

England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

Dental Recruitment Applicant Handbook 2022

All programmes, all levels



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Foreword

Welcome to the Medical and Dental Recruitment and Selection (MDRS) Dental Applicant Handbook which supports applicants to a range of postgraduate dental training posts covering: Dental Foundation, Dental Core and Dental Specialty Training programmes.

Postgraduate Dental Deans from Health Education England (HEE), NHS Education for Scotland (NES), Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) work collaboratively with key stakeholders through the auspices of the UK MDRS structures to develop a recruitment and selection process which is open, transparent, equitable and robust. The recruitment and selection process uses existing tried and tested IT systems and selection methodologies. It also provides a mechanism for job offers to be issued more equitably across the UK.

We recognise that trainees will have various compelling reasons for wanting to train in different areas of the UK and to support this we have developed a preferencing system which is aimed at maximising choice. All dental specialties now have a national recruitment process although currently not all devolved nations participate in all recruitment processes. Where practicable academic trainees are benchmarked through the recruitment process.

We encourage you to provide feedback. This will ensure we continuously improve the experience we are able to offer you.

Postgraduate Dental Deans across the UK are justifiably proud of the quality of training programmes and realise that this depends on the recruitment of individuals with the right qualities, values and skills.

I wish you every success with your application and your future career.

David Felix

Chairman COPDEND

Chair of MDRS Dental Sub-committee

1 Introduction to dental recruitment

This applicant handbook is intended to help you make the best possible applications, starting with your programme choices and continuing through the entire application process. In addition to reading this handbook you must also ensure that you read any programme specific guidance for the programme/programmes to which you are considering making an application.

All dental programmes are organised nationally by a lead HEE local office on behalf of all local offices and deaneries across the UK. This means that you complete one online application per specialty/programme and state your preferred geographical location/s.

It is important to note that due to COVID-19, recruitment processes will be subject to ongoing review and may change.

The following table shows the lead recruiters for 2022:

<u>Programme</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Lead recruiter</u>
Dental Foundation Training	Foundation	HEE - London and KSS
Dental Core Training	DCT1	HEE – East Midlands
Dental Core Training	DCT2	HEE – East Midlands
Dental Core Training	DCT3	HEE – East Midlands
Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands
Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands
Oral Medicine	ST1	HEE – East Midlands
Oral Microbiology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands
Oral Surgery	ST1	HEE – Yorkshire and the Humber
Orthodontics	ST1	HEE – North East
Orthodontics	ST4	HEE – North East
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	HEE – East Midlands
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	HEE – East Midlands
Dental Public Health	ST1	HEE – North East
Restorative Dentistry including Mono-Specialties (Endodontics, Periodontics and Prosthodontics)	ST1	HEE – North West
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	HEE – North West

Further information on the lead recruiters can be found on the Recruitment Leads page of the [Oriell Recruitment System](#).

Each Recruitment Office is responsible for some or all of the following:

- *Advertising vacancies*
- *Providing information on the recruitment process*
- *Receiving applications*
- *Longlisting applications against a set of agreed eligibility criteria*
- *Shortlisting based on set of criteria and scoring systems*
- *Interviewing and selecting successful applicants*
- *Making offers and receiving acceptances*

1.1 National Recruitment Rounds

National Dental recruitment is split into three recruitment rounds throughout the year. It is important that applicants familiarise themselves with which round the programme that they wish to apply to is being recruited.

- **Dental Foundation Training (DFT)** – DFT posts in England, Northern Ireland and Wales are advertised and recruited to, starting September 2022
- **Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACFs) England only** – This round has been introduced as a guide only, not all dental ACFs across England will adhere to this timeline.
- **Round 1**- this encompasses dental core, specialty, Paediatric Dentistry and Orthodontic ST4 training programmes across the UK. Most posts appointed in this round will start in September/October 2022. Those applicants applying for NIHR Clinical Lectureships or NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowships and who do not hold an NTN in the specialty they are applying to will need to apply to the relevant specialty for benchmarking purposes.

1.2 National Recruitment Timeline 2022

You can find the dental national recruitment timeline [here](#).

1.3 Dental Foundation Training (DFT)

Dental Foundation Training (DFT) is defined as ‘a relevant period of employment during which a dental practitioner is employed under a contract of service by an approved trainer to provide a wide range of dental care and treatment and to attend such study days as that contract provides, with the aims and objectives of enhancing clinical and administrative competence and promoting high standards through relevant postgraduate training’. Dentists who graduate from a UK dental school are required to undertake a minimum of one-year’s formal DFT to be able to work independently in NHS primary care dental practice. DFT aims to enhance competence and promote high standards to the domains of the DFT curriculum, namely, clinical, professionalism, leadership and management and communication.

There are up to 970 DFT places in approximately 72 schemes available each year across England, Wales and Northern Ireland with a number of further places allocated to Vocational Training in Scotland through a separate recruitment process. Appointment to places in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is through a national

model, DFT assessment will consist of an on-line Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and a one station digital interview. Successful applicants are appointed to Schemes (normally of 12-20 trainees) and allocation to individual training practices is normally carried out locally, however as a result of external pressures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, applicants were asked to preference directly to training practice via Oriel in 2021. Applicants should be aware that this preferencing approach **may** be taken again for 2022 recruitment.

Some regions run academic DFT posts. Applicants for academic posts should apply through the DFT national recruitment process indicating their interest in an academic post and will need to undertake the DFT National Recruitment process and will need to complete an academic application at a later date and if shortlisted undertake a virtual interview.

1.4 Dental Core Training (DCT)

There are usually over 700 Dental Core Trainees (DCTs) in training at any one time in the UK. Dental Core Training is available at three levels: DCT level 1 (DCT1), level 2 (DCT2) and level 3 (DCT3).

The DCT programme is designed to enhance clinical, leadership, management and professional competencies in order to promote high ethical standards leading to quality patient care. While the majority of programmes are hosted in secondary care Trusts / Hospitals, some posts are available in primary, community and specialist dental services.

DCT is recruited to once a year for a September commencement date. Recruitment is led by the Dental Core Training National Recruitment Office (DCTNRO) based at Health Education England (East Midlands). Applications are on a sequential basis, although a new equivalence route into DCT3 will be introduced from 2022. This will support applications from applicants who may not have undertaken a UK Dental Core Training Year 2 Programme by the time of post commencement. Further details with regards to this and the equivalence route into DCT2 will be available on the [DCTNRO](#) website.

