



E: deputydirectorofhealthworkforce@gov.scot

To all pre-registration nursing, midwifery, allied health professional, medical, dental, healthcare science and dental therapy students, and HNC Care, Healthcare Practice and Occupational Therapy Support students

28 January 2021

Dear Student,

In response to the increasing pressures on the NHS and social care due to the Covid-19 pandemic during winter, we are writing to all healthcare students studying at university and college, to highlight an opportunity for you to apply to join the Bank of healthcare workers at your local NHS Board. We are highlighting this opportunity while wanting to continue to reassure you that we are very keen to support and protect your learning experiences and environment, and that your course, and your personal health and wellbeing are top priorities.

We know that many of you already work on the Bank, especially nursing and midwifery students, but for those of you who have not already done so, registering with the Bank may provide a variety of paid opportunities to support the NHS at this critical juncture. It does not provide a guarantee of work, but allows NHS Boards to offer you employment as and/or when the need arises in your local area. Once you are registered with the Bank some Boards may also offer you a part time fixed term contract at a maximum of 15 hours per week. The opportunities which are available will vary between Boards, depending on their current and future requirements.

You should only consider taking up this option if you feel you are able to work in addition to completing your studies. It is important that this opportunity does not impact detrimentally upon your course, or on your other personal circumstances. Your ability to take this up may also depend on varying demands of your course, and you should consider carefully what those are, and likely to be, before pursuing this opportunity.

Please understand that this employment opportunity is completely optional. It is not part of the requirements of your studies and cannot be counted towards any practice hours that you are required to undertake for completion of your qualification. As a student you will be expected to continue to complete your university or college course, including attending clinical placements and other practice based learning opportunities.



With that in mind, it is your responsibility to ensure that any employment you decide to undertake:

- does not affect your studies, ensuring your progress on the course towards graduation;
- is aligned to the employment guidance of your University/College course (there may be a maximum number of hours you can work); and
- should not be in an area (for example ward or clinic) in which you are currently undertaking a placement.

Be assured that when you are in the health service, whether on a student placement, or working on the Bank, you will have access to the same resources as staff, including PPE and access to vaccinations and testing. You will be advised of the Board's phone line or booking link to book yourself an appointment at staff vaccination clinics, if this is not arranged through your supervisor.

We know that some of you will be disappointed not to be embarking on 'paid placements' for the remainder of your studies. This is because we want you to continue on your programmes as normally as possible so that you become the health professionals that Scotland will need for the future. One of our top priorities is for you to be able to either graduate, or continue on, your degree programme. Therefore, protecting your learning experience and your status as 'learners' is as important to us and the future of the NHS, as it is for you.

If you have any concerns about potentially working in healthcare frontline services, please contact your university personal tutor, who can discuss these with you, and direct you to appropriate supports. This includes your mental or physical health, or that of others around you.

Since the beginning of the pandemic healthcare students in Scotland have made invaluable contributions at an unprecedented time of need. Thank you all, whatever your role, for your extraordinary hard work, dedication, skills and commitment and for your continued efforts in the weeks and months ahead.

Stephen Lea-Ross

Stephen Lea-Ross
Deputy Director of Health Workforce, Leadership & Service Reform

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. How do I find out more?

This is an optional opportunity for those who are able to take it up. You can find out details of the application process through following the links in Annex A, or contacting your local board directly.

2. I am a first year student can I apply?

If you have had your criminal records check completed (usually this would be your PVG – or any additional checks that your University/College has required if you have also lived outside Scotland) and your health checks are also complete then you can apply. If you have not yet been on a clinical placement you may also have mandatory training to complete. You will be informed of what is required by the Bank when applying. This may vary depending on your year of study, programme and Health Board.

3. Can I apply to more than one Board?

You should only apply to the Board in the area of your current address, or the Board that you anticipate you will spend the majority of the next three months in, in order to minimise travel required.

4. I have placements this semester can I still apply?

Yes, the Bank contracts are designed to be flexible for both parties which means you may be asked to work some weeks more than others or not at all. However you must remember this is a paid employment opportunity; extra hours worked are over and above placement or academic time, and do not count towards your qualification. This will be additional to your course hours, up to a maximum of 15 hours per week (or the hours prescribed as part of your University's or College's employment guidance). Students should ensure they commit to what they are able to undertake without affecting progression on their course. That will be different for each student, and for each programme, and will vary over time.

