

**Supporting our future NHS Workforce:
a consultation on the NHS Bursary Scheme**
Consultation response

Your details

Are you responding:

- *as a member of the public?*
- *as an organisation?*
- *as a current healthcare student?*
- *as a prospective healthcare student?*
- *as a student studying in another subject?*
- *as a parent, spouse or partner of student?*
- *as a healthcare professional?*

Title e.g. Mr/Mrs/Miss	Dr
First name	Rob
Surname	Low
Your organisation (if applicable) – please indicate whether your organisation is regional or national	British Society of Audiology - a national society (1300 members)
Your job role/title (if applicable)	Consultant Clinical Scientist (Audiology)
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Consultation Questions

Please place an X in the box next to your response. Where you are asked to provide an explanation, the box will expand as you type.

Chapter 3: Evaluation Criteria and Evidence

1. Do you agree with the criteria in Table 3?

Yes

No

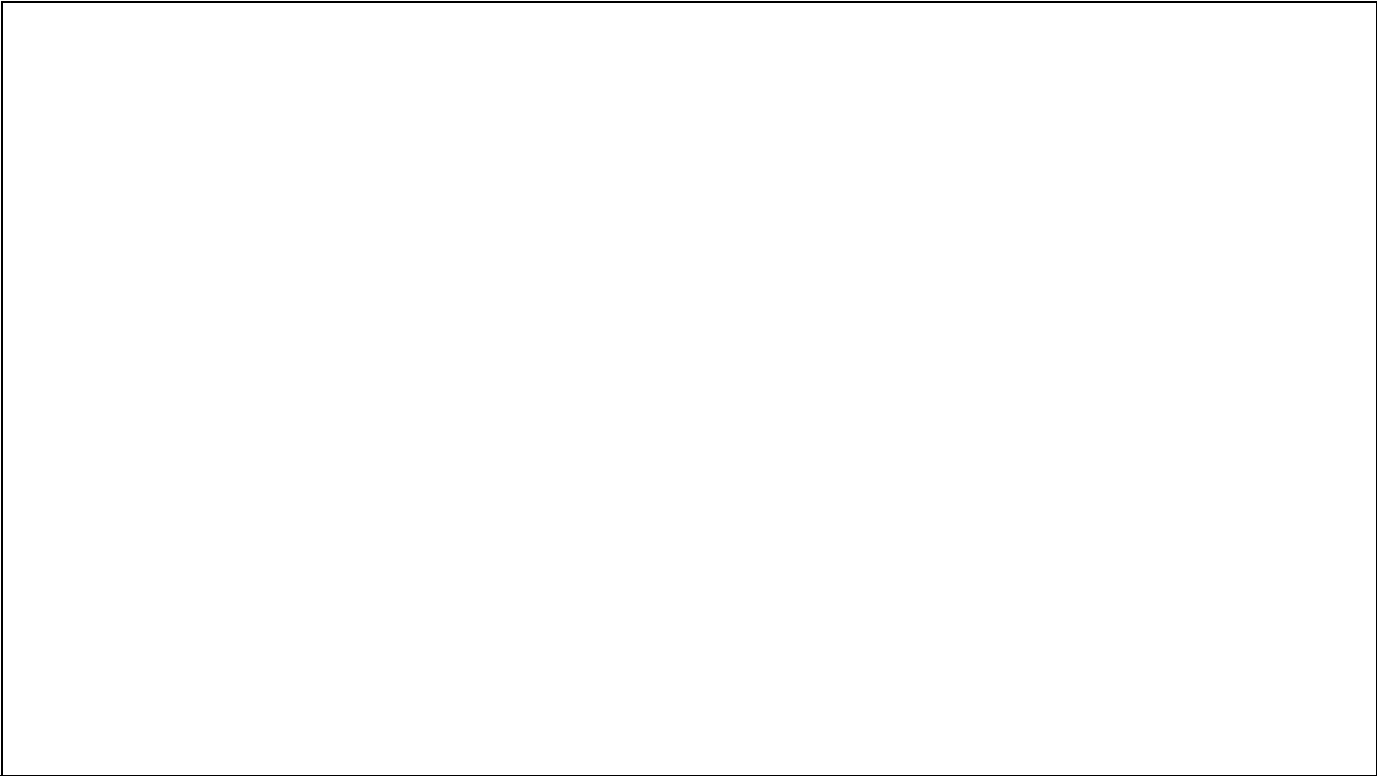
2. If you answered No to question 1, please give the reasons for your response.

3. Are you aware of further evidence that should be considered?

Yes

No

If so, please provide the evidence or the full title and source.



Chapters 6 and 7: Options for student support

4. **Which three options, in priority order, would you support from Chapters 6 and 7?**
Please ensure that you support only three of the options from the eleven listed below, as opposed to three from Chapter 6 and three from Chapter 7 (please include at least one option from Chapter 6 and one from Chapter 7). Insert a number 1 in the box of your preferred option and a number 2 and 3 for your second and third choices.

Chapter 6

Chapter 7

1		2d
2a		2e 1
2b 2		3b
2c		3c
3a		4 3
		5a

5. Please provide reasons for your answer to question 4

2e This provides higher levels of bursary funding than option 2b but identical loan funding. This bias would be attractive to debt-adverse and low income families. This level of funding is realistic in supporting students through their training period without developing burdensome debt. The relatively high levels of bursary minimise debt development. This is a strength of this option. Aligning the student loan to current NHS provision allows confidence in forecasting of subsequent debt repayment feasibility. This option would cost an estimated £670M and hence an investment of £240M would need to be identified in advance of offering the scheme but the loan repayments would offset this investment over time making the option realistic.

