

Neurosurgery ST1 & ST2 National Recruitment

2024 Applicant Handbook

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Introduction

The National Recruitment Office for Neurosurgery is NHS England North East and Yorkshire. We are recruiting to ST1 & ST2 posts across the United Kingdom.

This handbook aims to provide applicants with information regarding all aspects of the 2024 Neurosurgery recruitment process.

General information about applying to specialty training posts is available on the [Specialty Training website](#) and in the Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook which can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#). We recommend that all applicants read this document in full.

Timeline and Key Dates

Recruitment to ST1 & ST2 Neurosurgery in 2024 will follow the timeline below:

Applications open	At 10am on Thursday 26 October 2023
Application deadline	At 4pm on Thursday 23 November 2023
Shortlisting	Friday 5 January 2024
MSRA Window	Thursday 4 January – Sunday 14 January 2024
Interviews	Thursday 7 and Friday 8 March 2024
Initial offers released on	By 5pm on Tuesday 26 March 2024
Holding deadline	At 1pm on Thursday 4 April 2024
Upgrade Deadline	At 4pm on Tuesday 9 April 2024

Please note: all dates are subject to change at any time

Contact details

We have a recruitment helpdesk to assist applicants through the recruitment process. You can contact the recruitment helpdesk in the following ways:

By email: neurosurgeryrec.yh@hee.nhs.uk We aim to respond to all emails within 48 working hours. However, please be aware that this may not always be possible.

By telephone (for urgent enquiries only): For urgent enquiries we have a telephone helpdesk, which is available between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays). The Neurosurgery recruitment helpdesk number is 0113 887 1716.

Vacancies

NHS England (NHSE) is responsible for educating and training doctors, dentists, nurses and all healthcare professionals in England. Medical and Dental training programmes in England are managed locally by NHSE's Local Offices. Training programmes in Wales are managed by Health Education and Improvement Wales. Training programmes in Northern Ireland and Scotland continue to be managed by Deaneries. Links to the individual Local Offices and Deaneries are provided in [Appendix 2](#).

Vacancy numbers will be published on the [Neurosurgery recruitment webpage](#) once confirmed.

LAT Vacancies

Recruitment to Locum Appointment for Training (LAT) posts in England ceased on 1st January 2016 for all specialties. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland may continue to recruit to LAT posts. *All vacancy numbers are indicative and are subject to change at any time.*

Application

Applications will only be accepted through the [Oriel recruitment system](#). For further guidance on creating an account, registering and submitting your application using the system please refer to the Oriel Applicant User Guide which can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

Completing your application

The application form for Neurosurgery will open at 10am on Thursday 26 October 2023. Use the Vacancy Search tool to navigate to the national Neurosurgery vacancy and click "Apply"

Please complete all sections of the application form in full before submitting it. Once you have submitted your application, the only sections you will be able to change are your personal details and your referee details.


Application Deadline

The deadline for submitting applications is 4pm on Thursday 23 November 2023 After this time no applications will be accepted. **There will be no exceptions to this deadline.** You are advised to complete and submit your application at least 24 hours ahead of the deadline to allow for any unforeseen problems.

When you submit your application, you should receive an automatic confirmation email. If you do not receive this email within two hours you should check to ensure that you have successfully submitted your application.

Academic Benchmarking

If you have applied for local Neurosurgery Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) vacancies at ST1 or above and require clinical benchmarking, you must complete a National Neurosurgery ST1 or ST2 application and be deemed appointable at interview.



For more information about clinical benchmarking and the ACF process please see the Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook which can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

Eligibility and Longlisting

The eligibility criteria for ST1 & ST2 Neurosurgery are listed in the [2024 Person Specification](#). It is your responsibility to demonstrate that you meet the eligibility criteria. Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria both during longlisting and after offers where necessary. Any applications which do not meet the eligibility criteria will be longlisted out of the process and will not progress to the next stage.

By allowing applicants to progress to the interview stage, NHS England North East and Yorkshire DOES NOT accept or confirm that applicants meet all eligibility requirements. This includes immigration status, evidence of achievement of core competencies or equivalent, and requisite length of time in training as per the national [2024 Person Specification](#). This list is not exhaustive and is applicable to all eligibility criteria.

You may still be withdrawn from the application process at any stage, including after the interviews have taken place, if the evidence pertaining to an eligibility criterion is found to be unsatisfactory.

GMC Registration and Licence to Practice

Applicants will need to hold full General Medical Council registration status and a current licence to practice by the time of appointment (in most cases this will be Wednesday 7 August 2024). You will be asked to confirm that you will meet this requirement on your application form. Any offers made will be subject to you meeting this requirement by the time of appointment.

