

Application of incremental credit to new entrant Consultants

Frequently asked questions

29th September 2015

Title	Application of incremental credit to new entrant Consultants – Frequently asked questions
Version	1.
Date issued	29 th September 2015
Approved by	Health Service Executive, Department of Health, Irish Medical Organisation
Queries to	Email: doctors@hse.ie tel: 01 6352445

Purpose of these frequently asked questions

This document is intended to assist with and clarify how incremental credit is applied to new entrant Consultants to the public health service under the 'Framework for the application of incremental credit to new entrant Consultants to the Irish Public Health Service' agreed by the Health Service Executive(HSE), Department of Health (DoH) and the Irish Medical Organisation (IMO).

It also addresses the application of incremental credit to Consultants employed under the Department of Health October 2012 Consultant salary scale.

This document has been agreed by the HSE, DoH and IMO. Any amendment to the document will be subject to the agreement of each party.

1. How can a Consultant avail of incremental credit?

Incremental credit is available up to point 6 of the revised salary scales for relevant post-CSCST experience (section 2.1) and relevant qualifications (section 2.1) on the basis of verification in writing being received by the employer prior to incremental credit being awarded. The successful candidate for a Consultant position should outline to the employer the previous experience and qualifications they wish to have considered for incremental credit. The doctor must submit a copy of the qualification(s) and letter(s) from previous employer(s) verifying length of service in prior positions to the prospective employer. As incremental credit will be given up to the date of actual commencement of employment, the application should include the date that the current employment will cease and the proposed date of commencement in the new post. Anyone appointed after October 2012 will be awarded credit for time working in the Consultant post to which they were appointed from that time up to 1st September 2014. Anyone appointed after 28th January 2015 will be awarded credit from the time they took up their post.

2. Can a Consultant get incremental credit for service less than a full year?

A Consultant's incremental date is adjusted to take account of part of a year's service. For example, a Consultant with qualifying service of two years and three months would be awarded two increments on appointment (point 3). The Consultant would receive their next annual increment after nine months satisfactory service when the combination of qualifying and actual service would be the full year. This does not affect probation. This is subject to incremental credit freezes that might be applied under national agreements such as the Haddington Road Agreement.

3. What documentation is required to process incremental credit?

Previous experience can be verified by submitting a letter from the previous employer(s) outlining the position employed and the commencement and end date of the period of employment. It is normally possible to request letter verifying service through the HR or Administration Office in the previous Hospital/employer.

A copy of qualification(s) obtained can be submitted to the employer to verify qualifications outlined in section 2.2 of the framework.

Not all trainees apply for a CSCST certificate immediately on completion of training. In this context, in circumstances where training has been completed prior to the date of award of CSCST a letter from the appropriate training body confirming the date on which the trainee was eligible for award of certificate will suffice.

4. How much incremental credit can a Consultant get for time spent undertaking a fellowship?

All time spent in a relevant post-CSCST training position is reckonable for incremental credit.

5. Can a Consultant receive incremental credit for time spent undertaking a fellowship prior to undertaking my CSCST?

Only time spent in a relevant post-CSCST training position is reckonable for incremental credit. Pre-CSCST training and experience is not reckonable for incremental credit.

6. Can incremental credit be awarded for time worked in a temporary contract?

Yes. Time spent as a Consultant-equivalent in permanent or temporary employment is eligible for incremental credit where the experience was obtained in a recognised teaching hospital or an equivalent facility. In this regard, such service must be satisfactory, remunerated and have taken place in a teaching hospital / agency regulated by the state for the purposes of medical training. Satisfactory evidence of same must be provided.

7. How much incremental credit does doctor receive if they have taken time out of work to undertake one of the Master's degrees listed in 2.2 of the framework document prior to appointment as a Consultant?

A Consultant may be granted up to 2 years' incremental credit for a Master's degrees listed under section 2.2 of the document or equivalent qualifications obtained from recognised third level institutions outside of the State.

