Guidance for Applicants to Cardiothoracic Surgery ST3 Academic and Clinical Training programmes in 2014

Introduction

Health Education Wessex Recruitment Team (formally Wessex Deanery) is coordinating national recruitment to Cardiothoracic Surgery ST3 posts for commencement in August 2014. National Recruitment will cover all Cardiothoracic Surgery ST3 posts in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The process will incorporate recruitment into Specialty Training (NTN) and Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) posts in the specialty at ST3 level. There may also be LAT posts available.

If you have further queries about the specifics of the process after reading this document please refer to the Cardiothoracic Surgery National Recruitment FAQs on the Health Education Wessex website: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/recruitment/hew_national_recruitment/cardiothoracic_surgery_st1__3.aspx

Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) Posts

Application forms submitted for NTN ST3 posts will not be considered for academic posts. Please ensure that if you would like to apply for an academic post that you complete the specific application form.

If you wish to be considered for an NTN ST3 post and an ACFST3 post then you will need to complete an application for each post type.

Please be aware that applicants for ACF posts will be subject to initial assessment against the clinical ST3 entry requirements.

Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 7 November 2013</td>
<td>Advertisements Published</td>
<td>Adverts will be placed in the BMJ and on the websites for both NHS Jobs and the Society of Cardiothoracic Surgeons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 12 November 2013</td>
<td>Applications Open</td>
<td>Applications will only be accepted via the Intrepid Pathway online application portal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 5 December 2013</td>
<td>Applications Close</td>
<td>Applications will close promptly at 17:00. Late applications will not be considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 20 December 2013</td>
<td>Longlisting complete</td>
<td>All applications will be assessed for eligibility against the person specification. Shortlisting for ST3 will not take place in the 2013 recruitment process. Applications will be scored by the Pathway system based upon answers given.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 16 December 2013 – Thursday 2 January 2014</td>
<td>Shortlisting completed (ACF applications only) Shortlisting will be completed for ST3 ACF applications only.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No later than Friday 17 January 2014</td>
<td>Invitation to Assessment Centre Applicants will receive notification of the outcome of the scoring process. Applicants who are successful at this stage will be asked to book themselves into an assessment centre slot.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 February 2014</td>
<td>Assessment Centre Assessment centre will be held at Botley Park Hotel Golf and Spa, Winchester Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO32 2UA. Invited applicants are required to attend on both days.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week commencing Monday 10 February 2014</td>
<td>Initial offers made Offers will be through the UK Offers System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00 Wednesday 12 March 2014</td>
<td>Holding deadline Applicants must have accepted or declined any “held” post by this deadline. Any post not accepted will be recycled and offered to eligible applicants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contacting the Recruitment Team**

It is kindly requested that applicants do not contact Consultants or Training Centres involved in national recruitment.

Please refer to online documentation for information about the posts.

Any queries should be directed to the Recruitment Team via email: ctsurgery.recruitment@wessex.hee.nhs.uk

- The Team will endeavour to respond to your queries within 48 hours.
- Urgent enquiries can be dealt with via telephone on 01962 718424
- The office opening hours are 08:30 – 17:00, Monday - Friday

**Applying for a Vacancy**

Applications for all posts in Cardiothoracic Surgery will be completed via the Intrepid Pathway recruitment portal only. The portal can be accessed via the internet: https://secure.intrepidonline.co.uk/Pathway2014/sys_Pages/MainMenu/MainMenu.aspx

The system requires pre-registration which can be completed immediately.

Please note that allocation of NTN’s at ST3 level is done via the SAC and at the time of application will be provisional numbers only.
Longlisting

Applicants that do not satisfy the essential criteria for the posts being advertised will be removed at the longlisting stage. This process will be completed centrally by Health Education Wessex Recruitment Team.

Please be aware that you may be contacted prior to the closing date for application if there is a query about the information that you have already completed. You will be required to submit clarification or additional information within 72 hours of a request.

Queries at the longlisting stage will be limited to clarification of information that you have supplied on your application form.

Any applicant who is unsuccessful at the longlisting stage will be informed of this with a reason why their application was unsuccessful.

