

## Cylchlythyr | Circular

# Postgraduate Taught Master's Incentivisation Bursary Schemes 2021/22

**Date:** 05 May 2021  
**Reference:** W21/11HE  
**To:** Heads of higher education providers in Wales  
Other interested parties  
**Response by:** Response, if necessary, by **31 May 2021** to  
[hestats@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:hestats@hefcw.ac.uk)  
**Contact:** Name: Nicola Hunt  
Telephone: 029 2085 9735  
Email: [nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk)

This circular provides details of HEFCW's postgraduate taught (PGT) Master's Incentivisation bursary schemes for academic year (AY) 2021/22 and allocations of funding.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please email [info@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:info@hefcw.ac.uk).



Noddir gan  
Lywodraeth Cymru  
Sponsored by  
Welsh Government

## Introduction

1. This circular provides details of HEFCW's postgraduate taught (PGT) Master's Incentivisation bursary schemes for academic year (AY) 2021/22 and allocations of funding.
2. Bursaries are available for eligible<sup>1</sup> PGT Master's students who will be studying science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine related subjects, also known as STEMM subjects, and/or who will be studying through the medium of Welsh and/or who are aged 60 or over, in Wales, in the academic year 2021/22.

## Details of 2021/2022 bursary schemes

3. Welsh Government has [confirmed](#) that the PGT Master's bursary schemes introduced in AY 2019/20 will continue in AY 2021/22.
4. In 2021/22, we will provide funding to providers via our existing three Master's bursary schemes for eligible PGT students: for PGT students who undertake a Master's degree through the medium of Welsh; for PGT students who study a Master's degree in a STEMM subject; and for PGT Master's degree students aged 60 or over. It is possible for a student to be in receipt of all three bursaries.
5. The bursaries apply to those studying on either a full-time or part-time basis and are made available to students, through providers, to cover costs associated with their programmes of study. In all cases, the bursaries are allocated on the understanding that individual entrants for 2021/22 receive a maximum of one bursary from each scheme during the course of their study.

## Method of allocation of funding

6. We are making one minor change to the funding allocation methods used for AY 2020/21 starters for both the STEMM/Welsh medium scheme and the scheme for students aged 60 or over in AY 2021/22.
7. We will allocate funding for AY 2021/22 to higher education providers in Wales in proportion to their AY 2021/22 estimated Master's numbers in the relevant STEMM subjects, those taking 40 or more credits of their course through the medium of Welsh and students aged 60 or over.
8. Estimated PGT Master's numbers for AY 2021/22 are based on the proportion of postgraduate entrants that are PGT Master's students, taken from the AY 2019/20 Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record, and the number of forecast postgraduate entrants in AY 2020/21

---

<sup>1</sup> Eligible students as per <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2021/2/4/1614272755/student-finance-wales-information-notice-eu-exit-eligibility-categories.pdf>

taken from the student number forecasts provided to us by providers in July 2020. This is a change from last year when we used PGT entrants rather than all postgraduate entrants in the calculation. The reason for this change is that the forecasts data collection for 2020 did not provide the split into taught and research postgraduates. We also asked providers to adjust the estimates during the verification process to ensure that only eligible EU students were included.

9. The data extracted to calculate the allocations have been verified by providers. Allocations, based on verified data, are included in **Annex A**.

#### PGT Master's bursaries for STEMM and Welsh Medium

10. Our allocation of funding is based on £2k per eligible STEMM PGT Master's student and £1k per eligible Welsh medium PGT Master's student. It is our expectation that bursaries will be paid to eligible students on this basis.
11. Funding will be based on data on eligible students that has been verified by each provider. If there is a shortfall it is for the provider to determine how this will be managed to ensure that eligible students are not disadvantaged.

