



Application for Sponsorship

Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives Scheme

HSE HR Circular 40/2020 (Appendix 2)

Please note if all mandatory fields highlighted with a red border are not completed the form cannot be submitted by the Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Service Manager – Should you have any queries regarding completion of this form please email: PHSEScheme@hse.ie

Please do not copy and paste onto this form.

Closing Date: Please see ONMSD Website for closing date <https://healthservice.hse.ie/about-us/onmsd/education-and-continuous-professional-development/cpd-for-nurses-and-midwives/onmsd-sponsorship-schemes/public-health-service-employees.html>. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

This Sponsorship Scheme is available to employees in the Irish Public Health Services currently encompassed under the support services grades such as Health Care Assistants/Multi Task Attendants who are involved in the direct delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context.

The Applicant must:

- Have two consecutive years relevant service as an employee in the Irish public health service within the last five years on the 1st day of January of the year in which they apply for sponsorship. (Relevant service is defined as being involved in the direct delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context).
- Be employed as a permanent employee on a full-time or part-time basis. Where employed on a part-time basis, they must have been working an average of not less than 15 hours per week.
- Have a satisfactory service record and fulfil the relevant service requirement. This must be verified by the applicant's employer on the sponsorship application.
- Qualify as a Mature Code Applicant on 1st January in the year in which they apply for a place on the pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery Degree Programme under the system operated by the Central Applications Office (CAO) on behalf of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).
- Have applied for a nursing/midwifery degree programme through the CAO in the area of care in which their employing agency is involved in delivering i.e. General Nursing or General and Children's Nursing (Integrated) or Intellectual Disability Nursing or Mental Health Nursing or Midwifery.
- Undertake and successfully pass the written assessment test administered by the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI).

The sponsorship scheme is not available to:

- Employees who are not directly involved in the delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context.
- Employees who have deferred acceptance of a CAO place on a pre-registration nursing/midwifery degree programme from a previous year.
- Employees who have withdrawn from a pre-registration nursing/midwifery education programme within the five-year period immediately preceding their application for sponsorship.

- Employees within a public health service whose service do not employ nurses and midwives within their approved staffing complement.
- Agency staff or those employed in Section 39 organisations, private hospitals, private nursing homes or GP practices.
- Persons who are currently undertaking a pre-registration nursing/midwifery degree programme.
- Non-EU/EEA applicants who do not have authorization to work permanently in the state.

Data Protection Statement

The Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) require personal data included in the application for the following reasons:

- To enable a decision to be made on your application in line with the relevant HSE HR Circular 40/2020
- To process payments to be made to your identified education provider and current employer in respect of a successful funding support application
- To maintain records that demonstrates compliance with HSE National Financial Regulations <http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/Resources/Financial%20Regulations/> and HSE Record Retention Policy.

NMPDU employees involved in the application process will have access to the information you provide and will only contact you or your line manager in relation to your application for funding support. Your data (except data identified below) will not be shared with third parties.

Data that will be shared with third parties

Agency/Body	Purpose	Information exchanged
Higher Education Institutions	To verify your identity when processing registration fee/student contribution with the third party/identified education provider.	Surname, First Name, Maiden Name, Student ID No., Course Title.
Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director	To facilitate payment of salary to employer while undertaking the nursing/midwifery degree programme.	Surname, First Name, Work Address, HSE Administrative Area, Employee Grade, Employee No. Current, Salary Point on Salary Scale, Increment Date, Course Title.
Your Regional NMPDU	For administration of registration fee/student contribution fee and follow up of sponsorship agreement.	Application Form, CAO Offer, Service Commitment Form, Salary/Incremental Details, Correspondence in relation to sponsorship application.

Data will be held for the period of time recommended in the HSE National Financial Regulations and HSE Record Retention Policy.

Please tick this box to indicate that you have read, understand and agree to your data being used for the reasons outlined in the above Data Protection Statement.

