



BURSARY AWARD SCHEME POLICY

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Bursary Award Scheme Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1. NHS 24 is committed to investment in the education, training and ongoing development of all staff in line with the evolving changes from Agenda for Change and the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF).
- 1.2. In December 1999, the Scottish Executive launched “Learning Together, A strategy for Education, Training and Lifelong Learning for all staff in NHS Scotland”. In line with this strategy, NHS 24 strives to ensure that learning is embedded into the organisation, and further supports the ongoing development of staff through the provision of opportunities to gain new skills and knowledge in the workplace and through experiential learning. With the introduction of the Knowledge and Skills Framework, all post holders within NHS 24 may require ongoing development to ensure that they are able to apply and develop their knowledge and skills in their post. The Bursary Award Scheme is one means by which staff can work towards evidencing their KSF.
- 1.3. The Bursary Award Scheme applies to courses of study or development that, if successfully completed, will lead to the award of a recognised educational or professional qualification (e.g. HNC, HND, degree, Diploma). The bursary scheme is one means by which NHS 24 provides commitment to the development of employees’ current and future potential within their job role, through a structured approach and process.
- 1.4. **This policy applies to all NHS 24 staff and has been developed to ensure there is equity of access and opportunity to all aspects of learning and development for all NHS 24 staff.**

2. Funding Arrangements and Award Criteria

- 2.1. Bursary funding is held and managed centrally by the Head of Recruitment and Development. The actual disbursement of funds is through NHS 24’s Bursary Award Panel. This panel consists of members from across different NHS 24 directorates and from partnership, and is inclusive and representative of all employee groups. In the future, it is intended that there will be representation from patient/ public involvement. The panel is chaired by the Director of Human Resources.
- 2.2. After the stated closing date and following the receipt of applications, the Head of Recruitment and Development will prepare a paper for consideration by the



Bursary Award Panel, providing a summary of all applications received. Awards are made against set criteria (outlined in paragraph 2.4 below).

- 2.3. In most instances, the Award will lead to the recipient gaining a transferable qualification which has mutual benefit to both the employee and NHS 24. In view of this, 50% funding will be offered to all successful candidates. All funding is capped to no more than £1000 in any financial year.
- 2.4. Awards will be made subject to the following criteria being met:
- The relevance of the course of study to the employees' current role and the overall goals of NHS 24, with specific and direct relevance to the individual's KSF outline and Personal Development Plan;
 - The relevance of the course of study to NHS 24's learning and development priorities for the year;
 - Demonstrable benefit of the study to both the employee and team members;
 - Funding awards are also influenced by the volume of applications in any year and by the cost and duration of your particular course of study.
- 2.5. All awards are made for one financial year only. If the course of study spans subsequent years then applications will have to be made annually. In most circumstances, support will be guaranteed for the duration of the course; however, this will be dependant on the provision of a satisfactory end-of-year evaluation from the employee and their manager, and a satisfactory application. Provision of both evaluations is a condition of the Bursary Award Scheme. Failure to submit one or both could have an impact on an employee's application in subsequent years. The level of funding awarded to an applicant, or for a particular course, in one year will not necessarily be guaranteed in another.

3. The Process for Applications

The Bursary Award Scheme is advertised annually across all NHS 24 sites and there is a closing date, normally in May or June. The following points should be noted:

- All applications must be made through full completion of the Bursary Application Form – applications via any other means will not be considered.
- Prior to completion and submission of an application, a discussion should take place with the employee's line manager regarding the course of study and the relevance to the employee's overall KSF outline and Personal Development Plan.
- Applications should be made prior to the course start date and retrospective applications (made after the course has already started) will not be considered.
- All applications should be completed in full and returned to the Learning and Development Department in hard copy by the closing date. Any applications received by e-mail will not be considered. Partial applications (e.g. those still requiring line manager sign off) will not be accepted.
- Applicants and line managers should sign the form accepting that they agree to the Bursary Award Scheme terms and conditions.



- Before submission to the panel, all applications will be anonymised, assigning an application number in place of the applicant's name and leaving only the role name and the course/ cost details of the application. This is to assist the panel in reviewing each application equitably.

3.1. To submit an application for a Bursary Award, please follow the process below:

STAGE 1: Obtain a Bursary Application Form - from the Learning and Development Department at Clyde Contact Centre, from the Learning and Development pages on the intranet (http://anhs24gw2k14/intranet/content/default.asp?page=s3_2_4), or by e-mailing TrainingRequests@nhs24.scot.nhs.uk.

STAGE 2: The Bursary Application Form consists of sections A to E. Complete the application form fully as it provides key information for the Bursary Panel meeting, and decisions can only be made based on the information provided in the form. (Please note that, as per paragraph 3 above, all applications will be anonymised prior to submission to the panel and an application number will be assigned in place of the applicant's name, leaving only the role name and the course/ cost details of the application. This is to assist the panel in reviewing each application equitably.) Incomplete applications or those that do not contain sufficient detail may impact on the ability of the Bursary Panel to consider the employee's application. It is useful to attach copies of any further course information you may have from a university/ college prospectus, website or other source.

