

Applicant Guidance

Targeted General Practice Training 2021

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to outline requirements to allow successful completion of recruitment to Targeted GP Training (TGPT).

The TGPT scheme will focus on doctors who left GP training *before* the increase in extensions to training which came into effect from 31 January 2018 (as detailed in the [Reference Guide for Postgraduate Specialty Training in the UK \(The Gold Guide, 8th Ed.\)](#)) having passed two of the three assessment requirements, with success in Workplace-Based Assessments being a prerequisite. A change in exam rules by the RCGP will enable doctors who re-enter training through the TGPT scheme to re-sit with a maximum of two additional attempts. This will not be affected by the number of attempts already had. TGPT programmes will be available at ST3 entry level only for a duration of 18 months.

All submitted applications for TGPT will be assessed using a standard, national and consistent staged process outlined below. The competency-based selection process allows applicants to demonstrate their abilities and suitability to re-enter GP training.

Applicants will make a single application for *all* available TGPT posts in participating regions.

Applicants should also refer to both the [Oriel Applicant User Guide](#) (for general guidance on how to navigate Oriel and technical help with the on-line application form) and the [2021 Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook](#) (for general information about the administration of national recruitment processes).

1.1 Assessment & Selection Process in 2021

The assessment and selection process will involve the Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA) which is a computer-based assessment delivered in physical test centres. A subsequent face-to-face or virtual assessment at a Selection Centre **will not** occur in 2021.

In the event of significant disruptions to testing during the scheduled window due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MSRA will be delivered remotely to applicants.

Successful applicants will be considered for appointment across the whole of England and Scotland, based on their performance in the MSRA. This method is known as Single Transferable Score (STS) as applicants are not restricted to being considered for appointment in a single specific region. The STS system is designed to maximise opportunities for successful appointment.

1.2 Time-Limited Recruitment Window

Recruitment into the Targeted GP Training scheme will be open for all specialty application rounds for entry into training from February 2019 to August 2021. This means the **final** intake into the scheme will be for posts commencing in August 2021.

2. Eligibility Requirements

All applications will be assessed against the essential criteria outlined in the [Targeted GP Training Person Specification](#), i.e. applicants must meet *all* the following criteria:

- Have current GMC registration with a license to practice *at the point of application*
- Have previously held a GP National Training Number (NTN)
- Left GP training between August 2010 and January 2018
- Have satisfactory Workplace-Based Assessments (WPBA)
- Have passed one of either Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) or Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA)
- Have taken, but not passed, the other exam of the two
- Been in medical practice in the NHS in the last two years.
- Be able to demonstrate compliance with all NHS Revalidation, CPD and Appraisal requirements since leaving GP training

Applicants who are unable to satisfy the eligibility requirements will have their application rejected. For clarity the following doctors are **not** eligible:

- Passed one of the exams; not attempted the other
- Failed both exams
- Unsatisfactory WPBA

3. Submitting an Application

All applications must be made electronically via the on-line Oriel recruitment portal by the specified deadline. **Late applications will NOT be considered.** The dates and deadlines relating to recruitment activity are available on the [GPNRO website](#).

The TGPT application form will only ask for factual information about you, your previous GP training and your employment history. Once your application has been submitted you are unable to make any changes, apart from to update your own contact and referee details so please ensure that you do not submit unless it is complete.

Please be aware that Oriel does not support internet browsers that have reached the end of their product support lifecycle.

4. Communications Regarding an Application

Communication regarding your TGPT application will be via direct messaging through Oriel. An email will also be sent as a secondary form of communication however, as emails are external to Oriel, delivery cannot be guaranteed and therefore this method of communication should not be relied upon. Therefore, please ensure you check your Oriel account regularly for messages throughout the entirety of the recruitment process.

You should also make sure that you are using an email account that you can access at any time and will not be blocked by your employer's IT security system. If you are uncertain about this, you should check with your IT department at work.

To ensure messages from the GPNRO are not filtered by your email provider's junk / spam filters, you are strongly advised to add gpnro@hee.nhs.uk and noreply@oriel.nhs.uk to your email whitelist.