Guidelines on Application Process

Step 1: Download the Application Form to your computer/device to enable completion and submission. Please use the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader software when completing the form
<https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Step 2: Submit the completed Application Form to your Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Service Manager

Step 3: Submit the results of your NMBI Nursing Assessment Test Results to **PHSEScheme@hse.ie**

Step 4: Immediately, submit your CAO offer A when received to **PHSEScheme@hse.ie**

Closing Date: Please see ONMSD Website for closing date <https://healthservice.hse.ie/about-us/onmsd/education-and-continuous-professional-development/cpd-for-nurses-and-midwives/onmsd-mentorship-schemes/public-health-service-employees.html>. Applications received after this date will not be considered

Application for Sponsorship

Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives Scheme

HSE HR Circular 40/2020

Section 1: Eligibility Criteria

If you answer **NO** to 1.1, or **YES** to 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 your application will be deemed ineligible

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.1. Do you qualify as a Mature Code Applicant for a place on the pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery Degree Programme under the system operated by the Central Applications Office (CAO) on behalf of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 1.2. Are you currently undertaking a pre-registration nursing/midwifery education programme? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 1.3. Have you withdrawn from a pre-registration nursing/midwifery education programme within the five-year period immediately preceding this application for sponsorship? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |
| 1.4. Are you applying using a deferred place on a pre-registration nursing/midwifery education programme from a previous year? | Yes <input type="radio"/> | No <input type="radio"/> |

Section 2: Personal Details

2.1. Surname

2.2. First Name

2.3. Employee No/
Personnel No.

2.4. Employee
Grade

2.5. Email Address

2.6. Contact
Mobile No.

2.7. Home Address

Eircode

2.8. Work Address

Eircode

2.9. Point on Salary
Scale

2.10. Increment
Date

2.11. Employment
Status

2.12(a). Do you require a work visa?

Yes

No

2.12(b). If yes, insert
expiry date

2.12(c). If yes, please enter
stamp number

Section 3: Course Details

3.1. Please insert your CAO Application Number

3.2. Please enter the Course Title(s) and Course Code(s) as entered on your CAO application

3.3. Please enter your score as advised by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) (If you have not received your NMBI Assessment Test results at the time of applying, please submit them as soon as you receive them to **PHSEScheme@hse.ie** stating the reference number in the subject line of the e-mail)

3.4(a). Do you already hold a primary degree from an Irish Higher Education Institution? (Please note if yes, you could be liable to pay the tuition fee for the duration of the four year nursing/midwifery degree course).

Yes

No

3.5(b). If yes, please complete the following

Name of University/ Higher Education Institute	Name of Primary Degree	Year Obtained

3.6. Have you ever commenced a Third Level Degree Course in the Republic of Ireland?

Yes

No

3.7. If you commenced a Degree in the Republic of Ireland at any stage in the past but did not complete, please insert the following:

Name of University/ Higher Education Institute	Name of Degree Programme	Level	No. years completed

Section 4: Service Record

4.1. Name of Employment Organisation

4.2. Public Health Service

4.3. Area of Care

4.4. Job Title

Please give particulars in date order of **all relevant employment and experience within the Irish Public Health Services** starting with your most recent position.

4.5. Service Record

From (e.g. 01/01/2024)	To (e.g. 01/01/2024)	No. of Months	Average Hours employed per week
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

List of main duties and responsibilities

1	<input type="text"/>
2	<input type="text"/>
3	<input type="text"/>
4	<input type="text"/>
5	<input type="text"/>
6	<input type="text"/>

From (e.g. 01/01/2024)	To (e.g. 01/01/2024)	No. of Months	Average Hours employed per week

List of main duties and responsibilities

1
2
3
4
5
6

From (e.g. 01/01/2024)	To (e.g. 01/01/2024)	No. of Months	Average Hours employed per week

List of main duties and responsibilities			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

I hereby declare all the information given in this application form to be true. I am aware that wilful misrepresentation of any fact either in written form or otherwise for the above sponsorship will disqualify my application.

4.6. Applicant Name

4.7. Date (e.g. 01/01/2024)

You should now save this form and forward as an email attachment to your Director of Nursing/ Midwifery/Service Manager

Section 5.1: Confirmation required by Director of Nursing/ Midwifery/Service Manager regarding compliance with eligibility criteria

To be completed by Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Service Manager

Applicant Name

Employee No.