Assessment of Competency

Applicants must have achieved Foundation or ST1 competencies by the time of appointment. Evidence of these competencies must be provided at the time of application and interview. If you are currently achieving these competencies, then any offer will be made on the basis you achieve the relevant competence by the start date of the post.

Evidence of foundation competences via a CREST form

If demonstrating your foundation competency using the Certificate of Readiness to Enter Specialty Training, all candidates are required to attach this evidence **prior to submission**. Applications made without properly completed certification will normally be rejected. Please ensure you read the Applicant Guide to CREST Completion 2024 available on the [Oriel Resource Bank](#) prior to submitting an application.

Please note – the CREST form has been updated and only the 2024 version of the form will be accepted for this round of recruitment. A copy of the 2024 CREST Form can be found in the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

ST1

24 months' or less clinical experience, of which no more than 12 months (maximum) experience in any combination of the following specialties; Neurosurgery, Neurology, Neuro-radiology, Neuropathology, and Neuro-intensive care. (All experience above is by time of intended start date and excluding foundation modules)

Please note all experience (after 24 months Foundation Modules) is counted, this is regardless of the post level, locum or permanent posts or country the experience is gained in.

ST2

Have completed the relevant ST1 competences in Neurosurgery as described in the Neurosurgery specialty curriculum by start of post.

The Neurosurgery ST2 Alternative Certificate of Competences can be found on the [national neurosurgery recruitment webpage](#)

Immigration/Right to Work

You must have the right to work as a doctor training in the UK. Your application will be assessed based on your immigration status at the time of application.

Applicants requiring visa sponsorship in order to take up a post are eligible to apply.

Career Progression and Experience

You must provide a complete employment history going back to completion of your primary medical degree on your application form. If you are in a rotational training programme, please also list posts that you are *due* to rotate to up until the end of July 2024 or until completion of your Foundation /ST1 Programme if this is later. You must provide an explanation for employment gaps of more than four weeks.

Trainees released or removed from a training post or programme

Specialty training posts and programmes are not normally available to anyone who has previously relinquished or been released/removed from a training post/programme in the same specialty. When applying for a post you will be asked if you have previously relinquished or been released or removed from a training programme in the specialty to which you are applying.

If you answer yes to this question, you will need to upload a completed **“Support for Reapplication to a Specialty Training Programme - Exclusion Policy Support Form”** to your application no later than the application deadline. This form can be downloaded from the [Oriell Resource Bank](#).

Trainees applying to continue training in a different region

Applicants who are currently undertaking a specialty training programme (and who have a National Training Number), who are reapplying to continue their training in a different region must declare this on their application form.

If you are reapplying to continue your training in a different region, you must also upload a completed “**Support for Reapplication of Specialty Training in a Different Region - Support Form**” to your application no later than the application deadline. This form can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

Applicants on the Specialist Register

You are not eligible to apply if you already hold, or are eligible to hold a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in Neurosurgery. You are not eligible to apply if you are currently on the specialist register in any EU member state.

Criminal Records and Fitness to Practice

The application form contains a Criminal Records and Fitness to Practice Declaration. If you answer ‘**Yes**’ to any of the questions on this page you must fully complete and submit a separate ‘**Fitness to Practise Declaration Form**’. **This must be received no later than 4pm on Thursday 23 November 2023.**

This form is available from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#) and must be submitted to ftprec.yh@hee.nhs.uk. Please mark your email ‘**CONFIDENTIAL –Neurosurgery**’.


Both declarations and any information provided in relation to them will be kept securely and in confidence, and access to it will be restricted to designated persons within the Recruitment Office and other persons who need to see it as part of the selection process and who are authorised to do so.

If you are successfully appointed to a training post, this information will be passed to designated persons in the NHSE local office / Deanery which will be responsible for your training and subsequently to your employing organisation and any organisations through which you rotate as part of the training programme.

No information relating to your declaration form will be made available to any members of the selection panel at any time during the recruitment process.

Applying for a Deferred Start Date

Applicants can request deferred entry to specialty training programmes on statutory grounds (e.g. maternity leave, ill health etc.) only. Deferred entry to training programmes is not permitted for any other reason. Refer to the [Gold Guide](#) for more information about deferring start dates.



If you intend to apply for a deferred start date you should indicate this on your application form. If offered a training programme you will need to apply separately for a deferred start date via the Local Office/area where you are offered a post.

The final decision regarding any deferment will be made by the NHSE local office / Deanery which will be responsible for your training according to their local policies.

