



Our Ref: DLIB/FOI/25-09-25

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, received on 25 September 2025, reference number FOI 25/09/25. I can confirm that Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) has completed a search of its records and has established that it does hold information falling within the confines of your request.

1. In relation to the Physician Associate courses at Swansea University and Bangor University:

1.1 The date on which the decision was made to suspend recruitment for the 2026 intake.

Please see Appendix 3 and Appendix 5 which confirm that HEIW wrote separately to Bangor University and Swansea University on 28 August 2025 confirming that following engagement, HEIW was pausing commissioning education for the physician associate pre-registration programme in academic year 2026-27.

1.2 The reasons for this suspension, as recorded in documents or communications such as emails and PowerPoints.

Please see the below response to question 1.3.

1.3 Copies of correspondence, meeting minutes, reports, or other documents held by HEIW that discuss or relate to this suspension.

HEIW has completed a search and is able to provide some information which fall within the confines of your request. Please see Appendix 1 to 6 which details correspondence and meeting minutes discussing/ relating to the suspension. The appendices have been redacted in accordance with Section 40(2), of the Freedom of Information Act, on the basis that disclosure of third-party information would breach data protection principles.

In relation to question 1.2 and question 1.3, HEIW has completed the following searches of all emails within the scope of your request, which would need to be retrieved and extracted:

- Search of emails has returned 1,415 items
- Search of SharePoint for documents has returned 6,130 items

Therefore, HEIW will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. It is estimated that it will take an individual approximately 3 minutes to retrieve and extract each email or document to determine if the item falls within the scope of the request. This equates to at least 377 hours. Based on a national hourly rate of £25 per person per hour, the cost of responding to the request for information is estimated to be £9,425.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. For HEIW, the cost limit is set at £450.

HEIW may be able to provide some information in the scope of your request, if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. For instance, this could be achieved by:

- restricting the scope of the request to just emails or documents; and
- restricting the scope of emails and documents to those exchanged during a 2 month period; and

- focusing the request on emails between HEIW and Swansea University or HEIW and Bangor University; and
 - focusing the request for emails on those sent to or from a more focused set of individuals.
- 2. The number of streamlining posts (training jobs) currently available for Physician Associate graduates in 2025.**

HEIW can confirm that there was 1 post available for 2025.

- 3. Any plans, proposals, or documents held by HEIW regarding the provision of streamlining posts for Physician Associate graduates in 2026.**

HEIW does not currently hold information regarding the provision of streamlining posts for Physician Associate graduates in 2026. Planning for 2026 streaming posts for Physician Associate graduates is due to commence at the start of 2026..



. NOTES FROM EXECUTIVE TEAM

Note from 27 August

6.3	PA/Leng update on discussions with WG and HEIs	
	<p>The Executive Team received a verbal update. GJ informed that the Cabinet Secretary has approved pausing the 2026/27 PAs programmes. A meeting with universities is to be held to communicate this, with MR tasked with arranging verbal and formal notifications per contractual requirements.</p> <p>AH informed that England's FAQs were published last weekend and an expert group in England is reviewing PAs and pay issues. WG guidance is expected imminently</p> <p>TL shared feedback from the recently attended PA/AA webinar and it was noted that the outcome of the Leng Review will inform future actions. In the meantime preparation is needed to secure roles for the autumn graduates and HW and TL to coordinate their teams to provide CEOs with clear guidance on workforce planning and case models, and ensure materials are suitable for their audience.</p>	MR
		HW/TL
Noted:	The Executive Team noted the update.	

Note from 3 September

6.3	PA/Leng update on discussions with WG and HEIs	
	The Executive Team received a verbal update indicating that a position statement had been shared, specifying that WG will lead the Implementation Group. The announcement was broadly welcomed; however, some the absence of recognition for AAs was noted.	
Noted:	The Executive Team noted the update and agreed to retain the item as a risk on the agenda. To be addressed initially through the individual organisations.	

Note from 10 September

6.3	PA/Leng Update	
	<p>TL provided a verbal update, informing that a date for the Implementation Board is still awaited.</p> <p>There is no change in respect of the job situation, and this matter should be raised as an item for discussion at the Implementation Board.</p> <p>Potential risks of attrition were discussed to assess any financial impact. It was assessed that this would be limited but that a clear timeline of correspondence with Welsh Government on the issue of programme continuation should be kept to highlight the actions that had been taken.</p>	IM
Action:	The Executive Team noted the update.	

Note from 17 September

6.4	PA/Leng Update	
	The revised all-Wales framework for PAs was being reviewed in relation to Leng and will proceed through the appropriate governance process. Nothing further to report at this stage although the first meeting of the Implementation Board will take place in November.	