1. I confirm that the applicant fulfils the service requirement for this sponsorship application i.e. the applicant has at least two years' relevant service involved in the direct delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context within the Irish Public Health Service on 1st day of January of the year in which they are applying for sponsorship as outlined in Section 4 Service Record of this application.
2. I confirm that the two years relevant service have been obtained within the 5-year period immediately preceding this sponsorship application.
3. I confirm that where employed on a part-time basis the applicant has been working an average of not less than 15 hours per week.
4. I confirm that the applicant has applied for sponsorship to undertake a nursing/midwifery degree in the area of care in which this organisation is involved in delivering (see section 3.2 of this application form).
5. I confirm that the applicant has a satisfactory service record.
6. I confirm that I support the applicant's application for sponsorship and accept the Terms and Conditions of the sponsorship scheme outlined in Appendix 1.

Section 5.2: Confirmation required by Director of Nursing/ Midwifery/Service Manager regarding compliance with sponsorship agreement and conditions (Appendix 1)

Applicant Name

Employee No.

1. I understand that following successful completion of the four year nursing/midwifery degree programme, subsequent registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) and satisfactory employment selection procedures, I undertake to employ the sponsored employee as a Staff Nurse/Midwife for a period of five years. I undertake to provide for this in my workforce planning requirements.
2. I undertake to notify the local Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) if this part of the sponsorship agreement is not fulfilled.
3. I understand that the sponsored employee will be required to be available for work during all periods outside academic semesters, except when they are on annual leave or undertaking supernumerary clinical placements as part of the nursing/midwifery degree programme.
4. I understand that I must liaise with the student's HEI regarding his/her attendance and planned return to work outside of academic semesters.
5. I understand that sponsored employees will retain their annual leave entitlements throughout the nursing/midwifery degree programme and that annual leave may only be taken outside of academic semesters and allocated clinical time in full consultant with the sponsoring employer.
6. I understand that for the duration of the four year degree programme the sponsored student will be employed on a full-time basis and that the applicant will remain on the payroll of their public health service employer. I further understand that the applicant will retain their existing basic substantive salary throughout the four years of the degree programme and will continue to be entitled to normal incremental progression up the maximum of that scale up until full registration with the NMBI and taking up duty as a staff nurse/staff midwife. Sponsoring employer's budgets will be reimbursed by the Office of the Nursing Services Director (ONMSD) in respect of the sponsored employee's salary.
7. I understand that sponsored employees will not receive any extra remuneration or allowances during the period of training other than premium payments where appropriate.
8. I undertake to notify the local NMPDU if the applicant withdraws from the programme or has failed examinations. Failure to do so may result in overpayment.

I undertake to comply with the Terms and Conditions of the Sponsorship for Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives Scheme as listed above.

Section 5.3: Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Service Manager confirmation of support for application and sign-off

1. Please enter your name, date and email address below and click the SUBMIT button.
2. When prompted please click Continue (this will generate an email with the form attached).
3. Click send on email (**PHSEScheme@hse.ie**) to forward the form to the NMPDU South East for review. An acknowledgement email will be sent to the applicant and you as line manager once received.

First Name

Surname

Job Title

Email Address

Mobile Number

Date

Comment (Optional) for completion by Director of Nursing/Midwifery/Service Manager

Submit

Should you have any queries regarding completion of this form, Please email: **PHSEScheme@hse.ie**

Appendix 1: Terms and Conditions of Sponsorship

Retention of Salary

The sponsored student will remain on the payroll of his/her existing employer and will retain his/her existing substantive salary throughout the four years of the nursing/midwifery degree programme and will continue to be entitled to normal incremental progression up the maximum of that scale, up until full registration with NMBI and the taking up duty as a staff nurse or midwife. Salary will be reimbursed to the employer by the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD). Details of salary and increment dates should be notified to the local Nursing and Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) by the student's employer. The NMPDU will subsequently pass on all the salary details to the ONMSD to facilitate reimbursement.

Part-time employees

Part-time employees who are awarded sponsorship will be required to become full-time employees for the four-year duration of the nursing or midwifery degree programme. Following successful completion of the programme, they may, with the prior agreement of their employer, be permitted to work on a part-time basis provided the contractual commitment is not less than half-time (i.e. 0.5 wte).

