



Professor Philip Banfield
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Sent via email to: publicaffairs@bma.org.uk

19 April 2023

Dear Professor Banfield

SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS ON JUNIOR DOCTORS PAY

Thank you for your letter dated 14 April to the Cabinet Secretary relating to social media graphics which contained information relating to junior doctors pay and the ongoing pay dispute. He has asked me to respond as Permanent Secretary and Accounting Officer for the Department of Health and Social Care.

I take concerns about the conduct of the Department very seriously. Having reviewed the material that you pointed towards in your letter I have not found any instances of breaches of the Civil Service Code or other guidance.

Communicating the Government of the day's policies and positions on issues, such as public sector pay, is a core part of what the Government Communications Service does. Whenever formulating graphics for use on social media, the Department's civil servants take care to ensure that the material in the graphics is accurate and precise. This is the case in the tweet you reference.

You raised two specific issues in your letter:

- the reference to a 35% pay demand reflected the position taken publicly by the BMA, for example in its [press notice of 23 March](#), where it makes clear that "the ask of 35% pay restoration is our starting position"; and
- the material relating to junior doctors' mean earnings was taken from published [NHS England Staff Earnings Estimates](#). The factual accuracy of these figures has, to my knowledge, never been challenged. In addition the table is headed to make clear it relates to earnings, quotes its source material and is caveated to make clear it includes "additional earnings on top of basic pay"

*From the Permanent Secretary
Sir Chris Wormald*



**Department
of Health &
Social Care**

In both cases therefore I am content that the output is in line with the Civil Service Code. As you have made your letter public, I will do likewise. I am also copying it to the Cabinet Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

**SIR CHRIS WORMALD
PERMANENT SECRETARY**