All the levels above are advertised and recruited to with differing eligibility criteria. DCT posts, regardless of level, are a fixed 12 months in length, however there are a small number of 24-month posts. Less Than Full Time (LTFT) training is possible.

For detailed information about the recruitment process please review the DCT Applicant Guidance, available on the [DCTNRO](#) website.

1.5 Dental Specialty Training

There are 13 dental specialties recognised by the GDC and there are currently over 400 trainees in Dental Specialty Training.

All national recruitment processes have a station interview format. Currently the following specialties undertake national recruitment led by the following HEE local offices, however not all UK nations currently participate;

Dental Public Health	North East
Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology	East Midlands
Mono specialties	North West
Oral Medicine	East Midlands
Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology	East Midlands

Oral Microbiology	East Midlands
Oral Surgery	Yorkshire and the Humber
Orthodontics	North East
Paediatric Dentistry	East Midlands
Restorative Dentistry including Mono Specialties	North West
Special Care Dentistry	North West

1.6 Academic Clinical Fellows (ACFs) ENGLAND ONLY

Applicants applying to ACFs linked to core/specialty training will need to meet the criteria in both the clinical and ACF person specifications.

Applicants applying for ACF's associated with Primary Dental Care will need to meet both the ACF Person Specification and the local person specification.

The ACF Person Specification can be found [here](#).

Applicants are required to demonstrate appropriate competence in both an academic and a clinical interview for the programme to which they are applying.

Applicants who currently hold a National Training Number (NTN) in the appropriate programme will not be required to attend a further clinical interview. These applicants will only be required to attend the integrated clinical-academic interview as they will have met the requirements of the clinical interview previously.

Applicants applying for NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowships who require benchmarking will be required to complete and submit both an academic application form and the associated clinical application form (through the normal recruitment process on Oriel) for the programme in which they will require benchmarking.

Any academic offers made will be conditional upon meeting the appointability threshold at the clinical interview.

For more information on benchmarking applicants should refer to the FAQ document in **Appendix 1** of this handbook.

1.7 Clinical Lectureships – ENGLAND ONLY

Applicants applying for Clinical Lectureships (CLs) will need to meet the CL Person Specification which can be found [here](#).

Applicants should note that taught doctorates are not considered equivalent to a PhD. For specialty training posts, applicants should ideally have completed at least 1 year of specialist training and are more than 12 months from obtaining a CCST, with the exception of post CCST trainees in Orthodontics and Paediatric Dentistry. Where applicants do not hold an NTN and are recruited to at ST1 level, they will be required to attend clinical benchmarking.

Applicants applying for NIHR Clinical Lectureships who require benchmarking will be required to complete and submit both an academic application form and the associated clinical application form for the programme in which they will require benchmarking.

Any academic offers made will be conditional upon meeting the appointability threshold at the clinical interview.

2 Person Specifications

Each programme (and entry level for training) has a nationally agreed Person Specification that lists the required competences for that programme. Applicants will need to demonstrate that they meet specified eligibility criteria at the time of application and further specified criteria at the time of post commencement.

National person specifications will be available to download [here](#).

Applicants applying to ACFs and CLs will need to meet the criteria in both the clinical and ACF/CL person specifications.

3 Submitting an application

All applications must be made via the on-line Oriel system - <https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/>

Late applications will NOT be considered.

Once your application has been submitted you will be unable to make any changes, apart from to update your own contact and referee details so you should ensure that you do not submit unless it is complete.

Please be aware that the Oriel system supports the following browsers: Safari v12+, Google Chrome v77+, Edge v79+ and Firefox 68+.

4 The application form

Contact regarding applications will be via direct messaging through Oriel. Applicants are therefore advised to log into their Oriel accounts regularly throughout the recruitment process.

Most recruitment offices will also send applicants an email to a stated email address, however, these emails should not be relied upon and delivery cannot be guaranteed as they are being sent external to Oriel.

All dental programmes are recruiting by means of a national process. In these programmes, you will be able to make a single application where you are asked to state your order of preference between different geographical locations.

To ensure a fair, legal and equitable process, where shortlisting takes place, the people completing the shortlisting will not see your personal details when they consider your application.

Before starting an application, applicants should ensure that they:

Read all supporting documentation

Before commencing an application to understand what is required of them e.g. programme specific applicant guidance, criteria contained within the Person Specification, any mandatory documentation that needs to be uploaded to the application form.

Gather evidence

Required to complete the application form e.g. dates and titles of qualifications, publications, presentations, research, audit etc. If invited to interview, original evidence of these will all need to be provided.

Please note: Your portfolio of evidence **MUST NOT** contain patient identifiable data and should only include your own original work.

Applicants need to be able to demonstrate reasons for applying for a programme and what they can bring in terms of skills and personal attributes.

Plan time

Work out how long it will realistically take to complete the application form, including getting feedback from colleagues.

The application form will take some time to complete so applicants should ensure they allow enough time to complete the form and submit it ahead of the published deadline.

Under no circumstances will late applications be considered.

Referees

Referees should be contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm that they are happy to support the application and provide a reference.

Applicants for all programmes excluding DFT will need to provide details, including up to date email addresses of three referees who have supervised clinical training in the last 2 years. Those applying to more than one programme may opt to nominate different referees for each. It is important that applicants confirm referee email addresses prior to completing the application form. Once offers have been accepted, referees will be contacted by email and sent a link to complete the reference. It is therefore important that email addresses provided are correct and for email accounts that are regularly accessed.

Key content of application forms

Applicants **MUST** ensure that any work submitted or referenced is their own. Any plagiarism in applications will be treated extremely seriously and will result in further action being taken.

Submitted application forms will need to pass eligibility checks before they can be considered for shortlisting and/or interview. Recruitment teams will ensure that applicants meet the following eligibility criteria in addition to any other programme specific criteria:

- *Immigration status and right to work in the UK*
- *Eligible for registration with GDC*
- *English language skills as per the eligibility criteria and as demonstrated by registration with the appropriate regulator*
- *Any examination/competency/experience requirements in line with the post*

By allowing applicants to progress to the shortlisting and/or interview stage, recruitment offices have not accepted or confirmed that applicants meet eligibility requirements. Applicants may still be withdrawn from the recruitment process at any stage, including after interviews have taken place if the evidence pertaining to an eligibility criterion is found to be unsatisfactory by the Recruitment Office.