Applying for Less Than Full Time Training

Trainees may train on a Less Than Full Time (LTFT) basis for a variety of well-founded reasons. Refer to the [Gold Guide](#) for more information about Less Than Full Time Training.

All posts offered through this recruitment process will be offered as full time posts. If you intend to request Less Than Full Time Training you can indicate this in the relevant section on the application form.

If offered a training programme you will need to apply separately for Less Than Full Time Training via the Local Office/area where you are offered a post. You will only be able to apply for Less Than Full Time Training once you have accepted a full time post.

The final decision regarding Less Than Full Time Training will be made by the NHSE local office / Deanery which will be responsible for your training according to their local LTFT policies.

Shortlisting

All applications that have been successful at the longlisting stage will proceed to shortlisting, each application will be marked by 2 trained assessors on the 5 January 2024.

Please note the shortlisting results will not be available on this day

MSRA

All applicants will be required to sit the MSRA.

The Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA) is a computer-based assessment, delivered in partnership with Work Psychology Group and Pearson VUE, has been designed to assess some of the essential competences outlined in the ST1 Person Specifications and is based around clinical scenarios. The purpose of the MSRA in the neurosurgery shortlisting process is to give applicants the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have acquired during foundation training and medical school. It also tests professional capabilities and decision making which are key components of neurosurgical practice and complements the selection centre. It will account for 40% of the total shortlisting score. Further details about the MSRA can be found in the [MSRA](#)

[Overview](#) and the MSRA FAQ document that is available on the Neurosurgery page of our website.

All neurosurgery applicants (ST1 & ST2) are required to sit the MSRA in the first recruitment round of any given recruitment year. There are no exceptions or exemptions to this requirement.

The MSRA is delivered on a number of consecutive days throughout the whole of the UK in a large number of Pearson VUE Computer Testing Centres (see timeline on page 3).

All applicants who reside in or, are in employment in the UK (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) during the assessment window are expected to attend a UK test centre.

Please note – if you do not attend the MSRA, your application will be removed from the recruitment process.

Interviews

Booking an Interview Slot

If you are invited to attend an interview, you will need to book an interview time slot in Oriel. Interview slots are offered on a first come first served basis. You must book your interview slot by the deadline stated in the invite email. Please refer to the Oriel Applicant User Guide for instructions on booking your interview slot. You can download a copy of the Oriel Applicant Guide from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

You should receive an automatic confirmation email once you have booked your interview slot. If you do not receive this email within two hours of booking, please check your Oriel account to ensure that you did successfully book a slot.

If you experience problems booking your interview slot please contact neurosurgeryrec.yh@hee.nhs.uk for assistance.

Interview Dates and Venue

The interviews for Neurosurgery will take place online on 7 and 8 March 2024 (these dates may be subject to change).

You will be sent a link and joining instructions after booking your interview and in advance of the interview date.

Applicants with Disabilities

If you have a disability which may require specific arrangements or adjustments to enable you to attend an interview please indicate this on your application form and contact neurosurgeryrec.yh@hee.nhs.uk to discuss your requirements.

Documents Required at Interview

You will be required to prove your identity at the start of the interview by showing your Passport or Driving License. You will be notified of all requirements on the invite to interview sent via Oriel.

Technical requirements for the Online Interview

All interviews in 2024 will be held online via Qpercom VIDs. Full details of the system, and instructions for attending an interview will be provided to applicants in due course.

When undertaking your online you must ensure that you are in a location with a stable and reliable internet connection and use a device that is suitable for a video interview with a camera and microphone. The administration staff from NHSE and panel members will be unable to assist you with any technical issues.

In the event of technical difficulties during the interview, we will attempt to resume the interview once the issue has been resolved. However, if we are unable to resume the interview at the scheduled time we will, where possible, aim to rearrange the remainder of the interview at a later date or time however we cannot guarantee this will always be possible. Where the interview has been partially completed, only the sections that were disrupted will be rescheduled; scores from interview questions that are completed without disruption will stand.

Technical issues that happen outside of the interview itself must be reported to the Recruitment Team, with details of the issues experienced, providing screenshots where possible, within one hour of the allocated interview time. Technical issues reported outside of this timeframe cannot be considered.

Your interview will not be recorded by NHSE or panel members. Applicants are also not permitted to record the interview. If it is found that you have recorded any part of the interview process a probity panel will be convened to investigate. Details of the Probity Panel procedure can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Interview Format

The interview will consist of a multi-station 45 minute interview panel designed to assess the selection criteria detailed on the [2024 Person Specification](#) .