5. Can I work in an area where I am on placement?

You cannot work in an area (for example ward or clinic) where you are currently on placement as it is important that your student placement and employment are kept separate. Accordingly, if you already know you are going to be placed, or have a resit in a Board clinical area in the next 3 months, you should state this when any offer is made. If you are offered hours in an area where you have previously been on placement, there is no reason you cannot return there if you are happy to do this.

6. What do the roles involve?

There are a variety of opportunities in existing roles within NHS Boards. All of these roles have clear job descriptions and have been evaluated under the Agenda for Change job evaluation system and will be paid at the AFC band for the specific role you take up. You may be employed in acute, mental health and community settings providing you are appropriately line managed and supervised. You should be clear that whatever role you undertake is separate from your role as a student on placement and should be treated as such at all times. The role will not necessarily be directly related to your programme of study.

You should not undertake duties outwith the role profile to which you have been recruited, and should not be expected to undertake duties you are not competent to undertake.

For welfare or other reasons it may not be possible to undertake paid employment in addition to the placement hours you are currently undertaking, but you may be able to undertake paid work through the bank before or after a scheduled placement.

7. How much will I be paid?

These positions are not the same as last year, and the pay will be appropriate for the work opportunities available in the board, and also consider if you have any prior work experience. Boards will offer contracts at bands 2, 3 or 4 in line with the job description of the position. The contracts will be around a maximum of 15 hours per week, but precise arrangements will vary.

8. Should I let my University know that I am applying to go onto the Bank?

Your University/College will know that this is an option, but you should inform your personal tutor if you plan to apply. They can help you to consider the balance between study and work, in your particular circumstances. However, there is no requirement to do this.

9. Am I covered under the NHS Scotland Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme?

University students undertaking clinical placements in NHS Scotland are automatically covered under a temporary COVID-19 linked death in service cover called the NHS Scotland Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme. This cover also extends to college students working towards a HNC in Care and Administrative Practice, HNC in Healthcare Practice, and HNC in Occupational Therapy Support who undertake placements in health and social care settings. A one off payment of £60,000 will be made to the next of kin of any student who dies where COVID-19 is a documented factor, while undertaking NHS clinical placements.

You are covered both as a student on placement and as an employee if you take up a role with the NHS on the Bank, however only a single payment in relation to an individual can be made to any dependent making a claim under the scheme.

10. Does there remain a commitment to honouring student placements to enable students to complete required supervised practice hours.

Yes. Our absolute priority is to maintain the availability of student placements wherever possible, in order that as many students as possible can complete required practice hours with minimum disruption. The Scottish Government is working proactively with health boards and higher and further education providers to monitor placement availability and make alternative provision in circumstances in which placements are rearranged or curtailed.

ANNEX A – LIST OF NHS BOARD BANK CONTACT DETAILS

NHS BOARD	STAFF BANK WEBSITE OR CONTACT DETAILS
NHS FIFE	https://www.nhsfife.org/work-with-us/routes-into-care/nurse-bank/
NHS GRAMPIAN	https://www.nhsgrampianmahp.scot.nhs.uk/home/grampian-nurse-bank/
NHS GREATER GLASGOW & CLYDE	https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/working-with-us/hr-connect/staff-banks/nursing-and-midwifery-staff-bank/contact-us/#
NHS LANARKSHIRE	https://www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk/services/staff-bank/
NHS LOTHIAN	https://careers.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/StaffBank/Pages/default.aspx
NHS HIGHLAND	https://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/careers/pages/bankstaff.aspx
NHS TAYSIDE	https://www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk/WorkingWithUs/OurVacancies/PROD_204624/index.htm
NHS ORKNEY	ork.recruitment@nhs.scot
NHS SHETLAND	shet.hradmin@nhs.net – Please make reference to the open letter when emailing NHS Shetland
NHS WESTERN ISLES	
NHS AYRSHIRE & ARRAN	
NHS FORTH VALLEY	0845 130 3855 FV.forthvalleystaffbank@nhs.scot
NHS DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY	
NHS BORDERS	