

ABM University Health Board	
Date of Meeting: 19th March, 2019	
Name of Meeting: Nursing and Midwifery Board	
Agenda item:	
Subject	Health Board support for PhD study for nurses and midwives
Prepared by	Louise Condon Professor in Nursing
Approved by	Lynne Jones Head of Nurse Education and Temporary Staffing
Presented by	Lynne Jones Head of Nurse Education and Temporary Staffing

1.0 Situation

One of the goals of the Health Board's Nursing and Midwifery strategy is to support nurses to engage in and lead research activity. It is acknowledged that nursing and midwifery research in the UK is currently underdeveloped. In order to develop research in these professions more support is required to facilitate nurses and midwives to attain doctorates. PhDs are the gold standard required to embark on a research career. Professional doctorates are to a similar standard but include more taught components, and a shorter thesis (40,000 rather than 80,000 words).

2.0 Background

In the summer of 2018 the health board's Director of Nursing and Professor John Gammon proposed that they fund fees from the post registration nurse education contract for up to 3 PhDs per year, with time to study being provided by the Service Delivery Units. This would consist of one day per week study leave and either one day working on the PhD at work or completed in candidates' own time. As a result, in July 2018 an SBAR was presented at the Nursing and Midwifery Board to support up to 3 health board nurses and midwives per year to commence study to PhD level.

3.0 Assessment

PhD opportunities were advertised by Louise Condon, Professor in nursing in January 2019, with the aim of students starting in October 2019 at Swansea University. In response staff, who had the agreement of their line manager, returned three proposals (around 500 words). These were from Flying Start, NPT, School nursing, Infant Feeding lead, NICU Singleton. In addition a further registrant wishes to study for a professional doctorate at Swansea University- the professional doctorate is currently in the process of being revised and relaunched.

4.0 Recommendations

This report is being presented to the Nursing and Midwifery Board for comment and approval.

1. It is proposed that a panel is formed in ABMU to consider the applications submitted. Applicants would be required to demonstrate to the panel how the proposal meets ABMU Nursing and Midwifery aims, and key priorities. Successful applicants would then need to apply to the university. Acceptance at the university would be conditional on the quality of the proposal and the

identification of a supervisory team for each candidate with knowledge and experience of the proposed area of study.

2. The availability of a professional doctorate in October 2019 is currently being explored with the university. An alternative option is for all candidates to start on the MSc Research Methods module in October 2019, and make a choice about whether to study for a PhD or professional doctorate at a later stage. The university is likely to stipulate an agreement that if candidates are not reaching the required standard in the MSc modules they would not be eligible to progress to PhD. If candidates wished to stop after the MSc research methods module they could achieve a post-graduate diploma in research methods.