Annual Leave

The sponsored student will retain his/her annual leave entitlements throughout the four years of the nursing or midwifery degree programme. However, annual leave may only be taken outside of the academic semesters and allocated clinical time (either supernumerary or internship) in full consultation with the employer and in accordance with academic requirements.

Availability for work

Sponsored employees will be required to work during all periods outside of the academic semesters, except when they are on annual leave or undertaking supernumerary clinical placements as part of the nursing or midwifery degree programme.

Repeat year

A sponsored employee who is required to repeat a year of the nursing/midwifery degree programme must remain in employment with his/her public health service agency for that year, working in his/her substantive grade, with the exception of time required for theoretical instruction, clinical instruction or examinations. The sponsorship arrangement in relation to salary and fees will be discontinued for the duration of the repeat year but will recommence after the employee has successfully completed the repeat year. However, salary will be paid in respect of time actually worked for the agency during the repeat year. The local NMPDU & ONMSD must be notified with immediate effect in respect of repeat elements of the programme.

An employee who does not remain in employment during a repeat year will have his/her sponsorship terminated and will be required to repay all moneys received under the sponsorship as determined by the employer. Such repayments shall be made to the public health service agency where he/she was employed.

Repayment of Salary/ Discontinuation or Non-Completion

A sponsored employee who does not remain in employment with the sponsoring employer during the period of the degree or who discontinues or otherwise does not complete the programme will have his/her sponsorship terminated and will be required to repay salary and fees as outlined below:

- (a) if remaining in employment with the sponsoring employer be required to repay to that employer all third level fees paid on his/her behalf over a period determined by that employer, and
- (b) if not remaining in employment with the sponsoring employer be required to repay to that employer on a pro-rata basis the value of the salary received by him/her during:
 - (i) academic semesters / years, and
 - (ii) all supernumerary clinical placement periods outside of those semesters / years and
 - (iii) all third level fees paid on his/her behalf.

Service Commitment

On successful completion of the nursing or midwifery degree programme, registration with NMBI and following satisfactory employment selection procedures, the sponsored employee will return to their place of employment and work as a registered nurse or midwife for a period of five years as part of the service commitment undertaken by the sponsored student. In exceptional circumstances, all or a portion of the five-year nursing service commitment may, with the prior agreement of the public health service employer concerned, be given in the employment of an alternative Irish public health service agency. HSE employees directly involved in patient/ service user care who are not directly attached to a nursing/midwifery department will be facilitated with sourcing appropriate nursing/midwifery employment by National HR based on identified service need.

Each employer has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the service commitment contract

If the sponsored student fails to honour his/her written undertaking to work as a registered nurse or midwife for his/her employer for a period of five years immediately following successful completion of the nursing or midwifery degree programme and registration with NMBI he/she shall be required to repay to that employer on a pro-rata basis the value of the salary received by him/her during (a) academic semesters and (b) all supernumerary clinical placement periods outside of those semesters.

Recoupment of Salary Costs

The employer will liaise with the Higher Education Institution (HEI) with regard to attendance of the sponsored employee and with the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) with regard to recoupment of salary costs for the student and placement on completion of the programme.

Appendix 2: HR Circular 40/2020: Sponsorship for Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna

Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhísí Sláinte Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'
Baile Átha Cliath 8

Office of the National Director of Human Resources

Health Service Executive Dr. Steevens' Hospital
Dublin 8

Tel: 01 635 2319 **Email:** nationalhr@hse.ie

To: Chief Executive Officer, Each National Director, Each Assistant National Director HR Each Assistant, Chief Finance Officer Each Hospital Group CEO, Each Hospital Group Director of HR Each Chief Officer CHO, Each Head of HR CHO, Each CEO Section 38 Agencies, Each HR Manager Section 38 Agencies Each Employee Relations Manager, Each Group Director of Nursing & Midwifery Each Group Director of Midwifery, Each Clinical Director

From: Anne Maire Hoey, National Director Human Resources

Date: 25th May 2020

Re: HR Circular 40/2020: Sponsorship for Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives

Dear Colleagues

This circular supersedes *Circular 009/2010 - Sponsorship for Public Health Service Employees wishing to train as Nurses/Midwives*

For the purposes of this circular an employing organisation is a statutory (HSE) or voluntary (Section 38) agency in the Irish public health service in which the employee is working when they commence the sponsorship. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- an acute/non-acute hospital
- a community care area
- intellectual disability services
- a long-term care facility
- a mental health service.