Please note that the panel members will be using a device to record your scores into a secure online system.

The interview will be split into three 15 minute stations:

- **CV/Understanding of Specialty**
- **Clinical Scenario**
- **Management & Problem Solving**

Lay Representatives

A Lay Representative may be present during your interview to observe the process. The Lay Representative will not score or assess your performance in the station; they are there to ensure the process is fair and consistent.

Confidentiality

You should ensure that the content of the interview assessments remains confidential and must not be discussed with other applicants or published where they can be accessed by other applicants. This includes on websites, online forums or discussion groups and all other forms of social media.

Remember, this is a competitive process, and you may reduce your own chances of appointment by giving an unfair advantage to other applicants.

Reporting Issues During Your Interview

The vast majority of interviews are conducted without issue. However, if there are any issues during your interview which may affect your assessment, it is vital that you report them to a member of the NHSE North East and Yorkshire Recruitment Team by emailing neurosurgeryrec.yh@hee.nhs.uk

Any issues must be reported as soon as possible and **ideally within 1 hour of the completion of your interview**. This will give us the best possible chance to investigate and, if necessary, take action to remedy the issue. It is not usually possible to investigate issues or take remedial action once the interviews have concluded.

Scoring and Ranking

Your performance in each domain will be scored using a structured scoring system. The scores from each interview station will be combined to produce your overall interview score.

Your ranking will be based upon your overall interview score and your individual station scores. NHSE may set a minimum required score in any individual domain and should your score in an individual domain not meet that requirement you will be ranked 0.

Appointability

To be considered appointable you will need to achieve the following scores:

Applicants at ST1 who achieve 65% of the marks available will be considered appointable.
Applicants at ST2 who achieve 74% of the marks available will be considered appointable.

Tied Scores

In the event of tied overall interview scores, the individual station scores in the order below will be used to differentiate between applicants:

1. Clinical Station
2. Management Station
3. CV/Understanding of Specialty Station

References

References will only be requested through the Oriel system once an offer of training has been accepted. Referees will be contacted by email, so it is important that the contact details provided are correct. We strongly advise that you inform your chosen referees so that they are aware they may be asked to provide a reference.

If a referee is unable to complete the reference prior to the deadline date, responsibility for requesting and collecting the reference will pass to the employer. You and/or your referees will be contacted directly by the employer if further references are required. There is no need for you or your referees to do anything until this contact is made.

Offers

All recruitment offices will be using the Oriel system to make offers to training posts in all specialties. You can download a copy of the Oriel Applicant Guide from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#).

Selecting Your Preferences

You will be asked to rank your preferences using the Oriel Recruitment System. You will receive an email when Preferencing opens. Please note that this may not take place until after the online interviews have taken place.

Once preferencing is open, it will remain open so you can change your preferences at any point in the process, including during and after the offers process.

For guidance on submitting your preferences please refer to the Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook and the [Oriel Applicant User Guide](#) which can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#)

Receiving and Responding to Offers

The initial offers for Neurosurgery are expected to be released by 17:00 on 26th of March 2024. If this date changes we will contact eligible applicants via Oriel.

If you are offered a post you will have 48 hours from the time of your offer (excluding weekends but not bank holidays) to decide whether to accept, reject or hold it. You must respond to the offer through the Oriel system. No other form of response will be accepted.

For guidance on responding to offers, please refer to the Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook and the [Oriel Applicant User Guide](#) which can be downloaded from the [Oriel Resource Bank](#)

Any offer made through this recruitment process is an offer of an allocation to a training programme; it is not an offer of employment. Offers of employment can only be by an employing organisation following completion of satisfactory pre-employment checks.

Withdrawing from the Recruitment Process

You may withdraw from the recruitment process at any time up until offers are released via your Oriel account. Once you have withdrawn your application it cannot be reinstated.

Once an offer has been accepted, applicants wishing to withdraw will need to contact the recruitment office directly.

You are reminded of the GMC's Good Medical Practice guidance which states: "*Patient safety may be affected if there is not enough medical cover. So you must take up any post you have formally accepted, and work your contractual notice period before leaving a job, unless the employer has reasonable time to make other arrangements.*"

Feedback

Feedback will be provided at the following stages of the recruitment process:

Longlisting

If you are not longlisted, you will be provided with the reasons for this.

Shortlisting

Your shortlisting scores will be released on the Oriel system.

Interview Ranking

You will be able to view your total interview score and rank online through their Oriel account once offers are released. Please note that a thorough Quality Assurance and validation process is carried out on all applicants' scores following the interviews. No scores will be released until this process is complete.

