

Dear Colleague

ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE DISTINCTION AWARDS AND DISCRETIONARY POINTS SCHEMES FOR CONSULTANTS

Summary

1. This letter confirms the arrangements for the Distinction Awards and Discretionary Points schemes during 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Discretionary Points

Arrangements for 23/24.

2. The current arrangements for the allocation of Discretionary Points is not impacted and will continue.
3. Boards are asked to arrange for the necessary processes to be put in place to enable Discretionary Points to be paid to eligible consultants for work done in 2023-24.
4. Boards should note that arrangements for the payment of Discretionary Points should continue to be put in place annually until advised otherwise.

Arrangements for 24-25

5. The Pay uplift agreed by Scottish Consultants for 2024/25 included an uplift in the value of Discretionary Points from £3204 per point to £3600.
6. This uplift takes effect from April 2024 and should be implemented accordingly, in line with existing arrangements.

DL (2025) 01

21 January 2025

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards and Special Health Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (Common Services Agency)
Directors of Human Resources, NHS Boards and Special Health Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (Common Services Agency)

For information

Members, Management Steering Group;
Members, British Medical Association, Scotland; Members, British Dental Association, Scotland

Enquiries to:

Health Workforce Pay, Practice and Partnership Directorate
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Distinction Awards

7. The current arrangements for Distinction Awards will remain in place. Distinction Awards will therefore continue to be frozen with no increase in the value of awards, no new awards and no progression through the award scheme during 2024-25.

8. The information regarding existing Distinction Awards is included as an appendix to this DL

Action

9. Boards are asked to arrange for the necessary processes to be put in place to enable Discretionary Points to be paid to eligible consultants for work done in 2023-24.

10. NHS Boards, Special Health Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (Common Services Agency) are asked to ensure that this letter is drawn to the attention of all interested parties.

11. Employers are asked to make their own arrangements for obtaining additional copies of this Director's Letters (DL) which can be viewed at [NHS Scotland - Publications](#)

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jane Hamilton'.

Jane Hamilton
Deputy Director,
Health Workforce Pay, Practice and Partnership Division

APPENDIX

Holders of Distinction Awards

As at 31 December 2023 there were **89** holders of awards in Scotland, which is 1.5% of the total number of consultants (6,006) in Scotland, as set out below:

Award	Award Holders	% of all Consultants
A+	9	0.2
A	13	0.2
B	67	1.1
Total	89	1.5

A list of all award holders in Scotland as at 31 December 2023 is at Appendix A and related statistical analysis is set out in Appendices B to I.

2023/24 saw a steady number of retirements amongst consultants, both award holding and non-award holding.

An analysis of Awards by age (Appendix C), Gender (Appendix G) and Ethnic Origin (Appendix H) has been made. However, it should be noted that as the Awards are closed, inequalities cannot be addressed and can only be analysed retrospectively with regard to the diversity of Awards Holders as at 2011. In addition, it should be noted that 53 (60%) Award holders did not declare ethnicity.

Due to the fluctuating workforce numbers in response to the needs of the Covid pandemic, the accuracy of the detailed demographic information from each Board cannot be held to the same expectations as in previous years. Equality and Diversity information was calculated based on the percentage reported from each Board as well as NHS Scotland as a whole that can be found here: Overall Staff in Post | Turas Data Intelligence (nhs.scot)

ANALYSIS BY AGE GROUP (All Consultants)

Scotland as at 31 December 2023

Age Group	Award Holders				Non-Award Holders	All Consultants
	A+	A	B	Total		
No Answer	0	0	2	2	0	Cannot be determined as the Non-Award Holders Data is only recorded as 34 and Under, 35 – 54 and 55+
Under 35	0	0	0	0	1,717	
35-39	0	0	0	0	2,931	
40-44	0	0	0	0		
45-49	0	0	0	0		
50-54	0	0	0	0	1,358	
55-59	0	4	21	25		
60-64	1	1	32	34		
65+	8	8	12	28		
Total	9	13	67	89	6,006	6,095