The provisions of this circular are dependent on the availability of funding and resources. The capacity to sponsor applicants each year will ultimately be based on organisational priorities, available funding and organisation policy.

The number of sponsorships available each year will be determined by the Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD). The National Lead for the operation of this sponsorship scheme will be notified of the places available at the commencement of each year.

1. Eligibility

1.1 This funding initiative is available to employees in the Irish Public Health Services currently encompassed under the support services grades such as Health Care Assistants/Multi Task Attendants who are involved in the direct delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context.

1.2 Applicants must have:

at least **two** consecutive years relevant¹ service as an employee in the Irish public health service within the last five years on the 1st day of January of the year in which they apply for sponsorship.

1 Relevant service is defined as being involved in the direct delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context

and

be employed as a permanent employee on a full-time or part-time basis. Where employed on a part-time basis, they must have been working an average of not less than 15 hours per week

and

must have a satisfactory service record and fulfill the relevant service requirement. This must be verified by the applicant's employer on the sponsorship application

and

must qualify as a Mature Code Applicant on 1st January in the year in which they apply for a place on the pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery Degree Programme under the system operated by the Central Applications Office (CAO) on behalf of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

and

must have applied for a nursing/midwifery degree programme through the CAO in the area of care in which her/his employing agency is involved in delivering i.e. General Nursing or General and Children's Nursing (Integrated) or Intellectual Disability Nursing or Psychiatric Nursing or Midwifery

and

undertake and successfully pass the written assessment test administered by Public Appointments Service (PAS) on behalf of the Nursing & Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI).

1.3 This funding initiative is **not** available to:

- Employees who are not directly involved in the delivery of care to patients/clients within a nursing/midwifery context.
- Employees who have deferred acceptance of a CAO place on a pre- registration nursing/ midwifery degree programme from a previous year.
- Employees who have withdrawn from a pre-registration nursing/midwifery education programme within the five-year period immediately preceding their application for sponsorship.
- Employees within a public health service whose service do not employ nurses and midwives within their approved staffing complement.
- Agency staff or those employed in Section 39 organisations, private hospitals, private nursing homes or GP practices.
- Persons who are currently undertaking a pre-registration nursing/midwifery degree programme.
- Non-EU/EEA applicants who do not have authorization to work permanently in the state.

2. Application Process

An eligible employee intending to apply for sponsorship must:

2.1 Firstly make a formal application through the Central Applications Office (CAO) as a Mature Code Applicant, for a place on the pre-registration Nursing/Midwifery Degree Programme at one of the thirteen Higher Education Institutions that are involved in the delivery of the programme. The CAO Handbook and application forms are available from the CAO. This can be accessed from www.cao.ie

and

2.2 Register and apply to publicjobs.ie to undertake the written assessment test administered by the Public Appointment Service (PAS) on behalf of Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) www.publicjobs.ie

and

2.3 Apply for sponsorship to the HSE through the Office of the National Lead for the Sponsorship Scheme (**see Section 3 below**).

N.B. The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) information booklet **Nursing/Midwifery a career for you**, contains valuable information including details of all [key dates](#) for applicants to nursing and midwifery programmes together with details on the training places available throughout the country. This booklet is available from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) www.nursingcareers.ie

3. Application for Sponsorship to the HSE

Having completed steps 2.1 and 2.2 above an eligible employee intending to apply for sponsorship must:

3.1 Submit a completed sponsorship application form to the National Lead for this scheme by the designated closing date. Further details and information can be accessed on the following link: <https://healthservice.hse.ie/about-us/onmsd/cpd-for-nurses-and-midwives/onmsd-sponsorship-schemes/public-health-service-employees.html>

3.2 Submit the PAS written assessment test score to the HSE National Lead for this scheme once available. Mature code applicants are notified by the PAS of the result of their written assessment in early June.

- 3.3 Only those who satisfy the eligibility criteria outlined in Section 1 of this circular will be considered for sponsorship.

