

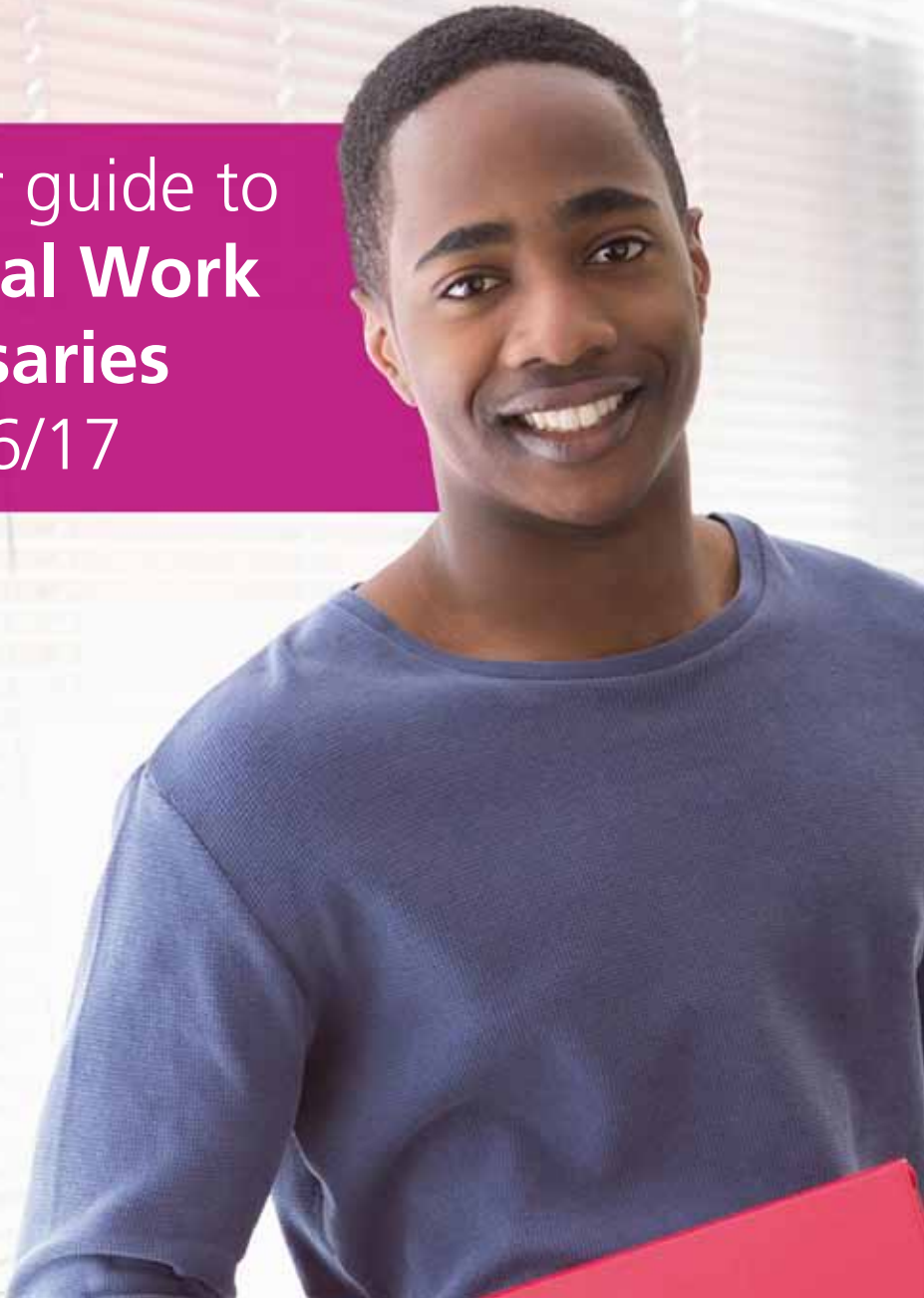
Student Services

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Business Services Authority

Your guide to
**Social Work
Bursaries**
2016/17



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This booklet applies to students on approved undergraduate and postgraduate social work courses. However, some of the guidance is different for these students, so please look out for **undergraduate/postgraduate** explanations where the guidance differs.



Welcome to the Social Work Bursaries (SWB) guidance booklet for students. These bursaries are available to provide financial support for social work students during training. (Eligibility rules apply - see page 5). All the information you need to apply for your bursary is included in this booklet. Before reading any further, make sure you meet the residency criteria and that you are eligible to apply for a Social Work Bursary. The eligibility criteria can be found on our website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students under SWB > Eligibility.

