

Social Care Workforce Special Payment Scheme Guidance

Introduction

Purpose of the scheme

The scheme has been introduced to recognise and reward the hard work and commitment of social care staff who have provided essential care to our most vulnerable citizens during the most challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The scheme is aimed at staff within registered care homes and domiciliary care services and includes Personal Assistants (PAs). These social care workers are delivering care to people in their own homes. Staff cannot adhere to social distancing measures and they are at increased risk due to the numbers of people they are assisting.

Payment

Payment is a one-off flat rate payment of £500. An eligible individual can only receive one payment, whether or not they have worked in more than one care service during the relevant period (as agency or employed staff).

Relevant time period

The time period of the scheme is 15 March to 31 May 2020. This covers a particularly challenging period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

PART 1 - Eligibility

Eligible staff roles

To be eligible for this payment, staff must be:

- a paid employee of a registered care home or domiciliary care service;
- an agency care worker;
- an agency nurse who has worked in the same setting for 12 weeks or more;
- a personal assistant paid through direct payments.

Staff who work as/for contractors in care homes are not covered by this scheme.

Nature of employment

Staff must be part of the paid workforce. They can be:

- full-time or part-time;
- subject to a zero hours employment contract;
- subject to a permanent or temporary contract;
- from a care agency.

A member of staff who is summarily dismissed (gross misconduct) from their position is not eligible for the payment. If the dismissal is successfully appealed the care worker will become eligible for payment.

Requirement to be employed in relevant time period

This scheme is to reward staff employed in eligible social care roles during the relevant time period of 15 March to 31 May 2020. An eligible worker must have been employed, or engaged to work as an agency care workers, in a relevant care service for all, or part of, this time period. There is no minimum period specified. There are particular criteria for agency nurses outlined below.

Staff who were employed in eligible roles during the relevant time period but who were absent from work for the entire period due to illness, maternity leave, shielding, or due to a household member shielding, furlough etc will remain eligible for payment.

Staff in eligible roles who have worked from home for this time period will receive the payment, for example Personal Assistants providing support remotely

Redeployment

Staff who have been redeployed from an eligible role into a job role which is not included in the scheme will receive the payment as their substantive role is eligible.

Staff who have been redeployed into a role which is eligible and who have worked for part or all of the relevant time period will receive the payment.

The term 'redeployment' is applicable whether this was a formal or informal arrangement.

Further details on eligible staff roles

Category of worker	Eligible for payment
Domiciliary care workers	Care workers employed by a registered domiciliary support service are eligible. This includes care workers providing care to people in private homes or to people in a supported living arrangement.
Care workers in care homes	Care workers employed to care for people living in registered care homes are eligible. This includes care homes for older adults, younger adults and children. It includes secure accommodation services for children and residential special schools or colleges registered as care homes with Care Inspectorate Wales.
Nurses employed by care homes	Nurses employed by registered care homes are eligible for the payment.
Ancillary staff in care homes	Cooks, domestic staff, administrators, activity coordinators, maintenance and other ancillary staff are eligible for the payment if they have not been able to maintain social distancing and have played an active role in supporting the provision of care. Eligibility recognises those ancillary staff who have extended their duties during Covid-19 and spent more time in close proximity to residents and undertaken care tasks.
Managers and deputy managers of care home and domiciliary services	Managers/ deputy managers of care homes and domiciliary support services are eligible for payment where they have provided personal care during the relevant time period due to staff shortages and/or have not been able to maintain social distancing and played an active role in supporting the provision of care.

Personal Assistants (PAs)	PAs provide personal care and support for individuals in their own homes to enable greater independence and flexibility of care arrangements. PAs are paid via direct payments made to individuals receiving care. PAs are eligible for the payment only where they are paid via direct payments
Agency care workers	Agency care workers who have undertaken work for a registered care home or domiciliary support service, during the relevant time period, are eligible for the payment. Eligibility is for one payment only, even where the agency worker has worked in several care services.
Agency nurses - worked 12 weeks or more in the same care home	Agency nurses are eligible for the payment when they have worked in the same care home for 12 consecutive weeks or more, and when 12 weeks is reached on or before the 31 May 2020 (the end date of the relevant period).
Allied health professionals	Allied health professionals employed by, and working within, a registered care home or domiciliary care service are eligible for payment where they are providing direct care and support for people and social distancing is not possible.

