

Jeane Freeman MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport

John Swinney MSP  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
*Sent by email*

16 February 2021

Dear Jeane and John,

### **COVID disruption to dental schools**

I am writing following Friday's announcement that financial support - in the form of a bursary - was to be extended to dental students required to extend their studies to acquire the necessary clinical experience.

The Association welcomed this move in no uncertain terms. We felt it demonstrated the necessary leadership we expect from all UK governments.

Therefore, we are disturbed by reports this morning that final year students at Aberdeen were informed last night that they will not qualify for government support, by virtue of the fact their extension will not cover a full 12 months.

We would hope this is an administrative oversight that will be immediately rectified. If it is not it will signal a two-tier approach that will protect some students from a mountain of debt, but not others.

We are conscious there also remain questions over the status of English, Welsh, Northern Irish, and overseas students at all Scotland's dental schools.

What every final year student now requires is certainty and support. We await your urgent response.

Yours sincerely,



David McColl  
Chair, BDA Scottish Dental Practice Committee

cc. Jamie Greene MSP, Donald Cameron MSP, Iain Gray MSP, Monica Lennon MSP, Ross Greer MSP, Alison Johnstone MSP, Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP, Beatrice Wishart MSP