If you are eligible for a bursary you must make an application each academic year in order for us to continue to pay your bursary. The bursary is paid pro rata for part-time students.

Undergraduate students can only apply for a bursary from their second year of study. **Postgraduate** students can apply for every year of study.

This booklet gives you an overview of SWB. You can find more detailed guidance on all aspects of bursary support in the booklets *Undergraduate students* and *Postgraduate students* which are available from our website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students under SWB > Applying for a SWB > Student Guidance. Our website also provides useful information for all existing and prospective social work students, including downloadable application forms.

Who are we?

SWB are a national service provided by Student Services, a part of the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA).

We assess, award and pay bursaries to eligible students on approved undergraduate and postgraduate social work courses on behalf of the Department of Health.

We currently pay bursaries worth over £60 million to more than 8,000 students each year.

Our aim is to ensure our customers are paid correctly and on time, every time. We offer an attentive, customer-friendly service that provides information, help and support about your bursary when you need it.



Eligible courses

You must be studying, or intending to study, on a college based social work course approved by one of the following:

- the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)
- the Care Council for Wales
- the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)

Residency criteria

To be eligible for bursary funding, you must be ordinarily resident in England on the first day of the first academic year of your course. You must also satisfy both of the UK residency rules, or one of the non-UK residency rules.

UK residency rules

You must:

- have been resident in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man throughout the three years preceding the date your course starts (living here mainly to receive full-time education, when you would normally live elsewhere, does not satisfy the residency status) **and**
- have settled status in the UK within the meaning of the Immigration Act 1971.

Please visit our website for the non-UK residency rules at:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Eligibility > Other Eligibility Criteria.

Other criteria

You must not hold a higher education qualification in social work and must not be receiving other funding for your social work education training (apart from undergraduate students who can apply to SLC for funding). For full details, please visit our website at:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Eligibility.

Capping process



The number of bursary recipients for both part-time and full-time courses are capped, so there is no guarantee that you will receive a bursary if you take up an offer of a place on a social work course.

Universities in receipt of a capping allocation decide who receives a bursary based on capping criteria set by the Department of Health. For more information on how your university selects these students, please contact them directly. SWB are not involved in this process. There is no right of appeal to us if you are not selected by your university.

Your university will agree a shortlist of students within their allocated number of places and then notify us. You will only be assessed for a bursary if you are on the list your university sends us and you satisfy the residency and other eligibility criteria.

If you have not been allocated one of your university's bursary places then you will not be eligible to receive the SWB. The only funding that you may be eligible to receive will be the fixed contribution towards your placement travel expenses through the Placement Travel Allowance (PTA). If you satisfy the residency and other eligibility criteria, the PTA will be available to you.

Once allocated a bursary place, you will keep this place for the duration of your course unless you withdraw from your studies.

Bursary elements



Tuition fees

If you are studying on a postgraduate course and are eligible for a bursary, we will pay a contribution towards the cost of your tuition fees. This will be paid directly to your university.

Undergraduates are not entitled to this element.

Basic Grant (non-means tested)

If you are eligible for funding and you are nominated by your university for a bursary, we will pay you the standard rate of Basic Grant based on the location of your university. This will include a fixed amount of PTA. Part-time students will be paid a pro rata amount of Basic Grant/PTA.

This is the only bursary element available to undergraduate students. You cannot apply for any other support from SWB.

In addition to the Basic Grant, postgraduate students may also apply for further bursary elements.

Maintenance Grant (means tested)

This is the total amount of net bursary you are awarded, after means testing, to assist with the costs of attending your course and is only available if you are studying on a **postgraduate course**.



Adult Dependants Allowance

This is payable if you are studying on a **postgraduate course** and you have an adult who is wholly or mainly financially dependent on you. This may include your spouse, partner or civil partner but not your child or your spouse/partner's child. Your entitlement to this allowance is assessed using your dependant's income.

Placement Travel Allowance

Your course will normally include time spent at an agency that provides placements. As there is a fixed contribution towards your placement travel expenses included in your Basic Grant, no further payments of placement expenses will be made by us.

It is expected that the agency offering your placement will contribute towards the travel costs incurred whilst you are carrying out your placement duties. A contribution of this nature will not affect your entitlement to the bursary.

