



# INSTANT INFO ON POSTGRADUATE BURSARIES 2026

## Instant Information on Postgraduate Bursaries 2026

The NWU Postgraduate Bursary Scheme is designed to provide financial support to deserving postgraduate students who lack the means to afford tertiary education while also recognising outstanding academic performance. This scheme aligns with the University’s strategic objectives as outlined in the Annual Performance Plan.

All students admitted for postgraduate studies will **automatically be considered** for the NWU Honours, Masters and Doctoral bursaries - **no separate application is required**, except for **the Full Cost Master's and PhD Bursary**.

The University reserves the right, should circumstances be justified, to alter the guidelines, conditions and value of the NWU bursary without prior notice to the applicant.

### 1 Bursary Conditions

#### 1.1 Honours Bursaries

- The bursary **is valid only once** during the first year of a full-time Honours degree and must be utilized within a grace period of one year for the completion of the degree.
- An amount of **R26,140** per year is awarded for both scarce and non-scarce skills courses. Note that the minimum academic average required to qualify for the Honours Bursary differs for scarce and non-scarce skills programs. Refer to the summary below for details.
- Eligibility is limited to students **registered for a full-time prescribed Honours degree**, including Postgraduate Diplomas and PGCE. Part-time students, occasional students, and working students are not eligible. Working students are defined as those employed, earning a salary, and for whom work is their primary activity.
- Students with bursaries from Statutory Councils (e.g., NRF, SETA) or other external institutions may qualify for a top-up Honours Bursary. The combined funding cannot exceed R196 460 per annum. The University reserves the right to adjust or cancel the Honours Bursary if this limit is exceeded. Note that the limit is subject to change for 2026.
- The bursary amount must be repaid if the student fails to comply with any of the following conditions:
  - Terminates their studies.
  - Fails to complete the course within the prescribed period.

#### a. Scarce Skills Programmes

To qualify, applicants must have achieved a cumulative **minimum average of 65%** calculated across all undergraduate modules

IDENTIFIED SCARCE SKILLS = BCom and BSc		
Accounting Sciences	Computer Sciences	Logistics
Actuarial Studies	Economics	Mathematical Sciences
Agricultural Sciences	Electronic Sciences	Natural Science Statistics
Architecture	Engineering	Physical Sciences
Auditing Sciences	Financial Management	Risk Management
Biotechnology	Geology	Statistics
Chemical Sciences	Health Science	Transportation Studies
Chemistry	Informational Studies	
<b>See BCom and BSc non-scarce exceptions in the table below</b>		

## b. Non-Scarce Skills Programmes

To qualify, applicants must have achieved a cumulative **minimum average of 70%** calculated across all undergraduate modules

IDENTIFIED NON-SCARCE SKILLS	
Degree	Field of study
BA, BEd, BTh, BHSc	All subjects
BCom	Communication / Economy & Communication / Entrepreneurs / Financial Business / Industrial Psychology / International Trading / Journalism / Labor Relations / Law / Management / Marketing Human / Political Studies / Population Studies / Resources / Social Science / Sociology
BSc	Consumer Science
Diplomas and Certificates	Disaster & Risk / Education / Management / Nuclear and Technology

## c. Other Honours Bursaries

Bursaries are also available for final-year undergraduate students who are high academic achievers and have applied for and been approved for Honours studies, with the expectation of continuing to master's studies. Students will be nominated by their respective faculties for consideration for these full-cost bursaries; no separate application process will be required. The finalisation of nominations is subject to the internal selection and evaluation processes of each faculty, some of which may only be concluded in January. A limited number of bursaries will be awarded, subject to the availability of funds.

