



**Baroness Barran**

Minister for the School System and Student Finance  
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Rt Rev. and Rt Hon. The Lord Bishop of London DBE  
House of Lords,  
Parliament Square,  
London,  
SW1A 0PW

7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Dear Sarah,

Thank you for speaking during the House of Lords Oral Parliamentary Questions on the Graduate Job Market on the 27 November 2023. I committed to writing to you on the proposal to backfill funding for NHS apprentices.

The NHS Long Term Workforce Plan puts apprenticeships and skills at the heart of the NHS workforce strategy, with 22% of all training for clinical staff through apprenticeship routes by 2031/32, up from 7% today. This plan, with the introduction of the Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship, will make significant strides in making medical professions much more accessible and help ensure a diverse workforce that is more representative of local communities.

To implement this plan, NHS England are working closely with NHS employers and providers to develop an apprenticeship funding approach that better supports employers with the cost of employing an apprentice. The Department for Education (DfE) are providing support on this approach, which includes enabling apprenticeship levy funds to be more easily transferred between employers. You can find out more about NHS England's funding approach in the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan publication in paragraph 48: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/accessible-nhs-long-term-workforce-plan/>.

The DfE has also developed accelerated apprenticeships to support those with industry experience and those progressing from other skills programmes like T-levels and skills bootcamps to reduce time on the programme and complete more quickly by recognising their prior learning. Health Education England has worked with some NHS Trusts to support Nursing Associates' progress onto Registered Nurse apprenticeships – completing one or two years more quickly than their counterparts coming through the typical apprenticeship.

I hope this demonstrates our commitment to supporting apprenticeships in the NHS, and I assure you that we will continue to work closely with the DHSC and Health Education England to ensure apprenticeships continue to work in the sector and support the delivery of the NHS Long-term Workforce Plan.

Thank you again for raising this matter with me. I hope these further details have been useful and I will place a copy in the House libraries.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "Baroness Barran". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**BARONESS BARRAN**

**MINISTER FOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND STUDENT FINANCE**