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# **Extra allowances**

**for**

# **All NHS funded students**

**with children**

**and/or**

**a spouse or partner**

**Information produced by the  
Student Advice team,  
Student Support Centre  
Cardiff University**

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**The information in this guide is applicable to NHS Funded students in - Nursing & Midwifery and Healthcare Studies – (BSc Occupational Therapy, BSc Physiotherapy, BSc Radiography, BSc Radiotherapy & Oncology and Dental Therapy & Hygiene Diploma). The rates of Allowances are the expected rates for 2011/12.**

### **Medicine & Dentistry students**

**If you have been funded in previous years by your 'Student Finance' Service or LEA then you would usually be eligible to apply for NHS Funding in the 5<sup>th</sup> Year of your course. If you are on the Medicine Graduate Entry scheme you would usually be eligible for NHS Funding from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year of the scheme.**

# **Dependants' Allowances**

In addition to your basic NHS Bursary, if you have children or an adult in your household who are financially dependent on you whilst you study, you can also apply for Dependents' Allowances.

Dependents' Allowances are means-tested, so how much you qualify to receive will depend on an assessment of your household income (See page 9).

You can apply for Dependents' Allowances for each person who is financially dependent on you.

## **How much are Dependants' Allowances?**

The maximum annual rates of Dependants' Allowances are -

	<b>Nursing &amp; Midwifery</b>	<b>Healthcare Studies</b>	<b>*Medicine &amp; Dentistry</b>
Adult dependent, or first child if no adult dependent	£2, 238	£2,640	£2,640
Other dependants	£539 each	£539 each	*£539

\*Medicine & Dentistry – If you started at University prior to September 2007 ie your course started before this date, you will be treated as an 'existing student' for these allowances. This will only affect the allowance for 'other dependants'. For each other dependant child the allowance will range from £552 (for each child under 11) to £2,113 (for each child aged 18 or over). For further details contact a Student Adviser at the Student Support Centre.

## **How to apply for Dependants' Allowances**

- **Nursing & Midwifery students**

The School of Nursing & Midwifery Finance Office will assess if you qualify for Dependants' Allowances. When you receive an offer of a place on the course you will be informed about the application process.

- **Healthcare Studies students**

You apply directly to the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit at the same time as you apply for your NHS Basic Bursary. The Awards Unit will send you the appropriate application form. The NHS Wales Student Awards Unit will assess if you qualify for Dependants Allowances.

- **Medicine & Dentistry**

If you were living in Wales prior to starting your course you apply to the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit. If you were living in England prior to the start of your course you apply to the NHSBSA in England. Contact details are on page 17. You apply for Dependants Allowances at the same time as you apply for your NHS Basic Bursary.

**All applicants** applying for the Dependants Allowances will be asked for evidence of your family circumstances and income such as birth certificates of children, marriage certificate or if not married proof that your partner lives with you, OR proof of your single status.

Council tax letters, utility bills, tax credit assessments, proof of child benefit payments are useful forms of evidence.

You will also be asked for evidence of your household income.

## **How is the Allowance paid?**

It is paid to you via Cardiff University at the same time as your NHS Basic Bursary which is usually paid in equal monthly instalments.

# **Parents Learning Allowance**

The Parents Learning Allowance is a non-repayable allowance to help with some course-related costs such as travel to attend university, books, stationery, photocopying and equipment as well as some help towards some costs of caring for children such as school related expenses.

All students with children who are financially dependent on them will be considered for this allowance. (See page 9)

It is means tested against household income.

## **How much is the Allowance?**

The maximum annual rate of Parents Learning Allowance (PLA) is as follows. The amount of Allowance does not depend on how many dependent children you have.

<b>Nursing &amp; Midwifery students</b>	<b>Healthcare Studies students</b>	<b>*Medicine &amp; Dentistry</b>
£1,104	£1,303	£1,303

\*Medicine & Dentistry – The PLA was introduced in September 2007. If you started your course prior to this date you will not be eligible for the PLA. However, if you are single parent you will be eligible to apply for a Single Parent Addition of £1,303.

## **How to apply for the Allowance**

The Parents Learning Allowance will be assessed in the same way and at the same time as the assessment for Dependents' Allowances.

## **How is the Allowance paid?**

It should be paid to you via Cardiff University at the same time as your NHS Basic Bursary.

# **The Childcare Allowance**

If you expect to incur registered childcare costs the main source of assistance will probably be the NHS Childcare Allowance.

The Childcare Allowance is for registered childcare only. If you expect to incur non-registered childcare costs and there are good reasons for this you have the option to apply to the Financial Contingency Fund, Cardiff University. For further information contact a Student Adviser, Student Support Centre.

