

Higher Specialist Scientific Training (HSST)

Interviewing Process for Applicants

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Contents

1	What applicants can expect if invited to interview	3
	Processes.....	3
	Venues	3
	Timings.....	3
	Document check.....	4
	Standards	4
	Interview stations	4
	Interview logistics.....	5
	Diagrammatic representation of the interview process for HSST recruitment 2019.....	6
	Scoring	6

1 What applicants can expect if invited to interview

The National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS) is committed to delivering interviews to a high and professional standard.

Processes

Interviews are run in accordance with set processes. All interviews are designed to be fair, equitable and transparent and all processes will be applied consistently.

Venues

The NSHCS uses a range of venues to host interviews. While care is taken to ensure a quiet environment for interviews, unexpected noise can occur and for large scale recruitment, applicants are advised to be prepared for a certain amount of low-level bustle and noise. Applicants who have a hearing impairment are asked to notify the NSHCS at hcsapplicants@hee.nhs.uk ideally at the time of booking their interview slot but as a minimum, at least 5 working days prior to interview to highlight their impairment – hearing loops may be available. Any additional arrangements such as sign language support must be made by the applicant. The NSHCS will be able to offer support and guidance where this is required. Applicants with concerns regarding access to the interview venue are likewise asked to contact the email address above, at least 5 working days prior to interview. Signs will be displayed at the interview venues to assist all applicants in finding their way. Applicants should ask NSHCS staff for assistance should they have difficulty finding their way within the venue.

Should applicants experience an issue relating to the venue on the day of interview, they should speak to the senior manager from the NSHCS who will be present at interviews on the day.

Timings

Every effort is made to ensure that interviews run to time. Applicants are asked to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to their allocated interview time in order to allow sufficient time for document checking and necessary briefings. Applicants are asked to be prepared for the fact that some delays are likely to occur, especially at large scale interviews and applicants should be mindful of this when making travel arrangements. For Higher Specialist Scientist Training we would recommend that applicants expect to be at the venue for up to 2 hours. However this does not allow for delays due to any unforeseen circumstances that may occur on the interview day.

Applicants should be aware that where another applicant has failed to arrive in time for their interview, they may be asked (especially in cases where interviews are running behind schedule) if they are willing to accept an earlier interview time in order to minimise delays. This is to be expected in circumstances for example where there are local or national adverse weather conditions. Applicants are not obliged to agree to this request.

Should applicants be unable to attend their interview, they are asked to notify the NSHCS via the helpdesk service as soon as possible at: hcsapplicants@hee.nhs.uk

Applicants who arrive late for their scheduled interview should be aware that it may not be possible to offer them a later interview slot and that their interview may thus be forfeited. The contact telephone number for anyone running late is **0121 695 2529**.

Should applicants experience issues to do with timing on the day of interview, they are asked to speak to the senior manager from the NSHCS who will be present at the interviews on the day.

Applicants will be briefed on the morning of the interviews on what to do should the fire alarm sound during the interviews.

Document check

Applicants can expect to undergo a document check, including verification of their identity (ID check) and immigration status if applicable. Applicants are expected to bring **original** documents as well as a photocopy of the document to the interview as outlined in the invite to interview email.

While the document check is generally scheduled to take place prior to applicants undertaking their interview, applicants may be asked to defer their document check until after their interview, especially in cases where applicants have arrived late to the interview or applicants have agreed to move up the interview schedule in order to fill a slot of an applicant who has failed to arrive in time. Where applicants are asked to defer their document check until after interview, the ID check will subsequently take place.

All applicants will be issued with a name badge prior to going into interviews.

Standards

All interview panels have been briefed on the day on the interview process in question, and specifically on the importance of maintaining consistent scoring parameters. Applicants can expect their interview panel to probe and challenge their answers and statements if the panel feel they need further information. This allows applicants a fair opportunity to answer the question(s). Similarly, applicants can expect panels to wind up their interview with applicants prior to the designated time, if the panel feels it has obtained sufficient information to assess an applicant. Neither probing questioning, nor an early finish should be grounds for concern and are consistent with the expected process for interviews.