STAGE 3: Prior to completion of sections A to C, a discussion should take place between the employee and their line manager. Following this discussion, the line manager should complete section D and sign the form.

STAGE 4: The fully completed form should be submitted to the address below prior to the closing date. Late or incomplete applications will NOT be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant and their line manager to ensure that the form is received by the Learning and Development Department on time:

Learning & Development Administrator
Clyde Contact Centre
5th Floor
Golden Jubilee National Hospital
Beardmore Street
Clydebank
G81 4HX

STAGE 5: All applications will be collated by the Head of Recruitment and Development, who will prepare a paper for consideration by NHS 24 Bursary Panel.

STAGE 6: All applications will be considered by the Bursary Award Panel against the set criteria, as mentioned previously in this document. All decisions made by the Bursary Award Panel are final; no appeal system exists. However, applicants have the right to invoke the Grievance Procedure should they feel that they have been treated unfairly.



STAGE 7: All applicants will be notified in writing of the decision which has been made and, in the case of unsuccessful applications, reasons will be provided for the decision. Where an employee's application has been successful, they will be notified of the amount awarded. The employee's line manager will also be notified of the decision which has been made.

STAGE 8: On receipt of the award letter, the applicant should complete and sign the enclosed "Acceptance of Bursary Award" form. The signed "Acceptance of Bursary Award" form must be returned within the stated time frame as failure to do so may result in the award being withdrawn and re-allocated.

STAGE 9: In March of the following year, each employee in receipt of a bursary award will be sent an End of Year Evaluation form. This form should be completed fully and returned to the Learning and Development Department. If the employee is continuing with the same course of study and will be re-applying for funding, the End of Year Evaluation form is considered by the Bursary Award Panel together with the Bursary Award Form.

STAGE 10: A similar End of Year Evaluation report will be requested from the employee's line manager. If the employee is continuing with the same course of study and will be re-applying for funding, this End of Year Evaluation form is considered by the Bursary Award Panel together with the Bursary Award Form.

4. For Successful Applicants: Time away from work

4.1. It is recognised that many employees who are successful in their application for a bursary award may also require time away during normal working hours to attend classes, sit exams or attend to other course-related matters. Please note that a successful application for funding does not suggest or guarantee that time off from work will also be granted, and this decision lies outwith the authority of the panel.

4.2. In the interests of clarification, the guidelines below have been developed:

4.2.1. The bursary scheme is offered in addition to a range of other study options which employees may participate in as part of their working day. It is likely that employee in receipt of a bursary will still participate in other Continuing Professional Development activities. Taking this into consideration, employees who receive bursary support have no automatic right to leave during normal working hours in connection with this study. This is clearly outlined to them in their award letters as well as being contained within the policy.

4.2.2. Where leave is requested, employees are required to negotiate this with their line managers. We would expect that time off from work for study



would consist of a combination of the following; use of annual leave; shift swaps; working time back and “study leave”.

- 4.2.3. Where managers agree that “study leave” is appropriate, **this should not exceed 5 days** in any given financial year. This is NOT to say that employee have a right to the maximum number of days, rather it is a guide to increase flexibility of options. The study leave which is authorised can be used to attend classes, sit exams, work for assignments, or any such combination of relevant study activities. Employees should agree with their Line Manager a detailed plan for any days of this nature to be taken, and submit this to the panel as part of their application for Bursary Award. A Study Leave form should be completed and returned at this time. This does not exclude the employee from taking part in other training/ development activities during working hours as long as these are agreed by the line manager to be appropriate.
- 5. Additional course costs – e.g. additional course fees and course materials (e.g. textbooks, journals)**
- 5.1. The bursary award, where granted, covers a percentage of the course fees as stated in the award letter. However, any additional course costs (e.g. registration fees) or any textbooks, journals or other course materials required for the employees study are not covered by the Bursary Award Scheme. However, NHS 24’s Library would consider purchasing course materials for the use of the organisation as a whole where particular recommendations are made. These materials would then remain the property of NHS 24 and be held within the Library resource areas for the use of all employees. Recommendations on the purchase of these materials should be made to the Librarian.
- 6. Additional Support**
- 6.1. It is recognised that employees with a disability who are in receipt of bursary may require additional support in order to attend classes or to study effectively. Any such requirements should be communicated to the Head of Recruitment and Development. All required support will be funded in order to allow the employee to participate fully in their course of study.
- 7. Incomplete/ Failed courses**
- 7.1. It is recognised that there may be cases where employees who are in receipt of a Bursary award may be unable to successfully complete or finish their course of study. In this event, the candidate **MUST** notify the Head of Recruitment and Development as soon as possible in order that their situation can be reviewed.
- 7.2. The employee may be asked to repay NHS 24 in part or in full for the course fees which have been provided through the Bursary Award scheme. Each case of incomplete or failed course will be dealt with on an individual basis.



8. Leaving NHS 24: Repayment Arrangements

- 8.1. The NHS 24 Bursary Award Scheme recognises that the recipient gaining a transferable qualification has mutual benefits to both the employee and NHS 24. In view of this, candidates who leave the employment of NHS 24 during their course will be required to repay all funding received during the current financial year. Successful applicants will be required to agree to this as a condition of accepting the award.

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