8. Will a doctor receive incremental credit if they have undertaken one of the Master's degrees listed in 2.2 of the framework document while working prior to appointment as a Consultant?

An arrangement has been agreed for a fixed period of two years (expiring on 30th June 2017) that 2 years incremental credit will also be awarded if the Master's degree was undertaken during training or while working post-CSCST. For example, a doctor that undertakes a Master's degrees over 2 years while working in a relevant Post-CSCST fellowship for 2 years will be awarded 4 incremental credits (2 for the Master's degrees + 2 for 2 years Post-CSCST experience) and commences on point 5 of the Consultant's scale on appointment.

9. How is incremental credit applied to a doctor that has been awarded a PhD over 5 years?

Time out spent in the pursuit of a higher level qualification (during training or post-CSCST) may be granted up to a maximum of 3 years for a PhD. In circumstances where the applicant did not take time out to pursue the higher level qualification (to the maximum outlined in no 1 above) a maximum of 2 years incremental credit may be awarded for a PhD. In the case of a doctor working while pursuing a PhD please see FAQ22

10. What credit do Higher Diplomas and other qualifications not listed earn?

Higher diploma's and other courses not listed are not reckonable for incremental credit.

11. What Master's degrees level qualifications are eligible for incremental credit?

The following Master's degrees level qualifications are outlined in section 2.2 of the framework:

- MSc. in Healthcare Ethics and Law (RCSI)
- MSc. in Human Factors & Patient Safety (RCSI)
- MSc in Healthcare Management (RCSI)
- MSc in Health Services Management (TCD)
- MA in Healthcare Management (IPA/UCD)
- MSc in Quality & Safety in Healthcare Management (RCSI)
- MSc Healthcare Risk Management & Quality (UCD)
- MSc in Leadership (RCSI)
- MSc in Leadership in Health Professions Education (RCSI)
- Master's degree of Surgery (MCh by module) (RCSI)
- MCh (by research) (UCD, NUIG, UCC, TCD etc.)

- MSc in Medical Professionalism (CAI)
- MSc in Organisational Change & Leadership Development (RCSI)
- MSc Forensic Medicine (UCD)
- MSc Healthcare Informatics (UCD)
- MSc Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (UCD)
- Master's degree Art Obstetrics (UCD)
- Master's degrees in Public Health (MPH) (Various Colleges, USA/UK)
- MSc in Evidence Based Healthcare (Oxford)
- MBA (Various Colleges)
- MD (Various Colleges).
- MSc achieved by Research
- MSc in Molecular Medicine (TCD)
- Masters in Medicine
- MSc in Cognitive Psychotherapy

Equivalent qualifications obtained from recognised third level institutions outside of the State may also be recognised for incremental credit.

Details of additional equivalent qualification approved for incremental credit will be added to this FAQ document as they arise.

12. Are there any cases where doctors can be awarded incremental credit beyond point 6 of the salary scale?

In exceptional circumstances application may be made for entry above the 6th point of the salary scales.

13. What is the process for seeking incremental credit beyond the 6th point of the scale?

Following a recommendation made by the interview panel and where the employer agrees, the employer will prepare a business case outlining the justification for incremental credit at the higher point. The employer is required to submit this business case to National HR HSE for consideration and approval. Following consideration and acceptance of the business case from the employer National HR HSE will forward the business case to the Department of Health seeking approval of that Department and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for commencement above the 6th point of the scales. The final decision will be issued in writing from the Department of Health.

14. How will I progress through the incremental scale under HRA?

Incremental progression under the Public Service Agreements (including the Haddington Road Agreement and Lansdowne Road Agreement) is currently being considered by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and further guidance will issue in due course.

15. From what date is the increment credit applied?

Incremental credit can be awarded in line with the framework document and applied from the date the Consultant commences in the new post.

16. Will a Consultant that commenced before the LRC agreement, for example in December 2014, get paid incremental credit and have it applied retrospectively?

Consultants who were interviewed after 1st October 2012 and commenced work under the Department of Health 2012 Consultant pay scale will have incremental credit applied retrospectively to 1st September 2014.