Please note: Recruitment offices will not be able to make any changes to submitted application forms on Oriel. Applicants must therefore ensure that they check the content of their application form prior to submission as there will be no opportunity to correct mistakes at a later date.

4.1 Evidence of English Language skills

Applicants will need to provide evidence of their English language skills at the relevant Selection Centre in line with the acceptable evidence detailed in the relevant national Person Specification.

4.1.1 Evidence of communication skills for UK Dental Performers/NHS list

For some posts eligibility for entry onto a UK Dental Performers'/NHS List/NI Dental List is an essential criterion in the Person Specification and therefore, applicants must also ensure their evidence of communication skills complies with the standard operating procedure (SOP) or guidance issued by the relevant primary care organisation (PCO) responsible for maintaining a UK Dental Performers'/NHS List/NI Dental List in each of the four countries.

PCOs are NHS England in England, Health and Social Care Board in Northern Ireland, Local Health Boards in Wales, and Primary Care Divisions within Health Boards in Scotland.

4.2 Evidence of Dental Foundation Training/Vocational Training (DFT/VT)

One criterion for posts other than DFT/VT, is that applicants may need to evidence their completion of DFT/VT. As per the relevant Person Specification this can be proven in one of two ways:

1. *Current employment in a UK DFT/VT OR exemption from the requirement to undertake DFT/VT OR Certificate of Completion of DFT/VT if a UK Dental School graduate*
2. *If an Overseas Dental School graduate (non-UK/EEA): Completion of UK DFT/VT OR hold a Certificate of Demonstration of Completion of Performers List Validation by Experience (PLVE) signed by Postgraduate Dental Dean from the area in which equivalence was demonstrated*

4.3 Evidence of Dental Core Training Competences

All applicants applying to specialty training posts are required to demonstrate the competencies acquired at the end of UK Dental Core training year 1 (i.e. outcome 1) at the time of interview and of UK Dental Core training year 2 at the time of post commencement.

If an applicant considers that they have acquired experience and/or training which should be regarded as equivalent to DCT2, they **must** apply to have this confirmed through the National Certification of Equivalence to Dental Core Training Year 2 process. Successful applicants will receive a National Certificate of DCT2 Equivalence which should be uploaded as part of their application on Oriel and will be accepted and **this certificate is the only form of evidence accepted to support their submission.**

Further information and guidance notes are available here <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/our-work/dental-dct2-equivalence/>

4.4 Employment History

When completing the employment history section of the application form all previous clinical experience should be declared; this includes experience both inside and outside of the UK, in both training and service posts. Applicants should also ensure that they detail any time spent out of work to ensure that there are no unexplained career gaps.

4.5 Fitness to Practise

If an applicant makes a Fitness to Practise declaration on their application form, they must

complete a form and submit it to the lead recruiter providing more information. This must be provided at the time of application. The approach taken will depend on the recruitment model used by the specialty to which the applicant is applying. Applicants should provide their supporting information by email to either the lead recruiter or the region to which they are being interviewed/considered for appointment. Each specialty/programme recruiter will advise on the process that should be followed.

A contact list per lead recruiter and recruitment office can be found in **Appendix 2**.

The [FTP declaration form \(Dental\)](#) is available to download from the Oriel resource bank.

Further details on the nature of the declaration may be requested and should be provided prior to the deadline for submission of applications. Failure to provide this detail by the closing date may result in the application being rejected.

4.6 Right to work in the UK

All applicants will be required to provide right to work documentation.

Applicants subject to immigration control (including limited leave to remain), will be required to provide evidence of their immigration status as at the closing date of the post to which they are applying.

Applicants subject to immigration control (including limited leave to remain), will be considered for the post as long as their immigration category allows them to take up a training programme.

From 1 January 2021, free movement ended, and the UK introduced a points-based immigration system. A total of 70 points is needed to be able to apply to work in the UK. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-immigration-system-what-you-need-to-know#visa-application-process>

The new system will treat EU and non-EU citizens equally. EU citizens will either need to provide evidence that they have obtained settled (or pre-settled) status under the EU Settlement Scheme or require an appropriate visa.

As with all immigration rules, this is subject to change.

Please note it is the applicant's responsibility to inform the Recruitment Office of any changes to their immigration status during the process.

Where Sponsorship is required, this will be coordinated by the Overseas Sponsorship Team within the relevant nation following a successful offer.

4.6.1 Criminal Records Certificates

The Home Office requires those applying to come to the UK as a Skilled Worker doctor or dentist in training, and their adult dependants, to produce a criminal record certificate from any country in which they have been resident for 12 months or more, consecutively, or cumulatively, in the previous 10 years, aged 18 or over.

If applicants are successful in being appointed to a training programme in the UK, and require Skilled Worker sponsorship, they will be required to provide the criminal record certificate to the Home Office when they make their visa application. As it can take some time to obtain a criminal record certificate, applicants should begin the process of seeking certificates, if required, at the earliest opportunity. Please note that this is for entry clearance applications

only, so will only be applicable if applying from outside the UK.

Details of how to obtain such a check from the relevant authorities abroad is available on the Home Office website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

If the country concerned is not listed, please contact the relevant embassy or consulate for further details. Contact details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk>

4.6.2 Maintenance

Public bodies cannot offer to certify maintenance on the Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). If applicants are successful in being appointed to a training programme in the UK, and require Skilled Worker sponsorship, they will be required to provide evidence of maintenance (funds) to the Home Office when they make their visa application.

Full guidance can be found at: [Health and Care Worker visa: How much it costs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-care-worker-visa-how-much-it-costs)

4.7 Special Circumstances

A process is being implemented, across all national dental recruitment, to ensure that applicants with special circumstances and a requirement to train in a particular location are treated in a fair and consistent way.

For Dental Foundation Training, please refer to the DFT national applicant guide, which in addition to the criteria below has introduced a further criterion. The applicant guide can be found on the documents section of the DFT vacancy on Oriel.

Any applicant who falls into one of the following eligibility criteria will be pre- allocated into the post, subject to it meeting the requirements of their training programme:

- **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*

4.7.1 Applying for Special Circumstances

Applicants wishing to be considered for special circumstances pre allocation should ensure that they state this on their application form and submit the required form and supporting evidence by email. Requests for consideration of special circumstances received in any other way will not be accepted.

Please refer to the [Oriel resource bank](#) for more information on applying for Special Circumstances.