2b This option uses a two tier bursary system thereby allowing access for all students to a sum of financial support which is non-returnable and hence attractive to debt-adverse and low income families alike. The sum level of financial support offered through this option is barely realistic in supporting students through their training. Aligning the student loan to current NHS provision allows confidence in forecasting of subsequent debt repayment feasibility. Costs to the NHS are neutral with respect to current funding arrangements. Since none of the schemes look to reduce costs this represents the most cost-limited option.

4 This option offers generous levels of funding through student loan but offers far less in terms of bursary allowance. Whilst those bursaries which do exist target the students those who have financing challenges it makes access to the mature student less attractive for reasons of debt aversion. The high levels of funding permitted through student loans gives this option the potential to provide good financial support. This option delivers primarily through student loans and therefore offers a high risk to the student of inappropriate levels of debt particularly for the allied health professional group. Costs to the NHS would be burdensome with an additional £260-£280M to be found at a time of NHS financial challenge.

6. What benefits would you expect to be achieved if the options you support were implemented?

Each of these options offers the opportunity to invest in the future of the NHS by attracting students who might currently be dissuaded from an NHS training route for reasons of financial support. I would anticipate the bursary levels of option 2e being particularly attractive since this option avoids subsequent debt repayments. This option is also attractive from the perspective of affordability for the NHS since it involves a realistic investment of £240M which although significant is defensible in the context of the equality of access issues which it permits, particularly when loan repayments offset investment sums.



7. Do any of the options have a significant negative impact on equality?

Yes

No

Not sure

8. Please provide reasons for your answer to question 7.

9. Do any of the options have a significant positive impact on equality?

Yes

No

Not sure

10. Please provide reasons for your answer to question 9.

Reducing financial restraints to course application has a positive impact upon course access equality. Each of the options increases access in this way and so each has a positive inmpact.

Chapter 8: Medical and Dental Students

11. Do you support the proposal to include the specified group of medical and dental students in the NHS Bursary Scheme?

Yes

No

Not sure

12. Please provide reasons for your answer to question 11

12. The inclusion of medical and dental students within the NHS Bursary scheme would be beneficial in making the socioeconomic backgrounds of dental and medical practitioners more representative of the groups of patients with whom they will subsequently interact. This will allow practitioners to have greater understanding of socioeconomic factors of health care and health provision uptake. It might also increase health care uptake as patients from lower socioeconomic groups see their health care professional as more relevant and approachable.



13. Can you suggest any further proposals to encourage widening participation in medicine and dentistry?

no

Chapter 9: Other issues for consultation

14. Do you agree that these are the right issues to take into account in considering whether to add new professions to the scheme?

Yes

No

Not sure

15. Are there any other issues that should be taken into account?

The criteria listed might also include the strategic vision of the NHS to deliver health care in new and innovative ways which will have the potential to drive recruitment into professional areas outside of those meeting the existing criteria. Funding might also be directed towards bringing in high achieving research persons into the NHS in order to create such innovations in practice.



16. Do you have any other suggestions or evidence to support the development of a mechanism for adding new professions?

No

17. Do you think it is reasonable to have different levels of support depending on where students are studying and living?

Yes

No

Not sure

18. Please provide the reason for your response to question 17.

In addition to those listed it is possibly simplistic to believe that London alone has costs of living which require special consideration. A more generic term of high living costs area would allow the geography to be less important than the cost implications. The cost of living in the south east of England, and many cities across England are equivalent to many parts of London. Identifying London alone as a location with increased financial support would not be equitable to either the HEI or the students.

19. Is there any additional evidence that needs to be considered?

A regularly updated distribution of cost of living values across the country to inform bursary allocation.

20. What are the gaps in the information for healthcare students?

Comparisons of course costs and subsequent debt repayment probabilities are needed between careers of varying sorts in the NHS and other non NHS graduate training routes.

21. Who should provide the information for healthcare students?

This information needs to be made available to students when they are making decisions regarding their A Level choices. Therefore such information should be available in an accessible format either online or through careers advice in the school.

22. How and where should the information be made available?

As stated above the information needs to be accessible to students of 15 or 16 when they are making choices of A level course and thereby future careers. It is also needed at school/college leaver stage but by this point some who may have chosen inappropriate A level subjects will be lost to the NHS career of their first choice.

Do you have any other comments?

no

About You

Please provide us with some information about yourself. This will help us to determine whether we have captured the views of everyone and whether there are any specific issues that are important to particular groups. All the information you provide will be kept completely confidential. No identifiable information about you, will be passed to on to any other bodies, members of the public or press.

1) What is your sex? Tick one box only.

Male
Female
Transgender

2) Which age group applies to you? Tick one box only.

0-15 yrs
16-24 yrs
25-34 yrs
35-44 yrs
45-54 yrs
55-64 yrs
65-74 yrs
75-84 yrs
85 yrs and over

3) Do you have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)? Tick one box only.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a person with a disability as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Yes
No

4) What is your ethnic group? Tick one box only.

A White

British
Irish
Any other White background, write below

B Mixed

White and Black Caribbean
White and Black African
White and Asian
Any other Mixed background, write below

C Asian or Asian British

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian background, write below

D Black or Black British

Caribbean
African
Any other Black background, write below

E Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Any other, write below

5) What is your religion or belief?

Tick one box only.

Christian includes Church of Wales, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations.

- None
- Christian
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh

Other, write below

6) Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

Tick one box only.

Only answer the question if you are aged 16 years or over.

- Heterosexual/Straight
- Lesbian/Gay
- Bisexual
- Prefer not to answer
- Other, write below