17. What options does a doctor have if they wish to have more credit applied to their experience and qualifications then they have been offered?

The employer awards incremental credit following consideration of the applicant's qualifications and experience and the recommendation made by the interview panel in line with the framework document. The Consultant should speak with the prospective employer in the first instance. The employer may refer a case to the CICC to request a decision regarding an exceptional case not dealt with in the policy document or to address an appeal from a doctor via the employer following which the CICC make a final decision. The final decision by the CICC may be appealed by the Consultant under the Grievance and Disputes procedure set out in the Consultant Contract 2008.

18. Who can I contact to clarify issues related to incremental credit?

This FAQ document will address most queries and will be updated as new queries are raised and answered. If you require clarification on a matter not already addressed in the Framework document or FAQs please email doctors@hse.ie

19. Is maternity leave reckonable for incremental credit?

Yes, paid and unpaid maternity leave taken (while employed in a role that is reckonable for incremental credit) is eligible for incremental credit.

20. If someone is working part-time for a period is the time reckonable for incremental credit the hours worked (eg half time for 1 year = 6months) or the full period (eg half time 1 year = 1 year)?

Yes, part-time working is reckonable for incremental credit. Half time per week over a year would be awarded a full years' incremental credit.

21. Is a Clinical Research Fellow post reckonable for incremental credit?

Relevant Post CSCST experience is reckonable for incremental credit. If the Clinical Research Fellowship meets both of those requirements the experience would be reckonable.

22. Can a Consultant gain a credit for relevant experience and simultaneously a credit for a relevant qualification?

Credit for relevant experience and relevant qualifications could be regarded as overlapping for a period of no more than 2 years' incremental credit. This is permitted in circumstances where the applicant did not take time out to pursue the higher level qualification (to the maximum outlined in no 1 above) - a maximum of 2 years incremental credit may be awarded for a Masters Degree or PhD. This arrangement is for a fixed period of two years expiring on 30th June 2017.

23. “Relevant service and qualifications must be verified prior to incremental credit being awarded” – from whom does the Consultant request verification of service?

Verifications of service are requested from the previous employer (usually through the Medical HR or HR Dept).

24. Under 2.2 Relevant Qualifications – it specifies certain universities after the first 19 qualifications and “various colleges” after the last 2. If a university is specified e.g. Master of Surgery (MCh by module) (RCSI) and a Consultant has MSc of Surgery (Jordan University) does this count towards incremental credit?

Under section 2.2 of the document, a Consultant may be granted incremental credit for equivalent Master’s qualifications obtained from recognised third level institutions outside of the State subject to sign-off by the committee. The list of qualifications at masters’ level will be updated regularly and posted on the HSE website.

25. Does time spent as a non-permanent Consultant (e.g. locum or temporary) count?

Yes - if the individual held the qualifications associated with a Consultant post during the period claimed e.g. CSCST.

26. Does time spent acting up as a Consultant count towards incremental credit?

No. Not unless the individual held the qualifications associated with a Consultant post during the period claimed e.g. CSCST.

27. By what date does a doctor need to have obtained a relevant qualification to be able to seek incremental credit for completing the qualification?

A doctor that has successfully completed a relevant masters or PhD level qualification during or following completion of specialist training and prior to commencement as a Consultant is entitled to a maximum of two years’ incremental credit. The individual should have received the qualification by the date of commencement of employment.

28. How will the incremental credit apply to new doctors and doctors already in place?

As incremental credit will be given up to the date of actual commencement of employment, the application should include the date that the current employment will cease and the proposed date of commencement in the new post. This means that:

- Individuals employed after 1st September (2014) or 28th January (2015) can accrue credit up to the point at which they commence the new employment.
- Individuals employed in Consultant posts on the October 2012 salary scales from 1st October 2012 to 27th September 2014 can accrue incremental credit from the date of their employment on the October 2012 scale up to the point at which they commence the new employment.

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