Fitness to Practise

Any applicants who answer yes to any of the fitness to practise declarations on their application form must inform Health Education Wessex prior to submission of their application. These details will be examined and passed to the relevant LETB/Deanery should you be successful. Please submit all FTP declarations to: ctsurgery.recruitment@wessex.hee.nhs.uk marked “Fitness to Practise – Confidential”

Exclusions Policy

During recruitment to posts commencing from August 2014 all LETBs/Deaneries and recruiters will be asking questions relating to applicants’ prior resignation or removal from training posts within the specialty to which they are applying.

Evidence of the reasons for resignation or removal from training will need to be submitted in line with the fitness to practise model. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this information at the time of application and failure to provide such could result in your application being withdrawn.

Achievement of Core Competences

Typically, you will have achieved the competences or equivalent from the first two years of specialty training (ST/CT1 and 2). For further information, see the specialty training curriculum available from the relevant Royal College websites.

There is no upper limit on experience for eligibility for selection to ST3, though some specialties may indicate a desirable upper limit.
Right to Work

All applicants must prove that they are eligible to work in the UK at the time they apply. The proof required depends on your immigration/visa status. For more detailed information, please refer to UKBA (www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) and the Specialty Training websites (http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk)

Generally, UK/EEA Nationals will only need to show their passport to prove their right to work. The exceptions are Bulgarian & Romanian citizens who must provide additional information as their immigration status is different to that of other EEA nationals. Please visit the UKBA website for more information: http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/

Non-UK/EEA Nationals applicants may be eligible to apply depending on whether or not they have any work restrictions on their immigration status.

“Self Assessment” and Shortlisting

Applications to Cardiothoracic Surgery ST3 will be machine marked during the 2014 recruitment process. This process will require you to select specific statements from drop down boxes in the application form. Each answer will have a score allocated to it. Some answers will have the same score as one another and some answers will not have points attached. All answers are designed as “best fit” and you will be required to provide evidence of the achievements stated upon request. All scores will be checked and scrutinised by the Recruitment Team in the first instance.

Any applicant who is successful in being invited to attend the assessment centre will asked to provide evidence to support the answers selected on their application form. Any discrepancy found may result in an applicant’s self assessment score being adjusted and/or an investigation being carried out. This could then lead to being withdrawn from the process depending on the outcome of the investigation. In 2013 an application was withdrawn from the process at the assessment centre stage for this reason.
Surgical Experience vs. Career Progression

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT TIME SPENT IN CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

Applicants will be asked about their experience of certain procedures.

Time spent in cardiothoracic surgery includes months spent in all cardiothoracic or thoracic surgical posts at any level (not including Foundation modules), but excludes time spent in research posts.

The month range you should select is the bracket which you fall into at the time you submit your application form.

Please note that for the purposes of the application form the first bracket has been lowered to 1 – 5 months as this takes into account the earlier opening date, however to be eligible you must have completed at least 6 months in Cardiothoracic Surgery at CT1 level or higher by the time of appointment as per the person specification.

At the longlisting stage the Recruitment Team will review the employment history against the time bracket selected in your application form. If there is a discrepancy between the employment history and the time bracket selected then your application will be removed at the longlisting stage.

If you have doubts about eligible months, please email: ctsurgery.recruitment@wessex.hee.nhs.uk for clarification. Your self assessment of experience and number of procedures completed will also be cross-checked at interview and checked against your validated logbook.

It is essential that the procedures you list were completed as 1st operator with or without a Consultant scrubbed for assistance.

As part of the selection process in 2014 applicants will be asked to complete a series of questions relating to their experience of specific surgical procedures. You will be asked to state the number of particular procedures that you have completed during your time in cardiothoracic surgery. Each answer will have a score allocated to it. This scoring function is automatic and it is therefore important that any queries are raised with the recruitment team, prior to submission.

The questions and answers for the specialty specific part of the application form will be published prior to applications opening. This will list each possible answer against each question and also give a range of scores for each question. Please refer to the Wessex Deanery website where you can download a copy of this (under Useful Downloads – named ‘ST3 Scoring Matrix’):

Preferences

Applicants who are invited to attend the assessment centre will be asked to express a preference on training centres on the UK Offers System. These preferences will be used in conjunction with your ranking from the assessment centre to inform the offer you receive.
should you be successful. The number of posts available in each training centre will be published alongside the preference list.