4.7.2 Supporting Evidence

Applicants wishing to be considered for special circumstances should complete the criterion appropriate special circumstances application form (available from <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Resources-Bank>) and forward this, together with the following supporting evidence, as a single scanned document, as soon as the application has been submitted to mdrs.nationalrecruitment@hee.nhs.uk.

The deadline for receiving special circumstances requests for Round 1 is 8 February 2022.

Criterion 1

- *Written statement from a general practitioner or social services professional who you will have normally known for at least 6 months, confirming your role as primary carer for this person; and*
- *Care plan on headed paper from a general practitioner or social services professional. **Where an official care plan is not available**, details of caring responsibilities and activities should be provided, attested by the general practitioner of the person who is being cared for; **and***
- *Proof of current address e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last 3 months*

Criterion 2

- *A report by the current medical specialist treating your condition or Occupational Health physician, in which they will be required to:*
 - *Describe the current medical condition or disability*
 - *Describe the nature of the ongoing treatment and frequency*
 - *Explain the reasons why the follow up treatment **cannot** be delivered elsewhere in the UK*
 - *The impact transferring care elsewhere would have on you; **and***
 - *Proof of address e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last 3 months*

Special circumstances applications will be reviewed by a national eligibility panel and a decision on whether the application has been successful will be communicated to the applicant.

For applicants who develop special circumstances after the deadline for the recruitment round in which they have applied, contact should be made directly with the region where an offer has been made. Special circumstances cannot be considered in this process, outside of the timelines listed above.

Where the applicant is unhappy with the decision of the national eligibility panel, they are permitted to submit an appeal to the national review panel. The decision of the national review panel will be final.

4.7.3 Allocation

Applicants who have been approved as having a special circumstance will be pre-allocated into the region of their choice, subject to the following criteria being met:

- *Applicant is deemed appointable at Interview/Selection Centre*
- *Applicant is ranked highly enough to receive an offer e.g. if there are 10 posts available, applicant will need to rank in the top 10. Applicants will also*

be considered to have ranked highly enough, where there are applicants ranked above them who would not be eligible to receive an offer due to limited preference choices and preferred posts being unavailable.

- *The region the applicant wishes to be allocated to can fulfil all requirements of the curriculum for the programme for which they have applied*

If all of these conditions are met, the applicant will be pre-allocated into the preferred region, before the main offers algorithm is run. Applicants are not guaranteed their preferred programme/post within the preferred region. Special circumstances applicants will be offered the highest ranked post within that region that they would have been offered, had the normal offers process run. Where applicants with special circumstances would not have been offered a post in the preferred region, they will be pre –allocated to one of their ranked programmes within that region.

Where applicants with special circumstances do not rank highly enough to be offered a post in the first round of offers they will be placed on a reserve list, pending more posts becoming available or offers being declined. There is no guarantee of matching special circumstances applicants to preferred locations after the first round of offers has been completed. An applicant without special circumstances who has accepted a post in the preferred location of an applicant with special circumstances will not be displaced to allow allocation of the applicant with special circumstances.

When ranking preferences, applicants with approved special circumstances must ensure that they only rank programmes/posts that they are willing to accept and undertake. Applicants will be allocated based on these preferences. If it is not possible to pre-allocate an applicant with special circumstances, they will have opportunities throughout the recruitment process to amend their preferences, should they wish to be considered for appointment in another region.

When selecting post preferences, applicants must ensure that they meet the eligibility for those posts.

4.8 Less than full time (LTFT) training

If you are applying to enter specialty training but are unable to train full time, you may apply for less than full time training (LTFT), providing you can show that training on a full time basis would not be practical for you for well-founded reasons. Well-founded reasons may include, for example, disability, ill health, caring responsibilities, religious commitments and unique opportunities for personal or professional development.

Less than full time training must meet the same requirements as full-time training, except that there will be fewer hours of work per week. Please note that you will need to secure a full-time post in open competition before you can make an application to work LTFT.

You should apply for eligibility through your current HEE local office/Deanery ahead of this and indicate your desire to work less than full time on your application form.

If you are, or will be, on a Skilled Worker visa, your pro rata salary must meet the minimum salary threshold for this visa type.

Please contact the lead recruiter if you are planning to apply for LTFT training.

5. Shortlisting

In shortlisting, applications are scored according to their content, e.g. applicants' experience, achievements, qualifications, etc. The scoring systems used are based upon the nationally agreed Person Specification.

Not all dental recruitment processes use shortlisting.

Some recruitment processes will use a self-assessment form as part of the shortlisting process.

Responses to the self-assessment questions on the application form will be validated using the evidence submitted alongside the application and will determine the shortlisting score. Applicants are asked to upload self-assessment evidence onto the Self-Assessment Portal (<https://sa-verification.hee.nhs.uk>). Applicants will receive instructions on what documents to upload from recruitment offices of the Specialties they applied to. Guidance explaining how to upload evidence on the Self-Assessment Portal can be found on the Portal, as well as on the Specialty Recruitment website [here](#). We also have some helpful FAQs on Oriel. If you have any questions after reading the guidance and the FAQs, please feel free to get in touch with us via either starting a chat with Portia, our virtual assistant on the SA Portal, or via email us on saportalhelpdesk@hee.nhs.uk.

For some specialties there are a limited number of interview slots available and due to some high competition ratios, not all applicants can be invited to interview.

Where applicable, details of the scoring scheme should be made available to applicants.

Where shortlisting takes place applications that pass the eligibility checks will go ahead to be scored. The top-scoring applicants will be invited to interview or assessment. Typically, more applicants will be invited to interview than the number of posts available.

Due to the large volume of applicants, some recruitment offices will only contact applicants if they are being invited to interview. However, the lead recruiter will send shortlisting feedback to all applicants within 7 working days of the interview date.

Applicants who are unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage, will receive feedback from the lead recruiter. This will consist of the following:

- *Applicant's shortlisting score and/or rank*
- *Maximum possible shortlist score*
- *Shortlist score and/or rank required to be invited to interview*

Where applicants feel that their application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, there is a national complaints procedure.

Applicants should contact the specialty Recruitment Office if they have any concerns about their application or would like to know more about the complaint's procedure.

6. Interviews and Offers

Many specialties publish information about interviews and selection centres on their recruitment websites.

Some interviews will be arranged locally by HEE local offices/Deaneries; however, many specialties now arrange national centres or clustered interviews where applicants will be considered for appointment across a number of regions.

Most specialties recruit by means of a national process handled by a lead HEE local office/Deanery on behalf of all appointing regions and these processes may

vary in arrangements.

