

SCOTGEM YEAR 2 STUDENT PLACEMENT ALLOCATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

(Version 1.8)

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 four blocks. The first two blocks are Case-Based Learning (CBL) blocks. The third block is a mix of CBL and Agents of Change (AoC). The final block is Patient Journey Urgent Care.

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
CBL1	NHS Fife	NHS Fife	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries & Galloway
CBL2	NHS Fife	NHS Fife	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland
CBL3 & AoC	NHS Highland	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Fife	NHS Fife
PJUC	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	NHS Highland	NHS Fife	NHS Fife

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. Of the places available for students in Year 2, approximately 50% are within NHS Fife, 25% within NHS Dumfries and Galloway, and 25% within NHS Highland

3. **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES (allocations).** We recognise that for some students, moving around the ScotGEM partner health boards may not be possible. We anticipate that a very small number of students would wish to spend all of Year 2 in one location (usually 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 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.

To have exceptional circumstances considered an email should be sent to scotgem-placements@st-andrews.ac.uk outlining circumstances, with required supporting evidence (in accordance with submission dates published on Solas)

Submissions are anonymized prior to consideration by the exceptional circumstances (allocations) group. The group should comprise the following:

- ScotGEM Deputy Programme Director (Y1/2)
- Year 1 Lead
- Year 2 Lead
- University of St Andrews Pro-Dean (or a delegate)
- University of Dundee student support lead

The exceptional circumstances (allocations) group will make the final decision as to whether the circumstances are accepted. Students will receive email notification of the outcome. We will aim to allocate any students whose circumstances are accepted to a full year in one location, however there is no guarantee of this due to a balance of student numbers required across the partner health boards. Accommodation will not be provided for students who have their exceptional circumstances accepted and remain in one location for the duration of year 2.

Unless Med Support are already aware of the circumstances that form the basis for your request, you should arrange to discuss your circumstances with them (email: medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk) before submission of an exceptional circumstances request. Any student who is planning to submit an exceptional circumstances request and has queries on obtaining evidence for their request can liaise with the Med Support team via medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Students whose progression is delayed (e.g. through deferral, need to re-sit a year etc.) and held exceptional circumstances in the preceding year should contact Med Support (email: medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk) to have this reviewed.

4. ALLOCATION PROCESS. All students are invited to submit their preference for one of the four possible rotation options (A, B, C or D, see table above).

All students are invited to submit their preference in Semester 2 of Year 1 using a preference questionnaire (in accordance with submission dates published on Solas). Students will be informed of the submission deadlines for their academic year via email and on Solas. If a student expresses no preference, they will be allocated randomly.

The allocation process takes place shortly after the closure of the questionnaire submission deadline. Students will be allocated to the available places across the boards; if there are more preferences for rotations than there are places, students will be allocated randomly to another rotation. All students will be notified by email of their rotation allocation.

5. SWAP WINDOW

Following confirmation of allocations, there will be a two-week window for any students to arrange a mutually agreeable swap with another student. Under no circumstances should a student be made to feel pressured into agreeing a swap. Once both students have agreed to swap rotations, both students should email the placements team (email: scotgem-placements@andrews.ac.uk) within the two-week timeframe. 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 on the day allocations are confirmed and will close two weeks later. The placements team will notify students of the dates in the confirmation email, no further reminders of the deadline will be issued.
- 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 medsupport (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk).
- Students are advised that swap requests cannot be guaranteed

Changes to allocations will not be considered unless new exceptional circumstances are submitted and accepted. Students who consider their circumstances have changed following allocation should contact medsupport (email: medsupport@scotgem.ac.uk). Any new exceptional circumstances will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis.

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.

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.

Students will remain in the same GCM group for the duration of each block.

7. 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

email: scotgem-placements@standrews.ac.uk

Author:	Andrew O'Malley (aso2), Eleanor Morris (esm9)	Approval Committee:	
Consultees:			
Location/s (Med Handbook):			
Location of source file:			
Access Level: (Public/University/School Staff)	Public		
This document may/may not (delete as appropriate) be released under the Freedom of Information Act without prior discussion. (If may not is			

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
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
06/03/2023	Revised version (2022/23, v1.6)	Addition of CBL/AoC rotation swap window
18/04/23	Revised version (2023/24, v1.7)	Removal of Remote & Rural Commitment Statement requirement Removal of Notification of Swap Request form Removal of repeating students keeping previous allocations Addition of choosing 2 preferences of rotation instead of 1
06/02/24	Revised version (2024/25, v1.8)	Revision of policy due to change in structure of year 2 (i.e update to structure/rotations, removal of separate PJUC allocation), update to composition of exceptional circumstances (allocation) group, changed exceptional circs to enable spending all of year 2 in one location other than Fife in certain circumstances. Wording updated re contacting medsupport before submitting exceptional circs application.