Category of worker	Ineligible for payment
Agency nurses – worked less than 12 weeks in the same care home	Agency nurses that have worked for less than 12 weeks for the same care home are not eligible for the payment.
NHS nurses redeployed into care homes on a temporary basis	Nurses in these circumstances continue to be employed by the NHS and are not eligible for this payment.
Social workers	Social workers do not provide personal care in people's homes and are able to socially distance. They are not eligible for the payment.
Regional managers/ Responsible Individuals	Regional managers are not usually based within care services and do not provide personal care. They are not eligible for the payment.
Foster carers	Foster carers receive an allowance and are generally not paid employees. They provide a service from their own homes, rather than other people's homes. This is likely to reduce risk of exposure to Covid-19. They are not eligible for the payment.
Shared lives carers	Shared lives carers receive an allowance and are generally not paid employees. They provide a service from their own homes, rather than other people's homes. This is likely to reduce risk of exposure to Covid-19. They are not eligible for the payment.
Workers in residential family centres	Workers are not providing significant levels of personal care and are not eligible for the payment.
Other staff in care homes for children	Teaching staff, therapeutic staff and 'office based' staff in care homes for children, including secure accommodation services and residential special schools or colleges registered with Care Inspectorate Wales are not eligible for the payment. Such staff are likely to be able to maintain social distancing and/or are not directly employed by the care home. Their roles would not include direct care.
Support workers in supported housing projects, floating support, hostels etc	Workers are providing support rather than personal care. If support workers do not work for a registered domiciliary support service or care home, they are not eligible for the payment. If workers are employed by a registered domiciliary care agency to provide care and support, they are eligible for the payment.

Early intervention and community based services	Social care workers employed in community based services are not eligible for the payment, unless they have been redeployed into an eligible staff role. This scheme is focused on staff delivering care in people's homes.
Volunteers and unpaid carers	Volunteers and unpaid carers are not included in this scheme, which is aimed at paid employees of registered care services. They are not eligible for the payment.
Childcare and play services	Full or sessional day care for young children are not registered care home or domiciliary care services. Care workers employed by these services do not provide personal care in people's homes and are not eligible for the payment.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Question:** *Why will cooks, domestic and other staff in care homes receive this payment?*

Answer: Care homes operate as large households where many staff interact with residents and form relationships. During Covid-19, visitors to care homes have been restricted and there have been staff shortages. Ancillary staff in care homes have gone above and beyond their usual duties to assist with elements of care of people and have not been able to maintain social distancing.

2. **Question:** *I have been redeployed from my job elsewhere to work in a care home or for a domiciliary care service. Will I receive the payment?*

Answer: You will receive the payment if you worked in a care home or as a domiciliary care worker for all, or part, of the period 15 March to 31 May 2020.

3. **Question:** *Why are nurses in care homes receiving this payment when other nurses don't?*

Answer: Nurses employed by care homes are an integral part of the staff team. This scheme is focussed on care home and domiciliary support services and does not include NHS staff or settings.

4. **Question:** *I am a carer for a family member and receive Carer's Allowance. Will I receive this payment?*

Answer: This scheme focuses on the paid workforce and does not include unpaid carers. The Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services has agreed funding of £50,000 to Carers Wales to extend provision of psychological support to carers. Welsh Government has established a new Third Sector Covid-19 Response Fund worth £24 million and carers will benefit from the services this funding aims to support. Welsh Government is exploring what additional support can be provided to carers.

5. **Question:** *What about Personal Assistants who live with the person receiving care, either because they are a family member or because they have moved in during lockdown?*

Answer: The Personal Assistant will receive the payment if they have continued to be paid via direct payments.

6. **Question:** *I have left my job in a care home, will I still receive the payment?*

Answer: If you worked in an eligible role for some or all of the period 15 March to 31 May 2020, you remain eligible for the payment. The exception to this is if you were summarily dismissed ie subject to instant dismissal for gross misconduct. You are eligible for one payment only.

7. **Question:** *I am employed to provide care and class myself as a Personal assistant. My employer pays me from their own money or from their benefits.*

Am I eligible for the payment?

