

Health Workforce Directorate
Planning, Strategy and Development Division
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Dear Karen

The Scottish Government writes annually to the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) regarding intake numbers for medical schools in Scotland. This follows careful consideration by the Scottish Government of the advice of the Medical Undergraduate Group, who are tasked on behalf of Scottish Ministers to consult with both higher education institutions and the health service in anticipation of providing a target intake recommendation for medicine.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of medical students coming through the system to meet projected medical workforce demand and ensure a sustainable supply for the future. To this end the 2021 Programme for Government (PfG) committed to increasing medical school places by 500 over the lifetime of this Parliament and doubling the number of widening access places. Three hundred additional places have been created so far.

In 2021-22 the first tranche of this commitment was delivered through over recruitment by medical schools. In 2022-23 the second tranche of 100 students were added, with these places being distributed between the innovative courses including ScotGEM, HCP Med, the Aberdeen GP track course, as well as increases to widening access places and the core intake. In 2023-24 the Scottish Government increased student places by a further 100 places. Pursuant to the deliberations of the Medical Undergraduate Group, in 2024-25 the intake target will not be increased further, as such the total target intake will remain at 1,417.

Ministers remain committed to growing the number of Scottish domiciled medical students studying at Scottish universities as a policy priority, and as you may be aware, the Scottish Government, SFC, NES, and university Deans are jointly taking forward a piece of work examining how the Scottish domiciled and widening access applicant pool can be increased. Universities should, however, note that the Scottish Government wishes the SFC to continue to monitor the number of Scots domiciled students studying medicine in Scotland, including as a proportion of the overall medical schools intake.

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Given the continued significant over recruitment of international students, the Scottish Government has begun work on imposing the intake targets for international students more stringently. We would ask that the SFC closely monitor the number of international students in the system. Advice about next steps, including the possible introduction of penalties for the over recruitment of international students, will be provided in due course.

Should medical schools foresee any difficulties in meeting the targets for 2024-25 beyond normal tolerance levels then they should make this known at the earliest opportunity.

The Scottish Government recommends that the medical undergraduate intake for 2024-25 should be as follows:

- Scots/rUK/Rol/Gibraltar – 1,339
- International (incl. EU) – 78
- **Overall Intake – 1,417**

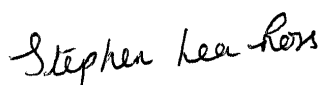
In the 2021 PfG the Scottish Government committed to double the number of widening access (WA) places from 60 to 120. As of the 2023-24 there was 110 WA places. Given the increases in previous years, for 2024-25, the Scottish Government will maintain this target at 110 places in 2024/25, the distribution of places also remains the same. This is detailed in the table below.

AY 2023-24 total widening access intake	
University of Aberdeen	24
University of Dundee	24
University of Edinburgh	25
University of Glasgow	25
University of St. Andrews	12
Total	110

In order to meet this criteria students should be from a SIMD 20 and/or from a care experience background. The intake on the pre-medical entry courses will remain unchanged. The intake at Glasgow will remain at 40 students, and the intake at Aberdeen will remain at 30 students.

I would be grateful if the Scottish Funding Council would now make the necessary arrangements for the 2024-25 intake.

Yours sincerely



Dr Stephen Lea-Ross
Deputy Director, Health Workforce Planning, Strategy & Development