

University Intake Targets for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery AY 2025-26



University intake targets for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery AY 2025-26

Issue Date:	11 June 2025
Reference:	SFC/AN/17/2025
Summary:	Announcement of university intake targets for the controlled subject of Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education for Academic Year 2025-26.
FAO:	Principals / Chairs of Scotland's universities, and the general public.
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University intake targets for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery in AY 2025-26

Purpose

1. I am writing to announce the university intake targets for the controlled subject of Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education for Academic Year (AY) 2025-26.

Background

2. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) receives annual guidance from the Scottish Government's Chief Nursing Officer's (CNO) Directorate, providing recommended intakes for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education. The CNO Directorate's guidance for AY 2025-26 is provided as [Annex A](#).
3. From 2015-16, the guidance from the Scottish Government has provided SFC with university intake targets for all Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Education. This includes the 'three year' courses which are funded through a Scottish Government ring-fenced grant, Honours Nursing provision (referred to as 'four years honours'), and courses offered through the Open University in Scotland (OUIs).
4. In 2023, the CNO Directorate set a three-year intake target, covering the period AY 2023-24, AY 2024-25 and AY 2025-26. Although announcing a three-year plan, it was stated at that time that Ministers reserved the right to review and adjust intake targets should this be required.

Intake targets for AY 2025-26

5. **The overall intake target for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery in AY 2025-26, as recommended by the CNO Directorate, is 4,891 students;** which is an increase of 54 students from AY 2024-25. The intake target includes students with 'home fee' status, students from the rest of the UK (rUK), and students from the Republic of Ireland (RoI). Included in the target are 461 students that have been allocated to the seven universities delivering four-year honours provision. This is unchanged from last year.
6. In AY 2024-25, in recognition of the challenges universities face in recruiting to Nursing and Midwifery programmes, the CNO Directorate worked with NHS Education for Scotland (NES), the Council of Deans Health Scotland and individual institutions to introduce 'soft' targets which should be achievable for universities, as well as the existing targets which have been redefined as 'stretch' targets. A similar process is in place for AY 2025-26.
7. We have set out both the intake targets for AY 2025-26 and the 'soft' targets according to field of practice, as set out in the CNO's guidance. Universities should consider the

split of intakes between the four Nursing fields of practice and Midwifery when recruiting for AY 2025-26.

8. In AY 2021-22, SFC took over the funding of Pre-Registration Nursing and Midwifery at the Open University in Scotland (OUiS) from the Scottish Government. This will continue in AY 2025-26, with the Scottish Government providing the associated transfer of resource for SFC to allocate this funding directly to the OUiS.

European Union students

9. As a result of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union (EU) and the transitional period ending in January 2021, EU students without 'home fee' status - starting their courses in AY 2025-26 - are not eligible for SFC funding. RoI students will also be ineligible for funding but will have access to a tuition fee loan via Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) of up to £9,535 each year. Continuing EU students (who commenced their studies prior to AY 2021-22) will continue to receive SFC funding.

Indexing of Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery students

10. In addition to SFC's data collections, universities are also required to index Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery students with NES.
11. In response to concerns regarding the consistency of data submitted to NES and SFC, a 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) document is attached as [Annex B](#).
12. This document includes information on intake targets, funded student places, SFC's consolidation number, and when students should be indexed with NES.

Tuition fees

13. From AY 2021-22, tuition fees for Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery were administered in a similar manner to other programmes and this will continue in AY 2025-26.
14. Universities can claim tuition fee support, through SFC's Fee Anomalies grant, for students who commenced their Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery studies prior to the beginning of AY 2021-22, with no expectation of having to pay tuition fees and who are unable to access tuition fee support through SAAS. This may include EU students who commenced their studies prior to the beginning of AY 2021-22 and are on Honours courses where universities previously invoiced the Scottish Government directly.

Funded student places

15. [The University Final Funding Allocations for AY 2025-26](#) were published on 29 May 2025 and set out the initial funded student places for Nursing and Midwifery, based on the

‘stretch’ targets. As in AY 2024-25, it is our intention to adjust funded places in-year to reflect actual intakes, above or below the targets. It is our expectation that universities will make every effort to achieve the ‘soft’ targets set out in this announcement. Should any university recruit beyond the ‘soft’ target, they will be funded in full. The process for adjusting funded places in-year is set out below:

- SFC has modelled funded places based on the ‘stretch’ targets published in this announcement.
 - These funded places were set out in our [Final Funding Allocations](#) publication.
- SFC will adjust the funded places and consolidation number, in-year, to reflect universities’ actual recruitment of Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery students.
 - Funded places and funding will be adjusted for recruitment both below and above the existing targets (up to a maximum of the sector intake target).
- Actual recruitment will be based on an additional SFC data collection - ‘Early Intakes Collection’.
- SFC will write to universities to confirm the revised funded places, based on actual recruitment, before the end of December 2025.

Under and over recruitment

16. For AY 2025-26, SFC will recover funds from universities that under-enrol students eligible for funding against the adjusted funded places (based on actual recruitment), with a tolerance threshold of 3%. We will not apply financial penalties to universities who recruit above their consolidation number.

Further information

17. Please contact Duncan Condie, Senior Funding Policy Officer, Finance Directorate, tel: 0131 313 6671, email: dcondie@sfc.ac.uk.

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Acting Director of Finance

Table 1: Pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery Intake Targets for AY 2025-26

	Adult (stretch)	Adult (soft)	Mental Health (stretch)	Mental Health (soft)	Children & Young People (stretch)	Children & Young People (soft)	Learning Disability (stretch)	Learning Disability (soft)	Midwifery (stretch)	Midwifery (soft)	Total (stretch)	Total (soft)	Intake target for 4-year Honours Degree (included in total)
Abertay University	0	0	78	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	78	55	78
Dundee University	420	290	112	60	57	57	0	0	0	0	589	407	0
Edinburgh University	64	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	64	45	64
Edinburgh Napier University	440	250	134	90	101	101	60	28	101	101	836	570	0
Glasgow University	55	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	42	55
Glasgow Caledonian University	518	518	110	110	103	103	98	98	0	0	829	829	71
Open University	179	154	60	55	4	4	7	7	0	0	250	220	0
Queen Margaret University	88	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	75	88
Robert Gordon University	281	200	80	40	55	55	0	0	81	81	497	376	43
Stirling University	285	200	104	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	389	270	62
University of the Highlands & Islands	118	80	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	138	100	0
University of the West of Scotland	777	675	190	210	0	0	0	0	111	111	1,078	996	0
TOTAL	3,225	2,529	888	710	320	320	165	133	293	293	4,891	3,985	461