ANALYSIS BY NATURE OF CONTRACT

Scotland as at 30 December 2022

Nature of Contract				
	A+	A	B	NON-AWARD HOLDERS
Honorary	3	6	20	2,726
Fixed Term	0	0	1	403
Permanent	6	7	46	2,877
Total	9	13	67	6,006

ANALYSIS BY NHS BOARD
Scotland as at 30 December 2022

NHS Board	Award Holders								Non-Award Holders		All Consultants
	A+		A		B		Total				
	No.	% Per Area	No.	% Per Area	No.	% Per Area	No.	% Per Area	No.	% Per Area	
Ayrshire and Arran	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	291	99.7%	292
Borders	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	84	100.0%	84
Dumfries and Galloway	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	114	100.0%	114
Fife	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	2	0.6%	3	0.9%	291	99.1%	294
Forth Valley	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	2	0.7%	273	99.3%	275
Grampian	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	4	0.7%	5	0.9%	587	99.1%	592
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	3	0.1%	4	0.2%	23	1.3%	30	1.7%	1719	98.3%	1749
Highland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	274	100.0%	274
Lanarkshire	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%	2	0.4%	530	99.6%	532
Lothian	5	0.5%	5	0.5%	22	2.0%	32	3.0%	1049	97.0%	1081
National ⁽¹⁾	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	6	3.2%	7	3.7%	183	96.3%	190
Orkney	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	10	100.0%	10
Shetland	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	12	100.0%	12
Tayside	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	5	1.0%	7	1.4%	490	98.6%	497
Western Isles	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	11	100.0%	11
Total	9	0.1%	13	0.2%	67	1.1%	89	1.4%	5917	98.6%	6006

Note: (1) Includes consultants working in National Organisations; NHS National Services Scotland (operating name for the Common Services Agency), NHS Education for Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, Public Health Scotland, the Scottish Ambulance Service, the State Hospitals Board for Scotland, the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland, the Golden Jubilee National Hospital and NHS 24.

ANALYSIS BY SPECIALTY
Scotland as at 30 December 2022

Specialty	Total No. of Consultants in Specialty	% of All Consultants	Award Holders								Non-Award Holders	
			A+		A		B		Total			
			No.	% of Specialty	No.	% of Specialty	No.	% of Specialty	No.	% of Specialty	No.	% of Specialty
Anaesthetics	554	9.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	0.7%	4	0.7%	550	99.3%
Cardiothoracic Surgery	33	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	32	99.7%
Chemical Pathology ⁽²⁾	22	0.4%	1	4.5%	0	0.0%	2	9.0%	3	13.5%	19	86.5%
Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	42	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	42	100.0%
Clinical Genetics	9	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	100.0%
Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery	24	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	24	100.0%
Dentistry ⁽¹⁾	274	4.7%	0	0.0%	1	0.4%	2	0.8%	3	1.2%	271	98.8%
Public Health Medicine	50	0.8%	0	0.0%	2	4.0%	1	2.0%	3	6.0%	47	94.0%
General Practice	426	7.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	0.7%	3	0.7%	423	99.3%
Occupational Medicine	9	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	100.0%
Blood Transfusion	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%	1	100.0%	0	0.0%

