

# Staff Bulletin 455



2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012

## *Amended ASR Scheme, to be known as the Special Award Scheme (SAS)*

The MRC has gained approval to make a number of non-consolidated bonus payments under the ASR scheme to reflect employee contribution during financial years:

- April 2010 - March 2011
- April 2011 – March 2012.

Small adaptations to the existing in-year ASR scheme have been made, and this will now be referred to as the Special Award Scheme.

All awards will be non-consolidated (i.e. your basic pay will not be increased if you get one), non-pensionable, one-off lump sum payments that will be subject to tax and National Insurance deductions.

For the current exercise, only employees in bands 7 – 2 will be eligible to receive an award. Separate arrangements will be discussed by MRC Remuneration Committee for Band 1 and Senior Contract Pay staff.

### **Award mechanism**

Special Awards will be up to 5% of current basic salary or £1250 (whichever is the lower) per employee per award year.

Directors, with the support of their line managers and HR Leads, will identify employees whose contributions qualify for Special Awards and will determine the value and type of awards. Directors (or their nominated delegate) will inform employees who have been awarded a Special Award in April before the April payroll is run. Directors' decisions are final.

### **Eligibility for a Special Award**

The following groups of staff will not be eligible for a special award:

- Employees who will be progressed from the A section to the B section of their band as part of the current exercise;

- New employees who joined the MRC after the 1<sup>st</sup> April on the financial year in question;
- Employees who have received a promotion during the financial year in question (e.g. band 5 to band 4 promotion);
- Employees who have received a significant new allowance (Recruitment and Retention Allowance, or Responsibility Allowance) during the relevant financial year;
- Clinical Consultant employees on NHS payscales (alternative mechanisms exist for rewarding exceptional contributions by this group).

### **Special Awards qualifying criteria**

The criteria that determine awards for employees in bands 7-3 are as follows (ASR rules):

1. The increased contribution of a member of an employee following a significant increase in responsibility.
2. A significant increase in effectiveness of an employee following training or work related development.
3. Continued significant contribution of an employee to the work or business of the unit.
4. Either increased or continued significant personal/collective contribution of an employee to the team.
5. Outstanding contribution of an employee to the work or business of the unit over the past year.
6. Significant contribution of an employee to either the work, or corporate or scientific goals of the MRC, or the wider scientific community.
7. Significant one-off contribution of an employee to the work of the Team, Unit or MRC.

The criteria for SAS awards for band 2 staff are as follows:

1. Scientific contribution which has advanced and promoted, or has the potential to advance and promote, MRC strategies and objectives;
2. Leadership, direction and intellectual contribution to scientific and/or other strategic initiatives and agendas.
3. Managing the successful delivery of significant scientific and/or other programmes, projects, services and initiatives within agreed time, quality and resource requirements.
4. People management and leadership
5. Professional self-development with demonstrable translational impact on the workplace/organisational benefit to the MRC.
6. The development and exploitation of external networks and collaborations with clear benefit to the MRC.

More detailed information on the criteria can be found in the HR > MRC > Pay section of the KnowledgeBase.

### **Equality monitoring**

HR Leads across the MRC will have the primary responsibility for ensuring the fair and consistent distribution of Special Awards in their Units.

Corporate HR and National TUS will review corporate data following the completion of the SAS exercise. This will look specifically at the nature and distribution of awards to ensure fairness and equality. Corporate HR and NTUS will initiate consultations over the mechanism for SAS in 2012/13.

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For further information please contact your local HR representative.

## **Questions and answers for employees**

### **Are all employees eligible to be considered for an Special Award?**

All employees in bands 7 to 2 will be eligible with the exception of:

- Employees who will be progressed from the A section to the B section of their band as part of the current exercise;
- New employees who joined the MRC after the 1<sup>st</sup> April on the financial year in question;
- Employees who have received a promotion during the financial year in question (e.g. band 5 to band 4 promotion);
- Employees who have received a significant new allowance (Recruitment and Retention Allowance, or Responsibility Allowance) during the relevant financial year;
- Clinical Consultant employees on NHS payscales as alternative mechanisms exist for rewarding exceptional contributions.

### **Are Career Development Fellows (CDFs) eligible for Special Awards?**

Yes, CDF are eligible to be considered for a Special Award.

### **Who is responsible for deciding who will receive Special Awards?**

The Unit Director is responsible for decisions on Special Awards. The Director will work closely with the HR teams, Senior Management and line managers on deciding who receives an award.

### **Are staff in their probationary period eligible to be considered for an award?**

No, not for this round of awards as employees need to have been employed by the MRC for the full duration of the financial year the award relates to.

### **Do the criteria for significant contribution relate only to one year?**

Yes. The focus of this exercise is performance during the either of the financial years:

- April 2010 – March 2011
- April 2011 – March 2012

Employees can only receive one Special Award for either of these two years, but not both.

### **Are externally funded employees eligible to be considered for a recommendation for an SAS?**

In most cases yes, as most external funding organisations meet the extra costs of pay awards and other salary increases. But where they do not (e.g. EU fellows) such individuals will be ineligible.

**Are part-time employees and home workers eligible to be considered for an award?**

Yes, employees are eligible regardless of their contracted working hours or normal place of work.

**Are employees who have previously been, or who are now, deputising to a higher Band eligible to be considered for an award?**

Yes.

**When will SAS payments be made?**

SAS payments will be made in the April payroll as a lump sum payment less tax and NI.

**Can I appeal the Directors decision?**

No specific appeals process exists however any employee who feels that they have been unfairly treated should raise this first with their HR team.

**Will the scheme be continuing further in 2012/13?**

Following this exercise consultation on the SAS for subsequent years will be initiated between Corporate HR and the National Trade Union Side and further information on this will be released as appropriate at that time.