If you are undertaking an **undergraduate social work course**, you should contact Student Finance England at www.sfengland.slc.co.uk to find out more about additional support that you may be entitled to.



Parents' Learning Allowance

This is payable if you have a dependent child or children (aged under 19). We will automatically assess your entitlement based on your dependant's income (if they have any). This allowance is only available to students studying on a **postgraduate course**.

Childcare Allowance

If you are studying on a **postgraduate course** and you have dependent children aged under 15 (or aged under 17 for children with special educational needs) who are attending registered/approved childcare, you can apply for Childcare Allowance. You cannot claim this allowance if you are getting the childcare element of Working Tax Credit. Your entitlement to this allowance is assessed using your dependants' income (if they have any). This allowance will be reconciled directly with your childcare provider three times per year, towards the end of each term.

Disabled Student Allowance

If you are studying on a **postgraduate course**, have a disability and need extra help or equipment to complete your course, you may be eligible to apply for this allowance.

Please visit www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/AskUs for more information about this allowance.

Making a bursary application



To make your application you will need to print the appropriate application form from our website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Applying for a SWB > Main Application and Additional Forms. This section explains what to do before, during and after making your application.

What should I know before I apply?

Before you submit your application, check your eligibility. Full details are available on our website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Eligibility.

If you are eligible to apply, but will not be entitled to a bursary because you have not been allocated a bursary place by your university, you should still make an application. You may still be entitled to receive the PTA.

We only accept original documents as supporting evidence.

If you are applying for a bursary for the first time, you must provide evidence to confirm your identity and residency, which must include a photograph of yourself. This will normally be a valid passport. We will return all original documentation within 15 working days. You **must** enclose a self-addressed return envelope with Special Delivery pre paid so you can track the return of your documents once they leave us.

You must make an application **each** academic year.

When can I apply?

When does my course start?	When can I apply from?	When is my deadline to apply?
Autumn	1 March 2016	1 November 2016
Winter	1 March 2016	14 February 2017

Any bursary applications that we receive after the deadline will be rejected and no bursary or additional allowances, including PTA and Disabled Student Allowance, will be awarded.

If you want to apply for the Maintenance Grant, Adult Dependents Allowance or Parents' Learning Allowance you must also do this before the deadline of 1 November or 14 February, depending on whether your course starts in Autumn or Winter.

You can make an application for Childcare Allowance and Disabled Student Allowance at any time from 1 March until the end of your academic year.

Timescales for assessment and payment

Documents

We aim to process and return documents within 10 working days.

Bursary applications

We aim to assess your bursary application within 20 working days of receiving your application.

Childcare Allowance

We will assess these applications at the same time as your bursary application. If you apply separately, at a later date, we aim to assess your application within 20 working days.

Further information letters

If we request further information or evidence from you, we will process your response within 10 working days of receiving the information.

Change in circumstances

You must notify us immediately of any change to your circumstances. If the change results in a reassessment that affects your bursary entitlement, any overpayments that have been made to you must be repaid.

We aim to process these within 20 working days providing we have all the relevant information required from you and your university.

Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)

We aim to pay these allowances within 20 working days of receiving the application and all requested supporting evidence.



How do I apply?

Print the relevant application forms, including those for Childcare Allowance and DSA, from our website at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Applying for a SWB > Main Application and Additional Forms.

What happens if I miss the deadline to apply?

If you miss the deadline to apply, you will not be eligible for a bursary or any payment of PTA. Please make sure we receive your application by 1 November or 14 February (depending on when your course starts) as there is no appeal process for late applications.

How will I know my application has been assessed?

You post your application and original supporting documents to SWB.

We receive further information about your application.

We will send your original documents back in the post to you.

We require further information in support of your application. We will request this from you.

We have all the information we need in your application.

If capping data has been received from your university, and you are **not** allocated a bursary place, we will send you a PTA notification letter.

If capping data has not yet been received from your university, we will send you a PTA notification letter.

If capping data has been received from your university, and you are allocated a bursary place, we will send you a bursary notification letter.

When we receive confirmation from your university that you are attending your course we will make your first payment.

How often will I receive my bursary?

Bursaries are paid in three termly instalments each academic year and can only be paid once we have received confirmation from your university that you are attending your course. Please see our website for the scheduled payment dates at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Applying for a SWB > Bursary Payment Dates.

If you are entitled to the PTA only, we will make a single payment of this once we have received confirmation from your university that you are attending your course.