Answer: The scheme is focused on those Personal Assistants providing care that has been identified as required by a local authority care and support plan for the cared for person. Direct payments are then made by the local authority to allow the individual to arrange their own care. The scheme does not include carers who are employed outside of these specific arrangements as described.

PART 2 - Implementation

Tax and national insurance and welfare benefits

HMRC confirmed these payments are regarded as earnings and will be liable for tax, national insurance contributions and student loan repayments. They will also be included in welfare benefits calculations.

All eligible staff will receive a taxable payment of £500 providing they complete and return a claim form to their employer.

The payments should be made through payroll to ensure the proper treatment of income tax and national insurance, and to facilitate the appropriate notifications to the Department for Work and Pensions.

Delivery process overview

- Welsh Government supply guidance and claim forms.
- Care providers/employers identify eligible staff and issue claim forms.
- Care providers/employers identify eligible agency staff who are issued claim forms.
- All eligible staff complete and return claim forms to their employer.
- Employers retain claim forms and submit funding claims to local authorities.
- LAs provide £500 funding to care provider/employer or agency for each eligible member of staff.
- Care providers/employers or agency pay staff via payroll.
- Employers claim any additional employer's costs (NI & pension) from local authority.
- LA reclaims funding from Welsh Government.

The process may differ dependent upon the nature of the employment.

1. Staff employed directly by local authorities (LAs)

- LAs identify eligible staff they employ directly.
- Staff complete and submit claim form.
- LAs add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible staff as part of next available payroll.
- LAs report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- LAs to submit claim to Welsh Government to fund the costs of the payment including any actual employer national insurance or pension costs.

2. Staff employed directly by independent care providers

- LAs contact care providers supplying them with claim forms and requesting a list of eligible directly employed staff.
- Staff complete and submit claim forms to care provider.
- Care providers supply LAs with a list of eligible directly employed staff (who have submitted claim forms).
- LAs provide £500 funding to care providers for each eligible member of staff on the list.
- Care providers to add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible staff included on the list as part of next available payroll.

- Care providers should report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- Care providers to send LAs confirmation of payroll payment including any actual employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.
- LAs to provide any supplementary funding to care providers for any employer national insurance and/or pension costs incurred.

3. Agency staff

- LAs contact care providers asking them for a list of agency staff they employed between 15 March 2020 and 31 May 2020 and the agencies that supplied them.
- LAs contact agencies sending claim forms and requesting the agencies confirm the agency staff worked for the care providers between 15 March 2020 and 31 May 2020.
- Staff complete and submit claim forms to agencies.
- Agencies supply LAs with a list of eligible agency staff (who have submitted claim forms). This list should include the national insurance number for all eligible staff.
- LAs provide £500 funding to agencies for eligible agency staff.
- Agencies to add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible agency staff included on the list as part of next available payroll.
- Agencies should report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- Agencies to send LAs confirmation of payroll payment including any actual employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.
- LAs to provide any supplementary funding to agencies for any employer national insurance and/or pension costs incurred.

4. Domiciliary support services

- The LA will contact all domiciliary care agencies they commission and supply claim forms and request a list of eligible staff.
- Domiciliary care agencies should forward the claim form to their eligible staff.
- Staff complete and submit claim forms to agency.
- Agencies supply the LA with a list of eligible staff (who have submitted claim forms).
- The LA provides £500 funding to agencies for each eligible member of staff on the list.
- Agencies add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible staff included on the list as part of next available payroll.
- Agencies should report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- Agencies send the LA confirmation of payroll payment including any actual employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.
- LAs to provide any supplementary funding to care providers for any employers national insurance and/or pension costs incurred.

5. Personal Assistants (PAs)

Either

- LAs identify eligible PAs who are funded by payroll support services.
- LAs distribute claim forms to PAs.
- PAs complete and submit claim forms to their employer (the person in receipt of care) who will forward them on the relevant (commissioning) LA.
- LAs instruct payroll support services to add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible PAs as part of the next available payroll and provide the payroll support services with the appropriate level of funding.
- Payroll support services should report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- LAs to submit claim to Welsh Government to fund £500 payment and any actual employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.