#### PGT Master's bursaries for students aged 60 or over

12. Our allocation of funding is based on £4k per eligible PGT Master's student aged 60 or over. It is our expectation that bursaries will be paid to eligible students on this basis.
13. Providers will be expected to award bursaries to all eligible students who apply. Where the actual number of starters eligible in AY 2021/22 who apply for a bursary is greater than the number estimated and used in the allocation of funding, providers are still expected to provide bursaries. Where this is the case, providers will be allocated further funding for the additional students to ensure that they can provide all the necessary bursaries at the rate of £4k per student over the duration of their course. This will be done through a monitoring exercise after the start of AY 2021/22 where we will ask for information where there is a shortfall. A similar exercise will take place for each year in which funding is provided. Any funding not spent on bursaries outlined in this circular will be recovered.
14. In circular [W20/04HE](#) we noted that adjustments may be required during AY 2020/21 to allow for the demand-led process of the bursary scheme for students aged 60 or over. Providers are asked to notify HEFCW if they think they will require additional funding to allow for recruitment over and above their allocated numbers of bursaries for students aged 60 or over in 2020/21. This should be done by email to [hestats@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:hestats@hefcw.ac.uk) by **31 May 2021**. We will use the information to assess whether further funding is required for the scheme in the remainder of AY 2020/21. We will use end of year monitoring data to inform any adjustments to the individual providers' allocations we included in circular W20/04HE and so will not make in-year adjustments to individual providers based solely on this information.

## Internal institutional allocation

15. Providers are expected to continue with the distribution method used in AYs 2019/20 and 2020/21 to award bursaries to eligible students undertaking a Master's course which qualifies for a bursary against one (or more) of the above schemes.
16. Through the schemes outlined above, it is possible for a student to receive all three bursaries, ie if they are studying a STEMM subject through the medium of Welsh and are aged 60 or over, they may receive up to £7k of bursaries. As assumed in the allocation method, we would expect a student studying a mixture of STEMM and other subjects to receive an appropriate proportion of the STEMM bursary.
17. It will be for providers to assess individual students' eligibility. The bursaries should be allocated to PGT Master's students that fit the eligibility criteria and are enrolled on eligible Master's programmes as defined in The Education (Student Support) (Postgraduate Master's Degrees) (Wales) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/895), as amended, except that awards should be made regardless of age. In developing a distribution method, providers will need to be mindful of any relevant courses that they sub-contract (or 'franchise').
18. An assessment of whether the course the student is studying on is a STEMM course should be made on the basis of the academic subject category (ASC) of the course. A STEMM course would be considered to be a course with a subject of study in ASCs 1, 2, 3, 4 or 6 (Medicine and dentistry, Subjects and professions allied to medicine, Science, Engineering and technology and Mathematical sciences, IT and computing). From 2019/20 the Higher Education Classification of Subjects (HECoS) coding system is used to categorise subjects of study and a mapping from HECoS to ASC is available in the Higher Education Students Early Statistics ([HESES](#)) survey in Annex E. The Welsh medium bursary should be allocated to those studying 40 credits or more of their course through the medium of Welsh.
19. It is our expectation that providers will publish clear information on how prospective students can access the bursary schemes on their websites and that this should be clearly signposted. The bursaries are intended to support eligible students with costs arising from their course of study and should therefore not be advertised solely as a tuition fee waiver. However, if a student in receipt of a bursary should choose to use it in this way, this would be allowable. Welsh Government has confirmed that these incentivisation bursaries can be awarded in addition to other institutional bursaries offered.
20. HEFCW will review provider websites to ensure that information on the bursary schemes is available. Providers should promote the bursaries to encourage under-represented groups to undertake postgraduate taught Master's study in Wales.

21. We have allocated funding based on the assumption that full-time students receive the funding in one year and that part-time students will receive funding over two years.
22. As stated previously in the [circular](#) for the 2020/21 scheme, we do not consider it necessary to allocate any of this funding for administrative costs for these schemes.

