



*Michelle Donelan MP
Minister of State for Universities*

*Rt Honourable Matt Hancock MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care*

Dear Michelle and Matt,

We are writing to you not only as representatives of our various student bodies, collectively representing over 387,000 students, but also as members of the public, who are unreservedly grateful to the members of our National Health Service and Health and Social Care Sector who continue to show nothing but courage, even more so in the face of adversity.

We are asking the Government to recognise the contribution and the incredible act of students enrolled on all healthcare courses stepping up and fighting on the front lines of this crisis. **It is time to fight for them, whilst they fight for us** by calling on you and the wider Government to waive the debt of all healthcare students who have made the difficult decision to step up to work in light of COVID-19. Recent figures show that we have more than 5,550 students from across 35 Universities in the UK who have opted to interrupt their studies to take up extended clinical placement to tackle the crisis. Healthcare students have, and continue, to serve beyond what should be expected of their studies, putting themselves at risk as part of their course. I know we are all grateful for their commitment and sacrifice, and now is the time to repay them.

We are incredibly appreciative and proud of the effort of all our key-workers across the country, but none more so than the students who have made such a monumental call to set their studies aside (where able) and step up for the benefit of our nation. Several signatories of this letter represent institutions with a significant cohort of healthcare students and are therefore key contributors to the success of the NHS, providing essential training to the future of nursing and healthcare provision. The 2017 cohort will not benefit from the Government's re-introduction earlier this year of the bursary, and most will graduate with over £30,000 of debt. **Our students are fulfilling an essential role within society and the NHS. Wiping their debt is the least we can do.** The Government has the power to relieve the burden of debt on those who have stepped up, and this is just a small act of gratitude compared to their efforts on the front line.

We support free education, and especially the debts and fees waived for all healthcare students and public sector workers. However, we believe that this absolutely should not be at the expense of the outstanding institutions who contribute such a vital training provision to the public sector. We recognise that the Government will need to make difficult decisions to

stabilise the economy in this crisis, and therefore our priority right now is that debts are waived for those who have been asked to put their lives on the front-line as part of their course. We do urge the Government to consider a long-term plan to introduce and re-introduce full coverage bursaries for all healthcare students as part of preventative and proactive measures to support a strong NHS into the future. The long-term issues of NHS' sustainability and the recruitment of healthcare workers will not be resolved following this crisis. As the Government who promised in their 2019 election campaign to enable 50,000 more nurses within the NHS, this wider removal of a cost to students is essential to enabling more students to train in these lifesaving disciplines and protect our NHS and the Health and Social Care sector.

We know our students are struggling as outlined by the [Nursing Times](#)¹ and the [RCN](#)². We can only imagine how frightening it is for students in such early stages of their career to be fighting this worldwide battle. We know that whilst they are doing all they can they still have an enormous sum of debt weighing on their shoulders. And we know that waiving their fees and this debt is just the first step to truly appreciating what they have done for us all.

We hope you agree with us in that these vital and admirable healthcare students deserve to be valued for their sacrifice and the risks they take. We hope you agree that they deserve tangible measures of appreciation. And we hope you agree to waive these fees and this student debt.

Now it is time for you to demonstrate your gratitude and support for the student healthcare workers around the country who are protecting our loved ones and protecting our NHS. We can all agree that these outstanding individuals deserve the full measure of support from their government and society, and as a united community we are urging you to waive all fees for these incredible students.

We look forward to hearing from you on these points soon.

Sincerely,

Jono Smith, Greenwich Students' Union Officer 19/20

Ashleigh Henser, Final Year Adult Nursing Student, University of Greenwich

Henry Setter, Greenwich Students' Union President 19/20

Bilal Ijaz, Greenwich Students' Union Officer 19/20 and President (elect) 20/21

Mayo Femi-Obalemo, Greenwich Students' Union Officer 19/20 and (elect) 20/21

Zoe Campbell, Greenwich Students' Union Officer (elect) 20/21

Niel Lewis, Greenwich Students' Union Officer (elect) 20/21

Nelly Kibirige, London South Bank University Students' Union President 19/20

Isobel Hall, Hull University Union President 19/20

Mari Chappell, Keele University Students' Union Education officer 19/20

Amy Wells, Leeds University Union Welfare Officer 19/20

Gemma Lovegrove, The University of Northampton Students' Union President 19/20

¹ <https://www.nursingtimes.net/news/workforce/nursing-times-launches-new-campaign-to-support-nurse-mental-health-amid-covid-19-crisis-08-04-2020/>

² <https://rcni.com/nursing-standard/features/how-covid-19-affecting-nurses-mental-health-and-what-to-do-about-it-159456>