Haematology	77	1.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.5%	2	2.5%	75	97.5%
Medical Microbiology & Virology	33	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0	33	100.0%
Histopathology	70	1.2%	0	0.00%	0	0.0%	2	2.8%	2	2.8%	68	97.2%
Dermatology	58	1.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.7%	1	1.7%	57	98.3%
General Medicine ⁽³⁾	934	16.1%	5	0.5%	5	0.5%	24	2.6%	34	3.6%	900	96.4%
Geriatric Medicine	228	3.9%	0	0.00%	0	0.0%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	227	99.6%
Paediatrics ⁽⁴⁾	363	6.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%	3	0.6%	360	99.4%
Palliative Medicine	35	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	35	100.00%
Neurology	49	0.8%	0	0.0%	1	2.0%	1	2.0%	2	4.0%	48	96.0%
Rehabilitation Medicine	14	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	100.0%
Respiratory Medicine	92	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%	1	1.0%	91	99.0%
Genito Urinary Medicine	16	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	6.3%	1	6.3%	15	93.7%
Obstetrics & Gynaecology	270	4.5%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	4	1.6%	6	2.4%	264	97.6%
General Psychiatry	301	5.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	2	0.7%	299	99.3%
Psychotherapy	16	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	16	100.00%
Forensic Psychiatry	25	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.0%	1	4.0%	24	96.0%
Psychiatry of Learning Disability	27	0.4%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	27	100.0%
Old Age Psychiatry	49	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	49	100.0%
Diagnostic Radiology ⁽⁵⁾	217	3.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	216	99.6%

Radiotherapy (Clinical Oncology)	66	1.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	66	100.0%
Emergency Medicine ⁽⁶⁾	364	6.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	363	99.7%
ENT Surgery (Otolaryngology)	69	1.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	69	100.0%
General Surgery	399	6.6%	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	3	0.9%	5	1.5%	394	98.5%
Neurosurgery	33	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	33	100.0%
Ophthalmology	92	1.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.1%	1	1.1%	91	98.9%
Trauma & Orthopaedic Surgery	275	4.6%	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	0	0.0%	2	0.7%	273	99.3%
Plastic Surgery	51	0.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	51	100.0%
Paediatric Surgery	31	0.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	3.2%	1	3.2%	30	96.8%
Urology	76	1.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.3%	1	1.3%	75	98.7%
Communicable Diseases	38	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	7.9%	3	7.9%	35	92.1%
Not Specified	193	3.3%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	193	100.0%
Total of all consultants	6006	100%	9		13		67		89		5917	

NOTES:

(1) Includes: oral medicine, orthodontics, paediatric dentistry, restorative dentistry, community dentistry, oral pathology, dental public health, dental and maxillofacial radiology, surgical dentistry and oral surgery

(2) Includes: immunology

(3) Includes: cardiology, clinical pharmacology and therapeutics, clinical genetics, endocrinology and diabetes, gastroenterology, general (acute) medicine, medical oncology, rheumatology, audiological medicine, medical ophthalmology, clinical neurophysiology and renal medicine

(4) Includes: paediatric cardiology

(5) Includes: clinical radiology and nuclear medicine

(6) Includes: intensive care

ANALYSIS BY GENDER
(Of All Current Award Holders)
Scotland as at 30 December 2023

	Male		Female		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
All Consultants	2,855	48%	3151	52%	6006
A+	5	55.5%	4	44.5%	9
A	11	84.6%	2	15.4%	13
B	57	85%	10	15%	67
Total Awards ⁽²⁾	73	82%	16	18%	89
Non-Award Holders	2782	47%	3135	53%	5917

NOTES:

- (1) No. of Male or Female Award Holders as a % of the number of Awards at same Award Level
(2) No of Male or Female Award Holders as % of Total number of Awards

ANALYSIS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN
Scotland as at 30 December 2022

Ethnic Group	Awards Holders			Non-Award Holders
	A+	A	B	
White - Other British	1	1	12	539
White - Irish	1	0	0	77
White - Scottish	0	2	8	3365
White – Other	1	0	5	225
African	0	0	0	47
Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Group	0	0	0	30
Asian - Bangladeshi	0	0	0	6
Asian - Chinese	0	0	1	24
Asian - Indian	0	0	1	71
Asian - Other	0	0	0	41
Asian - Pakistani	0	0	1	35
Caribbean or Black - Black	0	0	0	0
Caribbean or Black - Caribbean	0	0	0	6
Caribbean or Black - Other	0	0	0	6
Other Ethnic Group - Arab	0	0	0	6
Other Ethnic Group - Other	0	0	2	18
Declined	4	5	17	503
Unknown	2	5	20	918
Total	9	13	67	5917