## **How much is the Allowance?**

- **For one child:**

The allowance is up to 85% of actual costs throughout the year including vacations. However, the maximum amount of allowance that will be paid for one child is £126.65 per week.

- **For two or more children:**

The allowance is up to 85% of actual costs throughout the year including the vacations. The maximum amount of allowance that would be paid for two children or more is £209.95 per week.

You will be expected to make up the remaining 15% or more of the costs yourself either from your Bursary, Benefit or tax credit income or from your own / family's earnings or savings. You can also apply for help from the University Financial Contingency Fund.

The Childcare Allowance can be paid to help with childcare costs during the University vacations.

You cannot get the Childcare Allowance and the childcare element of Working Tax Credit (WTC) at the same time. To claim help with childcare via WTC as a couple you both need to be in paid employment. Time on placements is not treated as paid employment.

## How to apply for the Childcare Allowance

When you apply for the NHS Bursary you will need to ask for a Childcare Allowance application form. Forms will be distributed on request at this time.

**Nursing & Midwifery students** – you apply via the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit but you will need to get your application signed by the School of Nursing & Midwifery Finance Office to confirm your enrolment on the course.

**All Healthcare Studies students** – you apply directly to the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit.

**Medicine & Dentistry students** – if you lived in Wales prior to starting your course you need to apply via the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit. If you lived in England prior to the start of your course you need to apply via the NHSBSA (See page 17).

When your application has been assessed the relevant NHS Awards Unit will notify you of your entitlement to the Childcare Allowance.

## How the Childcare Allowance works

At the beginning of the academic year the NHS will ask you to estimate your childcare costs for the year. Your childcare provider/s will be asked to sign the Childcare Allowance application form as confirmation of the arrangement. Your Allowance will be based on this estimate. The NHS will advise Cardiff University of your total Childcare Allowance and Cardiff University will pay you the Allowance

Often students on health profession courses find that their study commitments change during the year as they move from classroom based learning to clinical placements. If your childcare provider cannot be flexible you may need to pay for the maximum amount of childcare required even though sometimes you do not need this. The Childcare Allowance will usually apply to the contracted arrangement.

If your childcare provider is able to be flexible your weekly childcare costs may differ throughout the course. This means that some months you will receive a greater Childcare Allowance than you need for that month, in which case you will need to save it for the months in which your childcare may be greater.

At regular intervals during the year you will be asked to provide receipts for the childcare you have paid for. If these receipts show that you have had more or less registered childcare than you originally estimated, your Childcare Allowance will be recalculated accordingly. Future payments may increase or decrease as appropriate to account for any recalculation.

We recommend that you:

- Take a photocopy of your childcare estimates for the year before you return the form to the NHS.
- Throughout the year, regularly check your actual spending on childcare costs against what you estimated you would spend. Keep a record of what you actually pay for registered childcare.
- Students often use the option of transferring their childcare allowance each month into a separate account as this may make it easier to manage.
- Ask for a receipt every time you make a payment to your childcare provider and keep them to hand until the NHS asks for them.
- If your circumstances change during the year (e.g. you change childcare providers, or you are paying less / more for childcare than you anticipated etc.) inform the NHS Wales Student Awards Unit immediately and keep a record of your communication with them.

## **How is the Allowance paid?**

It is paid into your bank account via Cardiff University usually in instalments.

# **Will I qualify for extra allowances?**

The basic principle is that your **'household net income'**, is compared to the maximum amount of annual Dependents' Allowances, Parents Learning Allowance and estimated registered Childcare costs applicable to your family.

After disregards and deductions if the household income that is left is less than the maximum annual Extra Allowances and estimated registered Childcare costs, applicable to your family, you would be entitled to the difference in extra support. (See overleaf)

## **'Household net income' includes**

- The NET salary of a spouse or partner
- Other taxable income after tax has been deducted

For a full list of what counts as taxable income go to [www.adviceguide.org.uk/](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/) and look up under 'tax'.

## **The following is deducted or disregarded**

- Rent or mortgage up to £6000 p.a. is deducted from income
- For each member of your family (not including you as the student) £933 is deducted for Nursing & Midwifery students and £1225 for Healthcare, Medicine & Dentistry students.
- Employees pension contributions are deducted
- Life assurance payments are deducted
  
- Student support is disregarded
- Your earnings as a student is disregarded
- Tax Credits paid for you as the student are disregarded but Tax Credits for a spouse or partner, if you live as a couple, are included as income in the assessment
- Most benefits are disregarded

Note. Earnings replacement benefits such as Incapacity Benefit (claimed since 1995), Employment & Support Allowance (Contribution based) and Carers' Allowance count as a taxable income. However, by taking into account the above deductions it may mean that income from these sources will not affect entitlement to extra allowances.

