



Scottish Funding Council
Comhairle Maoineachaidh na h-Alba

SFC Announcement

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University Intake Targets for Medicine AY 2026-27



University Intake Targets for Medicine in AY 2026-27

Issue Date:	11 May 2026
Reference:	SFC/AN/11/2026
Summary:	Announcement of university intake targets for the controlled subject of Medicine in Academic Year 2026-27.
FAO:	Principals / Directors of Scotland's universities, and the general public.
Further Information:	funding@sfc.ac.uk

Table of Contents

University intake targets for Medicine in AY 2026-27	4
Purpose.....	4
Background.....	4
AY 2026-27 intake targets.....	4
Widening Access places	4
International students	4
Funding and funded student places.....	5
Further information	5
Table 1: Medicine intake targets for AY 2026-27	6

University intake targets for Medicine in AY 2026-27

Purpose

1. I am writing to announce the university intake targets for the controlled subject of Medicine for Academic Year (AY) 2026-27. The targets are set out in [Table 1](#) below.

Background

2. SFC receives annual guidance from the Scottish Government's Health Workforce Directorate, providing recommended intakes for medical schools in Scotland, following consideration of medical undergraduate numbers by the Medical Undergraduate Group. The letter of guidance for AY 2026-27 is provided in Annex A, and guidance on the way in which Linda Norgrove Foundation-supported students should be counted in our statistical returns is included in Annex B.

AY 2026-27 intake targets

3. In line with Scottish Government guidance, the university intake target for Medicine for AY 2026-27 will remain at 1,417 students, with an international student recruitment cap of 10% introduced for the first time.
4. Ministers remain committed to increasing the numbers of Scottish-domiciled students studying Medicine and we will continue to monitor the number of students eligible to pay 'home fees' studying Medicine in Scotland.
5. In addition, the total intake target for the Gateway to Medicine programmes at the universities of Aberdeen and Glasgow has been maintained at 70 students.

Widening Access places

6. The intake target for Widening Access (WA) students in AY 2026-27 will remain at 110 students. The distribution of the WA intake target also remains unchanged.
7. WA students must be from SIMD 20 areas and/or be from a care-experienced background to meet Ministerial aims and aspirations on WA and participation.

International students

8. Owing to Scottish Government concern at continued over-recruitment of international students, a 10% cap on international students has been introduced for AY 2026-27.
9. It is expected that there will be no decrease in the recruitment of students eligible for funding as a result of the international cap being introduced.

10. This new cap will replace the previous international intake target and is calculated as being 10% of each Medical School's total intake target. There is no separate, additional international intake target. This cap will apply to all international students entering year one of the programme from AY 2026-27.
11. In addition to the 10% international cap, the Scottish Government have indicated that there should be a 3% over-recruitment tolerance threshold. However, given that universities will be at an advanced stage of their recruitment cycle for AY 2026-27, we recognise that offers may have already been made to students that must be honoured and this may result in the cap being exceeded this year. We will work with colleagues in the Scottish Government to explore options for recovery of funding, where universities breach the 3% tolerance for international students from AY 2027-28.
12. We recognise that there are existing arrangements where international students transfer to Scottish medical schools in year three of study, and while these students are not included in the international cap, their recruitment should not exceed the number of students who withdraw in years one and two of each cohort. The arrangement for international students transferring into year 3 of the medicine programme will not be in place for AY 2026-27, but the Scottish Government is intending to apply it to future years intakes and to develop it in partnership with key stakeholders.
13. It has also been decided that from AY 2027-28, the Medical ACT Levy will be increased to the full amount of £21,000 per year for all international medical students.

Funding and funded student places

14. SFC may recover funding from universities who under-recruit against the annual intake target by more than 3%. SFC may also apply financial penalties to universities who over-recruit their intake target by more than 10%. Any action will be subject to the consideration of any mitigating evidence presented by the university. Specific allocations of funded student places will be provided in the final university funding announcement for AY 2026-27 at the end of May.
15. Should Medical Schools foresee any difficulties in meeting the intake targets for AY 2026-27 beyond normal tolerance levels (as set out above), they should make this known to SFC at the earliest opportunity using the contact details below.

Further information

16. Please contact the Funding team in our Investment & Research Directorate, email: funding@sfc.ac.uk.

Helen Cross

Director, Investment & Research

Table 1: Medicine intake targets for AY 2026-27

Institution	Core intake target for AY 2026-27	Widening Access	ScotGEM ¹	GP Track	HCP-Med	ScotCOM	Total intake target for AY 2026-27 ²	International cap ³	Gateway to Medicine
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Aberdeen, University of	219	24	-	55	-	-	298	30	30
Dundee, University of	196	24	-	-	-	-	220	22	-
Edinburgh, University of	266	25	-	-	35	-	326	33	-
Glasgow, University of	291	25	-	30	-	-	346	35	40
St Andrews, University of	90	12	-	-	-	55	157	23	-
ScotGEM ¹	-	-	70	-	-	-	70	-	-
Total	1,062	110	70	85	35	55	1,417	143	70

¹ ScotGEM is a collaboration between the universities of Dundee and St Andrews. Students study at St Andrews in years 1 & 2 and at Dundee in years 3 & 4.

²The total intake target for AY 2026-27 relates to all students entering year one of the medical programme, including international students.

³ The international cap is included in the total intake target for AY 2026-27 and is not additional.