Interview Scores

Following the conclusion of the offers process, you will be able to view a breakdown of your interview scores including a breakdown of the scores you achieved in each interview station online through your Oriel account. You will also receive an electronic copy of your interview scoresheets, including your scores and written feedback.

Evaluation of the Selection Process

Following the conclusion of the 2024 recruitment process, an evaluation of the recruitment process will be carried out. This will include an analysis of anonymised interview scores, appointment data and feedback from a number of groups involved in the process.

Feedback Surveys

Feedback about the recruitment process will be collected from the following groups:

- Applicants
- Interview Panel Members
- Lay Representatives

This feedback will be analysed and will help to inform changes and improvements to the recruitment process for 2025.

Privacy Notice

In order to manage and quality assure your training, NHS England needs to collect, store and process information about you. This is done in compliance with the **General Data Protection Regulation**. Among other matters, this requires that your data must be processed fairly and lawfully.

We will process data about you in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, and will do so for three main purposes:

1. Processing your data during the recruitment process.
2. Processing of successful applicants' data by NHS England's local offices, Deaneries and Royal Colleges.
3. Use of recruitment data for evaluation, research and testing purposes

For more information about how we safeguard and process your data please see our [Privacy Notice](#).

Appeals, Complaints and Confidential Concerns

Appeals

It is not possible to appeal the scores you are awarded or the outcome of any part of the recruitment process. If you have **evidence** that the published recruitment process has not been followed correctly, the Complaints Policy and Procedure should be followed.

Complaints

However hard we try to respond to the wishes and aspirations of the healthcare professionals accessing our recruitment services, we do recognise that, on occasion, our service may fall short of expectations.

The Complaints Policy and Procedure explains how you can make a complaint and how it will be handled. A copy of the Policy can be downloaded from the [Oriol Resource Bank](#). Complaints must be submitted using the Complaint Submission Form linked within the policy.

Confidential Concerns

If you have a concern that falls outside of the national complaints policy e.g. fraudulent submissions by other applicants you can confidentially email the MDRS Recruitment Team on mdrs.confidential@hee.nhs.uk. This address cannot be used as a way of raising a complaint and bypassing the process detailed in the complaints policy.



Appendix 1: Probity Panel Procedure

An applicant may be referred to a Probity Panel for a variety of reasons including when the veracity of the information contained in an applicant's application form or documentation provided at interview is brought into question.

In the event of such an occurrence the applicant will be asked to explain in writing and provide copies of any supporting documentation upon which they will seek to rely. When a response is received, or in the absence of a response within the deadline, a Probity Panel will be convened. The panel will be made up of at least three people including a Postgraduate Dean or their representative and a medical workforce/HR professional.

The Probity Panel will decide whether or not the applicant should remain in the recruitment process. The panel will also recommend whether any further action should be taken which may include referral to the GMC.

Appendix 2: Useful Links

Online Recruitment Systems

Oriel Recruitment System	https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/web/
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NHSE Local Offices and Deanery Websites

NHS England - East Midlands	https://www.eastmidlandsdeanery.nhs.uk/
NHS England - East of England	https://heeo.e.hee.nhs.uk/
NHS England - Kent, Surrey and Sussex	https://www.kssdeanery.ac.uk/
NHS England - North Central and East London	http://www.lpmde.ac.uk/
NHS England - North East	http://www.northerndeaneary.nhs.uk/
NHS England - North West	http://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/
NHS England – North West London	http://www.lpmde.ac.uk/
Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency	http://www.nimda.gov.uk/
Scottish Medical Training	http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/
NHS England - South London	http://www.lpmde.ac.uk/
NHS England - South West	http://www.severndeaneary.nhs.uk/
	http://www.peninsuladeaneary.nhs.uk/
NHS England - Thames Valley	http://www.oxforddeaneary.nhs.uk/
Health Education and Improvement Wales	https://heiw.nhs.wales/
NHS England - Wessex	http://www.wessexdeaneary.nhs.uk/
NHS England - West Midlands	http://www.westmidlandsdeaneary.nhs.uk/
NHS England - Yorkshire	http://www.yorksandhumberdeaneary.nhs.uk/

Other Useful Organisations

General Medical Council	http://www.gmc-uk.org/
NHS Employers	http://www.nhsemployers.org/
Medical Specialty Recruitment	https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training
Royal College of Surgeons of England	http://www.rcseng.ac.uk/
Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh	http://www.rcsed.ac.uk/
Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow	http://www.rcpsg.ac.uk/
Scottish Medical Training	http://www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk/
UK Visas and Immigration	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration