# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE**  | **New bursaries to study post-graduates qualifications in Wales** |
| **DATE**  | **28 June 2019** |
| **BY** | **Kirsty Williams, Minister for Education**  |

There are many reasons to study for a postgraduate qualification in Wales, not least our universities’ reputation for excellence in research, consistently high student satisfaction ratings and the most generous support package for post-graduate students in the UK.

Following my announcement in Plenary this week, today I am confirming the additional incentives to study for a postgraduate qualification in Wales through a new bursary scheme to attract Welsh students to do their Master’s degrees here in Wales.

Harnessing our post-graduate talent is instrumental for the growth of high-tech industries and the wider economy in Wales. The scheme aims to increase the number of Welsh graduates who remain in or return to Wales to undertake a Master’s degree in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics or Medicine. These are subject areas where we know there’s a high demand for post-graduate qualifications in Wales.

Additional funding will also be available to undertake a Master’s degree through the medium of Welsh. Increasing the number of Welsh-medium postgraduates is important to the continued development of the Welsh-speaking workforce, which is essential to achieving our target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Providing incentives for graduates to remain in, or return to, Wales is one of my priorities in meeting Wales’s skills needs. Just over two thirds of Welsh-domiciled postgraduate students currently study in Wales and we aim to increase the numbers to 80% of Welsh students. This scheme will support our higher education institutions to incentivise the recruitment of the most talented Welsh students, in line with our Economic Action Plan and my response to the Diamond Review.

The bursaries are in addition to the £17,000 Welsh students starting a postgraduate course this autumn can receive towards their studies and living costs, the most generous student finance package in the UK. Statistics published earlier this year showed a 58% increase in the number of postgraduates applying for student support in Wales, which is an early indication our policies are already bearing fruit.

£1.3m will be allocated to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) for the bursary scheme. Further details on the bursaries will follow.