5. Selecting a Region (Preferencing)

Applicants are permitted to submit ONE application, per Round, for a standard TGPT programme. At the time of application, you will be asked to indicate your preferences from all programmes available in England and Scotland, in rank order. This means that you can be considered for appointment across the whole of England and Scotland.

Important: please only preference the programmes that you would be prepared to work in, *including those listed with zero vacancies as posts may become available at a later date*. If you preference a post, it is assumed that you are able to accept this, if offered. It is therefore imperative that applicants consider their preference choices before submitting them. In making those decisions, researching regions carefully is recommended.

Applicants are advised to read the regions' profile pages and access individual region websites for more information about the opportunities available. It is suggested that you research not only the types of programmes offered in each region but also the geography of each region, the main Trusts within the geography, transport links to home and so on.

The ability to record your preferences will be locked at point of application submission however you will be presented with a further window to continue preferencing; this window will span from the date of invitation to the Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment until 48 hours before the first offers date; these dates are published on the [GPNRO website](#) for all relevant rounds. Applicants who successfully complete the recruitment and selection process will have a further opportunity to amend their preferences once the offers process commences. See section 21.1 *Offer Exchanges/Enhanced Preferences* for details.

The TGPT Programmes that you preference in your application will be used to make you an offer, subject to the successful completion of the selection process.

5.1 Targeted Enhancement Recruitment Scheme (TERS)

TERS will **not** be available for TGPT programmes.

6. Special Circumstances

A standardised national process is available for all specialty recruitment to ensure that applicants with special circumstances and a requirement to train in a specific region are treated in a fair and consistent way.

Any applicant who falls into one of the following eligibility criteria can apply to have their circumstances taken into consideration, allowing them to be pre allocated into a post, subject to it meeting the requirements of entering TGPT training:

- **Criterion 1** – the applicant is the primary carer for someone who is disabled, as defined by the Equality Act 2010,
- **Criterion 2** – the applicant has a medical condition or disability for which ongoing follow up for the condition in the specified location is an *absolute* requirement.

Applicants wishing to be considered for special circumstances should complete the special circumstances application form (available from the Specialty Training website [Resource Bank](#)) and forward this, together with the appropriate supporting evidence by email to mdrs.nationalrecruitment@hee.nhs.uk as soon as their application has been submitted.

It is important that you review the relevant section in the [2021 Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook](#) for full details on the eligibility criteria and administrative process.

7. Deferred Entry

Applicants can only defer the start of their TGPT programme on *statutory* grounds such as personal ill health or maternity/paternity/adoption leave.

8. Transferring Recruitment Scores

The ability to transfer recruitment scores is not available for TGPT recruitment.

9. Adjustments under the Equality Act 2010

All recruiters are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and in this regard, recruiters will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate applicants at Assessment and Selection Centres provided these are made known in advance. Applicants who require adjustments (e.g. wheelchair access, extra time, nursing mothers) will be required to submit supporting evidence to substantiate the required adjustment. This evidence will need to be uploaded to Oriel via the *Document Upload* dashboard as “*Supporting evidence*” and attached to the application form *at the point of application*.

Adjustments cannot be guaranteed if evidence is provided late and no adjustments can be made on the day of the assessment.

In some instances, to satisfy requests for adjustments, it may be necessary to schedule an MSRA place at a specific time or a specific location.

10. Application process for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) without Right of Residence

From 6 October 2019, all medical practitioners have been added to the Shortage Occupation List in the UK. This means that all general practitioners are exempt from the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) and can apply for GP training in any recruitment round, subject to eligibility; there will be **no restriction on their appointment**.

It is strongly suggested that you read the [2021 Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook](#) to familiarise yourself with the immigration information contained within, esp. the guidance relating to Home Office requirements.

11. Right to Work in the UK

All applicants will be requested to produce valid right to work documents. Applicants who do not have valid right to work documents will need to apply for Tier 2 / Skilled Worker sponsorship.