Note from 8 October – THIS IS DRAFT – NOT YET APPROVED

6.4	PA/Leng Update	
	<p>IM provided ET with updates regarding the queries raised by Welsh Govt earlier this week, which will require further consideration, along with the recently received FOI.</p> <p>The bursary process was discussed, with particular emphasis placed on the outstanding action from a previous meeting related to the audit trail. The importance of clarity in this area was stressed. IM to further review this matter to ensure it aligns with HEIW policy.</p>	IM

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: HEIW Physician Associate Programme
Date: 14 October 2025 13:45:25
Attachments: [Swansea - HEIW Physician Associate Programme.docx](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 August 2025 13:37
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: HEIW Physician Associate Programme

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached a letter sent on behalf of [REDACTED] regarding HEIW Physician Associate Programme.

Cofion caredig | Kind Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Addysg a Gwella Iechyd Cymru (AaGIC) - Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)

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Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)
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Nantgarw CF15 7QQ
Ffôn | Tel: 03300 585 005
Eboed | Email: heiw@wales.nhs.uk
Gwefan | Web: aagic.gig.cymru / heiw.nhs.wales

28 August 2025



Dear 

Re: Physician Associate Pre-registration Programme

I am writing to inform you that a decision has been taken in relation to recruitment to the Physician Associate programme.

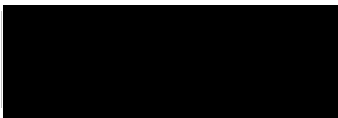
Following engagement HEIW can confirm that we will pause commissioning education for this programme in academic year 2026-27. We will work in collaboration with you to discuss how costs can be covered during this period.

For example, HEIW would like to engage with you in relation to delivering a series of CPD opportunities to:

- Support those PA graduates to become embedded into their roles
- Support graduates from the programme who have yet to find employment in Wales to maintain their skill set should future employment opportunities arise.

HEIW wants to ensure that students currently progressing through the programme are supported adequately and therefore we will set up a meeting to discuss funding arrangements for this period.

Your Sincerely





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Ebost | Email: heiw@wales.nhs.uk

Gwefan | Web: aagic.gig.cymru/ / heiw.nhs.wales

Addysg a Gwella Iechyd Cymru (AaGIC) | Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: HEIW Physician Associate Programme
Date: 14 October 2025 13:45:33
Attachments: [Bangor - HEIW Physician Associate Programme.docx](#)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 28 August 2025 13:34
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: HEIW Physician Associate Programme

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached a letter sent on behalf of [REDACTED] regarding HEIW Physician Associate Programme.

Cofion caredig | Kind Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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28 August 2025

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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Re: Physician Associate Pre-registration Programme

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Following engagement HEIW can confirm that we will pause commissioning education for this programme in academic year 2026-27. We will work in collaboration with you to discuss how costs can be covered during this period.

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Your Sincerely

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]



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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd Cymru (AaGIC) | Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW)



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Freedom of Information request - PA Wales Course Suspension and 2026 Graduate Prospects.
Date: 15 October 2025 09:01:16

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 October 2025 17:20
To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Freedom of Information request - PA Wales Course Suspension and 2026 Graduate Prospects.

Message that has gone out to students....

From the NHS Wales Physician Associate Recruitment Group

Dear Colleague,

We are contacting you regarding the Physician Associate (PA) Student Streamlining 2025 recruitment process.

Following extensive discussions between HEIW, University and Health Board representatives, we regret to inform you that this year's Student Streamlining recruitment process 2025 is unable to go ahead due to the lack of vacancies provided by Health Boards in Wales.

We understand that this is not the news you were hoping for and the disappointment this may cause, however we continue to work across NHS Wales to encourage the creation of PA roles. Health Boards who may be able to develop PA roles, have been advised to recruit to them in the usual manner, through NHS jobs and the Trac system. Colleagues in the universities are working with HEIW and health boards to establish support for PAs who have not found employment, with opportunities to maintain knowledge and clinical skills.

Consistent with the terms and conditions of the bursary, graduate PAs who have previously been unsuccessful in securing employment in NHS Wales have been released from the bursary tie in and have not been expected to repay the NHS bursary.

If you have any queries regarding your bursary, please contact the HEIW Bursary team:
HEIW.Bursary@wales.nhs.uk

We appreciate this is a very challenging and worrying time for you. Please be assured that we are and will continue to work across NHS Wales to identify roles and provide you with ongoing support opportunities where practical and possible. If you're finding things difficult in any way, we would encourage you to seek support. Whether it's your manager, colleague, university, professional or external body, there's support available. You may find the following organisations and websites useful for information, guidance, and support.

- Colleague health and wellbeing - HEIW
- College of Medical Associate Professionals (CMAPS) Home - CMAPS
- Canopi Canopi