

2021 Core Surgical Training CT1/ST1 Supplementary Applicant Handbook



Introduction

The National Recruitment Office for Core Surgical Training is Health Education England – London and Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

London and Kent, Surrey and Sussex are recruiting to posts on behalf of England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Working alongside the [Royal College of Surgeons](#) we manage a centralised process aimed at delivering a fair and consistent process for all applicants.

For more information about Core Surgical Training please refer to the [Royal College of Surgeons website](#).

For careers advice please visit the [Health Careers Website](#).

Detailed information including person specifications, competition ratios and the national medical specialty recruitment applicant handbook are available on the national [specialty training website](#).

This handbook aims to provide applicants with information regarding the 2021 Core Surgical Training CT1/ST1 recruitment process.

General information regarding recruitment to all specialty training posts is available on the national Specialty Training website and in the 2021 Applicant Handbook. These can be accessed via the links below:

<https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/>

Please note that all communication with applicants will be via Oriel, or via the contact details you provide as part of your Oriel application. You must ensure that your contact details are correct and kept up to date throughout the recruitment process.

Summary of changes for 2021 recruitment

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak there will be some changes to the way the recruitment process will run in 2021. Details of these changes are provided throughout this handbook in conjunction with central guidance issued by the national recruitment team that applies across specialties. You can find the central guidance in the resource bank of the HEE specialty training website <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Resources-Bank>. **You must read both this Supplementary Handbook and the Medical Specialty Applicant Guide before beginning your application.**

CST recruitment has 2 models for assessing applications in 2021: plan A and plan B. We are planning to assess all applications using plan A throughout 2021 recruitment, however, in the event that the COVID-19 pandemic worsens to the point where plan A cannot be completed (for example if interviews need to be cancelled due to clinician or administrative team availability) then we will switch to plan B. Plan B will consist of selection by the validated self-assessment score alone. All applicants will be notified via Oriel if a switch to plan B is required.

Plan A for recruitment will involve the following stages (which are outlined in more detail in the relevant sections of this handbook):

1. As part of the Oriel application form you will be asked to provide a self-assessment score depending on your personal achievements. Please see advert-linked document '2021 CST Self-Assessment Guidance for Candidates' for full guidance on how to complete your self-assessment scoring.
2. Your self-assessment score, as submitted on your application form will be used to shortlist. The top scoring 1100 applicants (approximately) will then be invited to upload evidence of their achievements to the Evidence Upload Portal
3. The evidence you upload will be reviewed by surgical consultants. They will verify that you have claimed the correct number of points and can change your score if they feel your evidence merits a different score from your self-assessment. This produces your verified evidence score. Applicants will be given the opportunity to appeal, more information on this process will follow after the application closing date.
4. After the evidence verification process is complete, the highest scoring 960 applicants (approximately) will be invited to attend a remote interview
5. A combination of your verified evidence score (1/3 of total score) and scores at interview (2/3 of total score) will be used to determine your final total score and ranking.

Plan B

Plan B will follow the same stages as plan A except that there will be no remote interviews. An applicant's verified evidence score then becomes their total score and this is used to determine rankings. Please note that we will only switch to plan B in the event that plan A cannot be completed due to COVID-19.

Timeline and Key Dates

Core Surgical Training CT1/ST1 recruitment will follow the below timeline:

Activity	Date(s)
Advert appears	Monday 2 November 2020
Applications open	At 10am on Thursday 5 November 2020
Applications close	At 4pm on Tuesday 1 December 2020
Evidence upload portal opens	Wednesday 23 December 2020
Evidence upload portal closes	Thursday 7 January 2021
Results of evidence verification released to applicants and appeals window opens	Thursday 21 January 2021
Appeal window closes	72 hours after results of evidence verification are released to applicants
Invite to Interview sent on	Tuesday 9 February 2021
Interview Dates	Monday 22 February – Friday 5 March 2021
Preferences open date	Monday 8 March 2021
Preferences close date	Tuesday 16 March 2021
Initial offers released by London & Kent, Surrey and Sussex (on behalf of all regions)	By no later than Monday 19 th April 5pm on Thursday 18 March 2021

Hold deadline	At 1pm on Friday 16 April 2021
Upgrade deadline	At 4pm on Monday 19 April 2021
Interview scoresheet release date	To be confirmed

Please note that all dates are subject to change, appropriate notice will be given to applicants should changes be required.