From 1 July 2021, EU/EEA citizens will need to either provide confirmation that they have obtained *EU settlement status*, have another valid right to work visa (e.g. dependent visa) or will need to apply for Tier 2 / Skilled Worker sponsorship.

12. Evidence of English Language Skills

Applicants' evidence of English language skills will need to comply with the requirements set by the GMC and the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) or Guidance issued by the relevant Primary Care Organisations (PCOs) responsible for maintaining a medical performers' list in either England or Scotland.

PCOs are NHS England in England and primary care divisions within area Health Boards in Scotland.

13. Fitness to Practise

If you answer *yes* to any of the Fitness to Practise questions on the application form, you will be required to send further information about this declaration to your first preference region *by the application closing date*. This must be provided on the [Fitness to Practise \(FtP\) Declaration Form](#) and sent to the GPNRO at gpnro@hee.nhs.uk.

Failure to provide this evidence by the application closing date will result in your application not progressing any further in the recruitment round.

14. ST1-ST2 Competency Level Questions

Ordinarily, applicants to ST3 training programmes are required provide evidence of ST1-ST2 competence. TGPT applicants **do not** have to provide this evidence. However, due to recent updates to Oriol, ST1-ST2 competency level questions are now mandatory and appear on the Competency/Eligibility page of the application form. Applicants can answer these however they wish but are advised to answer the minimal amount of questions in the shortest manner possible that does not require any attachment of supporting evidence. Answers to ST1-ST2 competency level questions will not be considered when determining the outcome of the application.

15. Evidence of Workplace-Based Assessments (WPBA)

All applicants to TGPT posts are required to demonstrate that they previously left GP training having achieved satisfactory Workplace-Based Assessments (WPBA). Satisfactory WPBA are evidenced via e-Portfolio in either of the following ways:

1. **Final ARCP** – the panel awarded an Outcome 4 and specified that *all* WPBA were satisfactory

Or:

1. **Final ARCP** – the panel awarded an Outcome 4 *without* listing any WPBA as needing further development *and*,
2. **Final Educational Supervisors Review (ESR)** – in an applicant’s *final* review, the educational supervisor rated every MRCGP WPBA competence progression as “Competent for licensing” or “Excellent” when recommending overall competence to the *final* ARCP panel.

15.1 Exceptional Circumstances

If in the very exceptional circumstances applicants have evidence that they were marked down on their Workplace-Based Assessments for exam failure only, then, this should be submitted as part of the application process and it will be considered against evidence within e-portfolio and the evidence from the HEE Local Office or Deanery. Suitable evidence should be formal correspondence from either the *GP Head of School* or *GP Director* at the HEE local office / deanery in which training was undertaken confirming release from training with satisfactory WPBA.

15.2 Consent to Access e-Portfolio

To process applications for TGPT, it is necessary to verify eligibility such as ARCP panel outcomes and WPBA outcomes in past training.

As part of the application process, applicants will be required to consent to the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) providing e-Portfolio access to the General Practice National Recruitment Office (GPNRO) and the responsible Health Education England (HEE) / NHS Education for Scotland (NES) GP Directors for the sole purpose of checking eligibility to TGPT.

16. Revalidation

Doctors who hold a license to practice to work in the UK must regularly show the GMC that they are keeping their skills and knowledge up to date and giving good care to patients. This process is called revalidation.

16.1 Compliance with NHS Revalidation, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Appraisal Requirements

All applicants to TGPT must be able to demonstrate compliance with all NHS revalidation, continuing professional development (CPD) and appraisal requirements since leaving GP training. Satisfactory compliance can be demonstrated in any of the following ways:

- **Currently on a Specialty Training Programme** - Applicants currently in active clinical or clinical and academic practice in a UK educationally approved training post (CT/ST/LAT or equivalent), holding either a National Training Number (NTN) or

Deanery Reference Number (DRN) will be required to upload a satisfactory ARCP outcome from their current training programme to their application form, at the time of application submission.

