

To: Lynne Berry CE, GSCC,  
Andrea Rowe CE, S4C,  
Jane Haywood CE, CWDC,  
Heads of Programme HEI's

14<sup>th</sup> March 2006

Dear Colleague

### **CHANGES TO POLICY CONCERNING THE SOCIAL WORK BURSARY**

As you are aware, the introduction of variable tuition fees in September 2006 has meant the department has had to review policy on social work bursaries. This letter sets out the policy changes we have decided to make, in agreement with DfES, for new undergraduate students from 1st September 2006. There will be no change for existing students.

#### **New undergraduate students**

The tuition fee contribution paid directly to Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) will cease. Instead, we are increasing the non-means tested bursary grant by £1,500 per student for those studying on undergraduate fulltime courses and £750 per student for all students studying on part-time courses.

This will mean that:

- fulltime undergraduate students studying in London will receive a total non-means tested bursary grant of £4,400;
- fulltime undergraduate students studying outside London will receive a total non-means tested bursary grant of £4,000;
- part-time students studying in London will receive a total non-means tested bursary grant of £2,200;
- part-time students outside London will receive a total non-means tested bursary grant of £2,000.

Undergraduate social work students can also access the higher education support system including the new variable tuition fee loan. They will be responsible for payment of their tuition fees and will be liable to repay them on entering employment and earning more than £15,000 per annum.

The social work bursary is intended to provide an incentive to students to train as social workers. This policy change provides a greater immediate incentive to students and greater choice. Students can choose to use the bursary to pay fees or they can use it in meeting costs and take out a fee loan.

### **Postgraduate students**

There will be no change to the bursary provision for postgraduate students and they will continue to receive:

- a contribution towards their tuition fees for fulltime the maximum amount increasing to £3,162 and for part-time the maximum amount increasing to £1,200;
- a non-means tested bursary at 05/06 rates; and
- a means tested support grant (fulltime only).

To help clarify these changes I attach an annex setting out future bursary entitlement by category of student.

We will communicate this policy in the social work student application packs for 2006, via the General Social Care Council's website and through the social care information service. However, I would be grateful if HEI's could also pass on this information to prospective students.

Please note this policy only applies to students domiciled in England. For students domiciled in other UK countries, their own countries' social work student policy will apply.

If you have any queries on these policy changes please contact me by e-mail [Anne.Mercer@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.Mercer@dh.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone on 020 7633 7023.



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