Patrick Hoyle, University of Exeter Students' Guild President 19/20

Sasha Langeveldt, Kent Union President 19/20

Tuna Kunt, City, University of London Students' Union President 19/20

Suntosh Kaur, University of Central Lancashire Students' Union President 19/20

Geoffery Gulzar, Marjon Students' Union President 19/20

Annas Mazhar, Aston Students' Union Vice President Student Activities 19/20

Nafiza Mamun, King's College London Students' Union Vice President Postgraduate 19/20

Oge Obioha, University of Leicester Students' Union President 19/20

Adnan Rahman, University of Leicester Students' Union Education Officer 19/20

Tony Magaia, University of Leicester Students' Union Liberation Officer 19/20

Megan Annetts, Queen Mary Students' Union President and Barts and The London Students' Association President –19/20

Precious Onyenekwu Tatah, University of the West of England Students' Union President 19/20

Lauren Corelli, Goldsmiths Students' Union Education Officer 19/20

Joshua Williams, University of Birmingham Guild of Students President 19/20

Millie Gibbins, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Welfare and Community officer 19/20

Millie Gibbins, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Welfare & Community officer 19/20

Joanne Park, University of Birmingham Guild of Students International Officer 19/20

Amanda Sefton, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Education Officer 19/20

Ryan Ginger, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Activities and Employability Officer 19/20

Amanda Sefton, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Education Officer 19/20

Ryan Ginger, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Activities & Employability Officer 19/20

Tobiloba Adeyemi, University of Birmingham Guild of Students Postgraduate Officer 19/20

George Reeves, Teeside University Students' Union President Activities 19/20

Alan Lofthouse, Teeside University Students' Union President Education 19/20

Sophie Bennett. Teeside University Students' Union President Welfare 19/20

Dan O'Donoghue, Roehampton Students' Union President 19/20

Phil Kloppenborg, Christ Church Students' Union President 19/20

Becky Thomson, Christ Church Students' Union President, Development 19/20

Chloe Woolaway, Christ Church Students' Union President, Sports and Engagement 19/20

Jamie Harris, Christ Church Students' Union President, Wellbeing 19/20

Healthcare Students, University of Greenwich

2nd Year Adult Nursing:

Olayinka Oleyami-Ajayi
Varsha Carim
Selen Alfuran
Efe Ruth Egharevba
Thomas Allen
Fatmata Kamara
Shanna White
Kayleigh Collier
Eniola Lugboso
Rosalee Lisle
Cristina Gagliu
Suela Zaneli
Danjela Mehmetaj
Precious Moyo
Jessica Sadler
Caroline Ohaerizu
Ella O'Brien
Caroline Chikowore
Angel Dannie
Andrea Whyte-Campbell
Paulette Reed
Maisie Palmer
Evelyne Ngwa
Lindiwe Khoza
Sharon Marimirofa
Mariama Charm
Edis Home
Kali Ahmed
Olufunke Adelekun
Makumbi Makombe
Maryrose Osuagwu, Olanike Popoola
François Nahimana
Ana Tavares, Bernadette Gowland
Abimbola Adejumo
Kamal Subba
Marta Olechnowicz
Fiona Kane
Tabitha Macharia
Kirk-Ann Harris
Charlotte Kingsley
Janet Egbe
Roberta Rasimaviciute
Sofia De Freitas Da Silva
Krystel Lukombo
Leanne Clarke
Farin Heyliger
Carmen Grigore
Paschaline Nwokeji

Chika Ngwu
Mamata Rai
Raheal Lawal
Obiageri Chukwunoye
Leticia Asiedu
Vanessa Anthony
Zoe Robinson
Amy Ajibade
Umita Rana
Muchaneta Chipawu
Paulina Okponaviobo
Fatiha Laamin
David Keugoue

3rd Year Adult Nursing:

Lorraine Davis
Olasunkamni Okubadejo
Niall Byrne

1st Year Adult Nursing:

Adline Njoku

2nd Year Midwifery:

Georgia Sibley

3rd Year Paramedic Science

Sean Crawford
Tom Bicknall
Michael Swan
Gabrielle Cucinella
Harriett Lambert
Sam Littlechild
Hollie Montrose
Muna Abdi
Andrew Sutton
Yasin Dinaully
Shawn Sunny
Seb Renshaw
Chloe Park

2nd Year Paramedic Science:

Tanya Meade
Jason Jeevaruban
Alice Clark
Naomi Davis
Ceri Beynon
Leo Macdonald
James Hillier
Matt Jarvis

Billy Serretiello
Keelan Weiser
George Laughton

1st Year Paramedic Science:

Joe Stockbridge
Saoirse Costello
Rhys Hurley
Callum Fowler
Frances Fairs
James Farquharson
Nathan Long