Or

- LAs identify PAs paid directly by their employer (the person in receipt of care).
- LAs issue claim forms to the employer asking them to forward them to their PA (providing they are eligible).
- PA must complete and submit claim forms to their employer (the person in receipt of care) who will forward them on to the relevant (commissioning) LA.
- LAs will provide £500 funding to the employer for each eligible personal assistant.
- The employer should add £500 to gross pay before deductions for eligible PAs as part of the next available payroll.
- Employers should report these payments via a full payment submission to HMRC on or before the pay date.
- Employers should confirm the payment to the LA and claim and any employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.

Role of Welsh Government

The Welsh Government will fund the scheme. This includes:

- the costs of the £500 payment;
- any employer costs in respect of national insurance contributions and pensions directly associated with the £500 payment;
- the reimbursement of additional costs incurred by LAs as a result of delivering the scheme; and
- the re-imbursement of employer costs based on a flat rate of £1 per claim, providing the employer submits more than four claims.

The Welsh Government will not reimburse:

- the costs of existing local authority staff; or
- income tax and/or national insurance deductions resulting from the £500 payment.

The Welsh Government will collect summarised data from LAs showing the costs of the scheme by employer and provide funding.

Role of local authorities (LAs)

They will:

- manage the operational delivery of the scheme on behalf of Welsh Government;
- manage the scheme on a geographical basis;
- contact care providers requesting:
 - a list of eligible staff who are employed by the provider (i.e. they are on the provider's payroll); and
 - a list of eligible agency staff along with the agency that supplied them.

- gather and collate the lists of staff from providers and agencies;
- check the lists including for duplicate claims;
- agree with care providers and agencies how they will hold and manage personal data in accordance with GDPR regulations;
- identify all PAs and ensure they receive the payment;
- maintain sufficient records to satisfy audit; and
- ensure measures are in place to minimise the risk of fraud or losses.

Role of care providers

They are responsible for:

- identifying all eligible staff who were employed by them between 15 March 2020 and 31 May 2020;
- issuing claim forms;
- collecting claim forms and retaining them for audit/checking purposes;
- sending a list of all eligible staff to their LA confirming they have received a claim form from all staff on the list (This list should identify staff directly employed by the provider and any agency staff); and
- supplying a list of names of agency staff along with the contact details for the agency.

- Subject to LA agreement, the LA will provide £500 funding for each eligible, directly employed member of staff.
- Providers should add £500 to the pay of all directly employed staff as part of their next payroll.
- Following the payroll, the provider should submit a supplementary claim to the LA to cover the costs of any employer national insurance or pension costs.
- Providing this supplementary claim is submitted promptly, reconciles with the list of names supplied and is accompanied by supporting evidence, the LA will provide funding for any employer national insurance or pension costs incurred.

Role of agencies

They are responsible for:

- checking the lists of agency staff to ensure all staff were employed between 15 March 2020 and 31 May 2020;
 - issuing agency staff with claim forms;
 - collecting claim forms and retaining them for audit/checking purposes; and
 - sending a list of all eligible staff to their LAs confirming they have received a claim form from all staff.
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- The LA will provide the agency with £500 funding for eligible agency staff.
 - Agencies should add £500 to the pay of all eligible agency staff as part of their next available payroll.
 - Following the payroll, the agency should submit a supplementary claim to the LA to cover the costs of any employer on-costs.
 - Providing this supplementary claim is submitted promptly, reconciles with the list of names supplied and is accompanied by supporting evidence, the LA will provide funding for any employer on-costs incurred.

Timing of payments and claims

Employers should make payments to their staff via payroll as quickly as possible but ideally before the end of October 2020.

Employers should submit complete claims for a care setting to their LA, partial claims will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

LAs should re-claim the funding they have provided to employers from the Welsh Government before the end of financial year.

Evidence and validation of claims

LAs and Welsh Government must make all reasonable efforts to ensure all eligible staff receive the payment as quickly as possible.

LAs should check the number of staff claimed for is in line with the size of the care setting and undertake any further reasonable measures to verify the information they have received.

The LA should maintain a master record of all eligible staff they have funded. This should include the NI numbers of all staff that have received the payment. This will help LAs guard against double payments in their areas.

