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Dear Karen

## **2022/23 MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATE INTAKE**

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 relevant factors taking into account the advice of the Medical Undergraduate Group.

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 numbers and ensure a sustainable supply for the future. To this end the 2021 Programme for Government committed to increasing medical schools numbers by at least 100 per annum over the lifetime of this Parliament and doubling the number of widening access places.

In 2021, due to continued fall out from the Covid-19 pandemic, exams again did not take place and teacher assessed grades were awarded. As a result more students again met the terms of their conditional offers resulting in over-recruitment by the Scottish medical schools against intake targets. As a result of the over-recruitment the first year of the Programme for Government commitment was effectively met in 2021/22. Nonetheless the Scottish Government asked the SFC to undertake a re-profiling exercise in order to establish an equitable baseline for the 2022/23 intake as the over-recruitment did not fall evenly between the medical schools. Furthermore, for 2022/23 the Scottish Government recommends increasing places by a further 100 and distributing these places, insofar as possible, between the innovative courses which have been commissioned to deliver workforce outcomes and widening access places. The effect of these changes is that there will be a significant increase in intake targets for all Scottish medical schools in comparison with 21/22 targets.

As you are aware the Scots dom policy was introduced in 2019/20 in order to increase the number of Scottish domiciled students studying medicine at Scottish universities. This had to be suspended, however, in 2020/21 due to the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic, the resulting effect on exams and over-recruitment by medical schools. As a similar situation has occurred in 2021/22 with further over-recruitment taking place, the policy has once again



had to be suspended. Ministers remain committed to growing the number of Scottish domiciled medical students studying at Scottish universities as a policy priority. The focus on delivering this outcome has, however, shifted to increasing widening access places, pre-medical school places and other interventions targeted at Scottish domiciled students. Consequently, the Scottish Government is recommending an increase in widening access places for 2022/23 as well as an increase in the pre-medical entry courses at Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities in order to build the pool of widening access students for future years.

Given the unique circumstances for 2022/23 resulting in a significant increase in intake targets above 21/22 levels and, at the request of the Universities, a degree of flexibility in the recruitment of rUK students will be permitted, and no minimum intake target for 'Home Fees' students should be set. 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 overall medical school intake. The Scottish Government may wish to consider medical schools' records in recruiting Scottish domiciled students in the context of the bidding process which it intends to hold in respect of the remaining 300 places under the Programme for Government 2021 commitment.

Should medical schools foresee any difficulties in meeting the targets for 2022/23 beyond normal tolerance levels then they should make this known at the earliest opportunity so that potential flexibilities can be explored.

Given the very significant increase in home grown student numbers envisaged by the Programme for Government and the need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in medical schools and NHS clinical placements for those additional students, it is recommended that international student intake numbers remain at 2021/22 levels.

The Scottish Government recommends that the medical undergraduate intake for 2022-23 should be as follows:

Scots/rUK/RoI/Gibraltar – 1,239  
International (incl. EU) – 78  
**Overall Intake – 1,317**

This intake represents an increase of 200 places above the 21/22 overall intake target of 1,117. Of those 100 places are redistributed from the 21/22 over-recruitment and 100 are additional places to be distributed as follows:

ScotGEM - 15  
HCP Med - 5  
Widening Access - 30  
Aberdeen GP Track - 25  
Additional Core Intake - 25  
Total - 100

This brings the total number of places reserved for Widening Access students to 90. In order to meet this criteria students should be from a SIMD 20 and/or from a care experience background. In addition to this the Scottish Government recommends increasing places on the two pre-medical entry courses at Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities by a total of 20 places.

I would be grateful if the Scottish Funding Council would now make the necessary arrangements for the 2022/23 intake.

Yours sincerely

*Stephen Lea-Ross*

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