



Ministry
of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2020/11247/R/U

E-mail: ArmySec-Group@mod.gov.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

22 October 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 06 October in which you requested the following information:

Please could you clarify the process for Medical Officers (Doctors) on the Army Medical Services Bursary Scheme who wish to leave the army.

The Army Medical Services Bursary Undertaking states that return of service is for a period of not less than four years from the date of my starting basic training.

- 1. Can I confirm that this means 4 years from the start date of a Bursar's PQO Commissioning Course at RMAS?*
- 2. Is that Medical Officer eligible to optionally leave the British Army without financial penalty earlier than that point for any reason?*
- 3. What is the earliest termination date possible?*
- 4. How would a Medical Officer go about initiating this termination process and who should s/he contact about this?*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I have addressed each question separately below;

1. Yes. The initial commitment is 4 years from the start of Phase 1 training at RMAS (the Commissioning Course Short).
2. Only on the basis of a medical discharge. Should an individual who is part of a scheme which attracts a Return of Service leave or be discharged for any other reason they are likely to have to repay the sum of their Bursary, including any graduation and commissioning payments, and may also be subject to repayment of training costs.
3. The earliest discharge date will be 4 years from the start of Phase 1 training at RMAS (the first day of the Commissioning Course Short). Premature Voluntary Release options do not exist for officers on schemes where there is a stated Return of Service, such as a Bursary Scheme, or whom have received a Financial Retention Incentive.
4. A Medical Officer would initiate their termination process through the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system, following an interview with their Chain Of Command, and having completed at least three years of service from the start of

Phase 1 training. The termination process can be initiated one year prior to the end of the Return of Service, and the officer will be required to serve that year as their year of notice.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

L Williams

Manning Team, Army Secretariat