- **Not currently on a Specialty Training Programme** - Applicants who are not currently in a in a UK educationally approved training post will be required to upload copies of their appraisals since their last revalidation to their application form, at the time of application submission. There are number of formats in common usage, and any format that addresses the GMC domains will be considered and assessed by the responsible Health Education England (HEE) / NHS Education of Scotland (NES) GP Directors with knowledge of the NHS requirements.

IMPORTANT: in instances where appraisals were not conducted by applicants' Designated Body, as recorded on their GMC record, applicants will be required to provide supplementary evidence from their Responsible Officer (RO) confirming arrangements with external bodies to conduct appraisals on their behalf.

17. Accreditation of Transferable Competences Framework (ATCF)

Successful applicants will **not** be able to shorten their TGPT programme via the accreditation of transferable competences.

18. Reapplication to Specialty Training

Specialty training posts and programmes are not normally available to any doctor who has previously relinquished or been released or removed from that training post/programme. However, this requirement has been waived for applicants to TGPT who will **not** require support for re-application to GP specialty training.

19. Document Upload

As you progress through your application it may become apparent that you will be required to upload some form of documentation to allow GPNRO to assess your eligibility.

If you are required to do this, you must:

- Ensure that the document is uploaded as a single document and not in separate pages
- Ensure that the document label describes the nature of the document
- Ensure that the document is uploaded into the correct document section

GPNRO reserves the right to request re-submission of documentation if the above rules are not followed.

20. Longlisting - Eligibility Requirements

All applications will be assessed against the essential criteria outlined in the [TGPT Person Specification](#).

21. Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA)

Eligible applicants will be invited to attend the MSRA which is a computer-based assessment and will form the selection process in 2021. The assessment has been fully researched and evaluated and has been shown to have high predictive validity.

The MSRA will be delivered at Pearson VUE testing centres with remote testing provisions in place for those who are isolating/shielding due to COVID-19 or depending on their geographical location, where local or national COVID-19 lockdown measures prevent access to a testing centre.

GPNRO lead on the delivery of the MSRA and has developed a separate guide which provides GP applicants with information about the whole MSRA process (e.g. registering to sit the test, centre locations, format of the assessment, etc.)

All applicants are expected to read this document in full to develop an understanding of this particular stage of the recruitment process and what is expected of applicants; it is available from the [GPNRO website](#).

22. Outcome following the MSRA

All applicants will be notified of their outcome on the published offers date. The offers date can be found on the [Recruitment](#) webpage of the GPNRO website.

Applicants' MSRA scores and final national rank will be published in Oriel against the TGPT application as interview scores. Detailed guidance on how to locate or view these scores is contained in the [Oriel Applicant User Handbook](#).

22.1 Appealing the Outcome

The outcome is final and cannot be reviewed, re-marked or disputed. There is no appeals process.

If you feel your application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, there is a national complaints policy and procedure. You should explore this route if you have any concerns about your application. A copy of the policy can be located in the [GPRNO Resource Bank](#).

23. Offers

All offers will be made via Oriel by GPNRO. Offers received in any other way will be deemed invalid. If you are made an offer, you will need to respond to this on Oriel.

Applicants will be ranked in a single national list based on their performance throughout the selection processes. Offers are made in rank order based on this national ranking.

Initial offers will be released by *close of business* on the first offer date published for the current round (see the [GPNRO website](#)). Please do not contact GPNRO about offers prior to this date, as it could delay the release.

You will be given 48 hours (exclusive of weekends) to respond to an offer and you have the option to accept, decline or hold. Only one offer can be held at any one time, across all specialty applications in a given round. If you fail to respond to an offer within the 48-hour window you will be deemed to have declined the offer.

If you are holding an offer and try to hold another, the original held post will be automatically declined on your behalf by Oriel.

Once you have accepted a post, you will not receive any further offers from any other specialty in this round (i.e. Oriel will automatically withdraw you from all other applications you have in the given recruitment round).

Offers that are declined will be reoffered in rank order to other applicants.

