoice, receipt or letter headed paper.

If you do not send the relevant proof to support your claim then your claim will be returned to the correspondence address you have provided at Section 1. You may contact us at any time for verification on what we can / cannot accept as proof of accommodation. If for some reason you cannot obtain the required proof then your claim may not be considered.

Will my Bursary be increased whilst I am on placement?

The level of Bursary you receive is partly determined by where you live during term time. Students who live with their parents receive the "Home" rate, those who do not live with their parents receive either the "Elsewhere" rate, or if they are studying in London, the "London" rate.

Your Bursary, together with any assessed contribution and Student Loan (where applicable), is intended to meet your normal day to day living costs, including term-time accommodation. If you have to move away from your term-time address to attend a practice placement, your Bursary may be temporarily increased.

For example:

- If you normally live with your parents but have to move away whilst on placement, your Bursary may be uplifted to the "Elsewhere" rate if your placement is outside London, or the "London Rate" if your placement is in London.
- If you normally get the "Elsewhere" rate but have to move to London to undertake a placement, your Bursary may be uplifted to the "London" rate.

How do I make a claim?

You should first read this guidance carefully and decide by examining your Notification of Award Letter whether you are entitled to claim. If so, you should complete the attached claim form. Once the NHS Student Grants Unit (SGU) has received your claim, we will:

- ✓ check your eligibility
- ✓ ensure your claim is in order and correctly completed and certified; and
- ✓ if appropriate, process and arrange payment within 30 working days of receipt.

If we are not satisfied with your claim, we will contact you to resolve the situation. If we decide a claim is not appropriate or alter any amount claimed we will write to you explaining our decision.

What do I do once I have completed the form ?

Once you have completed the form make sure you take a photocopy of your claim plus all supporting evidence. Keep this safe, as you will need to refer to it should any problems arise. Please pass the original claim to your tutor or course administrator, who will arrange for your University to check and certify your claim. They will then pass it to Student Bursaries for assessment, and if appropriate payment.