The first instalment of your Childcare Allowance will be paid at the same time as your bursary as long as you apply for it at the same time as your main bursary. Further instalments can only be paid once we have reconciled the previous term's childcare receipts which we will request from your childcare provider.

Reapplying for your bursary next year

- All students must reapply for their bursary each academic year.
- It is your responsibility to ensure you submit an application form each year.
- If you do not reapply for your bursary each academic year, your bursary payments will not continue into the next one.

Help and guidance

Our website contains further information for all students. Visit us at: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx

From here you can also access our online knowledge base '*Ask Us*' which puts the answers to your questions at your fingertips 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

How to deal with a change in circumstances during your course

Your personal circumstances may change while you are attending your course. You must tell us immediately about any change as it may affect the amount of bursary you receive. This will reduce the risk of any under or over payments being made. Overpayments for any reason must be repaid.

Please be aware that if you withdraw from your course you will have to pay back any bursary that you have received for the time you were not in study.

We are serious about tackling fraud and employ Fraud Specialists to reduce the risk of fraudulent activity and investigate any potentially fraudulent claims.

Fraud can come to light before, during and after completion of training and may result in being unable to register or having registration removed. All reported allegations of fraud are investigated fully with a range of sanctions available (criminal, civil and disciplinary).

The NHSBSA is responsible for protecting the public funds it administers. To do this, we may share the information we hold about you with other bodies that inspect and manage public funds. The NHSBSA participates in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) which is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud. This includes police authorities, local probation boards, fire and rescue authorities as well as local councils and a number of private sector bodies.

How do I notify you?

You should notify us in writing about:

- a change of address
- a change of relationship status
- a change of income relating to additional allowances, for example, Adult Dependants Allowance
- additional children
- a change of contact details

You will need to print and complete the appropriate form from our website at www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx under SWB > Applying for a SWB > Main Application and Additional Forms if there is a change in your:

- bank details (*Notification of change of bank account form*)
- childcare costs or provider (complete a new *Childcare Allowance application form*)


You must tell us through our Customer Contact Services on 0300 330 1342 if you are suspending your training or leaving your course for any reason (please ensure you also notify your university so that they can submit a *Withdrawal form* to us). If you leave your course you will usually lose your allocation of a bursary place.

Please also call us if you or your partner's income reduces by 15% or more, as you may be entitled to more help. We will tell you what you need to do.





Contacting us

If you have any questions about your bursary, please click on the  icon on our website at:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/Students.aspx

'Ask Us' enables you to get answers to your queries 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without the need to call the helpline.

 **Email:** nhsbsa.swb1@nhsbsa.nhs.uk

 **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/socialworkbursaries

 **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/NHSBSA_Students

Telephone: **0300 330 1342**

Our opening hours are:

8am - 6pm Monday to Friday

9am - 3pm Saturday

Closed on Sunday

Useful contacts

Department of Health

Social Work Bursary information packs are published by the Department of Health and can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reforming-social-work-bursary-information-packs>

UCAS

Website: www.ucas.ac.uk

Student Loans Company

Website: www.slc.co.uk

Student Finance England

Website: www.gov.uk/studentfinancesteps

National Union of Students

Website: www.nus.org.uk

NASMA

(National Association of Student Money Advisors)

Website: <http://www.nasma.org.uk/>

Student Awards Agency for Scotland

Telephone: 0300 555 0505

Website: www.saas.gov.uk

Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

Telephone: 0845 6030 891

Website: www.sssc.uk.com

Care Council for Wales

Telephone: 0845 070 0249

Website: www.ccwales.org.uk

Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)

Telephone: 028 9536 2600

Website: www.niscc.info

Health and Care Professions Council

Telephone: 0845 300 6184

Website: <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/>

NHS Help with Health Costs

Telephone: NHS Low Income Scheme: 0300 330 1343
Prescription prepayment certificates (PPCs): 0300 330 1341
Medical and maternity exemption certificates: 0300 330 1341
NHS Tax Credit Exemption Certificates: 0300 330 1347

Website: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/HelpWithHealthCosts.aspx



(V1) September 2015

We have taken great care to ensure that the information in this booklet is correct at the time of publication. However, it is subject to change in accordance with Department of Health (DH) policy. The guide is not intended to override or replace any of the Social Work Bursary arrangements as set out by the DH. You can read the information for universities and students on the DH's website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reforming-social-work-bursary-information-packs>