



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the National Director of Human Resources  
Health Service Executive  
Dr. Steevens' Hospital  
Dublin 8

Tel: (01) 635 2319  
Fax: (01) 635 2486  
E-mail: nationalhr@hse.ie

## HSE HR Circular 21/2008

**To: Each Assistant National Director, Human Resources, HSE  
Each Assistant National Director, PCCC, HSE  
National Director, Population Health, HSE  
Mr. Tom Dowling, Department of Finance  
Ms. Maeve O'Brien, Department of Health and Children**

**27<sup>th</sup> August 2008**

**Re** Implementation of report on the review of the **Branch E Qualification** for Executive Analytical Chemists and Deputy Regional Public Analysts in the Public Analysts Laboratories.

Dear Colleague,

Following a review of the *Branch E* qualification for Executive Analytical Chemists (EAC) and Deputy Regional Public Analysts, Deputy (DPA) in the three Public Analysts Laboratories, Galway, Dublin and Cork, a number of recommendations now need to be implemented.

Among the key recommendations in Dr Tegg's report (copy attached), is the identification of an appropriate restricted set of equivalent / relevant professional postgraduate qualifications and minimum experience for entry onto the EAC and DPA *With Branch E Certificate* pay scale.

### **Retitling of the 'With Branch E Pay scales to Advanced Practitioner Pay scales'**

Also recommended is the retitling of the pay scales of the *EAC and DPA With Branch E*, to Executive Analytical Chemists – Advanced Practitioner Ppay scale and Regional Public Analysts, Deputy - Advanced Practitioner pay scale.

### **Certification of qualifications**

For those personnel in the grades of EAC and DPA currently on the *Without Branch E pay scale*, who wish to advance to the *With Branch E* pay scale (retitled Advanced Practitioner pay scale) the relevant HR Department are advised to forward the qualifications and certified experience of such personnel to Mr Paddy Duggan, Recruitment Manager, Policy and Standards, HR Directorate in Naas, for confirmation of eligibility to enter onto the Advanced Practitioner pay scale.

Those personnel currently on the EAC and DPA *Without Branch E* pay scale, who do not satisfy the criteria set out in Dr Tegg's report, (i.e. have not attained the necessary qualification and experience) will remain on the pay scale of *Without Branch E*.

New entrants to the grade of EAC and DPA must satisfy both the educational and minimum experience criteria as set out in Dr Teggs report in order to access the Advanced Practitioner pay scale.

**Assimilation**

It is proposed that those personnel in the grades of EAC and DPA *Without Branch E* pay scale, who have the educational and experience qualifications set out in Dr Tegg's report certified, will move to the Advanced Practitioner pay scale on the basis of the next most favourable cash point, with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007.

For personnel on the EAC and DPA, who were on the 2<sup>nd</sup> LSI of the *Without Branch E* pay scale on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007, will now move onto the 1<sup>st</sup> LSI of the Advance Practitioner pay scale with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007.

The funding associated with the implementation of the report was allocated in 2007 and has been included in the HSE Vote. Enquiries in this regard should be addressed to the Assistant National Director of Finance in your area.

Should you have any specific queries regarding this agreement please contact Ms Gaye Dalton HSE – Employers Agency, 63 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2, telephone 01-662 6966.

Please arrange for implementation as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,



---

**Sean Mc Grath**  
**National Director of Human Resources**

**Encl.**

**Follow Up Report to  
Review of 'Branch E' Qualification for  
Executive Analytical Chemists and  
Deputy Regional Public Analysts  
in Public Analysts Laboratories**

---

Prepared by Dr Vivienne M Tegg,  
22 May 2007 amended 31 May 2007

Updated 12 September 2007

### Introduction

1. This report follows up on the issues raised at the meeting held at the HSE-EA offices on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006 attended by IMPACT, HSE-EA and DoHC representatives where the Review of the 'Branch E' Qualification for Executive Analytical Chemists and Deputy Regional Public Analysts in Public Analyst Laboratories was tabled for discussion.

### The Review of 'Branch E' Qualifications

2. The Review of 'Branch E' Qualifications was commissioned as a 'desk/academic exercise' to identify an appropriate restricted set of equivalent/relevant professional post graduate qualifications to substitute for the 'Branch E' qualification for the grades of Executive Analytical Chemists and Deputy Regional Public Analysts. This means a set of professional post graduate qualifications that achieve the original intention behind the introduction of the 'Branch E' payscale i.e. the acquisition of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis, derived from securing advanced practical qualifications underpinning the professional status and development of the grades of Executive Analytical Chemists and Deputy Regional Public Analysts.
3. The review noted that unlike the UK the regulations in Ireland do not specify the MChemA as a mandatory requirement for food analysts and public analysts, which would suggest that there is no necessity to maintain the MChemA as the standard.
4. The review also noted that the Strategic Developmental Review of Health Board Food Control Laboratories (2004) makes the following comments:
  - a "It is important to ensure that there is an attractive career structure in place for laboratory staff ....."
  - b "Specialised testing capacities should be further developed on a national basis within the Service."

The Strategic Review also made recommendations regarding a training framework and dedicated funding for professional development. Any recommendation regarding substitute qualification or qualifications must therefore be capable of standing up to scrutiny in the context of the findings and recommendations of the Strategic Review and be consistent with any recommendations being acted on as a result of the Strategic Review

5. The review concluded that the qualifications recognised for the purposes of moving to a higher pay scale must meet the following criteria:
  - a Support and promote the acquisition of the advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis;
  - b Recognise the importance of acquiring specialist knowledge and capabilities in analytical chemistry;
  - c Be capable of being described as post-MSc.
6. The Review could not identify an equivalent qualification but concluded with recommending the retention of a payscale that remunerates the acquisition of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis to be retitled 'advanced practitioner' payscale.

### Issues

7. The key issues raised by IMPACT related to the range of qualifications that could be deemed to meet the original intention behind the introduction of the 'Branch E' payscale. The key issue being the exclusion of Masters level qualifications from the recommendations.

Updated 12 September 2007

8. At the start of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006 the issue of the pay anomaly between analytical chemists and medical scientists was again raised.
9. There seems to be an expectation that all existing staff in the grades concerned would be able to move to this higher payscale irrespective of whether or not they hold a Masters in an appropriate analytical chemistry subject with appropriate experience.
10. The list provided by staff from the laboratories contained a wide variety of MSc and PhD qualifications, the Review had concluded that an MSc qualifications *per se* could not be deemed to be equivalent to the MChemA, since the MChemA is a post-Masters qualification. This latter point was verified independently by the Public Analyst representatives who had contacted the RSC on receipt of the Review report.

#### Summary and proposals for the way forward

11. The qualifications for advancing to the higher pay scale must meet the following criteria:
  - a Support and promote the acquisition of the advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis;
  - b Recognise the importance of acquiring specialist knowledge and capabilities in analytical chemistry;
  - c Be capable of being described as post-MSc.
12. The recommended 'advanced practitioner' payscale to replace the 'Branch E' payscale is not a reward for acquiring an additional qualification; rather it is a recognition of the acquisition of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis.
13. The process of reviewing the 'Branch E' payscale is not a mechanism for resolving pay anomalies that may have arisen through other processes.

#### Findings

14. In light of the above and with the emphasis being on the acquisition of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis not the acquisition of a qualification *per se* I recommend the following: an appropriate and reasonable way forward would be to
  - a Revise the title of the 'Branch E' payscale to 'Advanced Practitioner' payscale;
  - b Define criteria for entry onto the 'Advanced Practitioner' payscale in a future-proofed manner that rewards the acquisition of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis and provides an attractive career structure for staff in public analyst laboratories capable of encouraging development and attracting new talent;
  - c Recognise that the MChemA is now tailored to the UK legislative framework and is not required in Irish law by broadening the scope of the retitled 'advanced practitioner' payscale to apply to individuals who have acquired a relevant qualification at Masters level and have a minimum of 3 years relevant post-Masters experience, or have a relevant PhD or DPhil and have a minimum of 1 years satisfactory experience, or acquired the MChemA qualification (UK) and have a minimum one years satisfactory experience, or who have an equivalent, and verifiable level of advanced skills and expertise in chemical analysis in other jurisdictions.
  - d In this regard I attach a restricted list of qualifying postgraduate degrees and minimum experience requirements for entry onto the advanced practitioner scale (see appendix 1 for details)

Updated 12 September 2007

**Outstanding issue**

15. The remaining issue to be resolved is of existing staff who do not meet the criteria set out above at 14c.

**Restricted list of Qualifying Post-Graduate Degrees and Minimum Experience  
Requirements for entry to the Advanced Practitioner Scale.**

**for  
Executive Analytical Chemist and Deputy Regional Public Analyst Grade  
in Public Analysts Laboratories**

- 1) **A recognised Doctorate (PhD or DPhil):**
  - a) in Chemistry, Food Chemistry, Food Science, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Instrumental Analysis, Instrumental Analytical Chemistry, Environmental/Analytical Chemistry, Biotechnology, Molecular Biology or Toxicology,  
**and**
  - b) Have a minimum of 1 years satisfactory experience at Executive Analytical Chemist level or Deputy Public Analyst level or equivalent, in one or more of the following:
    - (i) the Chemical or Microscopical Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,  
**or**
    - (ii) the Microbiological Examination of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,  
**or**
    - (iii) the use of Instrumental Techniques that are employed in the Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents.
  
- 2) **A recognised Masters of Science (MSc or MPhil):**
  - a) in Chemistry, Food Chemistry, Food Science, Microbiology, Biochemistry, Analytical Chemistry, Instrumental Analysis, Instrumental Analytical Chemistry, Environmental/Analytical Chemistry, Biotechnology, Molecular Biology or Toxicology,  
**and**
  - b) Have a minimum of 3 years satisfactory experience at Executive Analytical Chemist level, or Deputy Public Analyst level or equivalent, in one or more of the following:
    - (i) the Chemical or Microscopical Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,  
**or**
    - (ii) the Microbiological Examination of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,  
**or**
    - (iii) the use of Instrumental Techniques that are employed in the Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents.

Updated 12 September 2007

**3) Other qualifications:**

- a) The Mastership in Chemical Analysis (MChemA) of the Royal Society of Chemistry or other recognised Doctorate or Masters of Science degrees, whose content is composed largely of one or more of the subjects listed in 1 or 2 above.

**and**

- b) Have a minimum of 1 years (post Doctorate or equivalent) or 3 years (post Masters) satisfactory experience at Executive Analytical Chemist level or Deputy Public Analyst level or equivalent, in one or more of the following:

(i) the Chemical or Microscopical Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,

**or**

(ii) the Microbiological Examination of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents,

**or**

(iii) the use of Instrumental Techniques that are employed in the Analysis of Food, Drugs, Water or Effluents.

\* formerly Branch E scale.