### 1.2 NWU Masters Bursaries

- This bursary is available exclusively to postgraduate students registered for a full prescribed master's degree.
- Applicants must have achieved a **minimum average of 60%** for all modules/subjects in their preceding, completed Honours degree.
- Students with a completed four-year B-degree (e.g., BEng, LLB, BPharm, MMus, or BA in Town and Regional Planning) also qualify.
- **Part-time and working students** (those employed, earning a salary, and for whom work is their primary activity) may qualify for a **50% allocation** of the NWU Postgraduate Bursary.
- Full-time students are eligible for **R32,700 per year**, with a total value of R65,400 over two years. Continuation is subject to satisfactory progress.
- Students completing their dissertation in the third year of uninterrupted studies may qualify for a 1-Year Extra Grant of R32,700. This additional bursary is available only to students who previously received the NWU Postgraduate Bursary **without interruption**. The bursary is subject to confirmation from the study leader that students are on track to complete degree.
- Master's students may receive funding from multiple sources, but the total bursary amount may not exceed **R261,900** per annum. The University reserves the right to cancel or adjust the Master's Bursary if this limit is exceeded. Note that the limit is subject to change for 2026.
- The bursary amount must be repaid if a student:
  - Terminates their studies.
  - Fails to complete the degree within the prescribed period.
- Bursary holders must complete the master's degree within a minimum grace period of three (3) years.

### 1.3 NWU Doctoral Bursaries

- This bursary is available exclusively to postgraduate students registered for a fully prescribed Doctoral degree.
- Applicants must have achieved a cumulative **minimum average of 60%** in all modules/subjects of

their preceding, completed master's degree.

- **Part-time students and working students** (defined as those employed, earning a salary, and whose primary activity is work) may apply for a **50% allocation** of the NWU Postgraduate Bursary.
- Full-time students are eligible for **R35,410 per year**, with a total value of R106,230 over three years. Continuation is subject to satisfactory progress.
- Students submitting their thesis in the fourth year of **uninterrupted** studies may qualify for a 1-Year Extra Grant of R35,410. The bursary is subject to confirmation from the study leader that students are on track to complete degrees.
- Master's students who immediately enroll in Doctoral studies after completing their master's degree will have R32,700 carried over to their first year of Doctoral studies. If they do not enroll, the carried-over amount remains only R32,700
- Doctoral students may receive funding from multiple sources, but the total combined bursary amount may not exceed **R327,400** per annum. The University reserves the right to adjust or cancel the Doctoral Bursary if this limit is exceeded. Note that the limit is subject to change for 2026.
- The bursary amount must be repaid if a student:
  - Terminates their studies.
  - Fails to complete the degree within the prescribed period.
- Bursary holders must complete the Doctoral degree within a grace period of three (4) years.

## 2 NWU Postgraduate Merits

- Applicants must have completed their preceding qualifying degree with **an average of 75%** (Cum Laude) to qualify.
- Bursary holders must complete their postgraduate degree within the minimum grace period stipulated by the NWU Postgraduate Bursary Scheme.
- The **bursary will be awarded only once**, during the first year of the postgraduate program.
- The bursary amount must be repaid if a student:
  - Terminates their studies.
  - Fails to complete the degree within the prescribed period.

Academic Merit bursary value	
Average %	Bursary value
75 – 100%	R 5 000

## 3 Full Cost Master's and PhD Bursary Fund

- This bursary is available exclusively to postgraduate students registered **full-time**, master's or PhD degree. - **bursaries will not be awarded to part-time students. Students employed and earning a salary will be considered as part-time students as studies are not the primary activity.**
- Household income less than R600 000 per annum
- Applicants must have achieved  $\geq 70\%$  for their most recent degree. For applicants who do not meet this requirement, faculty motivation must be submitted along with the other supporting documents.
- The bursary will cover tuition fees, as well as R95,000 for living cost allowances.
- Applicants must qualify for faculty and programme-specific admission requirements.
- Preference will be given to students studying STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields, with 65% of allocations to STEM and 35% to non-STEM study fields.
- Programs presented in the Business School are excluded (e.g. MBA, PhD).
- Applicants may not hold other full cost bursaries. Other NWU bursaries will be deducted from the

NWU allocation (no double-funding).

- SADC and permanent RSA residents (subject to submission of SAQA certificate)
- Applications with the following documents must be sent to [finance@nwu.ac.za](mailto:finance@nwu.ac.za):
  - Academic transcripts of the most recent degree
  - Proof of income

## **5 Enquiries**

Students can log their inquiries through the NWU Student Portal by navigating to Helpdesk.