

Chief Nursing Officer Directorate

E: CNOD_Education@gov.scot

Karen Watt
Chief Executive
Scottish Funding Council
Apex 2
97 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh
EH12 5HD

29 May 2024

Dear Ms Watt,

PRE REGISTRATION NURSING AND MIDWIFERY UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

This letter is to advise the Scottish Funding Council of the Scottish Government Health & Social Care Directorate's proposals on recommended intake targets for nursing and midwifery undergraduate programmes for academic year 2023/24.

Having considered all of the factors involved, Scottish Ministers previously determined that the overall intake for all pre-registration nursing and midwifery programmes should be maintained for three academic cycles so targets for AY24/25 will remain at the same levels as AY 2023/24 of **4,837** nursing and midwifery student places. The intake target is for students eligible for 'Home fee' status, rest of UK students and students from the Republic of Ireland. This is the final year of the previously agreed multi-year period of 3 years which was agreed to give stability to the Higher Education Institutions and taking into account capacity of our Board partners to manage student placements.

As you will be aware, targets for the past 2 years for controlled places on nursing and midwifery programmes have not been met and we have worked with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), the Council of Deans Health (Scotland) and individual institutions to negotiate more realistic targets on which funding will be based. For ease we have named the formal targets above as "stretch" and the negotiated targets as "soft". HEIs will be funded on actual recruitment, based on SFC's data collection with funded places adjusted in-year to reflect actual recruitment. I express my thanks to Duncan Condie and your wider team for supporting us in our discussions on this.

Recommended intake targets, by institution and fields of nursing and midwifery, are set out in the Annex. The only other change for AY24/25 is that Edinburgh Napier University (ENU) will not be allocated a new cohort for their Shortened Midwifery Programme and will have continuing students only – so their overall target for midwifery will be for the undergraduate programme only. The Chief Midwifery Officer has taken the decision to conclude the ENU shortened programme and January 2024 was therefore the last intake. SFC should continue to fund students who have commenced on the Shortened Midwifery Programme in AY 2023-24 or earlier.

It is our expectation that universities should make every effort to recruit to the soft targets in this letter however if they are able to exceed those, they will be funded in full and not subject to clawback for over recruitment as the “stretch” target is still unlikely to be met. HEI partners have of course expressed legitimate concerns around recruiting to the stretch targets and the risk of financial penalty.

Normally SFC would recover funds from universities who under-recruit eligible students against funded places by more than 3% and apply penalties to universities who exceed their consolidation number by more than 10%, subject to the consideration of any mitigating evidence presented by the university. SFC should monitor under-recruitment against the adjusted funded places, based on actual recruitment. Over recruitment at a 10% level is not expected but should that occur we would not seek to apply a penalty.

Subject to discussions with the SFC over the calculation of the fundable student population and confirmation of the funding for session 2024/25, we will transfer the appropriate level of funding required.

Although new rUK students will be applying for tuition fee and living cost loans from their respective home country, these students are included within the target intake numbers for 2024/25. rUK students who commenced from 2017-18 onwards should not be included in the fundable student population, and should not be funded through SFC allocations. The SFC should continue to monitor the overall fundable student population based on changes in rUK numbers in consultation with institutions. EU students not ordinarily resident in the UK starting their courses in the 2024/25 academic year are ineligible for funding and will be treated as international students. Republic of Ireland students coming to Scotland to study will also be ineligible for funding but will have access to a tuition fee loan from the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) of up to £9,250 each year.

Scottish domiciled students should apply to SAAS for their tuition fees, and the SFC should no longer fund nursing and midwifery at the gross teaching price. Continuing EU students and ‘Home’ students unable to access SAAS tuition fee support who commenced their studies in the 2020/21 academic year or earlier will continue to be funded by the SFC for both tuition fees and teaching grant until the completion of their programmes.

You will of course be aware that we have now seen two successive years in reduced applicants for nursing and midwifery and this is under scrutiny by the Cabinet Secretary for NHS Recovery, Health and Social Care and the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce. Additionally the recently published equal consideration data from UCAS has shown a further drop compared to this time last year. We are working with the Education subgroup of the Taskforce to finalise recommendations around part time learning, earn as you learn routes and apprenticeships for consideration by the Cabinet Secretary and we will continue our helpful dialogue with your team as these develop.

This letter is copied as per the copy list below. Please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss any aspect of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Jessica McPherson

Jessica McPherson
Unit Head, Education
Chief Nursing Officer Directorate

Copy List

University Principals, Heads of Schools of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Sciences
Convener, Council of Deans of Health (Scotland)
Chief Executive, NHS Education for Scotland
Director General Health and Social Care
Director General Education and Justice

Proposed Intake Targets including 'Stretch' and 'Soft' targets for Academic Year 2024/25

2024 Distributions	Adult	Adult (soft)	Mental Health	MH (soft)	Children & Young People	CYP (soft)	Learning Disability	LD (soft)	Midwifery	Midwifery (soft)	Total	Soft total	Intake target for 4 year Honours Degree (included in total)
Abertay University	0	0	78	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	78	78	78
Dundee University	420	258	112	65	57	57	0	0	0	0	589	380	0
Edinburgh University	64	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	64	50	64
Edinburgh Napier University	440	319	134	110	101	101	60	30	109	109	844	669	0
Glasgow University	55	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	45	55
Glasgow Caledonian University	518	518	110	110	103	103	98	98	0	0	829	829	71
Open University	86	99	88	60	6	5	8	7	0	0	188	171	0
Queen Margaret University	88	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	75	88
Robert Gordon University	281	130	80	23	55	55	0	0	81	81	497	289	43
Stirling University	285	195	104	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	389	265	62
University of the Highlands & Islands	118	90	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	138	110	0
University of the West of Scotland	777	675	190	210	0	0	0	0	111	111	1078	996	0
TOTALS	3132	2454	916	746	322	321	166	135	301	301	4837	3957	461