If you choose to hold an offer, you can keep this offer held up until the hold deadline published for the current round (see the [GPNRO website](#)). Before this deadline, you will be required to go back into Oriel and make a final decision on the offer. Any offers still held when the deadline is reached will be deemed to have been declined and the system will automatically change your status to show that you have declined the post.

After the hold deadline has passed, any offers made will only have the option of accept or decline.

Please note:

- *When actioning an offer, it is strongly recommended that applicants avoid using a mobile device or internet browsers that have reached the end of their product support lifecycle as these are unlikely to be supported.*
- *Applicants who let their offer expire (and are withdrawn from the recruitment process) can be reinstated if they contact the GPNRO; however, their original offer cannot and will not be guaranteed.*

23.1 Confirmation of Actioning an Offer

Once you have actioned your offer, you will receive an automated confirmation message in Oriel and a secondary automated message will be sent to your registered email address. If you do not receive confirmation, log into your Oriel account to confirm if the offer action process was completed in its entirety.

24. Upgrading Offers

If you rank highly enough to be made an offer, this will be made to the highest ranked Training Programme preference that is available when your final rank is reached. If this Training Programme offer is suitable for you and you do not want to be considered for any other preferences you have ranked higher, you can choose to simply accept it.

However, applicants do have the option of getting one of their higher ranked TGPT programme preferences, should they become available, by opting into upgrading. The upgrading option is available to all offers that have been held or accepted, but not where an offer has been declined. An applicant who has accepted or held an offer can opt in or out of upgrading at any time during the window which runs until the upgrade deadline published for the current round (see the [GPNRO website](#)). Please be aware that due to the ranking of your GP Training Programme preferences you may move into a different region if you are upgraded.

If you opt into upgrades and a higher preferenced offer becomes available, the upgrade will be automatic. You will be placed in the higher preferenced post and an automated message will be sent to you Oriel informing you of the upgrade; you will **not** be given 48 hours to decide whether you wish to accept or decline the upgrade. If an upgrade is made, the previously held or accepted post will be released and will be reoffered to another applicant.

Once you have been upgraded you will be sent an automated message through Oriel to inform you of this. Details of the upgrade made will be available in the relevant section on Oriel.

Please note: Upgrading of offers will not continue beyond the stated upgrade deadline, even if a preferred post becomes available at a later date. After the upgrade deadline, vacant

posts will be offered to the next eligible applicant who has preferenced the post and who has yet to receive an offer, not to applicants who have already accepted a post.

24.1 Offer Exchanges/Enhanced Preferences

Applicants can have a change in circumstances for any number of reasons in the time between programme preferences being made and offers being released.

For applicants who have accepted or held a post, there will be an option to select upgrade options which not only include those programmes that were originally ranked higher than the offered post, but also those that were ranked lower.

Please note: Any changes to preferences made between the offers algorithm being run and offers being released will not be considered until the next offers match is run.

Applicants who have not been made an offer may also have a change in circumstances that requires them to make amendments to their expressed preferences. GPNRO will keep their programme preferencing open throughout the recruitment process, however this will be temporarily disabled before each offer algorithm is run, until the offers have been released.

These processes will continue up until the upgrading deadline in each recruitment round (see the [GPNRO website](#)).

More detailed guidance on this process is contained in the [Oriel Applicant User Handbook](#).

25. References

Referees should be contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm that they are happy to support the application and provide a reference. You are required to give details of your last three clinical or educational supervisors from your current post, your previous post and the post before that.

All offers made will be on the condition of the offered region receiving three satisfactory references. Obtaining references is an applicant's responsibility. The offered region will NOT chase your referees.

25.1 Reference Requests

Reference requests are an automated process in Oriel. A request will be triggered and sent electronically to your nominated referees when you accept or, accept with upgrades an offer of GP training. To ensure that the requests are not blocked or filtered by your referees' email providers you are strongly advised to inform your referees to add noreply@oriel.nhs.uk to their email whitelist.