Reasonable Adjustments

If you are an applicant that wishes to request reasonable adjustments, please go to:

https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_15=true

For further information, please refer to the 'Reasonable Adjustments Guidance' that can be found on the webpage below:

<https://www.lpmde.ac.uk/laserecruitment/applicant-enquiries-renamed>

Self-assessment and submitting an application

All applications must be submitted on Oriel before the national deadline of 16:00 (GMT) on 1/12/2020. Under no circumstances will late applications be accepted.

Providing a self-assessment score is a mandatory part of your application form. Please see advert-linked document '2021 CST Self-Assessment Guidance for Candidates' for full guidance on how to complete your self-assessment scoring.

If you are a dual qualified (medical and dental) applicant, please note the following when completing your employment history on the Oriel application form:

- If you are a dentistry first applicant call your pre-medical jobs 'Dental' and avoid the term SHO. Completing your MRCS does not preclude you from applying to CST.
- If you are a medicine first applicant and you have worked in surgical specialities before dentistry, doing your second degree 'resets the clock' on the 18-month limit of surgical experience. You may have to provide evidence of maintaining your foundation training competencies whilst studying for your dental degree.

Longlisting

Longlisting is the process of checking that applicants meet the minimum requirements to be eligible for a Core Surgical Training post. You can find the eligibility criteria on the person specification here: <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Recruitment/Person-specifications>. More information about longlisting can be found in the Medical Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook in the resource bank: <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Resources-Bank>

Shortlisting

As the number of expected applications for CST exceeds the maximum capacity for both the evidence verification process and remote interviews, shortlisting will be done in two stages for 2021 CST recruitment.

The first stage will use the self-assessment score provided as part of the Oriol application form to decide who will progress to the evidence verification stage. Applicants who score highly enough in their self-assessment will be invited to upload evidence for their claimed score to the evidence upload portal between 23/12/2020 and 7/1/2021.

Guidance on how to score your self-assessment can be found in the advert-linked document '2021 CST Self-Assessment Guidance for Candidates'

Therefore, it crucial that you complete your self-assessment honestly and accurately at the time of application. It is not possible to change your self-assessment score after you have submitted your application under any circumstances.

Any instances where applicants are found to have deliberately over-scored their self-assessment may be treated as probity concerns. This may lead to being removed from the recruitment process or a referral to the GMC.

Submitting Supporting Evidence

Applicants will be provided with further instructions about how to upload evidence to the portal after the application closing date. Applicants should ensure that they present the evidence in the requested format. Failure to do so could result in your evidence being rejected and/or the self-assessment score being revised downwards.

Failure to submit all evidence by the stated deadline will result in your application being withdrawn by the recruitment team.

Recruitment administrators **will not** be able to upload evidence on behalf of applicants and once the deadline for submission has passed, applicant access to the evidence portal will be withdrawn.

Evidence Verification

The second stage of shortlisting is the evidence verification stage. Submitted evidence will be reviewed by consultant surgeons and verified against the self-assessment scoring criteria. Where the evidence submitted does not match the self-assessment score awarded, the verified score will be adjusted accordingly.

On completion of the verification process applicants will be sent their verified score together with the verification panel's feedback explaining any changes to score. Where the applicant disagrees with the verified score awarded, they can lodge an appeal.

If the applicant self-assessment score differs significantly from the assessor score then applicants should expect to be contacted by an assessor as part of a probity process. Please ensure that your contact details on Oriol are correct and kept up to date as these are the details that will be used to contact you.

Appeals against verified scores must be lodged within 72 hours of the scores being sent to applicants. No additional evidence can be submitted but you can request a review of the evidence already submitted via the portal. Your appeal request should clearly explain why you feel that the score should

be adjusted, based on the evidence that was initially submitted and verified. Appeals received after the 72-hour deadline will not be considered.

Appeals will be reviewed by consultant surgeons who will decide whether verified scores should be changed or not and you will be informed of the outcome. The outcome of the appeal is final and there is no further recourse for dissatisfied applicants. Disagreements over self-assessment scores fall out of scope of the MDRS Complaints Policy.

Once the evidence verification and appeals processes have been completed then the applicants with the highest verified scores will be invited to book an interview slot via Oriel.

Interview Booking and Interview Process

Applicants will need to book an interview slot using their Oriel account. Slots are offered on a first come first served basis and will need to be booked by the deadline stated in the invitation to interview. Further information on how to book an interview slot can be found in Oriel Applicant User Guide.

All interviews will be undertaken online using Microsoft Teams between Monday 22nd February and Friday 5th March 2021.

There is an Applicant Declaration which all applicants must agree with and adhere to in order to sit an online interview. The Declaration also contains a list of vital steps you must undertake before the day of interview. You can find a copy of the Applicant Declaration here:

<https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/portals/1/Content/Resource%20Bank/Recruitment%20Documents/2021%20Recruitment%20Applicant%20Declaration.pdf>

As soon as the link to join the online interview has been received, applicants should ensure that they test this from the device they plan to use for their interview as you may need to source an alternative device to ensure connectivity if you experience any issues. Any applicants unable to connect should contact the recruitment team at the earliest opportunity. When testing the link, applicants should reach a screen that states that the host will commence the meeting shortly or similar wording. If you are unable to connect directly from the link, try pasting the URL link into the browser, or try using an incognito browser.

On the day of the interview, each applicant should click on the link and join the call 5 minutes prior to their allocated time. Before the interview commences, applicants will be briefed on the interview process and will be required to confirm their identity with the interview administrator. It is therefore important that applicants have suitable photographic ID available (passport or UK photo driving license). In addition, applicants will be required to move their camera to show the entire room where they are undertaking the interview, to confirm that nobody else is present. Once identity has been confirmed, the administrator will advise the interview panel that the interview process can commence.

Applicants should ensure that their camera and microphone are turned on and working correctly prior to joining the call. Interviews will be terminated where the panel cannot see the applicant.

The interview **must not** be recorded by either the applicant, the administrator or the panel members.

On completion of the interview, the applicant should terminate their connection to the call and the interview process is complete.

Interview format

The interview will consist of one 20-minute interview station with 2 sections completed in the following order:

1. Management question lasting for 10 minutes
2. Clinical scenarios lasting for 10 minutes

There is no break in between the management and clinical questions and they are asked by the same panel members.

The remote panel will be comprised of a maximum of two consultants and there may also be a lay representative on the panel whose role is to check for fairness and consistency.

The two sections contain the following components:

Management Section
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 pre-prepared 3-minute presentation. Applicants will receive the presentation title and instructions via Oriol as part of the invitation to interview - 2 minutes of questioning on presentation - 1 management scenario question. The is question is provided during the interview and encourages the applicant to think on their feet. - 5 minutes allowed to answer question
Clinical Section
<p>2 clinical scenario questions lasting 5 minutes each. These questions are provided during the interview to encourage applicants to think on their feet.</p>

Interview scoring criteria

The different sections of the interview will be scored according to the following points system:

Management Section:

Presentation	
Content	0 – No Evidence 1 – Very Poor 2 – Weak
Presentation skills	3 – Satisfactory 4 – Good
Questioning	5 – Excellent 6 – Outstanding

Management Question	
Probity & Professional integrity and awareness of safety & ethics	0 – No Evidence 1 – Very Poor
Judgement under pressure & prioritisation	2 – Weak 3 – Satisfactory 4 – Good
Communication	5 – Excellent 6 – Outstanding

Clinical Scenarios (each clinical question is scored separately according to the same points framework):

Clinical skills & knowledge	0 – No Evidence 1 – Very Poor
Judgement under pressure & prioritisation	2 – Weak 3 – Satisfactory 4 – Good
Communication	5 – Excellent 6 – Outstanding

Preferencing

Preferencing of posts will be available prior to offers being made. You will be able to preference posts between Monday 8 March 2021 and Tuesday 16 March 2021. After the first iteration of offers are made (date TBC), preferencing will reopen between offer iterations, in light of enhanced preferencing.

For guidance on how to submit your preferences please refer to the Oriel Applicant User Guide.

For full guidance on enhanced preferencing, please refer to 'Offer Exchanges/Enhanced Preferencing in the 2021 Medical Specialty Applicant Handbook:

<https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/ResourceBank>.

Applicants may preference either traditional 2-year Core Surgical Training posts, 2-year uncoupled Improving Surgical Training (IST) Pilot Posts, run-through IST pilot posts (in General Surgery, Vascular Surgery, Urology or Trauma and Orthopaedics), the run-through Otolaryngology pilot programme, the run-through Paediatric Surgery Pilot programme or a combination of any of these.

Detailed information about the Improving Surgical Training programme is available at

<https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/careers-in-surgery/trainees/ist/>

Further information and guidance will be released in due course regarding the different types of programme available and how to submit your preferences.

Offers, references and scoresheet

Following interview all applicants will receive a total score, a unique ranking and will be deemed successful or unsuccessful and will be informed of this via Oriel.

One third of your total score will be your verified evidence score. One third will be your score in the management section of the interview and one third will be your score in the clinical section of the interview.

Offers will be made to those successful applicants that have 'matched' to a post and will be based on the applicant's ranking and preferences. Initial offers will be made via Oriel on Thursday 18 March 2021.

Following initial offers being released, further offers will be made in subsequent iterations.

Applicants have 48 hours from the time of offer (excluding weekends) to confirm via Oriel whether they wish to accept, reject or hold their offer. Offers made after the hold deadline will only have the option to accept or reject.

References will only be requested when an offer has been accepted.

Scoresheets will be released to ALL applicants on Thursday 18 March 2021; therefore, you do not need to request your scoresheets after interview.

Allocation

Once an applicant has accepted a Core Surgical Training CT1/ST1 post, their information will be passed to their relevant region who will contact them directly to complete the allocation process.

Further information on how to request a **deferred start date** or **training less than full time (LTFT)** can be found in the 2021 Applicant Handbook.

Next steps/roles and responsibilities

If you accept an offer of a training programme your details will be passed on to the local training programme director around 14 weeks prior to your start date, and to the first trust you have been appointed to 12 weeks prior to your start date. Therefore, you should not expect to receive any communication from them prior to this time.

Enquiries and FAQs

Should you have any queries relating to the recruitment process for Insert Specialty you can contact the London and Kent, Surrey and Sussex recruitment team via our online enquiries portal - <https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/home>

Useful Links

Health Education England - London and KSS	https://london.hee.nhs.uk/recruitment/london-and-kent-surrey-and-sussex-lakss-recruitment
Oriel 2 Resource bank	https://new.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/ResourceBank
Oriel 2 home page	https://new.oriel.nhs.uk/Web
HEE Specialty Training Website	https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/
Royal College of Surgeons IST website	https://www.rcseng.ac.uk/careers-in-surgery/trainees/ist/
Core Surgery Recruitment	https://london.hee.nhs.uk/recruitment/london-and-kent-surrey-and-sussex-lakss-recruitment