

Information sheet for new and existing staff of the NSW Health Service

Information about the requirements for making a conversion request from Technical Officer to Hospital Scientist

This information sheet has been established in accordance with the *Health Employees' Technical Officer to Hospital Scientist Conversion Interim Award* ('the Interim Award'). The Interim Award is a standalone award that was made by the NSW Industrial Relations Commission on 11 September 2024 and represents an agreement reached between NSW Health and the Health Services Union to resolve a longstanding dispute about the classification of Technical Officers and Hospital Scientists.

From 12 November 2024, NSW Health Technical Officers, with 'requisite science qualifications' (as defined in the Interim Award, and below) can submit a request and be converted to a Hospital Scientist subject to the requirements of the Interim Award. On making a request, the Interim Award provides a process for eligible Technical Officers to be reclassified unless a refusal of a conversion is fair and reasonable.

Please carefully read the terms set out in the [Interim Award](#) and consider whether you are eligible to and/or would like to make a request for conversion to a Hospital Scientist. NSW Health will be providing information resources on the processes and procedures contained within the Interim Award to assist.

Criteria for making a conversion request

A Technical Officer (as defined in the Interim Award, and below) who:

- a. holds a requisite science qualification as defined by the Interim Award; and
- b. agrees to undertake the duties of a Hospital Scientist as determined by the Employer from time to time; and
- c. has been employed by the Employer as a Technical Officer for at least 6 months

may make a written request to the Employer to have their classification converted to a Hospital Scientist as contained within the Hospital Scientists Award (**conversion request**).

Process for making a conversion request

If you are eligible to and would like to make a conversion request, please complete the NSW Health Conversion Request Application form ('the Form'). The form includes a requirement to confirm your agreement to perform Hospital Scientist duties and is to be accompanied by:

- a. a copy of your degree certificate(s) and academic transcript(s), and
- b. evidence of your relevant work experience.

The Form must be completed with all required information and accompanying documents provided for it to be valid. If a Form is incomplete and/or required information is not provided, the conversion request will be refused.

You can access a copy of the NSW Health Conversion Request Application form [here](#). The form can be submitted using the "Credentialling Request" form in SARA.

Interim Award and conversion request timeframes

The Interim Award commences 12 November 2024 and will nominally expire 12 months after that date. You can make a conversion request at any time while the Interim Award is in operation. You may withdraw your conversion request at any time.

Acceptance/refusal of a conversion request

If the conversion request is accepted, the Technical Officer's classification will be converted to a Hospital Scientist effective the date the conversion request was made.

Refusal of a conversion request will only occur if:

- a. the Employer establishes it is fair and reasonable in all the circumstances to refuse the conversion request; or
- b. the Technical Officer fails to provide a duly completed Form with the required information under clause 4.

If the conversion request is refused, the notification of refusal will set out the reasons for the refusal, including the basis on which the Employer says is fair and reasonable to refuse the request.

If a conversion request is refused by the employer (but not on the basis of failing to provide a completed form), the Technical Officer or the Health Services Union may refer the request to a Transitional Committee, as outlined in the Interim Award. The Transitional Committee will determine whether the refusal was fair and reasonable in all the circumstances. For further information on the process of referral to the Transitional Committee and the effect of decisions made by the Transitional Committee, including where no majority decision is reached, please refer to the FAQ and other information [here](#).

Where a refusal is based on an incomplete form, a new (complete) form may lodged.

Matters potentially relevant to refusal

Matters which are potentially relevant to whether the Employer's refusal of a conversion request was fair and reasonable in all the circumstances include, but are not limited to:

- a. the particular nature of the science qualification held by the employee;
- b. any gender disparity in pay within the laboratory or area worked, if any disparity exists;
- c. any effect on the Employer's ability to attract and retain skilled staff in the laboratory or area worked, where there are attraction and retention issues;
- d. the nature of the laboratory or area worked, and the nature and volume of work performed where the employee currently works including duties performed by staff in the laboratory or area worked, technology and equipment used;
- e. the experience, skills, training and other qualifications of the employee;
- f. the performance of the employee;
- g. the employee's work experience and duration of the employment; and/or
- h. the staffing numbers and skills mix in the laboratory or area where the employee currently works.

Contact information

In the first instance, please contact your Health Agency's People and Culture team for more information and support in making a conversion request. Health Agencies have designated emails you can contact, as follows.

Local Health District / Health Agency	Contact Address
NSW Health Pathology	NSWPATH-HSInterimAward@health.nsw.gov.au
Sydney Children's Hospitals Network	SCHN-TOHSInterimAward@health.nsw.gov.au
Central Coast Local Health District	CCLHD-IndustrialRelations@health.nsw.gov.au
Hunter New England Local Health District	HNELHD-HRCorporate@health.nsw.gov.au
Health Share NSW	HSNSW-IndustrialRelations@health.nsw.gov.au
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	ISLHD-WorkforceOperations@health.nsw.gov.au
Murrumbidgee Local Health District	MLHD-WorkplaceRelations@health.nsw.gov.au
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District	Adam.Quested@health.nsw.gov.au
North Sydney Local Health District	NSLHD-WorkplaceRelations@health.nsw.gov.au
South East Sydney Local Health District	SESLHD-PeopleandCultureEnquiries@health.nsw.gov.au
Sydney Local Health District	SLHD-HSInterimAward@health.nsw.gov.au
South West Sydney Local Health District	SWSLHD-HSInterimAward@health.nsw.gov.au
Western NSW Local Health District	WNSWLHD-Grading@health.nsw.gov.au
Western Sydney Local Health District	WSLHD-IR-ER@health.nsw.gov.au

If you are unsure who to contact, or have not received a response from your Health Agency, please contact MOH-wr-irandwc@health.nsw.gov.au.

Key Definitions

'Technical Officer' means a person employed in the NSW Health Service under s.115(1) of the *Health Services Act 1997* as Technical Officers or Senior Technical Officers under the *Health Employees' Technical (State) Award 2023*, as amended or varied from time to time.

'Hospital Scientist' see the *Hospital Scientists State Award*

'Requisite science qualification' means:

- (A) the Diploma in Medical Technology of the Australian Institute of Medical Technologists (before 1973); or
- (B) a degree in science at Australian Qualifications Level 7 with subjects or a major predominantly relevant to pathology or, if employed in a non-pathology area, to the position to be employed in; or
- (C) a degree in science at Australian Qualification Level 7 with subjects or a major partially relevant to pathology or, if employed in a non-pathology area, the position employed in, and 2 years' of experience as a Technical Officer or Hospital Scientist; or
- (D) a degree in Science at Australian Qualifications Level 7 and 3 years' of experience as a Technical Officer or Hospital Scientist; or
- (E) a qualification which has been assessed by the body appointed by the Commonwealth government to assess qualifications for skilled migration visas as meeting the qualification requirement of Medical Scientist ANZ234611; or
- (F) such qualifications and experience as the employer deems equivalent.