25.2 Completing a Reference

Referees are required to submit references electronically, using the online referee portal in Oriel. You will be advised, via your Oriel portal, when your referee has submitted a reference. In rare cases there may be a need for your reference to be provided on paper. We will instruct you if this is necessary. You can download a Structured National Reference Form from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#) and you will need to ask the affected referee to return the completed form directly to the offered region or employer, if known.

25.3 Changing Your Nominated Referee

For any references that have not yet been submitted you are able to update the details of or, change your, nominated referees. However, if a referee has already submitted your reference, you will not be able to make any changes to their details.

If you change the email address against a referee, a new reference request will be sent to the newly provided email address, and the original request will be withdrawn.

26. Further Preferencing within Offered Training Programme

Once you have accepted an offer of training at a region and the upgrade deadline has passed, you will be asked, by the offered region, to indicate your preferred geography and/or rotational posts from those that are available within the Training Programme that you have accepted.

Information regarding these further preferences will be published on individual region websites.

The GPNRO does not have any involvement in this process. Any queries relating to this should be sent to the region where the training offer was received.

26.1 Allocation of Trainees within Local Training Programmes

Once offered a Training Programme within a region it is expected that further preferences will be based on individual ranking and achievement over the exercises involved in the selection process, i.e. higher performing applicants are offered a higher preference from the pool of local placements/rotations on offer.

There is, however, a risk associated with the lower level of allocations to programme level if done purely by choice. Therefore, each region has developed its own allocation policy to

mitigate risk. You should visit the website of the relevant region for further information on this.

27. Clearing

Using the Single Transferable Score model in TGPT recruitment means there will be no option for clearing. Therefore, if you do not receive an offer in this round of recruitment it will be for one of two reasons:

1. Every one of your TGPT Programme preferences are accepted before your rank is reached (this could happen even if you are considered appointable in the process).
2. You were unsuccessful at a certain part of the recruitment process (you will be notified if this is the case).

28. Feedback

Applicants will be given feedback throughout the recruitment process and will not need to make a formal request to receive it.

Applicants that are rejected at the longlisting stage will be advised of the reason why their application was rejected. Applicants that are rejected following MSRA will be advised of their total scores and the scores needed to achieve success. There is no further feedback that can be provided for the MSRA.

29. Offers of Employment & Pre-Employment Checks

The offer and allocation of a Training Programme referred to above is NOT an offer of employment. An employment contract detailing the terms and conditions of employment will be issued by the responsible employing organisation and is made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. Your offer of employment will include the name of your employer, the start date and length of the period of employment, the location, the hours, the minimum rate of remuneration and the notice period applicable.

Information regarding pay, hours, sick pay and annual leave entitlements, notice period, study leave, pension scheme etc. are set out in the national terms and conditions available from NHS Employers. A framework for a written contract of employment for GP specialty registrars is also available from the BMA. Individual region websites may also provide additional local information and links to individual employer websites.

The employing organisation will carry out several pre-employment checks before an offer of employment can be confirmed. These will include verification of identity, registration and qualifications, right to work (immigration), employment history and employment reference checks (these are different from the clinical reference checks that the region needs), a

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and an occupational health check. Some of these (verification of identify, registration and qualifications and right to work for example) may also be undertaken by the region during the recruitment process.

30. Applicant Expenses

Expenses incurred by applicants in sitting the MSRA will *not* be reimbursed by the GPNRO.

31. Complaints Procedure

All national recruitment offices use a nationally agreed process for handling complaints about recruitment. If you feel your application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, you should explore this route. A copy of the national complaints policy and procedure document can be located in the [GPRNO Resource Bank](#).

31.1 Raising Concerns

Applicants wishing to raise concerns about any part of the recruitment process, where this falls outside the scope of the complaints policy should forward these, in confidence to mdrs.confidential@hee.nhs.uk.

Concerns raised without detail are difficult to investigate due to the volume of applications received. Applicants are therefore requested to provide details of the specialty and, where applicable, the applicants concerned. Any information provided would be treated in the utmost confidence.