You should be given at least five working days' notice of any interview; however, notice may be less if late interview slots arise due to other applicants withdrawing from the process. You will be informed of the reason for the late notice if this occurs.

Assessment centre/interview dates will be published by recruitment offices well in advance and applicants should consider these when applying for posts.

Applicants who accept another offer, after booking an interview, should ensure they inform the appropriate recruitment office as soon as possible in order that they can be withdrawn from the interview.

Applicants will be asked to declare on their application form if they have a disability as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and whether they wish to be considered under the Disability Confident Scheme. This information will not be available to shortlisting panels. Further information is available from:

<https://disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk/>

Recruiters will ensure, where possible, that reasonable adjustments are made at interview to meet the needs of applicants with disabilities. Applicants must ensure that they include this on their application form and communicate their requirements with the recruiting organisation as soon as an invitation to interview has been received. Failure to provide the requested information and documentation to the recruiting organisation by the stated deadline, will result in adjustments not being met.

Applicants should expect to provide medical evidence for any adjustments requested and are therefore advised to source this as soon as possible to ensure that deadlines are met.

The majority of Interviews and assessments will take place online. Where a recruitment contains a practical skills element as part of their recruitment process this may take place at an external venue and the ability to provide the requested adjustments will depend on the facilities available.

Applicants should contact the specialty recruitment office if they have any concerns about their application or would like to know more about the complaints procedure.

The entire duration of the assessment process will vary depending on the specialty/programme. The main aim of the interview is to ensure that applicants meet the requirements of the Person Specification and that the best applicants are selected.

The structure and content of interviews will vary across specialties and levels. Recruitment offices will inform applicants of the format of the interview or Selection Centre, including the number of stations and competences being assessed.

Interviewers may have access to anonymised application forms of applicants but will not have access to the equal opportunities or personal data.

Interview panel members will individually complete a scoresheet for each candidate and make any comments. The aggregate score given by all panel members, taking into account any associated weighting, will be the final score of the interview.

Sharing Interview Questions with Others

Once an interview has been completed, applicants should ensure that they do not discuss the interview process or share the interview questions with other applicants who are yet to be interviewed, either on the same date or on a future date.

Applicants found to be sharing interview questions with others may be removed from the recruitment process.

Raising Concerns at Interview/Selection Centre

Applicants wishing to raise concerns about the conduct of panel members during the interview/selection process or recruitment staff administering the event should be directed to the Recruitment Lead and/or the Clinical Lead who will decide if the issue requires immediate intervention and discussion.

Concerns should be raised on the day of the interview/selection centre, ideally before leaving the interview.

Where a serious concern is raised, a formal investigation will be undertaken.

Should an applicant, following reflection, wish to raise an issue after they have completed the selection centre, they should contact the lead recruiter. However, they should be aware that depending on the nature of their concern, it may not be possible to fully address it after the event.

6.1. Selecting Preferences

In the period between submitting an application and offers being made, applicants will be asked to specify their regional/geographical preferences. Preference choices are ranked in Oriel.

The preferences made by applicants will be used, along with final selection rank to determine which offer, if any, they receive.

Applicants will have the opportunity to express their preferences throughout the recruitment process as applicants' circumstances can change between the time of application and the time that offers are released.

Preferences added to the no preference column will be offered when a ranked preference is not available. Programmes added to the no preference column are given an equal rank; if applicants would like these programmes to be offered in a particular order, they should ensure that they are taken out of the no preference column and added to the ranked list of preferences.

For applicants who have accepted or held a post, there will also be the opportunity to change upgrade options to allow a post/programme that was originally ranked lower than the offered post to become an upgrade option.

The order offers will be made in will be determined solely on the selection score and permissions to work in the UK, not preferences made. An applicant's preferences will only come into play when that applicant is reached in the ranked list and an offer is due.

Applicants who are not prepared to accept an offer of training in a certain region/geographical area, should not rank it in their preferences (i.e. it should be added to the *not wanted* column). Applicants who choose this option, will never receive an offer for that particular preference, even if this means that the applicant receives no

offer, with the offer going to a lower ranked applicant who had chosen the preference option.

Preferences added to the no preference column will be offered when a ranked preference is not available. Programmes added to the no preference column are given an equal rank; if applicants would like these programmes to be offered in a particular order, they should ensure that they are taken out of the no preference column and added to the ranked list of preferences.

Preference choices should be made solely on desirability of the associated post for the individual applicant, not the perceived desirability for all applicants. Ranking a less popular preference highly will have no bearing on when an offer will be made.

By ranking a preference, applicants are stating that they would be prepared to undertake a training programme in that area. **Applicants should not preference or accept posts if they are unable to commence training in that particular post. If you are made an offer and decline it, you will be withdrawn from the process and will not receive any further offers for that programme.**

It is vital that applicants only preference posts which they would be willing to accept.

Interview panels will not have access to applicants' preferences.

6.2 Enhanced Preferencing

Applicants can have a change in circumstances for any number of reasons in the time between programme/post preferences being made and offers being released. To assist applicants in this situation, flexibility around preferencing has been introduced.

For applicants who have accepted or held a post, there will be an option to select upgrade options which not only include those posts/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. Programmes will keep their post preferencing open throughout the recruitment process but will close this off 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 recruitment timeline for exact dates).

6.3 Receiving offers

All offers will be made through Oriel.

Appointments to training programmes or posts will be offered in rank order, based on selection scores.

Applicants receiving training offers through Oriel will have the option to accept, decline or hold (until the hold deadline) the offer made. Applicants will be given 48 hours (excluding weekends but including bank holidays) from release of the offer to decide whether to accept, reject or hold it.

Offers which are not responded to within the 48-hour deadline will expire and will be offered to another applicant.

Applicants should only preference and accept posts that they are willing to undertake; this includes posts in the no preference column.

Applicants intending to decline a training offer are advised to do so as soon as possible to enable the offer to be made to another applicant. Applicants who do not initially receive an offer may still be offered at a later date, during the process of re-offering declined and expired offers.

Applicants who fail to respond to their offer within the 48 hours and allow it to expire, but who would have liked to accept the post, should contact the recruitment office, at the earliest opportunity. Where possible, recruitment offices will try to reinstate applicants, however, as recycling of the initial offer may have already taken place, there is no guarantee that the applicant will receive an offer or that it will be the same offer as initially received.

Not all applicants deemed eligible for appointment by the interview/selection panel will be guaranteed the offer of a post as the number of appointable applicants often exceeds the number of available posts.

Following interview and/or assessment, the Recruitment Office will contact applicants, if successful, with news of an offer. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a message informing them that they have not been successful on this occasion.

Applicants deemed eligible for appointment who rank below the number of vacancies available, could still receive an offer, if offers made to higher ranked applicants are rejected.

Posts which become available after the recruitment round will be offered to those applicants on the reserve list. This process will continue until either the reserve list has been exhausted or up until when the next round of recruitment has gone out for advert.

6.4 Offer Responses

Response	Conditions attached to the response
Accept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The applicant is excluded from any further offers from this and any other programme within this recruitment round. ▪ Pre-employment processes commence
Accept with upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The applicant will have their offer automatically upgraded if a higher ranked preference becomes available. If an applicant has opted into upgrades, no contact will be made with them prior to the upgrade taking place. ▪ The upgraded offer becomes the accepted offer and the previously accepted post is released and offered to another applicant ▪ Upgrades will continue to be made up until the upgrade deadline for the recruitment round ▪ No offers will be received from any other specialty unless the offer is a hierarchical upgrade (up until the hierarchical upgrade deadline) <p>Please note: If an improved preference becomes available the current offer will automatically be upgraded. Applicants are notified of the upgrade by message within their Oriel account. Applicants should not preference posts that they would not want to be upgraded into. After an upgrade has been made, there is no opportunity to revert to the previously accepted post.</p>
Holding offers	<p>The held offer can be accepted or declined at any time up until the hold deadline. Only ONE offer can be held at any time in the same recruitment round.</p> <p>Before the hold deadline passes, offers must be confirmed as accept, accept with upgrades or decline. If no action is taken the held offer will expire and will be deemed to have been declined.</p> <p>If a currently held offer is released as a result of holding another programme's offer, then the previously held offer will be rejected</p>
Hold without upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The applicant is reserving the offer ▪ No upgrades by preference will be made ▪ Offers from other programmes can still be received ▪ The held offer can be accepted or rejected at any time until the hold deadline

Hold with upgrades	<p>Applicants receiving offers which are not their first-choice preference can select the hold with upgrades option.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The candidate is reserving the offer▪ The held offer preference will be automatically upgraded if preferred preferences become available. Offers from other programmes can still be received. Applicants who opt into upgrades will have their offer upgraded without further contact being made with them▪ The held offer can be accepted or rejected at any time until the hold deadline <p>Please note: Upgrades are automatic when opting to hold with upgrades. If an improved preference becomes available, the current offer will automatically be upgraded. Applicants are notified of the upgrade by message within their Oriel account. After an upgrade has been made, there is no opportunity to revert to the previously held post</p>
Decline	<p>An applicant choosing this option will have their offer removed and will receive no further offers from this programme within that recruitment round. Applicants will continue to receive offers from other programmes, if applicable</p> <p>Please note: If an applicant does not respond to their offer within the 48 hours, this will be interpreted as declining the offer and it will be offered to another applicant</p>
Withdraw	<p>An applicant may withdraw completely from the process up until offers are released and should do so via their Oriel account.</p> <p>Once an offer has been accepted, applicants wishing to withdraw will need to contact the Recruitment Office directly.</p>

6.5 Upgrading of offers

Applicants who receive an offer through Oriel will **automatically** receive an upgrade, should one become available, if they accept or hold the offer **and** opt in for upgrades. Applicants who opt into upgrades will have the option to state which of their preferences they would like to be considered for an upgrade into. This could include all or some of the posts that were ranked higher than the offered post, but also those that were originally ranked lower; upgrade options are completely configurable by the applicant. Should an upgrade option become available and the applicant who has opted in for upgrades is next in line to receive the offer, they will be automatically upgraded to this offer with no option to revert to the original offer.

Applicants can opt out of upgrades at any point via Oriel.

Applicants who wish to be considered for upgrades into a particular post/programme should opt into this, even if the post/programme is showing no vacancies. If the post becomes available at a later date, an applicant will not be upgraded into it if they have not opted in, regardless of whether or not it was one of their higher ranked preferences in the original application form. Once an upgrade has been made there will be no opportunity for the applicant to request that their original acceptance be reinstated.

Offer upgrades are processed once all other offers for the programme have been responded to. Upgrades will not be processed at the weekend or on bank holidays.

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.

6.6 After acceptance of a post

Any offers made are conditional upon the necessary pre-employment checks being carried out successfully. Successful applicants will receive an offer of employment from their employer (subject to preemployment checks). The offer of employment is distinct from the training agreement. Successful applicants may change employers several times during their training period.

The first employer will need to complete pre-employment checks before the successful applicant can start working for them. Pre-employment checks are designed to ensure that every dentist working in the NHS is fit and safe to work with patients.

Applicants will be required to make declarations on the application form relating to their honesty and probity. Checks will include verification of references, fitness to practise updates from the General Dental Council (GDC) or other regulatory bodies, occupational health clearance, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and immigration status checks. They may also include validation of English language proficiency and evidence of competence. Once pre-employment checks have been completed successfully, the employer will confirm new starter details directly with the successful applicant.

References

Following acceptance of a training programme, reference requests will be sent through Oriel to the referees listed in the application form.

Referees will complete the reference online, using Oriel. 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. Applicants and/or referees will be contacted directly by the employer

if further references are required. There is no need for applicants and/or referees to do anything until this contact is made.

6.7 Receiving Feedback

All applicants will be given feedback after each of the following stages of recruitment:

- *Longlisting/Eligibility checked (if unsuccessful)*
- *Shortlisting (if applicable)*
- *Interview/Selection Centre*

Interview/Selection Centre feedback should be given no later than 7 days after the national offer deadline. Where available, the feedback will include the following:

- *Individual scores per interview station*
- *Total interview/selection score*
- *Maximum interview/selection score available*
- *Applicant's appointability and the minimum score required for appointability (as appropriate)*
- *Applicant's individual ranking. Please note, if an applicant does not reach the required threshold for appointability, they will not be given a rank.*

Copies of scoresheets with panellist comments will be sent via PDF to applicants.

7 Deferring the start date of a post

Applicants can only defer the start of their training programmes on statutory grounds such as personal ill health or parental leave. Commencement cannot be deferred for reasons such as research.

Applicants who have had a period of ill health or parental leave during the training programme for which they are applying will be permitted to defer their entry to training by the same period of time (whole time equivalent).

Applicants who require a Skilled Worker visa (<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>) wishing to defer should also discuss this with the appropriate visa sponsor to ensure they can do so under current immigration rules.

8 Support for Applicants

8.1 Support from the local region

Applicants may need support, careers information and guidance to help them make the best choices in entering the next round of recruitment.

The region in which they are currently working should be able to offer careers advice, in addition to the advice that can be obtained from senior colleagues and mentors. Trust consultants, clinical tutors and others should be well informed with up to date process details.

If applicants are unsure about local arrangements, the current employer may provide information about how to get confidential advice and support. This information should include for example, contact details for the local Occupational Health Department, employment assistance programmes and other organisations. The British Dental Association will be able to discuss in confidence any issues with dentists in distress including the pressures and stress of work and of the application process.

In summary, the best ways for applicants to receive support at the application or interview stage are as follows:

- *HEE local office/Deanery careers advisor/support team*
- *HEE Educational supervisors, Training Programme Directors and Associate Deans*
- *Careers lead in the trust*
- *College Tutors*
- *Dentists in training*

For dentists applying to specialty training from outside the UK or not in current dental employment who are considering applying for training programmes should contact the HEE local office/Deanery they are planning to apply to for advice. In addition, dental colleagues who have recently been through the specialty recruitment process may also be able to offer advice.

8.2 Support from the programme/region of application

Applicants should expect to receive helpful information from the programme and/or region to which they are applying.

National guidance recommends the following basic elements of applicant support throughout the recruitment process.

Websites should provide clear guidance to applicants including:

- *Up to date information on all recruitment activity; details of posts on offer and application requirements, shortlisting and interview timeframes.*
- *Information about posts in the rotation (where possible)*
- *An updated Frequently Asked Questions section.*
- *Information about shortlisting criteria and weightings, and any scoring scheme used.*

Email helpdesk services will be available in each HEE local office/Deanery. The email address will be advertised on the HEE local office/Deanery websites. Helpdesks will normally respond via email to applicants' queries within 72 hours. (Queries received within 48 hours of the relevant application deadline will be prioritised).

8.3 Fair, legal and equitable

All recruitment processes must meet legal requirements. Patient care and safety are the priority concern.

- *As a minimum, all posts must be advertised on NHS Jobs*
- *All posts must be advertised for a minimum of 28 days*
- *Advertisements, information for applicants and application forms must be clearly structured so that they are accessible to applicants with disabilities and so that applicants can easily find relevant details when carrying out a search*
- *All applications must be made electronically*
- *Application forms and the interview processes must map to the national person specifications*
- *The nationally agreed application form must be used*
- *Applicants will be able to apply for multiple training programmes.*
- *Random recruitment and selection processes should not be used*
- *All applications submitted before the deadline will be considered, provided they meet eligibility requirements as outlined in the relevant Person Specification*
- *Shortlisters and interviewers will not have access to the equal opportunities and*

Fitness to Practise sections of the application form or personal data.

- Interviewers will take account of applicants' portfolios, their structured CV and the summary of their portfolio of evidence
- Applicants may be asked to bring their portfolios to the interview. Please refer to programme specific guidance

8.4 Complaints Procedure

National Recruitment Offices use a nationally agreed process for handling complaints about recruitment. Applicants with concerns about the recruitment process or who wish to make a complaint should contact the Recruitment Office to which they applied to obtain further information on the complaints procedure.

9. Useful Links

Committee of Postgraduate Deans and Directors (COPDEND)	http://www.copdend.org/
British Dental Association (BDA)	https://bda.org/
BDA stress and mental health support	https://www.bda.org/about-the-bda/campaigns/stress
General Dental Council (GDC)	https://www.gdc-uk.org/
Oriel	https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/
Dental Schools Council (DSC)	http://www.dentalschoolscouncil.ac.uk/
National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)	https://www.nihr.ac.uk/

Appendix 1

NIHR (England only) ACF Dental Applicant Frequently Asked Questions

1. I wish to apply for a dental NIHR ACF post what is the process?

NIHR ACF posts are allocated annually to Integrated Academic Training (IAT) partnerships comprising a HEE local office, Higher Education Institute (HEI) and NHS organisation. The recruitment process is managed by the relevant HEE local office in the IAT partnerships and advertisements will appear on their websites, Oriol, and potentially also in other professional publications for example the British Dental Journal.

Application form: applicants will need to complete the ACF application form for the ACF posts advertised in the relevant specialties and levels through Oriol.

Specialty training application form: ACF applicants who require clinical benchmarking if they were successful at the ACF interview will need to complete the relevant specialty training application when the national recruitment application window opens.

Following assessment of the ACF applications, shortlisted applicants will be invited for ACF interviews (also sometimes known as the 'academic' interview) by the HEE local office hosting the ACF post. The ACF interview has several components assessing the clinical-academic potential of the applicant and the panel will include relevant clinical academic representatives from the hosting HEI. Appointable applicants at the ACF interviews will be ranked and, subject to national clinical benchmarking, the top ranked applicant will be offered the ACF post when offers are made.

Please refer below for a summary of the benchmarking process flow chart.

Conditional offers will be given to successful applicants at the ACF interviews who did not already hold an NTN in the GDC specialty and level to which they are applying. The condition of the offer relates to the clinical benchmarking in the GDC specialty of the ACF post to which they are applying.

If the top ranked applicant at the ACF interviews requires clinical benchmarking, then reserve appointable applicants from the ACF interview will also be invited for clinical benchmarking if required. An unconditional offer to reserve applicants, who passed clinical benchmarking, is dependent on the applicants ranked higher at the ACF interviews withdrawing to failing clinical benchmarking.

ACF applicants will be ranked and offered on their performance at the ACF interview and **not** the national standard clinical interview where they just need to pass the clinical benchmark. If applicants require clinical benchmarking then the HEE local office hosting the ACF post will need to ensure that the HEE national recruitment team are made aware of this in a timely manner, applicants should have been advised to apply to the relevant national recruitment.

2. What is clinical benchmarking?

Clinical benchmarking relates to applicants reaching the threshold of appointability at the national standard clinical interviews/assessments for the GDC specialty and level of the ACF post for which they are applying. Applicants deemed successful at clinical benchmarking will maintain this status for the entire recruitment year (until the date of the interview for the next recruitment round).

Applicants who fail to reach the appointability threshold at clinical benchmarking will be ineligible for appointment to the ACF post in that recruitment round. Under these circumstances, the conditional ACF offer will be withdrawn.