## Who usually qualifies for full entitlement?

**Most single parents** who depend on a combination of student funding, tax credits, benefits and / or part-time work should qualify for the full range of Extra Allowances.

**Students with a spouse or partner not in paid employment.** You are likely to qualify for the full range of Extra Allowances if you expect to rely solely on student funding, Child Tax Credit (if applicable), your part-time earnings as a student and either the benefits or the part-time earnings of a spouse or partner if these are equivalent to benefits. (Note: Proof of income will be required for the assessment)

## Who may qualify to partial entitlement?

Partial entitlement to extra allowances is likely if the following apply to your household –

- Your household receives Working Tax Credit and
- You have children and
- Your rent or mortgage costs are £6,000 or more p.a.

Students in this position may not qualify for Dependants' Allowances but may receive a full or partial Childcare Allowance depending on the level of household income and estimated registered childcare costs.

## Who would not usually qualify?

For students without children this is likely to apply if you live with a spouse or partner in paid work. It is also likely to apply if you live with a spouse or partner, and you have children, and the earnings of your spouse or partner are above the threshold to qualify for Working Tax Credit (ie you qualify for Child Tax Credit only).

However, this can vary significantly depending on individual family circumstances (the amount your spouse/partner earns, the number of children in your household, how much registered childcare costs you expect to incur etc.) so it is always worth checking to see if you may be entitled.

# **Social Security Benefits**

Students with dependants are eligible to claim benefits as follows.

- **On grounds of personal circumstances**

Personal circumstances usually include:

- Disability
- Long-term sickness and incapacity for work
- Expecting a baby (Maternity benefits)

- **On grounds of low income**

These benefits are means tested and are usually -

- Income Support
- Housing Benefit (if you pay rent)
- Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)

Note: Eligibility to claim JSA is usually restricted to the spouse/partner of a student, single parent students in the summer vacation or students who are waiting to return to study after a period of interruption to study.

## **How student funding is treated for benefits**

With the exception of a disregard for some course related expenses (travel & books) the student funding that you receive including Dependants' Allowances is treated as income for benefits purposes.

The Childcare Allowance and the PLA are disregarded in full.

If you received means-tested benefits prior to your course the basic principle is that student funding for living costs should replace some or all of these benefits. The following pages provide a guide as to what benefits you may be entitled to claim according to your household circumstances.

Additional funding via the University (Financial Contingency Fund grant) does not usually affect benefits.

## Students with a non student spouse/partner

Your spouse or partner can claim or continue to claim benefits in his/her own right on the grounds of disability and/or incapacity for work while you are at University (e.g. DLA, Incapacity Benefit or Employment & Support Allowance).

If your spouse or partner is not in paid employment he/she may be able to claim Income Support or JSA (Income based) on grounds of low income or as an addition to a disability or incapacity for work claim. You and if applicable your children could be included in the claim.

However, for means-tested benefits most of your student funding will be taken into account to determine entitlement. In practice this usually means that your student funding would be over the threshold to qualify for Income Support and JSA (Income based) but there may be an entitlement to some Housing Benefit if you pay rent. In this situation your spouse or partner should make the claim.

## Student couple

If you pay rent then as a couple you are eligible to claim Housing Benefit throughout the year **but** only if either of you is responsible for a child.

If you are on a course that incorporates a summer vacation and your student funding is paid for less than 12 months of the year it may be possible for you or your partner/spouse to claim the following in the vacation period.

- Income Support in the summer vacation **but** only if either of you is disabled or treated as incapable of work **and** you are responsible for a child.
- Job Seekers Allowance (Income Based) in the summer vacation if you or your partner/spouse are not in paid employment **and** either of you is responsible for a child.

In practice for any period that you actually receive student funding it is likely that you would not qualify for Income Support or JSA (IB) but you may qualify for some Housing Benefit if you pay rent.

## Single students caring for children

You are eligible to claim benefits because you have children. However, because most of your student funding counts as income your entitlement to means tested benefits is likely to be affected.

If your course incorporates a summer vacation, and student funding is paid for less than 12 months of the year, it may be possible to claim Income Support, if you are responsible for a child under 7, or JSA (Income based) in the summer vacation. The Government proposed to change the conditions for Income Support to allow single parent full-time students with a child under 16 to claim Income Support in the summer vacation but this has yet to be incorporated into law.

Nursing & Midwifery single parent students have been able to claim Housing Benefit between £20 and £85 per week. The lower entitlement is usually for Council or Housing Association rents and the higher entitlement is usually for private rented properties.

Healthcare Studies single parent students have also been able to claim housing benefit because overall your student funding is usually less than for Nursing & Midwifery students and approx. 2 thirds of your student loan is disregarded as income.

