

Associate Specialist and Specialist contracts in England Pay comparison

2021



The proposed Specialist contract pay scale is simpler than the transitional pay scale being proposed for the 2021 Specialty Doctor contract.

The transitional arrangements for existing Associate Specialists on the national 2008 contract who meet the criteria for the new Specialist grade and choose to move to it is set out in Annex A of the [Framework Agreement](#).

For completeness, here is a full pay comparison table for existing Associate Specialists on the national 2008 contract upon transferring to the 2021 Specialist grade contract:

Starting Year of Experience	Basic pay on	Basic pay journey for new Specialist (2021) on:			Cash pay rise over the deal period on the new Specialist (2021) contract	Basic pay journey for old AS (2008) and 1% annual pay uplifts awarded, on:			Potential cash pay rise over the deal period on the old AS (2008) contract	Potential basic pay difference between the Specialist grade and remaining on the AS (2008) in cash terms
	31-Mar-21	Progression 21/22	Progression 22/23	Progression 23/24		Progression 21/22	Progression 22/23	Progression 23/24		
0	£57,705	£79,894	£80,963	£87,000	£29,295	£62,967	£68,327	£75,321	£17,616	£11,679
1	£62,344	£79,894	£86,139	£87,000	£24,656	£67,651	£74,575	£80,790	£18,446	£6,210
2	£66,981	£85,286	£86,139	£87,000	£20,019	£73,837	£79,990	£83,060	£16,079	£3,940
3	£73,106	£85,286	£86,139	£92,500	£19,394	£79,198	£82,237	£83,060	£9,954	£9,440
4	£78,414	£85,286	£91,584	£92,500	£14,086	£81,423	£82,237	£86,020	£7,606	£6,480
5	£80,617	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£11,883	£81,423	£85,168	£86,020	£5,403	£6,480
6	£80,617	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£11,883	£84,325	£85,168	£88,981	£8,364	£3,519
7	£83,490	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£9,010	£84,325	£88,100	£88,981	£5,491	£3,519
8	£83,490	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£9,010	£87,228	£88,100	£91,942	£8,452	£558
9	£86,364	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£6,136	£87,228	£91,032	£91,942	£5,578	£558
10	£86,364	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£6,136	£90,130	£91,032	£91,942	£5,578	£558
11	£89,238	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£3,262	£90,130	£91,032	£94,903	£5,665	-£2,403
12	£89,238	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£3,262	£90,130	£93,963	£94,903	£5,665	-£2,403
13	£89,238	£90,677	£91,584	£92,500	£3,262	£93,033	£93,963	£94,903	£5,665	-£2,403
14	£92,112	£92,112*	£92,112*	£92,500	£388	£93,033	£93,963	£97,866	£5,754	-£5,366
15	£92,112	£92,112*	£92,112*	£92,500	£388	£93,033	£96,897	£97,866	£5,754	-£5,366
16	£92,112	£92,112*	£92,112*	£92,500	£388	£95,938	£96,897	£97,866	£5,754	-£5,366
17+	£94,988	£94,988*	£94,988*	£94,988*	£0	£95,938	£96,897	£97,866	£2,878	-£2,878

*Marked time pay protection, which means basic pay remains flat at the value on the 31 March 2021 until pay for the doctor on the Specialist contract would be higher than this value.

The “cash pay rise over the deal period on the new Specialist (2021) contract” reflects the rise in basic pay that an Associate Specialist (2008) would receive from 31 March 2021 (the day before the new contract would take effect) to the doctor’s progression date in 2023/24 (the final year of the deal), assuming the doctor meets the entry criteria for the role and expresses interest in choosing the new contract within the prescribed 6-month window of opportunity.

The “**potential cash pay rise over the deal period on the old AS (2008) contract**” reflects the rise in basic pay that an AS (2008) would receive over the same period, if they remain on the old AS (2008) contract *and the government awards a 1% annual pay rise in each year 21/22 – 23/24*. Whilst the government has not currently imposed a pay freeze on NHS doctors’ pay, the current economic climate may suggest this to be a reasonable assumption for comparison. However, the assumption that the government will award 1% annual pay rises to those on the old AS (2008) contracts is hypothetical; the actual pay rises awarded could be higher or lower.

Given that the national AS (2008) grade closed in 2009, it is expected that doctors with fewer than 11 years of experience completed by the 31 March 2021 are not on the national terms and conditions and therefore are not covered by the mandate for contract reform or the transitional arrangements.

However, we are aware of some employers that have offered local Associate Specialist contracts since the closure of the national grade that commit to treating such AS doctors in the same way as their AS colleagues on the closed national contracts. Where that has happened, the BMA would recommend using the table above to apply the same principle of pay transition to those on local contracts (those in the grey section of the table) as those on national contracts (from 11 years onwards).

In terms of basic pay, you can see from this table that for those at or near the top of the Associate Specialist scale, over the short-term there may not be a financial benefit to moving to the new contract. However, those at the top of the current AS scale that choose to move across will have their pay protected on a mark-time basis, and their pay will therefore not reduce but will remain static.

However, if you chose not to transfer to the new Specialist contract, that would mean that you would not benefit from other aspects of the contract, such as the new safeguards or the increased on-call availability supplements. You will have to consider these features carefully and make the right decision for you.

If it doesn’t work for you, we would urge you to think about other SAS doctors – your friends and colleagues – who might want to choose to move to these contracts – whether for the safeguards, the pay or the career prospects. The only way for them to have that option is for you to vote in favour of the contract package.

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