Applicants who fail clinical benchmarking and become ineligible are still able to reapply in future recruitment rounds.

3. Will all applicants need to attend clinical benchmarking?

No. If the applicant already holds an NTN in the same GDC specialty as their NIHR ACF application, there is no need for them to attend a national clinical assessment/interview as they will have previously met the required clinical standard.

4. Will applicants who hold an NTN in a different GDC specialty to the ACF they are applying for be required to attend clinical benchmarking?

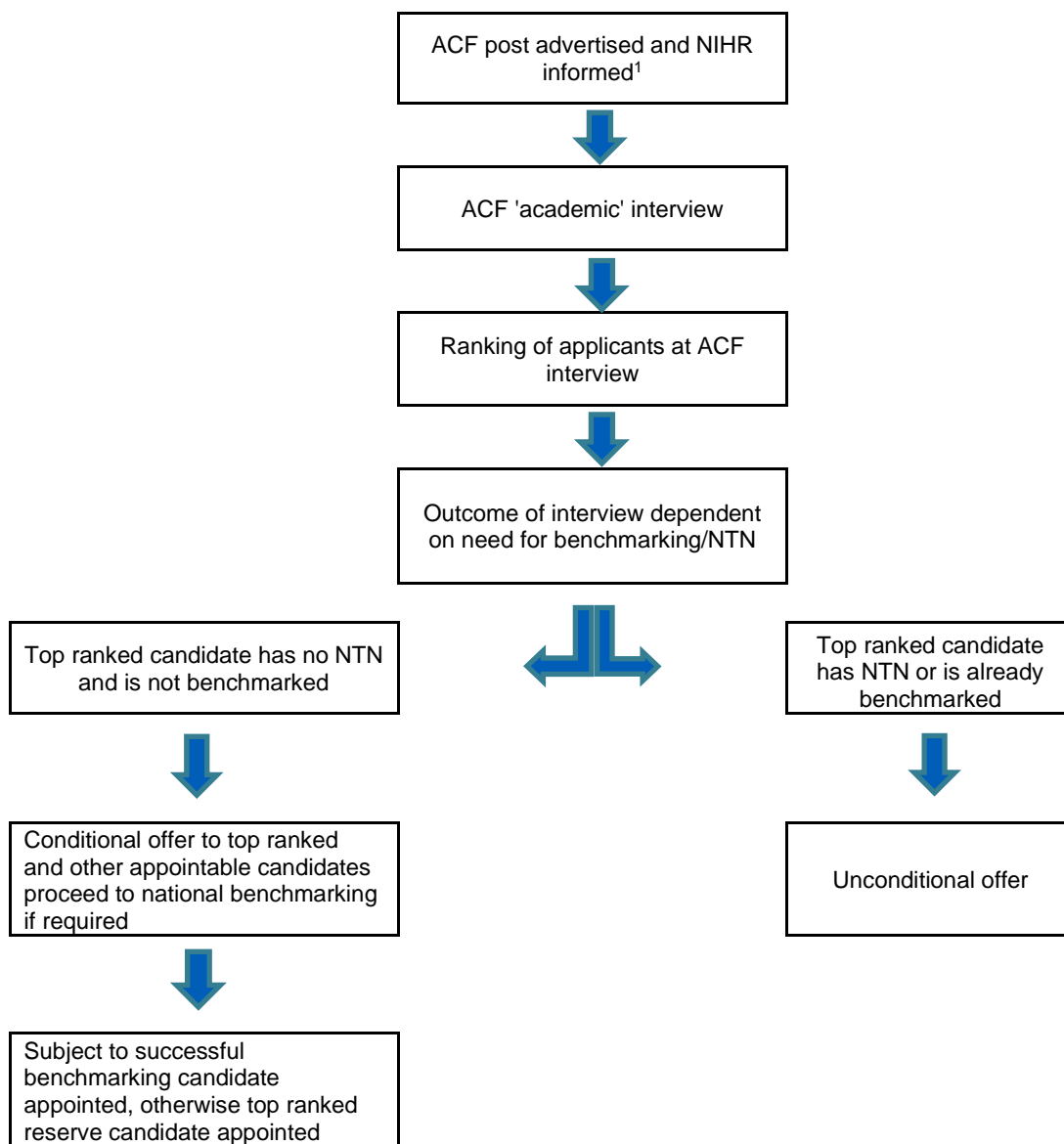
Yes. Although they have met the required standard in a national clinical interview previously, it was not in the same GDC specialty. Different specialties assess different skills and competences at interview and therefore should not be assumed that success in one clinical interview is appropriate for all specialties.

5. What is the required standard for NIHR ACF candidates undergoing clinical benchmarking?

Applicants who do not hold an NTN will need to be assessed and interviewed through the relevant national process for the specialty. The applicant will be required to reach the threshold of 'appointability' at national selection assessment/interview. They **do not** need to have been ranked high enough to have received a specialty training post i.e. 'appointed'.

Applicants that do not reach the appointable score threshold at national selection assessment/interview will have their ACF offer (or place on reserve list) withdrawn.

Diagram 1 – Benchmarking flow chart



¹ Advertising will use Oriel and may also involve local HEE and HEI websites or other professional publications

Appendix 2

Fitness to Practice contact list per recruitment office

<u>Programme</u>	<u>Level</u>	<u>Lead recruiter</u>	<u>FTP contact</u>
Dental Foundation Training	Foundation	HEE - London and KSS	https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_19=true
Dental Core Training	DCT1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Dental Core Training	DCT2	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Dental Core Training	DCT3	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Dental and Maxillofacial Radiology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Dental Public Health	ST1	HEE – North East	nhc-tr.lethelpdesk.ne@nhs.net
Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Oral Medicine	ST1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Oral Microbiology	ST1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Oral Surgery	ST1	HEE – Yorkshire and the Humber	ftprec.yh@hee.nhs.uk
Orthodontics	ST1	HEE – North East	nhc-tr.lethelpdesk.ne@nhs.net
Orthodontics	ST4	HEE – North East	nhc-tr.lethelpdesk.ne@nhs.net
Paediatric Dentistry	ST1	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Paediatric Dentistry	ST4	HEE – East Midlands	Finesstopractise.em@hee.nhs.uk
Restorative Dentistry	ST1	HEE – North West	finesstopractise.nw@hee.nhs.uk
Special Care Dentistry	ST1	HEE – North West	finesstopractise.nw@hee.nhs.uk