

# THE NHS STAFF COUNCIL

*WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP*

## **Ambulance frequently asked questions (FAQs)**

These FAQs are specific to paramedics employed by ambulance trusts in England. See FAQ number 17 if you are employed in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

**1. I am a paramedic – will I automatically be put into band 6?**

No, not automatically. A partnership panel of trained job matchers will compare your job against the new paramedic profile in a process called job matching. Find out more about job matching on the [NHS Employers website](#).

**2. Will this apply to all paramedics?**

If you were qualified and employed as a paramedic before 1 September 2016 in pay band 5, your post will be matched to the new band 6 profile. If your post matches to the new profile you will assimilate to pay band 6 in line with the nationally agreed assimilation rules – see answer 9 below. Paramedics who qualify and are recruited after this date will be included in the newly qualified paramedic (NQP) programme.

**3. When will Job Matching take place in my trust?**

Each ambulance trust will schedule matching panels and they will notify you through their internal communications.

**4. What information will the panel look at to make their decision?**

Typically this will be job descriptions, person specs and organisational charts. It is likely that the paramedic job description will cover a large number of individuals. Employers and trade unions have been asked to ensure these are up to date in advance of a matching panel. Panels can ask to see a representative of the staff group and a manager if this information is unclear or insufficient.

**5. What happens if I am already in a post which is at pay band 6?**

You will not be affected by these changes which affect paramedics in pay band 5 only.

**6. How will I know the outcome of the panel's decision?**

Your HR department will write to you to confirm the outcome of the matching panel.

**7. What if I disagree with the outcome of the matching process?**

In the event that groups of staff or an individual is dissatisfied with the result of matching, they may request a rematch by a panel with the majority of its members different from the previous panel. Such a request must be made within three months of notification of the original panel's decision. In order to trigger a review, the jobholder(s) must provide details in writing of where they disagree with the match and evidence to support their case using the matching review form.

In the event that the jobholder can demonstrate that the process was misapplied they may pursue a local grievance about the process, but not against the matching or pay banding decision. Where a grievance is upheld, a potential remedy may be a reference to a new matching panel.

**8. If I am matched to the band 6 profile, when will I move into band 6?**

If as a result of this process you are matched against the new band 6 paramedic profile, you will move into band 6 effective from 31 December 2016, in line with the nationally agreed rules for assimilation – see answer 9 below.

**9. When will I be paid on band 6 rate?**

The effective date of pay changes resulting from matching a band 5 paramedic job to the new band 6 profile will be 31 Dec 2016. If a decision on a job match is made after this date the change in pay will be effective from 31 December 2016 and arrears of pay will be payable from 31 December 2016.

**10. How will the move to band 6 work?**

This is re-banding: the Agenda for Change rules on pay on promotion do not apply.

- Paramedics on pay spine points in pay band 5 that overlap with corresponding pay spine points in band 6 will, on assimilation, move across to the same pay spine point in band 6. Thereafter they will progress up the incremental points in band 6 in line with their personal incremental date.
- Paramedics in pay band 5 on pay points below the first overlapping pay spine point will move to the lowest pay point in pay band 6 and their incremental date will be the date of assimilation.

**11. How will HART, SORT, HEMS/aircraft paramedics be affected?**

All current band 5 paramedic roles will be included in this process.

**12. I receive a separate payment for some of my duties (e.g. mentorship or other band 6 duties) but I am still in band 5. How will this affect those payments?**

Leads and allowances and other payments, which have been agreed in local collective agreements, and that relate to job weight as valued in the job evaluation scheme, will end on 1 April 2017 (the effective date of assimilation) for paramedics in pay band 5 whose job is matched to the new band 6 profile.

Leads, allowances and other payments agreed by local agreement e.g. relating to meal breaks, which are not provided for in the [NHS terms and conditions of service handbook](#) and which do not relate to job weight, will not be affected by this agreement.

There will be transitional arrangements which will ensure that existing staff do not have a reduction in earnings.

Existing local collective agreements for use of band 6 (linked bandings, run throughs) will end on 1 April 2017.

**13. Who is considered to be a newly qualified paramedic?**

A consolidation of learning period (preceptorship) will apply to all newly qualified paramedics who were recruited into one of the ten ambulance trusts in England on or after 1 September 2016. These staff will be expected to remain in pay band 5 in their consolidation role for a maximum period of two years.

**14. What will the newly qualified paramedic (NQP) programme look like?**

Employers and trades unions will work in partnership on the development of training programmes for new entrants to the profession.

This work will include:

- scope of practice
- scope of deployment
- job description(s)
- person specification(s)
- arrangements for clinical supervision.

**15. How long will the NQP programme be?**

These preceptorship/new entrant programmes will ordinarily be for a maximum period of 24 months. Completion of the programme will be conditional upon individuals demonstrating they have the requisite knowledge, skills/competencies for their role and that they have demonstrated the required level of performance and delivery during the programme period, as determined locally.

**16. How will this affect my student loan repayments?**

Your repayment amount might go up in the event of an increase to your salary. You should check with your student loan provider to find out how this affects you.

**17. I work in a devolved nation. How does this affect me?**

The Band 6 paramedic profile is available for all UK countries to use. Discussions about the matching and assimilation process included in these FAQs are specific to England. The NQP package is an England-specific initiative.