

General Practice Specialty Training

Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

The Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) is committed to providing equality of opportunity in its employment policy, practices and procedures in relation to GP Specialty Training.

The Deanery is committed to applying a fair and transparent process for all GP trainees. The priority is to provide a suitable training programme to enable acquisition of a CCT in General Practice.

The Deanery adheres to the processes stipulated by the National Recruitment Office for GP Recruitment into GP Specialty Training.

This document sets out the policy on recruitment for GP Specialty Training.

2. General Principles

In accordance with the Deanery's commitment to the provision of equality of opportunity, adherence to "best human resource practice" and current legislation, the underlying principle is that all appointments should be made on the basis of the 'merit' principle. That is to say that all appointments will be made solely on the basis of merit by objective evidence of competence. This objective evidence will be established during the GP national recruitment process.

All appointments will be made in accordance with the NRO criteria.

Those responsible for recruitment including GP Assessors will attend initial training in Recruitment and Equality and Diversity, followed by refresher training every 3 years.

To avoid conflicts of interest, anyone directly involved in the recruitment process who is related to, has or has had a close personal or professional relationship with any of the applicants must disclose the fact at the earliest opportunity. In such or potential circumstances the Assessor will not be involved in the recruitment of that candidate.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order (NI) 1979 stipulates among other things that, for the purposes of employment in the HSC, a conviction may never be regarded as spent. This stipulation will be drawn to the attention of all applicants, who will also be advised that a conviction does not necessarily debar an applicant from obtaining employment.

The Sex Discrimination Orders 1976 and 1988, Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998 all require organisations to submit annual returns to the Equality Commission with regard to information about all applicants, promotees and leavers in relation to gender, marital status and religious affiliation. All applicants are therefore required to complete a 'monitoring form' as an integral part of their application form.

An individual has a statutory right to take a complaint of discrimination within three months of becoming aware that he/she may have been discriminated against, therefore the Deanery will normally retain all appointment files for a period of 7 years.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process, therefore all information and correspondence will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The HR Manager can be contacted at any stage throughout the process for advice/ information, however ultimately any recruitment decisions taken are the responsibility of the Assessors.

Canvassing by applicants will result in disqualification and the potential for referral to the General Medical Council.

3. The GP Specialty Training Recruitment Process

The National Recruitment Office for General Practice Specialty Training co-ordinates the nationally agreed and quality assured process for recruitment to GP Specialty Training Programmes. The Deanery implements the procedures of the national recruitment process. The responsibility for the adherence to the procedures of the National Recruitment Process ultimately lies with the GP Director but is managed by the Associate Directors for GP Specialty Training and administered by the GP Specialty Training Team at the Deanery.

The National Recruitment Office website can be found at <http://www.gprecruitment.org.uk/>.

'The National Recruitment Office for General Practice training (NRO) was set up by the Committee of General Practice Education Directors (COGPED) in November 2002. It is an administrative body which co-ordinates recruitment to general practice training programmes throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

One of its main roles is to help the deaneries deliver a standard and robust recruitment process that is reliable, valid and fair. The NRO has published [Research and Evaluation Evidence](#) which outlines the development of the GP recruitment process and indicates how it follows best practice.' (NRO Website, About Us)

4. Stage 1 - Determination of Eligibility

The first stage in the recruitment process is to assess applications against the entry requirements. The process for identifying if applicants meet the entry requirements is completed electronically. Evidence of having achieved the competencies of the UK Foundation Programme will be reviewed by the Foundation Competency panel at the Deanery. More information regarding stage one and eligibility can be found on the NRO website:

<http://www.gprecruitment.org.uk/applicantsguide.htm#Evidence%20of%20Foundation%20Competence>

This panel will usually consist of the following members:

- Associate Director for GP Specialty Training
- HR Manager
- Lay representative

The panel will review the evidence of achieving the competencies of the UK Foundation Programme and if satisfied will allow applicants to proceed to the second stage of the recruitment process.

5. Stage 2 - Machine Markable Test

The second stage of the process forms the short-listing process. Candidates are invited to an initial assessment which is conducted under examination conditions during one day. The assessment is held at a Driving Test Centre, many of which are available throughout the UK. Candidates are provided with a list of Driving Test Centres and can book a place through the NRO online applicants system. This process is administered by the NRO.

6. Stage 3 - Selection Assessment Centre

Candidates who successfully attain the standard at Stage 2 are invited to Stage 3 which is a Selection Assessment Centre (SAC).

The NRO administer the booking of places via the online recruitment website. The Stage 2 assessment result is used to rank all candidates and allocate them to a Deanery for Selection Assessment Centre according to their rank and their Deanery preferences.

The Deanery is responsible for the selection and training of assessors at the Selection Assessment Centre. The Associate Directors for GP Specialty Training are trained in the national assessment process and provide training for all assessors. Training is a mandatory requirement for all assessors. All assessors receive Equality and Diversity Training every three years.

Simulators are also recruited specifically and trained for their role at the Selection Assessment Centre and in addition receive Equality and Diversity training every three years.

Assessors at the Selection Assessment Centre will identify the demonstration of evidence in the competency areas as described in the person specification. Interviews do not form part of the recruitment process and the Assessors do not have access to application forms, CVs or any other biographical information. Assessors therefore solely judge candidates on the evidence demonstrated at the Selection Assessment Centre. Candidates are required to complete 3 simulation exercises which are observed and assessed by the assessors. They also complete a written exercise.

A lay representative will be present as an observer at the Selection Assessment Centre and will provide a written quality report on the process. The report is reviewed by the Deanery's Quality Management Group.

The NRO also provides an external quality management system and senior recruitment staff visit other deaneries during the Selection Assessment Centres and provide a quality report to the Deanery and the NRO.

7. Stage 4 - Offer of GP Specialty Training Programme

Candidates will be ranked on their performance at the Selection Assessment Centre. The GP Director will offer the highest ranking candidates an opportunity to train in Northern Ireland, based on the number of available places. All offers will be made through the online recruitment system. A waiting list will be compiled for candidates who demonstrate competence but where there are insufficient places in Northern Ireland. These candidates may be offered an opportunity to train in another Deanery in the UK through the National Clearing process, which is administered by the NRO.

A decision to accept a GP Specialty Training programme requires the candidate to reject all other offers of training programmes. Failure to do so may result in the offer of all posts being withdrawn.