

YEAR 2 STUDENT PLACEMENT ALLOCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

(2019/20 Version 1.1))

SCOTTISH GRADUATE ENTRY MEDICINE (SCOTGEM) PROGRAMME (MB CHB)

1. **BACKGROUND.** Year 2 of the ScotGEM programme gives all students the opportunity to spend time living and studying in three of our partner health boards: NHS Dumfries and Galloway, NHS Fife and NHS Highland.

This policy describes how allocations to Year 2 placements are made, including guidance on exceptional circumstances.

2. **YEAR 2 STRUCTURE.** Year 2 is made up of six blocks. The first four blocks are Case-Based Learning (CBL) blocks framed around the 'life-cycle'. Following on from this is the Agents of Change project block. Joined together, these first five blocks of Year 2 are set up to allow students to 'rotate' through all three boards. There are four 'rotation' options for completing these blocks, as shown below. The dates for each block and details of holidays and assessment can be found in the academic calendar.

	Rotation A	Rotation B	Rotation C	Rotation D
Birth and Early Years CBL	NHS Fife	NHS Fife	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries and Galloway
Adult Years CBL			NHS Dumfries and Galloway	NHS Highland
Elderly years CBL	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	NHS Fife	NHS Fife
Chronic and Life-Limiting Illness CBL	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	NHS Highland		
Agent of Change project	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	NHS Highland	NHS Fife	NHS Fife

The sixth and final block of Year 2 is the Patient Journey/Emergency Care (PJEC) block, the location of which must be chosen separately.

PJEC	NHS Dumfries and Galloway	NHS Highland	NHS Fife	NHS Fife
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Of the places available for students in Year 2, approximately 50% are within NHS Fife, 25% within NHS Dumfries and Galloway, 25% within NHS Highland. The total number of student places available within the partner boards for each rotation is fixed and the Year 2 allocation process will operate within the confines imposed by these arrangements.

3. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (allocations). We recognise that for some students, spending significant periods of time in multiple locations may be difficult. We anticipate that a very small number of students would wish to spend all of Year 2 in one location due to exceptional circumstances and we have set up a process to consider this. The process currently only applies to allocation in Fife.

The following exceptional circumstances may be considered; these are in line with current University of St Andrews School of Medicine policy for student allocation in other contexts.

a. Student is a parent or legal guardian of a child or children under the age of 18 who resides primarily with them at an address local to Fife and for whom they have significant caring responsibilities. Evidence required:

- i. A copy/copies of full birth certificate(s)*
- ii. Evidence of residence, in addition to a*
- iii. Statement confirming that the student has significant caring responsibilities for the child/children.*

b. Student is an official, recognised primary carer for someone who is disabled or seriously ill. Evidence required:

- i. An official Care Assessment Plan with the local authority would be required.*

c. Student has a chronic illness or disability for which local follow up is an absolute requirement. Evidence required: In the case of disabilities:

- i. Confirmation by the Disability Support Service at St Andrews that this is a required adjustment,*
- ii. Evidence from a medical specialist. In the case of chronic illness: evidence from a medical specialist (this would need to explain why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than by other treatment centres.)*

Submissions are anonymised prior to consideration by the exceptional circumstances (allocations) group. The group consists of the ScotGEM Year 1 and Year 2 leads (or their deputies) and a Support Team lead who has not been involved with the student. The exceptional circumstances (allocations) group will make the final decision as to whether the circumstances are accepted. We will aim to allocate any students, whose circumstances are accepted, to a full year in Fife. There is no guarantee of this, due to a balance of student numbers required across the partner boards.

Students should discuss their circumstances with Student Support (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk) before submission of an exceptional circumstances request.

4. **REMOTE AND RURAL COMMITMENT.** The ScotGEM Programme has a commitment to developing doctors with an interest in practising remote and rural medicine.

We want to support students to develop the skills and knowledge required to practice in such settings across Scotland. We will therefore give priority for placements in rural boards for the Patient Journey/Emergency Care block to those who express a commitment to remote/rural healthcare.

We ask that anyone with a specific interest in working in either NHS Dumfries and Galloway or NHS Highland completes and submits Appendix A.

5. **ALLOCATION PROCESS.** All students are required to make two choices:

- a) Students must state a preference for one of four possible 'rotation' options (A, B, C or D - see table)
- b) Students must also state a preference for a location for study of the Patient Journey/Emergency Care block

The allocation process takes place in January of Year 1. The process takes into account expressed preferences for both the 'rotation' part of Year 2 (CBL blocks and Agents of Change), and the Patient Journey/Emergency Care block.

All students are invited to submit their preferences at the beginning of Semester 2 of Year 1. Students will be informed of the deadline for submission every year via email and on Solas. Student preferences should be submitted on Solas using the preference questionnaire and a Remote and Rural Commitment Statement (if applicable) submitted to the placements team (email: scotgem-placements@st-andrews.ac.uk).

Once all requests are submitted, the allocation process will take place. If a student does not express a preference, they will be allocated randomly.

There will be two allocation cycles. The first will be for the 'rotation' element (CBL blocks and Agents of Change). Student preferences will be considered. If there are more preferences for a rotation than there are places, students will be allocated randomly.

The final block for Year 2 (Patient Journey/ Emergency Care) will be allocated separately and will preferentially allocate students with a commitment to remote and rural practice to NHS Highland and NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Students with such a commitment are asked to submit details (see Appendix A) along with their preferences.

Students with no clear commitment for remote/rural practice will be able to express a preference for any rotation. After preference is given to those with a remote/rural commitment, a random allocation process will be run in order to allocate remaining students to the available places across the boards.

5. **CONFIRMATION OF ALLOCATION.** All students will be notified of their placement allocation by email early in Semester 2 of Year 1. Changes to allocations will not be considered after the process has finished unless new exceptional circumstances are submitted and accepted. Students who feel their circumstances have changed after allocation should contact

student support (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk) and the Year 2 Lead (email: Year2@scotgem.ac.uk).

Students who are allocated to Year 2 placements but whose progression is delayed (e.g. through deferral, need to re-sit a year etc.) will keep their allocation when they re-commence their studies, unless there has been a change in circumstances.

6. GENERALIST CLINICAL MENTOR (GCM) GROUPS. All students will be allocated to a GCM group for their placements in NHS Fife, NHS Dumfries & Galloway and NHS Highland.

There are 4 GCM practices in NHS Fife, 3 in NHS Highland and 2 in NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

Their locations can be viewed [here](#).

Students are allocated to GCM groups by the ScotGEM programme team. Students are not permitted to request allocation to a specific GCM group and are not able to transfer between groups once they have been allocated, unless there has been a change in circumstances.

a) CBL and Agents of Change Blocks

For the CBL and Agents of Change Blocks, students will remain in the same GCM group for the duration of their placement in any particular health board area.

Each student will therefore rotate through three GCM groups during the CBL and Agents of Change blocks – one in NHS Fife, one in NHS Dumfries & Galloway and one in NHS Highland. Those students with exceptional circumstances who remain in Fife for the duration of Year 2 will change GCM group after the Adult Years CBL.

b) PJEC Block

The PJEC block operates independently from the CBL and Agents of Change rotations. The ScotGEM Placement Coordinator and Year 2 Lead aim to assign students to a different GCM group for the PJEC block, even if they are remaining within the same health board region.

Summary

The ScotGEM Placement Coordinator and Year 2 Lead aim to allocate most students to four separate GCM groups in total over the duration of Year 2.

Students with exceptional circumstances, who remain in Fife for the duration of Year 2, will be allocated to three separate GCM groups in total over the duration of Year 2.

7. Travel Expenses. You are entitled to claim travel expenses for your travel to and from your placements, in accordance with the [ScotGEM Students' Travel and Expenses Policy](#).

Please direct all queries relating to this policy to:

ScotGEM Placement Coordinator

Teaching Support Office

School of Medicine

University of St Andrews

North Haugh

St Andrews

Fife KY16 9TF

phone: +44 (0)1334 46 3089

email: scotgem-placements@st-andrews.ac.uk

Appendix A - Patient Journey/Emergency Care block remote and rural commitment

Priority for placements in rural boards for the Patient Journey/Emergency Care block will be given to those who express a commitment to remote/rural healthcare. Anyone with a specific interest in working in either NHS Dumfries and Galloway or NHS Highland, should complete the following table (no more than 400 words):

Patient Journey/Emergency Care Block - Remote and Rural Commitment Statement	
Name of student:	Date:
Preferred location of study for Patient Journey/Emergency Care block:	
Personal connection to area:	
Reason for interest in remote/rural medicine:	
Previous experience of remote/rural working:	
Any other relevant information:	

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Author:	Eleri Williams (eww1), Eleanor Morris (esm9)	Approval Committee:	
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Date	Revision Description	Major Changes
01/08/2019	Published version	
11/12/2019	Revised version	Changing of wording to specify 'exceptional' circumstances Amending procedure for preference selection to include Solas