One LA will take responsibility for maintaining a pan-Wales register of payments made to check for duplicate payments across LA boundaries.

There will be an acceptance across LAs and employers of open book accounting as has been adopted successfully for other schemes.

Employers must retain the claim forms and may be asked to produce them as evidence.

Welsh Government Grant to LAs

The Welsh Government is establishing a new grant to fund this payment. LAs can claim funding from the Welsh Government.

Forms to be used

The Welsh Government will provide the following claim forms.

- The employee claim form.
- The LA claim form to the Welsh Government for LA directly employed staff.
- The care provider notification form that lists all directly employed staff and any eligible agency staff.
- The care provider claim form. This includes the actual pay costs of each directly employed member of staff.
- The agency claim form. This includes the actual pay costs of each agency member of staff.
- The LA claim form. This is for the LA to recover the costs of payments they have funded from the Welsh Government.

Guidance for individuals

Guidance will be included on the employee claim form. This will set out where employees can get further advice and guidance on the implications of this payment on the repayment of student loans, welfare benefits, tax and national insurance.

The form will also ask the employee to declare that: they are eligible; they will only claim once; and they will report any duplicate payments. The form also asks employees if they wish to receive a single £500 payment or five monthly £100 payments and notifies them of the personal information that will be shared with an LA to ensure GDPR compliance.

Staff who have left employment

If an employer identifies anyone who is eligible for the payment but has subsequently left their employment they should send a claim form to them and process it alongside their existing workforce. The only exception to this is if the staff member was summarily dismissed (instant dismissal for gross misconduct). Once the claim form is received, the employer should follow the payroll procedure for reporting and making a 'payment after leaving' to HMRC. If the employee was given a P45 upon leaving, then the tax code to use is 0T Week1.

If no P45 has been issued then the employer should use the last known tax code.

For national insurance purposes a payment after leaving should be assessed using a weekly earnings period.

Where employers are unable to contact eligible staff who have left their employment the employer should notify their LA, but no funding will be provided for these staff until they have submitted a claim form.

Staff not in work during the relevant period

Staff absent for the whole of the relevant time period due to long term illness, maternity leave, shielding or other reasons remain eligible for payments, and the claims for these staff should be processed as described in this guidance.

Staged payments

Some employees may prefer to spread the payment over time to better suit their personal circumstances. There is an option to receive the payment in five equal £100 instalments over 5 successive months. All instalments must be paid before the end of March 2021. The employer must provide the LA with evidence once all five instalments have been paid.

The decision whether to choose staged payments is for the employee only. Employers should not decide whether to make or not to make staged payments.

If an employee in receipt of a staged payment leaves employment before all of the payments have been made, the employee will receive all of their remaining payments as part of their final payroll.

Staged payments are not available to people who no longer work for the employer who is making the payment.

This staged payment option is only available to staff paid monthly.

Data management

Each organisation is responsible for ensuring the data they collect and retain complies with the relevant GDPR regulations.

LAs should collect and retain lists of all eligible staff who receive the £500 payment. This data will include the name, national insurance number and costs of each individual.

Employers will collect and retain all of the claim forms submitted by staff.

Staff will be asked to confirm on their claim form that they are content for personal information to be shared between their employer and the LA for the purposes of making this payment only.

Further information

HMRC have confirmed that these payments are regarded as earnings and will be liable for tax, national insurance contributions and student loan repayments, where appropriate. They will also be included in benefits calculations.

Further information on the effects of this can be found at:

Income Tax <https://www.gov.uk/income-tax-rates-letters>

National insurance <https://www.gov.uk/national-insurance-rates-letters>

Benefits <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/entitlement>

Student loan repayment <https://www.gov.uk/repaying-your-student-loan>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Question:** *Why do we need claim forms and what will happen to them?*

Answer: Claim forms are needed to provide evidence to confirm that both the employee and employer confirmed that the employee was eligible for the payment. To speed up the process and to avoid printing and postage costs claim forms can be sent to employees and returned electronically.

2. **Question:** *What checks are local authorities expected to do to validate claims?*

Answer: Local authorities will be expected to check employer claims to establish whether the claim is in proportion to the size of the care setting.