If you are in paid work while studying then your entitlement to Housing Benefit would be reduced. Other income such as Child Benefit, Maintenance payments and some Disability Benefits (E.g. DLA) are disregarded in full.

If you qualify for housing benefit it can be claimed throughout the year.

**If you'd like to find out if you are likely to qualify for benefits or continue to receive certain benefits contact a Student Adviser, Student Support Centre – See page 16**

# **Tax Credits**

There are 2 types of tax credit - **Child Tax Credit** and **Working Tax Credit**.

## **Child Tax Credit**

All students who care for children are eligible to claim Child Tax Credit. It is paid in addition to Child Benefit (Family allowance) and you don't have to be working to claim Child Tax Credit.

Child Tax Credit has, for most claimants, replaced the child allowance components of means-tested benefits such as income support.

The amount of Child Tax Credit that you qualify for depends on your household income. If as a household you have taxable income of less than £15,860 gross per year you should qualify for the maximum amount.

If you claim Child Tax Credit for the whole year the maximum amount is a £2,555 child element per child and a single £545 family element. If you have a child under 1 year old you should qualify for an additional baby element of £545. If you have a disabled child you should qualify for an extra amount.

If you claim Child Tax Credit part the way through the tax year (April to April) it will be calculated on a pro-rata basis.

Child Tax Credit is usually paid every four weeks and it should continue to be paid all year round.

## **Free School Meals**

If you qualify for maximum Child Tax Credit this should be a passport to free school meals. You need to apply via the LEA responsible for the school your child attends. Go to [www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) and follow links via 'education and learning' and 'schools' or contact the LEA or a Student Adviser at the Student Support Centre for further information.

## Working Tax Credit

All students are eligible to apply for Working Tax Credit (WTC) if any of the following apply –

- You care for a child & work 16 hours per week
- You are aged 25 or over & work 30 hours per week
- You have a disability that “puts you at a disadvantage in getting a job” and work 16 hours per week
- You are aged 50 or over and work 16 hours per week\*

(\*There are additional conditions under this category for more information go to <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits/> )

A spouse or partner has the option to make a claim and include the family if any of the above categories applies to him/her.

In each case the work must be expected to last at least 4 weeks when the claim is made for WTC. The amount of Working Tax Credit that you may be entitled to receive will depend on your household income.

Because you are a registered student your placements do not qualify as work for Working Tax Credit.

## How student funding is treated for tax credits

The only element of student funding that is treated as income for Tax Credits is the Dependants’ Allowance for an adult dependant. Dependants’ Allowances for children via the NHS Bursary scheme are disregarded in full.

Generally, student funding is not taxable income, so your individual “taxable income” whilst you are studying may be £0.00.

## **Further information and advice**

You have the option to contact a Student Adviser, Student Support Centre, Cardiff University

We often receive enquiries from prospective and current students who simply wish to check or clarify aspects about their funding as well as enquiries from students seeking specific advice about more complex funding issues.

**Basically, if you have any queries about student finance contact us. If we can't help we will probably know who could.**

<p>Student Support Centre (Heath Park Campus) 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Cardigan House University Hospital of Wales</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 029 2074 2070</p> <p><b>Email</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:studentsupportcentre@cardiff.ac.uk">studentsupportcentre@cardiff.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>Student Support Centre (Cathays Park Campus) 50 Park Place</p> <p><b>Telephone:</b> 029 2087 4844</p> <p><b>Email</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:studentsupportcentre@cardiff.ac.uk">studentsupportcentre@cardiff.ac.uk</a></p>
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# **Where to apply** **for NHS Bursary Extra Allowances**

## **Nursing & Midwifery Students**

The School of Nursing and Midwifery  
Finance Office  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room 713  
Eastgate House  
Newport Road  
Cardiff  
CF24 0AB

Telephone: (029) 2091 7713  
Email: [sonmsfinance@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:sonmsfinance@cardiff.ac.uk)

## **All Healthcare Studies students and Medicine & Dentistry students from Wales**

The NHS Student Awards Unit (Wales)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
14 Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

Telephone: (029) 2019 6167 (General enquiries)  
(Between 9 and 12 Monday to Friday)

Telephone: (029) 2019 6168 (Childcare Allowance enquiries)  
(Between 9 and 12 Monday to Friday)

## **Medicine & Dentistry students from England**

NHS Student Bursaries  
Hesketh House  
200-220 Broadway  
Fleetwood  
Lancashire  
FY7 8SS

[www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/)

General enquiries:

Telephone: 0845 358 6655

Childcare allowance enquiries:

[childcare@nhspa.gov.uk](mailto:childcare@nhspa.gov.uk)