Interview stations

The interview will consist of 3, 20 minute interview stations on a range of topics designed to explore your knowledge and skills. You will rotate to each station until all 3 interview stations have been completed - see 'Interview Process' diagram for information. Note that you may start at any one of the stations below. The stations will include:

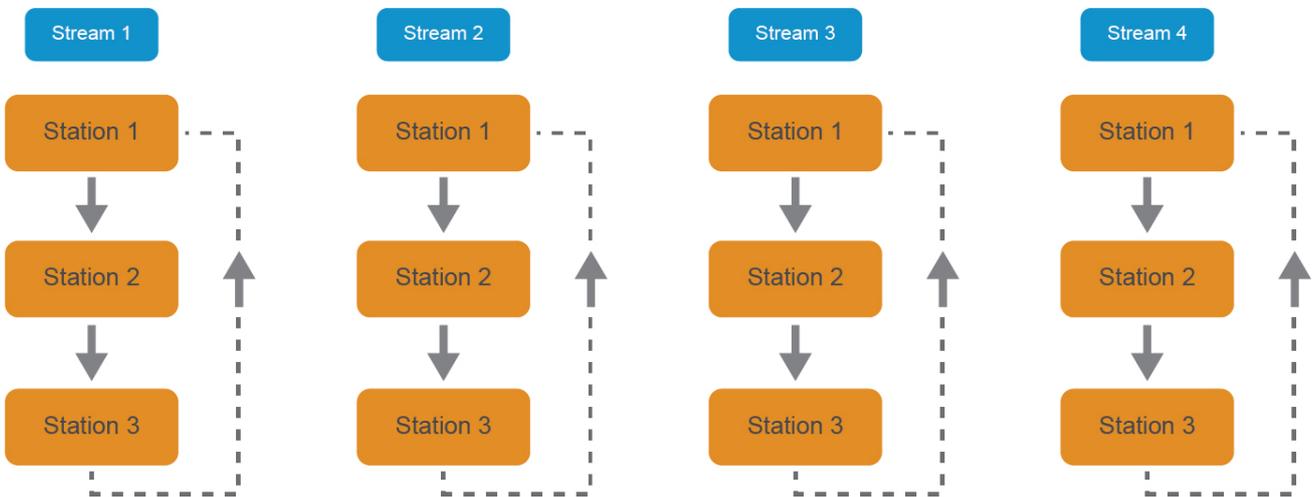
Station number	Area covered
Station 1	Scientific and Clinical station that is designed to focus on the specific HSST Curriculum
Station 2	<p>Research and Innovation station designed to assess scientific, policy or educational research</p> <p>This station will require applicants to deliver a 10 minute PowerPoint presentation followed by a 10 minute question and answer session.</p> <p>The presentation title will be provided to applicants when they are invited via email with any further details as appropriate.</p> <p>Applicants will be requested to submit their presentations via email to hcsapplicants@hee.nhs.uk</p> <p>Deadline for submission will be provided when applicants are invited to interview.</p> <p>In addition, applicants are requested to bring a copy of their PowerPoint presentation on a memory stick to the interview, together with 3 hard copies of their presentation (this is in the event of any failure of the IT facilities). Versions 2003, 2007 and 2010 in PowerPoint are supported.</p> <p><i>Please note, that no changes can be accepted to presentations after the deadline dates given above.</i></p>
Station 3	<p>Leadership and Management (aligned to Good Scientific Practice)</p> <p>This station will focus on (but is not limited to) patient centred care and safety, leadership, professionalism, innovation, teaching and learning, quality improvement and research methods.</p>

Interview logistics

Please allow for up to 2 hours to complete all stages of the interview. However this does not allow for delays due to any unforeseen circumstances that may occur on the interview day.

Diagrammatic representation of the interview process for HSST recruitment 2019

(Please note that applicants will be assigned into a 'stream' and rotate within that stream through the stations).



Scoring

There will be a minimum of two interviewers on any given interview station unless due to unforeseen circumstances where an interview station may comprise of one interviewer. Although interviewers must score independently, they can discuss an applicant's performance. As a result, scores awarded by interviewers on the same interview station/panel may vary. The NSHCS will quality check and review all scores prior to making offers of training to ensure consistency of scoring within the set scoring parameters.

It should be noted that it is not uncommon for applicants to have a range of scores across the stations, since the stations are designed to assess different areas of competence.

Applicants should be aware that communication skills will also be scored at each station in addition to the specific station questions. Applicants will therefore receive a wide range of scores from multiple interview stations, interviewers and station questions giving each applicant optimal opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities at interview.

Applicants will be scored between 1 - 5 and in whole numbers. Applicants will receive two scores; a total station score and communication skills score which will be weighted.

If an interviewer scores a 1 or a 2 for either the station or communication skills, this could be subject to further review and as a result may not necessarily result in a conditional offer, even if the applicant has a high enough total score that would have otherwise been ranked high enough to have received a conditional offer. If two interviewers score a 1 for the station or communication skills, the applicant will be deemed un-appointable and hence will not receive a conditional offer.