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Migration Advisory Committee
3rd Floor, Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London, SW1P 4DF

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as Foreign Secretary of the Academy of Medical Sciences, the independent body representing the diversity of medical science within the UK. Our elected Fellowship includes the UK's foremost experts drawn from an extensive range of research areas. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the review of Minimum Salary Thresholds for Tier 2 visas, being conducted by the Migration Advisory Committee.

The Academy recognises that the UK's world-leading research base is best served by enabling excellent people to move and collaborate across national boundaries. As such, we are concerned that the proposed changes to the Tier 2 (General) minimum salary thresholds may adversely affect the ability of international scientists to relocate to the UK. This would isolate our national research pool from international talent and limit our capacity for long-term collaborative links with developed and developing nations, which are facilitated by such movement. The international mobility of highly-skilled workers means that the UK must strive to maintain its appeal and accessibility compared to global competitors. Our world-leading universities and medical research institutions attract some of the world's most talented scientists – barriers that exclude them threaten our long-term research output.

The impact of the proposed changes would be felt most acutely among those at the early stages of their career, which would adversely affect the potential for the UK to build strong links with future global research leaders. We would draw your attention to the submission from the Royal Society, which presents substantial data demonstrating the impact of the changes, including the potential exclusion of recipients of their University Research Fellowship scheme, one of the most highly regarded Fellowships in the field. Threshold changes at the upper range of the proposals would go further – restricting international appointments to all but the most senior of levels, and removing a generation of international scientists from UK research establishments.

With the majority of biomedical researchers relocating to the UK entering through the Tier 2 (General) visa route, we urge the Committee to ensure that any **changes to thresholds are proportionate to the average salaries paid in this discipline**, recognising the difference between clinical and non-clinical researchers. It is important that the committee recognises the contribution made by international researchers to all levels of the UK's highly productive research base, and that **this value may not be fairly represented by researcher salaries alone**.

We look forward to further engaging with this issue, particularly within the wider review of Tier 2 visas scheduled for later this year. We would be pleased to provide further evidence if required.

Yours sincerely,

