

Reference:	FOI.18192 & 18208.25
Subject:	Incremental credit
Date of Request:	26 and 27 August 2025

Requested:

FOI.18192

Can I please ask for the following information re Incremental Credit and the Consultant recruitment process:

1. When did this process begin for the Hywel Dda Health Board?
2. Of the total number of consultant appointments made since the Incremental Credit process began, on how many occasions/recruitments has this been needed?
3. What have been the reasons for Incremental Credit to apply to the individual cases?

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4. The guidance or SOP for the Incremental Credit process for the recruitment of medical staff/consultants
5. The policy or SOP for confirming salary offers to successful recruits and their timing in relation to provisional and final job offers by the Board

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) is unable to provide you with all of the information requested, as it is estimated that the cost of answering your request would exceed the “appropriate limit” as stated in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The “appropriate limit” represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours (or 2½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

In order to provide you with the data requested for questions 2 and 3, the UHB would need to undertake a manual search of the successfully appointed Consultants’ commencement records to identify if incremental credit was applied for and the reason, as this information is not recorded centrally.

Additionally, due to the non-specific time period requested, some of the information may not be stored electronically, and may be in paper based form and stored in offsite archives. Any information pertaining to your request that may be stored in this manner is not easily identifiable or accessible.

The UHB is therefore applying an exemption under Section 12 of the FoIA, which provides an exemption from a public authority’s obligation to comply with a request for information where the cost of compliance is estimated to exceed the appropriate limit.

However, under Section 16 of the FoIA, we are required as a public authority, to provide advice and assistance so far as it is reasonable to individuals who have made a request under the FoIA, this can include assisting a requestor to further refine their request.

The UHB suggests you consider refining your request by providing a smaller, more specific timeframe, to assist us in identifying any relevant information. I

However, the UHB provides the accessible information it holds below.

1. The UHB does not hold the information requested. However, the UHB confirms that starting salaries for Consultants and all Medical and Dental (M&D) staff in Wales are outlined in Medical and Dental (W) – Pay, Terms and Conditions of Service handbook, which have been used for over two (2) decades. The handbook is available on the NHS Confederation website which can be accessed via the link provided below:

[Medical and Dental \(W\) - Pay, Terms and Conditions of Service | NHS Confederation](#)

2. & 3. An exemption under Section 12 of the FoIA has been applied. However, under Section 16 of the FoIA, the UHB can confirm that incremental credit application forms are used for M&D appointees from outside of Wales only.

4. & 5. The UHB does not hold a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), as the Medical and Dental (W) – Pay, Terms and Conditions of Service handbook determines the starting salaries of all M&D staff. The UHB provides below the current onboarding process:

- Candidate is interviewed
- Interview outcome shared with candidate.
 - At the same time the appointable candidate is asked to submit their payslip (if within Wales) or complete and submit the incremental credit form (if outside of Wales).
- Upon receipt of all relevant information from the applicant the salary will be calculated.
- A starting salary panel meet weekly to discuss and agree the starting salary calculation.
- The starting salary is then approved by the Associate Medical Director and shared with the applicant within their conditional offer letter.
- Salaries are confirmed in writing to successful recruits as part of their confirmed offer of employment.

The timeline for determining starting salaries is dependent on the time it takes to receive all relevant information to calculate the starting salary.