

2025 awards round announcement

The 2025 round will open 1 April 2025 and close at 5pm on 27 May 2025. To help applicants prepare, ACCIA has published the indicative timelines and updated guidance. This can be accessed on our [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) page.

2025 process and policy changes

Following consultation with stakeholders through a series of focus groups in Autumn 2024, we have taken onboard feedback and made changes to processes and policy for the 2025 awards round. These changes will apply to applicants employed in both England and Wales.

Changes include:

- **Changes to employer citations** - Employers will no longer have to write citations for every applicant. Instead, employers will answer a short series of yes or no questions to verify the applicant is meeting their contractual obligations, have been truthful in their application and whether there are any investigations and sanctions in place. We will continue to provide the space for employers to detail any concerns they may have but this information will only be available to the central ACCIA team who will investigate any issues raised. Employers will also now be asked about their organisation's CQC rating.
- **Changes to the CQC/Healthcare Inspectorate Wales section** – regulators ratings will no longer be requested from the applicant. Based on feedback received in the focus groups, this question will now sit under the employer verification stage. However, applicants are still free to detail how they have contributed towards their organisation's CQC/HIW rating under the domains section.
- **Changes to how payments are made** - From 2025 onwards, all new awards will be granted from 1st April the year following application (i.e. awards in the 2025 round will start 1st April 2026). This differs from the prior process of backdating award payments for the first year.

New applicants successful in the 2024 round will still receive backdated payments as the new rule will only apply to the 2025 awards round and subsequent years.

ACCIA hopes this change will bring positive results by providing greater consistency. It aims to simplify the administration of awards at both the central and employer levels. Additionally, it will enable applicants to undertake better financial planning, as they will have a clearer understanding of the amount of money subject to tax in a given financial year - an advantage not available when awards were backdated.

Please contact ACCIA on accia@dhsc.gov.uk if you have any questions on how these changes may impact you.