

Date 11/07/2025  
Your Ref  
Our Ref 10282

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Dear

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REVIEW – JOB EVALUATION PANEL

I write in response to your request for review of NHS Lothian's response to your Freedom of Information request about Job Evaluation panels. Having discussed your request and our response of, 18 June, I can respond as follows:

Original Request and Response:

Question:

- Please let me know the reasons why the joint NHS Lothian and the Royal College of Nursing Job Evaluation panel of 2017 to 2018, jointly decided to award only 156 Job Evaluation points for the post of Specialist School Nurse, despite there being an explicit requirement in the job description for the post holder to have a master's level qualification in a relevant subject. According to job evaluation national standards, a requirement to hold a master's level qualification should be awarded 196 job evaluation points.

Have NHS Lothian and the Royal College of Nursing discussed and reviewed this decision in the 7 years since and please send me email exchanges between NHS Lothian job evaluation team or senior management and the RCN regarding the subject of the 2018 NHS Lothian Specialist School Nurse job evaluation decision and its justification. Have NHS Lothian and the RCN colluded in covering up this incorrect (and financially harmful to RCN members) joint job evaluation decision in the period since March 2018?

Answer:

The Job Evaluation Panel that evaluated the Specialist School Nurse post in 2018 was an NHS Lothian Job Evaluation Panel not an NHS Lothian and Royal College of Nursing Job Evaluation Panel. In line with national guidance, a Job Evaluation panel is made up of two management and two staff side matchers which may be drawn from a staff side organisation, not only the RCN. In terms of the rationale for the award of the Job Evaluation points, this has already been addressed in a previous response to you dated 13 September 2024, which advised the following:

Headquarters  
Mainpoint  
102 West Port  
Edinburgh EH3 9DN

Chair Professor John Connaghan CBE  
Chief Executive Professor Caroline Hiscox  
*Lothian NHS Board is the common  
name of Lothian Health Board*

- Question: Does NHS Lothian agree that a Specialist School Nurse job that requires a Masters level (SCQF level 11) qualification should be awarded Job Evaluation level 7 (196 job evaluation points) in the Knowledge Training and Experience factor of the Job Evaluation? If not, why not?
- Answer: No. The training undertaken by School Nurses is a Post Graduate Diploma which contains Masters level modules but it is not a full Masters Degree. Based on the qualification and also the duties and responsibilities of the role, the Matching Panel awarded a level 6 KTE.

There has been no discussion between NHS Lothian and RCN about the Specialist School Nurse Evaluation outcome from 2018 in the last 7 years and therefore there is no correspondence to share.

Review Request:

"Can NHS Lothian provide an exact quotation, in the NHS Employers Job Evaluation Handbook, that proves that a post must require a full Masters degree in order to be awarded Job Evaluation Level 7/196 Job Evaluation points?

Answer:

There is no such statement in the NHS Employers Job Evaluation Handbook."

Yet in FOI Response 10134, the Director of Nursing states that:

"The training undertaken by School Nurses is a Post Graduate Diploma which contains Masters level modules but it is not a full Masters Degree. Based on the qualification and also the duties and responsibilities of the role, the Matching Panel awarded a level 6 KTE."

There is no mention in the NHS Employers Job Evaluation rules of requiring a full Masters Degree in order to be awarded KTE Level 7/196 JE points. Could the you tell me the exact Job Evaluation rule that justifies this? The KTE Escalator only refers to a Masters Level Qualification in a relevant subject which should be awarded KTE Level 7/196 JE points, which would describe the Masters level SCPHN School Nurse qualification.

Responses 9150 and 10134 cannot both be true. I would remind you that it is illegal to give an untrue Freedom of Information responses and I am formally requesting an investigation into you contradictory FOI responses.

Please escalate this as a formal complaint that NHS Lothian FOI has not responded truthfully to my FOI request in stating that "a full Masters Degree" is required in order to be evaluated at KTE Level 7/196 JE points.

Clarification received 19 June:

- Is the Director of Nursing stating that only a full Master's degree can be awarded 196 Job Evaluation points/ level 7 at KTE factor? That is how I understood her response. If this is what she meant then please tell the exact rule in the National Standards so that I can see for myself. I'm surprised that you're struggling to understand my FOI request. It's pretty basic logic. A Post Graduate Diploma is a Masters level qualification. It only contains Masters level modules. Why does the Director of Nursing even mention "a full Masters Degree"; it's not relevant to this issue. The NHS Employers Job Evaluation clearly states that a requirement for a Master's level qualification should be awarded 196 JE points/ KTE Level 7. I've attached the KTE Escalator to help with your comprehension. Which Job Evaluation guidelines is the Director of Nursing referring to if not the NHS Employers Job Evaluation Handbook and the KTE Escalator?

The reason that I have had to make these requests is because HR processes have not been transparent and HR do not give me reliable information.

Review Response:

*You asked - 'Can NHS Lothian provide an exact quotation, in the NHS Employers Job Evaluation Handbook, that proves that a post must require a full Masters degree in order to be awarded Job Evaluation Level 7/196 Job Evaluation points?'*

To which we responded - *'There is no such statement in the NHS Employers Job Evaluation Handbook.'*

This is factually correct.

This does not undermine the factual accuracy of what you state is shared in two earlier responses (9093 and 10134) that:

"The training undertaken by School Nurses is a Post Graduate Diploma which contains Masters level modules, but it is not a full Masters Degree" and therefore, she writes, it was "awarded a Level 6 KTE with 156 points."

Whether that evaluation panel outcome and rationale is agreed with or not, it is what happened. Therefore the response is factually accurate.

One of the purpose of the FOI(S)A Review process is to check for accuracy and confirm that the information provided is correct. The information provided is not inaccurate as you state.

If it is your view that the response represents an inconsistent position in our application of policy, this is not something that should be dealt with under FOI(S)A, but should be via the appropriate organisational processes which are private and confidential

If you are not satisfied with this response you still have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner who you can contact at the address below or using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at <https://www.foi.scot/appeal>. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

Scottish Information Commissioner  
Kinburn Castle  
Doubledykes Road  
St Andrews, Fife  
KY16 9DS  
Telephone: 01334 464610  
Fax: 01334 464611  
e-mail: [enquiries@foi.scot](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot)

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Reviewer/  
NHS Lothian**  
cc: Executive Nurse Director