4. Award of Sponsorships

- 4.1 An order of merit list of eligible applicants for each region is drawn up on the basis of their scores obtained in the written assessment test carried out by PAS.
- 4.2 The first applicants to be considered for sponsorship are those who receive an offer of a place from the CAO in Round A in early July of the year of application.
- 4.3 Sponsorship within the approved complement may be awarded to eligible applicants who:
- 4.3.1 are placed highest in order of merit on the PAS **written assessment test** in each region
- and
- 4.3.2 who have been offered a place by the CAO on a pre-registration nursing/midwifery degree programme in the area of nursing/midwifery in which her/his employing agency is delivering.
- 4.4 The relative positions of applicants with equal scores on the order of merit list should be determined by reference to the length of their respective relevant service¹ in the Irish public health service.
- 4.5 If sponsorships are still available to be awarded following Round A, the procedure outlined above should be repeated in respect of applicants for sponsorship who receive an offer in the next round.

5. Conditions of Sponsorship

5.1 Service Commitment

Successful applicants for sponsorship will be required to give a written undertaking to their employing public health service employer that they will:

- 5.1.1 following successful completion of the undergraduate nursing/midwifery degree programme, immediately register as a nurse/midwife with the NMBI
- 5.1.2 following satisfactory selection procedures commit to work as a nurse/midwife for that particular employer for a period of five years' service, accepting the terms, conditions and salary associated with a staff nurse/midwife position.

- 5.2 HSE employees directly involved in patient/service user care who are not directly attached to a nursing/midwifery department will be facilitated sourcing nursing/midwifery employment by National HR based on identified service need.

- 5.3 In exceptional circumstances, all or a portion of the five-year nursing/midwifery service commitment may, with the prior agreement of the public health service employer concerned, be given in the employment of an alternative Irish public health service employer.

- 5.4 A sponsored employee who fails to honour his/her written undertaking to work as a nurse/midwife for his/her employer for a period of five years immediately following successful completion of the nursing/midwifery degree programme and registration with NMBI shall be required to repay to the employer on a pro rata basis the value of the salary received by him/her during (a) academic semesters and (b) all supernumerary clinical placement periods outside of those semesters.

- 5.5 Each employer has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the service commitment contract.

5.6 Part-time Employees

- 5.6.1 Part-time employees who are awarded sponsorship will be required to become full-time employees for the duration of the nursing/midwifery degree programme.

- 5.6.2 Following successful completion of the programme, an employee may, with the prior agreement of their employer, be permitted to work on a part-time basis provided the contractual commitment is not less than half-time (i.e. 0.5 WTE).

5.7 Availability for Work

Sponsored employees will be required to work during all periods outside of academic semesters, except when they are on annual leave or undertaking supernumerary clinical placements as part of the nursing/midwifery degree programme.

5.8 Annual leave

Sponsored employees shall retain their annual leave entitlements throughout the nursing/midwifery degree programme. However, annual leave may only be taken outside of academic semesters and allocated clinical time in full consultation with the sponsoring employer.

5.9 Funding

- 5.9.1 All participants will have their registration fees paid as part of this sponsorship.
- 5.9.2 A sponsored employee who already holds a primary degree or is not covered under the Department of Education & Skills free tuition fees initiative, will be required to pay her/his own third level tuition fees.
- 5.9.3 A sponsored employee who commenced, but did not complete an undergraduate programme within the last five years will be required to pay the third level fees in respect of the academic years in question.
- 5.9.4 No funding will be provided for the repeat of module(s), units of study or examination(s). All associated costs must be borne by the sponsored employee concerned.

5.10 Retention of Salary

- 5.10.1 A public health service employee who is sponsored in accordance with the terms of this circular will remain on the payroll of her/his public health service employer.
- 5.10.2 She/he will retain her/his existing substantive basic salary throughout the four years of the nursing/ midwifery degree programme and will continue to be entitled to normal incremental progression up to the maximum of that scale, up until full registration with the NMBI and taking up duty as a staff nurse/staff midwife.
- 5.10.3 Sponsored employees will not receive any extra remuneration or allowances during the period of training other than premium payments where appropriate.
- 5.10.4 During the interim period between programme completion and full NMBI registration, participants will have an employment commitment on the terms and conditions of their substantive post.

