

Scientist Training Programme (STP)

Principles for in-service training routes for 2019

Contents

- 1. Purpose.....2
- 2. Background.....2
- 3. Principles for In-Service route.....2
- 4. Conditions.....3
- 5. Considerations for the Employer and the In-Service Candidate.....3

1. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance for

- Current NHS employees who wish to apply for the Scientist Training Programme (STP) while retaining their substantive post
- Employers wishing to put forward an existing employee for the STP
- Commissioners considering applications for the STP from existing NHS employees

2. Background

Modernising Scientific Careers: the UK Way Forward (2010) set out the UK wide policy framework for modernising the training, education and career framework for healthcare science. Within this policy document it was stated that there would be “*the ability to “grow your own” through local career progression pathways*”.

The Modernising Scientific Careers framework defines the various career levels of scientists in the health services and provides opportunities for existing staff to gain the training needed to change from one role to another, e.g. from Practitioner to Scientist, or from Scientist to Senior/Consultant Scientist.

Existing NHS employees who enter training programmes on this basis are referred as ‘**in-service**’ trainees.

Employees also still have the option to apply to the National Recruitment of ‘**direct entry**’ training posts and resign their substantive post if successful¹.

3. Principles for the in-service route

In-service candidates need the support of their employer so that current and future workforce needs are taken into account. Candidates must hold a substantive contract of employment in the NHS specialism for which they are applying. They enter the STP through local commissioning processes and application to the national recruitment process. They are employed and salaried by the Employer throughout the programme. They follow the whole programme and must be released from service duties as appropriate to undertake the training.

¹ Direct entry trainees are selected through a national recruitment process led by the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS). Successful candidates are employed on three-year fixed term training contracts.

4. Conditions

Candidates must

- be part of the workforce planned numbers required for training and have occupied an existing substantive NHS salaried post (within the same department as the training post) prior to training
- obtain agreement from the employer to release them from service to undertake the required academic and workplace-based training requirements
- apply through the same national online process as the direct entry candidates (including any online testing used), but do not go through a shortlisting process because they are not in competition for their substantive post
- go through the same interview process as direct entry candidates
- be trained in a department accredited as an STP training provider by the NSHCS
- be assessed using an e-portfolio and/or any other monitoring and quality assurance processes utilised by the NSHCS
- sit the Objective Structured Final Assessment
- complete the postgraduate academic programme (academic fees are paid by Health Education England)

5. Considerations for the Employer and the In-Service Candidate

The following points should be used as a checklist for Commissioners prior to agreeing in-service training places.

The employer must agree and confirm:

- continued employment of the candidate during the training (still subject to NHS terms and conditions). *[The local employer is responsible for considering any issue of pay protection or payment at a higher salary for the duration of the training where applicable]*
- awareness of the programme requirements and management of any HR, rota or staffing issues caused by the candidate's attendance at university and/or their participation in any required rotations
- that the candidate's assessor/supervisor/s attend an approved train the trainer programme, that they have the capacity and time to undertake the role, and that the department has the facilities needed to deliver all the required learning outcomes – either from their own resources, or in partnership with others

- release of the candidate from clinical service for study and training as appropriate, in order to provide equity with the training experience of the direct entry trainees
- that internal processes for providing access to training and development opportunities are fair and equitable in accordance with local HR policies
- that the training forms part of their overall commissioning and workforce plans, and that the employee (candidate) is an existing member of the workforce (i.e. not employed solely to undertake the training)
- that if unsuccessful in the admissions process, the employee (candidate) will remain in their substantive post - or employed according to the terms of agreement made with their employer for this eventuality. If as a trainee they fail to progress successfully and have to leave the training programme early, they will return to their substantive post, or employment according to the terms of the agreement made with their employer in accepting the training place

The employer should establish an agreement with the candidate on these points before the candidate is put forward for the training programme

The in-service candidate must:

- have secured confirmation of the support of their Head of Department (or responsible fund-holder) to undertake the training, including any necessary rotational placements, and to attend the academic programme
- be aware of any potential additional cost to themselves associated with undertaking the programme e.g. travel and subsistence if on placement away from their home trust
- be aware of the application and admissions criteria and processes with which they will need to comply (including interview and online testing) and that their training place is dependent on these criteria being met
- be aware of the probable provider of the academic programme and have obtained confirmation from the provider that their qualifications meet the admissions criteria of the provider. If the university does not accept that the candidate's qualifications meet the entry requirements, the application cannot proceed

Please refer to the NSHCS website for up-to-date details of the minimum academic requirements for entry into the STP.