### **Monitoring and unspent funds**

23. At the end of AY 2021/22, HEFCW will request a monitoring report to provide confirmation from each provider that all the funding has been spent in accordance with the terms and conditions upon which it was allocated, ie that the bursaries had been awarded according to the eligibility outlined above. Similar reports will be requested in subsequent years in which the scheme operates.
24. We will reclaim funding if necessary on the basis of the actual number of completed PGT Master's against the above scheme eligibility. We will take these numbers from the HESA student record, checked against the verified estimates used in the allocation of funding. Using the allocation per student of £2k for STEMM subjects, £1k for Welsh medium and £4k for students aged 60 or over, if the institution fails to deliver the estimated numbers against which the allocation was provided, we would reclaim this amount per student multiplied by the number shortfall.
25. Any data that we use to allocate funding is included in the scope of our external audit of higher education data. The systems and processes used to collate data are also included in the scope of providers' internal audits of data systems and processes. Included in this would be a check for reasonableness of the criteria used to assess students' eligibility for a bursary. More information can be found in HEFCW circular [W18/33HE](#) Audit of Higher Education Data 2018/19 to 2021/22.

### **Timetable**

26. The allocations for each provider are included at **Annex A**. We intend to pay the allocation based on full-time student numbers in two equal parts, one in September 2021 and one in March 2022. The allocation relating to the part-time student numbers will be paid in four equal instalments: September 2021, March 2022, September 2022 and March 2023. Should we have to amend this profile, we will inform providers as soon as practically possible.

### **Further information**

27. For further information, contact Nicola Hunt (029 2085 9735; [nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:nicola.hunt@hefcw.ac.uk))

## **Assessing the impact of our policies**

28. We have carried out an impact assessment to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality, which we keep under review. We also considered the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales and potential impacts towards the goals set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 including our Well-Being Objectives. Contact [equality@hefcw.ac.uk](mailto:equality@hefcw.ac.uk) for more information about impact assessments.
29. A similar responsibility rests on higher education providers to assess the impact of their method for allocation of the bursaries, to safeguard against discrimination and promote equality.

## PGT Master's incentivisation bursaries allocation for 2021/22 entrants

Provider	Allocation paid in: £												
	AY 2021/22						AY 2022/23			Total			
	Full-time			Part-time			Part-time						
	STEMM	Welsh medium	60+	STEMM	Welsh medium	60+	STEMM	Welsh medium	60+	STEMM	Welsh medium	60+	Total
University of South Wales	515,789	0	0	213,295	0	4,000	213,295	0	4,000	942,378	0	8,000	950,378
Aberystwyth University	108,328	13,000	12,000	42,187	1,000	2,000	42,187	1,000	2,000	192,702	15,000	16,000	223,702
Bangor University	324,482	32,000	20,000	29,189	2,500	4,000	29,189	2,500	4,000	382,861	37,000	28,000	447,861
Cardiff University	655,643	7,000	16,000	75,497	0	4,000	75,497	0	4,000	806,637	7,000	24,000	837,637
University of Wales Trinity Saint David	113,590	10,000	4,000	27,932	0	10,000	27,932	0	10,000	169,453	10,000	24,000	203,453
Swansea University	478,670	15,000	4,000	37,582	0	2,000	37,582	0	2,000	553,835	15,000	8,000	576,835
Cardiff Metropolitan University	218,054	4,000	4,000	25,010	0	4,000	25,010	0	4,000	268,073	4,000	12,000	284,073
Wrexham Glyndŵr University	103,000	0	0	79,848	0	40,000	79,848	0	40,000	262,696	0	80,000	342,696
Open University in Wales	0	0	0	33,850	0	8,000	33,850	0	8,000	67,700	0	16,000	83,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,517,554</b>	<b>81,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>564,390</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>78,000</b>	<b>564,390</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>78,000</b>	<b>3,646,334</b>	<b>88,000</b>	<b>216,000</b>	<b>3,950,334</b>

Note: STEMM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine