

YEAR 2 STUDENT PLACEMENT ALLOCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

(Version 1.5)

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 comprises six blocks, each of six weeks' duration. The first four blocks are Case-Based Learning (CBL) blocks. Following these is the Agents of Change (AoC) project block. Together, these first five blocks of Year 2 enable students to 'rotate' through all three regional health boards.

There are four rotation options for completing these blocks, as shown below (A, B, C, D). The dates for each block can be found in the academic calendar.

	Rotation A	Rotation B	Rotation C	Rotation D
Adult Years CBL	NHS Fife	NHS Fife	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries & Galloway
Elderly years CBL	NHS Fife	NHS Fife	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland
Chronic and Life Limiting Illness CBL	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Fife	NHS Fife
Birth and Early Years CBL	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland	NHS Fife	NHS Fife
Agents of Change: Healthcare Improvement Project	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland	NHS Fife	NHS Fife

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

Patient Journey/ Urgent Care	NHS Fife	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland
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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 outside Fife may be difficult. We anticipate that a very small number of students would wish to spend all of Year 2 within Fife due to exceptional circumstances. We have set up a process to consider such circumstances.

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 and mirror those used by the Foundation Programme.

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.* Copy 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.

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

- i.* In the case of disabilities: 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 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 Deputy Programme Director (and/or the Y1 and Y2 Module Controllers) 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 health boards.

Students must 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 practise in such settings across Scotland. We will therefore give priority for placements in rural boards for the Patient Journey/Urgent 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 submit two separate preferences:

- a) Students must state a preference for one of four possible 'rotation' options (A, B, C or D - see table above)
- b) Students must also state a preference for a location for study of the Patient Journey/Urgent Care block (NHS Fife, NHS Dumfries & Galloway, or NHS Highland - see table above)

All students are invited to submit their preferences in March of Year 1. Students will be informed of the submission deadlines for their academic year via email and on Solas. Student preferences are submitted on Solas using preference questionnaires. If a student expresses no preference, they will be allocated randomly. If applicable, a Remote and Rural Commitment Statement (Appendix A) should also be submitted to the placements team (email: scotgem-placements@st-andrews.ac.uk).

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

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

The second will be for the final block for Year 2 (Patient Journey/ Urgent Care) and will preferentially allocate students with a commitment to remote and rural practise 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 to undertake PJUC in any of the regional health boards. 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.

6. CONFIRMATION OF ALLOCATION. All students will be notified of their regional placement allocations in April of Year 1.

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 allocations when they re-commence their studies, unless there has been a change in exceptional circumstances.

Changes to allocations for the CBL/Agents of Change blocks will not be considered unless new exceptional circumstances are submitted and accepted. Students who consider their circumstances have changed following allocation should contact student support (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk).

It is recognised that some students, having had experience in each health board region, may wish to subsequently change their PJUC allocation. Requests for swaps to the regional allocations for PJUC blocks can be considered in Year 2. The following caveats apply:

- The placements team will not arrange the swaps for students; swaps must be discussed and agreed by the students involved in the swap.
- Swaps must be on a one-for-one basis and involve no more than two students.
- The swap window will be open from the start of Block D to the end of Block D. The placements team will notify students each year when the swap window opens, and the deadline for it closing. No further reminders of the deadline will be issued.
- Once agreed between themselves, each of the students involved in the swap must individually notify the placements team by completing and submitting Appendix B. Requests received after the deadline has passed will not be considered.
- Once both parties have submitted Appendix B and the change is approved, the placements team will inform the regional health boards of the agreed change.
- Once the agreed change is finalised, the decision to swap cannot be reversed unless there is a change to exceptional circumstances. If this applies, the student(s) should contact student support (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk).
- Students are advised that swap requests cannot be guaranteed.
- Students are advised that, following a swap, it may not be possible to place them in a GCM group for their PJUC block different to one they were previously allocated for CBL/AoC.

7. 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 currently 5 GCM practices in NHS Fife, 2 in NHS Highland and 3 in NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

Their locations can be viewed in Appendix 3 of the 'ScotGEM Student Placement Accommodation and Travel Expenses Policy', in MedHandbook.

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 exceptional 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 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 block.

b) PJUC Block

The PJUC block operates independently from the CBL and Agents of Change rotations. The ScotGEM Placement Coordinator aims to assign students to a different GCM group to those they were in for the CBL and Agents of Change blocks, even if they are remaining within the same health board region for blocks E and F.

In 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.

8. TRAVEL EXPENSES. You are entitled to claim travel expenses for your travel to and from your placements, in accordance with the 'ScotGEM Student Placement Accommodation and Travel Expenses Policy', in MedHandbook.

Please direct any 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 1871

email: scotgem-placements@standrews.ac.uk

Appendix A - Patient Journey/Urgent Care Block - Remote and Rural Commitment

Priority for placements in rural boards for the Patient Journey/Urgent 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/Urgent Care Block - Remote and Rural Commitment Statement	
Name of student:	Date:
Preferred location of study for Patient Journey/Urgent 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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Appendix B - Patient Journey/Urgent Care Block – Notification of Swap Request

Each student wishing to submit a request to change their PJUC regional allocation should complete the form below by the stated deadline and return it to the ScotGEM Placement Coordinator.

The deadline for submission of this form is 5pm on the last Friday of Block D (Chronic and Life-Limiting Illnesses).

The placements team will notify the class each year of the swap window being open and the deadline for it closing. Following this notification you will receive no further reminders of the deadline. Requests received after the deadline has passed will not be considered.

Patient Journey/Urgent Care Block – Notification of Swap Request	
Name of student submitting notification	
Original PJUC allocation (please circle/delete as applicable)	NHS D&G/NHS Fife/NHS Highland
Requested PJUC allocation (please circle/delete as applicable)	NHS D&G/NHS Fife/NHS Highland
Name of student with whom swap is being requested	
Date received (office use only)	

I confirm that the student I have named above has agreed to this swap request

NAME

SIGNED

DATE

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Author:	Andrew O'Malley (aso2), Eleanor Morris (esm9)	Approval Committee:	
Consultees:			
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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
06/10/2020	Revised version (2020/21 Version 1.2)	Updating terminology: PJEC to PJUC Updating terminology: Module Controller Earlier deadline date for submission of preferences Swap window for PJUC block - procedure Added Appendix B
05/08/2021	Revised version (2021/22 Version 1.3)	Terminology changed from 'Year 1 and Year 2 Leads' to 'Deputy Programme Director' Update to numbers of GCM practices in D&G
02/11/2021	2021/22 Version 1.4	Re-order of CBL blocks (Birth & Early Years no longer first) Update to number of GCM practices in Fife Update to ScotGEM Placement Coordinator phone number
11/01/2023	Revised version (2022/23, v1.5)	Update to preference submission dates