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

Guidance for Return to Practice for:

- Allied Health Professionals (AHPs)
- Biomedical Science Professionals
- Clinical Science Professionals
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs)
- Radiographers

1. Document History

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Date	Version	Reviewer Name	Reviewer Title
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1. Return to Practice (RTP)

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) are responsible for commissioning education and training to meet the needs of the NHS in Wales. The RTP course for nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses (SCPHN) and return to practice funding for AHPs, Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs), Radiographers, Biomedical Scientists and Clinical Scientists, fall within this remit.

Acting on behalf of the Welsh Government, HEIW annually commissions places on return to practice programmes for Welsh domiciled* nurses, midwives and SCPHNs, and provides financial support for Welsh domiciled* AHP and healthcare science professional returners that previously held HCPC registration. Each year the number of commissioned places and financial support provided is informed by local recruitment priorities based on workforce need. The notes which follow explain the detailed arrangements for the funding of this training on an all-Wales basis. For healthcare science professionals that do not require HCPC registration for their role, it remains the responsibility of Health Boards/Trusts to support appropriate return to practice. HEIW is continuing to review its position with regard to PSA accredited registers.

*Welsh domiciled means a permanent address in Wales.

2. AHPs, Biomedical Science Professionals, Clinical Science Professionals, ODPs and Radiographers, returning to the HCPC register

In order to maintain registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), practitioners must make a professional declaration every two years to stay registered, this requires registrants to confirm:

- Continued practise in the profession since last registration; or
- Not practised in the profession since last registration but have met the HCPC's returning to practice requirements.

and

- Continued to meet the HCPC's standards of proficiency for the safe and effective practice of the profession
- Have not had any change relating to good character
- Have not had any change relating to health which may affect the ability to practice safely and effectively;
- Continued to meet the HCPC's standards for continuing professional development
- Have professional indemnity arrangements in place providing appropriate cover or if not currently practicing understand the requirement to have one in place when returning to practice

If HCPC registration has lapsed for any reason an application has to be made to the HCPC for readmission. The full process of how to apply for readmission can be found on the HCPC website

[Our requirements if you are returning to practice | \(HCPC-uk.org\)](#)

The minimum HCPC requirement for returning to practice to update knowledge and skills are:

- 0 to 2 years out of practice – no requirements
- 2 to 5 years out of practice – 30 days of updating
- 5 or more years out of practice – 60 days of updating

HCPC advise: 1 day to be equivalent to 7 hours

There is no centralised formal higher education institute return to practice course for HCPC registrants in Wales. The process is self-directed and managed locally by Heads of Departments within Health Boards/Trusts, who arrange updating activities to meet the HCPC standards with the returner. Returners must secure a placement and management support for the duration of their period of updating. HEIW cannot arrange placements for returners. If the placement depends on seeking additional funding, agreement must be sought from HEIW via the Health Board/Trust manager, before commencing updating activities.

Agreement should be obtained by emailing heiw.edcommissioning@wales.nhs.uk with the following information:

- Name of returner
- Name of manager
- Organisation they will be based at for the duration of their placement
- Start and anticipated end date of placement
- Whether the returner has previously either:
 - Received part of, or the full bursary award, or
 - Received the full bursary award but their registration has now expired, and they are no longer on the register

3. NHS Wales RTP Bursary arrangements for AHPs, Biomedical Science Professionals, Clinical Science Professionals, ODPs and Radiographers returning to the HCPC register

Returners are eligible to receive a bursary payment of up to £1000, which can be used to purchase any education, agreed with their supervising Head of Department. Funds are to be paid to the returner by the Health Board/Trust in which the supervised practice is taking place. Health Boards/Trusts are required to raise recharges/invoices for funds to be paid to the returner. These can be sent directly to nwssp_psu_p2p@wales.nhs.uk.

Bursary payments are not subject to tax and National Insurance deductions unless the returner is also employed by the NHS Health Board/ Trust in another capacity. Only course fees are funded, no additional expenses can be claimed.

Returners who have been awarded the RTP bursary can also apply for assistance with childcare costs, please see below.

Individuals who are not currently working within healthcare:

Are eligible to receive a flat-rate non-means tested bursary of £500 per 30 days of updating required. i.) For individuals 2 to 5 years out of practice – 30 days of updating required are eligible to receive a single payment of £500. ii) For individuals 5 or more years out of practice – 60 days of updating required are eligible to receive two payments of £500

This amount should be paid to the returner monthly by the Health Board/ Trust placement provider. Health Boards/ Trusts are required to raise invoices for the bursary instalments. These can be sent directly to HEIW finance at nwssp_psu_p2p@wales.nhs.uk and should detail the name of the student, their respective Health Board/Trust and the amount paid.

Bursary payments are not subject to tax and National Insurance deductions.

Individuals who are currently employed as a support worker either within the NHS or Social Care within Wales:

Are eligible to receive their current salary, pro rata (up to the equivalent of Agenda for Change (AFC) Band 4) for the duration of the programme. Students must discuss with their managers and obtain the consent of their employers prior to applying for a place on the programme.

Students who have been awarded a place on a RTP course can also apply for assistance with childcare costs, please see below.

4. Nurses, Midwives and SCPHNs returning to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) register

In order to maintain registration with the NMC nurses, midwives and SCPHNs need to complete the NMC Revalidation Process. Revalidation is the process that all nurses and midwives in the UK need to follow to maintain their registration with the NMC.