3. **Question:** *What should the payment arrangements be between local authorities and care providers or agencies?*

Answer: This is for local authorities to determine. They should seek to use existing payment mechanisms if possible.

4. **Question:** *How do employers prove the payments have been made?*

Answer: Employers are asked to submit a completed form to the local authority. This should be accompanied by a financial report from the employers showing that the payments have been made.

5. **Question:** *How does an employer classify the income to fund these payments in their accounts?*

Answer: The payments should be recognised in each employer's accounts as a taxable income. Employers will be able to claim a matching deduction for employee costs, so there is no net effect on the employers overall taxable profit.

6. **Question:** *What happens if a care provider has multiple care settings in different LA areas?*

Answer: The relevant local authorities and the care provider can, by mutual consent, agree for one local authority to lead on the payments for all settings for that care provider to reduce complexity and the administrative burden

7. **Question:** *What if a domiciliary support service is commissioned by multiple local authorities?*

Answer: The domiciliary support services will need to collect signed claim forms from their staff and submit them to the relevant local authority. If domiciliary care staff provide care for more than one local authority the domiciliary care agency should ensure that only one claim form is submitted per employee and this should be to the local authority where the majority of the care is provided. Local authorities and domiciliary support services can, by mutual consent, agree for one local authority to lead on the payments for employees from a domiciliary support service to reduce complexity and the administrative burden.

8. Question: *Are these payments pensionable?*

Answer: These payments are usually pensionable unless there is a condition in the employee's terms and conditions of employment saying they are not. Employers are asked to check to ensure the payments are treated correctly.

9. Question: *How do employers determine and evidence employer National Insurance and pension costs?*

Answer:

NI

If the employee's payroll generates an NI cost of more than £69.00, the employer should include £69.00 as their additional NI cost on their claim form.

If the employee's payroll has generated an NI cost of less than £69.00, the employer should include the full cost of the employees NI on their claim form.

If the employee's payroll has not generated an NI cost, no NI cost should be included on their claim form.

Pensions

If the payment is pensionable under the employee's terms and condition employers should calculate the total employers pension cost as a percentage of total pay before any deductions. Then apply this percentage to £500 and include this figure in their claim form.

10. Question: *What happens if an eligible care worker has been dismissed?*

Answer: If an eligible care worker has been summarily dismissed they are not eligible to receive the payment. This is regardless of whether the dismissal was during the eligible period or after it. If this dismissal is overturned or found to be unfair they will be eligible to receive the payment.

Employees in an eligible role who are dismissed following disciplinary process other than summary dismissal, remain eligible for the payment.

11. Question: *What happens if an eligible care worker has died?*

Answer: The payment will be made to care worker's estate. This payment will not influence or be influenced by any other Welsh Government funds established to assist the families of care workers that have died as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

PART 3 - Appeals Process

Local authorities administer payments for the scheme on behalf of Welsh Ministers.

This process applies when a claim for payment has been rejected by a local authority.

Stage 1 - Reconsideration

The care worker requests a reconsideration of the decision of the local authority by completing a Reconsideration Request form. A manager from the local authority undertakes the reconsideration and may:

- identify the applicant as eligible for the payment and make the necessary arrangements;
- identify the applicant as ineligible for the payment and issue a letter outlining the reasons for the decision;
- refer the matter to the Welsh Government Appeals Panel due to the complexity or individuality of the circumstances.

The reconsideration process will be completed within 10 working days.

If the care worker remains dissatisfied following stage 1, they have the right to escalate their appeal to stage 2.

Stage 2 – Welsh Government Appeals Panel

The applicant completes the application form and sends to SocialCarePayment.Appeals@gov.wales. We will acknowledge receipt of applications.

The Panel comprises Welsh Government officials, local authority representative, trade unions representative, employers' representative and a chairperson. The chairperson is an external individual not employed by any involved organisation.

The Panel has delegated authority from Welsh Ministers to take decisions on appeals and may:

- find the applicant eligible for the payment and issue the necessary instruction for payment;
- find the applicant ineligible for the payment and issue a letter outlining the reasons for the decision;
- refer the matter to Welsh Ministers if the Panel cannot make a confident decision.

The Panel cannot change the eligibility criteria of the scheme.

The stage 2 appeals process will be completed within 10 working days.