

<b>Reference:</b>	FOI.20494.26
<b>Subject:</b>	Membership of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom (MRCP (UK)) diploma
<b>Date of Request:</b>	19 May 2026

**Requested:**

Thank you for your letter – FOI.20328.26.

Can we clarify that I specified the Medical Directorate? i.e. Consultants and SAS within the **GENERAL MEDICINE DIRECTORATE ONLY**.

Are you able to reconsider my request within the single specified Medical Directorate as initially requested?

**Response:**

Following review of your request for an Internal Review received 19 May 2026, Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) has identified that the request detailed above is a new refined request for information which has been clarified in response FOI.IR.20471.26.

The UHB is unable to provide you with the refined 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 2 ½ working days) in determining whether the UHB holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

In order to provide you with the information requested, the UHB would be required to undertake a manual trawl of the personal files for Consultants and Staff, Associate Specialist, and Specialty (SAS) doctors within the General Medicine specialty, to identify those who do not hold the MRCP UK qualification, as the information requested is not centrally recorded.

The UHB can confirm that three hundred and seventy (370) Consultants and two hundred and eight seven (287) SAS doctors were employed within the General Medicine specialty, as at 20 May 2026. It is estimated that a manual search of these records would exceed the 18 hours stipulated within the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA). Based on the number of Consultants and SAS doctors employed, conducting a search, taking a minimum of five (5) minutes per digital record, would exceed the ‘appropriate limit’, costing the UHB the following:

657 @ 5 minutes per record = 54 hours and 45 minutes  
54 hours and 45 minutes @ £25 per hour = £1,368.75

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 that you may refine your request by reducing the timeframe requested to a recent three (3) month period e.g. 1 March to 31 May 2026. However, the UHB would still be required to undertake a manual trawl all Consultant and SAS doctor personal files within the General Medicine specialty to be undertaken to identify if any do not hold the MRCP UK qualification. Therefore, the outcome would be dependent on the number of records identified within a shorter time period.

However, completion of relevant Royal College Examinations (or equivalent) is included as part of the essential criteria within the Locum Consultant Job Description/Personal Specification and the criterion is assessed on the application form during the recruitment process.