5.11 Repeat Year

- 5.11.1 A sponsored employee who is required to repeat a year of the nursing/ midwifery degree programme must remain in employment with her/his public health service sponsoring health service employer for that year, working in her/his substantive grade, with the exception of time required for theoretical instruction, clinical instruction or examinations.
- 5.11.2 The sponsorship arrangement in relation to salary and fees will be discontinued for the duration of the repeat year but will recommence after the employee has successfully completed the repeat year.
- 5.11.3 However, salary will be paid in respect of time actually worked for the health service employer during the repeat year.
- 5.11.4 A sponsored employee who is required to repeat any element of the programme will also be required to pay her/his own associated third level fees.
- 5.11.5 The local NMPDU* must be notified with immediate effect in respect of repeat elements of the programme. The local NMPDU* should subsequently notify the ONMSD in respect of funding implications.
- 5.11.6 An employee who does not remain in employment during a repeat year will have her/his sponsorship terminated and will be required to repay all moneys received under the sponsorship as determined by the employer. Such repayments shall be made to the public health service employer where she/he was employed.

5.12 Repayment of Salary and Registration Fees

A sponsored employee who does not remain in employment with the sponsoring employer during the period of the degree will have his/her sponsorship terminated and will be required to repay salary and fees as outlined in 5.13.

5.13 Discontinuation or Non-completion.

A sponsored employee who discontinues or otherwise does not complete the programme will:

- (a) if remaining in employment with the sponsoring employer be required to repay to that employer all third level fees paid on his/her behalf over a period determined by that employer, and
- (b) if not remaining in employment with the sponsoring employer be required to repay to that employer on a pro-rata basis the value of the salary received by him/her during:
 - (i) academic semesters, and
 - (ii) all supernumerary clinical placement periods outside of those semesters, and
 - (iii) all third level fees paid on her/his behalf.

5.14 Governance

The sponsored employee will be required to provide their employing agency and their local NMPDU* office with evidence of successful completion of the programme.

5.15 Exceptions

A sponsored employee absenting themselves, and/or failing to complete the programme due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, may be facilitated at the discretion of the employing agency and higher education institute to complete the programme and examinations in such manner as may be specified.

5.16 Additional Costs

All other additional costs, charges and expenses, including travel, text books and library charges incurred by the sponsored employee undertaking the programme will be discharged by the sponsored employee at their own expense.

6. Sponsoring Health Service Employers' Responsibilities

- 6.1 The applicant's employer must accept the conditions attached to the sponsorship as outlined in Section 5 of this circular.
- 6.2 The employing agency undertakes to comply with the conditions of sponsorship and has responsibility for ensuring the sponsored employee's compliance with their sponsorship agreement and service commitment.
- 6.3 The employing agency is responsible for notifying their local NMPDU* of the candidate's plan to withdraw from the programme or defer any part of the programme. Failure to do so may result in overpayment.

7. Sponsored Employee Obligations

- 7.1 The sponsored employee undertakes to comply with the conditions of sponsorship as outlined in section 5 of this circular and with the terms and conditions outlined in the sponsorship and service commitment agreement signed by them and their sponsoring employer.
- 7.2 The sponsored employee will attend in full the programme with due diligence and will undergo such examination and tests as may be prescribed in or required by the programme curriculum with a view to successfully completing the programme.
- 7.3 The sponsored employee will return to work for his/her employing agency during all periods outside of academic semesters except when on approved annual leave or while on clinical placement as part of the degree programme. The sponsored employee will liaise with his/her employing agency regarding same.
- 7.4 The sponsored employee will undertake to notify his/her employing agency should they intend to withdraw or defer any part of the nursing/midwifery degree programme.

8. Starting Pay for Sponsored Students

- 8.1 Starting pay for Sponsored students who progress to registration on the NMBI Register will be in accordance with the HSE HR Circular (Circular 11/2008) <https://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/resources/hr-circulars/>

9. Review of Initiatives

This initiative will be kept under periodic review.

10. Queries

Any queries in relation to this circular should be addressed to The Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director, Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

Tel. 01 6352241

John Scott Email: john.scott@hse.ie

Yours sincerely



Anne Marie Hoey

National Director of Human Resources