Every three years in order to re-register/revalidate as live on the register for the next three years, those on the register have to demonstrate the following:

- 450 practice hours, or 900 if renewing two registrations (for example as both a nurse and midwife)
- 35 hours of CPD including 20 hours of participatory learning
- Five pieces of practice-related feedback

- Five written reflective accounts
- Reflective discussion
- Health and character declaration
- Professional indemnity arrangement
- Confirmation

The revalidation process is explained in full on the NMC website [Revalidation - The Nursing and Midwifery Council \(NMC.org.uk\)](https://www.nmc.org.uk/revalidation). The return to practice programme is not intended to be used as a mechanism for individuals to achieve requirements of revalidation.

If NMC registration has lapsed for any reason an application has to be made to the NMC for readmission. The full process of how to apply for readmission can be found on the NMC website

[Apply for readmission - The Nursing and Midwifery Council \(NMC.org.uk\)](https://www.nmc.org.uk/readmission)

Nurses and midwives seeking readmission to the register, who have practised for fewer than 750 hours in the previous five years, or 450 hours in the three years before their application for readmission to the register, must either:

- successfully complete an NMC approved return to practice programme (benchmarked against recognition of applicants' prior learning) or
- pass an NMC test of competence to be eligible to apply for readmission to the register.

This must be via the Health Board/Trust Manager. Agreement should be obtained by emailing heiw.edcommissioning@wales.nhs.uk with the following information:

- Name of returner
- Name of Manager
- Organisation they will be based at for the duration of their placement
- Start and anticipated end date of placement
- Whether the returner has previously either:
 - Received part of, or the full bursary award or
 - Received the full bursary award but their registration has now expired and they are no longer on the register

Nursing, midwifery and SCPHN return to practice: commissioning

Each education provider will be notified of the commissioned places on each course by the start of the academic year. If additional places are required, the education provider must obtain agreement from, HEIW before recruiting to these additional places.

Nursing, midwifery and SCPHN return to practice course fees

HEIW will support Welsh domiciled* individuals to gain readmission to the NMC register.

Confirmation on whether the returner is eligible for funding should **only** be sought from, HEIW in the following circumstances.

If the returner has previously, either:

- Started and/or completed a return to practice course **or**
- Previously completed a return to practice course but their registration has now relapsed, and they are no longer on the NMC register.

In these instances, education providers must contact, HEIW to confirm whether the returner is entitled to further funding for their fees and bursary before offering an NHS Wales place to the student. Each returner will be assessed on an individual basis.

Course fees will be paid directly to the course provider by HEIW on receipt of an invoice from the education provider. The invoice should detail the number of students who commenced the programme, within the agreed commissioned number, at the agreed fee.

The Education Providers are required to provide the following information as a matter of priority following commencement of the course:

- List the names of those starting the course under their respective Health Board/Trust, and the start date of the course and send this to: etfinance.heiw@wales.nhs.uk and
- Arrange for an invoice for the course fees to be sent to HEIW Finance at: nwssp_psu_p2p@wales.nhs.uk.

This is to facilitate accurate budget monitoring, future planning and to ensure that any unused places can be reallocated.

*Welsh domiciled means a permanent address in Wales.

5. NHS Wales RTP Bursary arrangements for Nurses, Midwives and SCPHNs returning to the NMC register

Individuals who are not currently working within healthcare:

Are eligible to receive a flat-rate non-means tested bursary of £3,000 (approximately £500, paid monthly) for the duration of the RTP programme.

This amount should be paid to the returner monthly by the Education Provider. The Education Providers are required to raise invoices for the bursary instalments. These can be sent directly to HEIW finance at nwssp_psu_p2p@wales.nhs.uk and should detail the name of the student, their respective Health Board/Trust and the amount paid.

Bursary payments are not subject to tax and National Insurance deductions.

Individuals who are currently employed as a support worker either within the NHS or Social Care within Wales:

Are eligible to receive their current salary, pro rata, (up to the equivalent of AFC Band 4) for the duration of the programme. Students must discuss with their managers and obtain the consent of their employers prior to applying for a place on the programme.

Students who have been awarded a place on a RTP course can also apply for assistance with childcare costs, please see below.

6. Assistance with Childcare Costs

NHS Wales Health Boards/ Trusts and Education Providers strive to provide flexible and parttime training options that are sensitive to the circumstances of returners who are parents.

Returners from all professions referenced within this document can apply for means-tested assistance with childcare costs incurred whilst attending placements and refresher training. Payments will only be made on production of relevant receipts from registered or approved childcare services.

Payments will be managed by the NHS Wales Student Awards Services. The childcare allowance is means-tested and is based on 85% of the actual registered or approved childcare costs up to a maximum amount.

Application for assistance with childcare costs, for returners who have secured NHS Wales funding, should be made directly by emailing the student awards service abm.sas@wales.nhs.uk with the following information:

- Institution studying at
- Start date of course.
- Home Address
- Contact telephone number

Student Awards Services manage the process and liaise directly with the returner. Returners are required to apply for childcare costs before the commencement of their course as childcare allowance cannot be claimed for costs incurred before the course start date.

If you have any queries or need further explanation then please contact your Programme Lead, or email etfinance.heiw@wales.nhs.uk or heiw.edcommissioning@wales.nhs.uk.