At the time applications close the number of posts will be indicative only. After the SAC in December final numbers of posts will be available and will be communicated to all those who have submitted an application.

You will be able to adjust your preferences after the closing date of application, until **12:00 noon Friday 24 January 2014.**

**Assessment Centre**

The assessment centres will be held on **Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 February 2014** at Botley Park Hotel Golf and Spa, Winchester Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO32 2UA. If you are successful at the self assessment / shortlisting stage of the process you will be invited to attend the assessment centre stage, and further details of the venue will be provided at that time.

Please note that you will be required to be at the assessment centre from 8.00am on both days for registration and a candidate briefing.

**Applicants are required to attend the Assessment Centre on both days.**

The ST3 assessment days will consist of:

1. A structured interview lasting approximately half an hour.

2. An OSATS\(^1,2\) (Objective Structured Assessment of Technical Skills) evaluation through 3 skills stations, to assess manual dexterity, movement economy, tissue and instrument handling etc. Examples of the skills stations include a vascular anastomosis station and a thoracoscopic skills evaluation station – each station will last 20 minutes in total.

3. A 5 minute presentation, using PowerPoint, on an **audit** project which must be relevant to Cardiothoracic Surgery that you have been primarily involved, in which your presentation skills will also be assessed.

4. A Communication Skills station which will last approximately 15 minutes. This station will involve a simulated patient / actor.

5. Collation of scores from each station.

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Whilst there is no specific portfolio station within the assessment centre, in lieu of this, checks on operative experience and other aspects of the application form will be carried out and cross validated against your portfolio. If any discrepancy is found an investigation may be carried out, which could lead to being withdrawn from the process depending on the outcome of the investigation. In 2013 an application was withdrawn from the process at the assessment centre stage for this reason.

*Please note the specific stations mentioned above may change between applications opening and the actual assessment centre. However, full details will be given to applicants who are invited to the assessment centre.*

**OSATS**

Applicants are advised that for the OSATS assessments it is not necessary to wear “interview clothing”. You must be dressed in a fashion that allows you to move freely, however the assessments are of technical ability and you should consider what you would deem appropriate for this. It is suggested that you consider the type of clothing that you would wear to work. Scrubs are not necessary.

**Academic specific stations**

These have yet to be agreed but details will be provided to any applicant who is invited to the assessment centre. Previous questions have included a critique of a paper, a PowerPoint presentation on academic challenges etc.

**Presentation**

Audit presentations will need to be submitted to the WDRT by **17:00 on Friday 24 January 2014**. This is to allow the team to load all presentations onto the IT equipment in advance. Late submissions will not be accepted and your presentation will then have to be made without the use of slides. Completed presentations should be emailed to: ctsurgery.recruitment@wessex.hee.nhs.uk

Amendments and additions to the presentations will not be accepted, nor will they be considered.

The Wessex Deanery uses Microsoft PowerPoint 2007. All lower editions are compatible. If you are using Office 2010 please ensure this is saved in a compatible format.

**Assessment Centre Accommodation and Expenses**

It is kindly requested that applicants do not make reservations to stay at the Botley Park Hotel Golf and Spa where the Assessment Centre is taking place. Members of the panels and Deanery staff will be staying at the hotel and preparing during the evening for the following day’s assessments.
There are several hotels in the vicinity where we would recommend applicants make arrangements, below are a couple of suggestions:

Holiday Inn Express, Southampton M27, Jct.7:  

Travelodge, Southampton Eastleigh: [http://www.travelodge.co.uk](http://www.travelodge.co.uk)

Health Education Wessex will reimburse expenses incurred for travelling and attending the Assessment Centre. You will be advised of the details of making a claim should you be invited to attend. Reimbursement will be made in line with the Health Education Wessex policy on interview expenses with any exceptions to the policy being communicated directly.

Please refer to the Expenses Guidance which can be found on the Wessex Deanery website for details of what you need written authorisation for in order to make a claim.

**Posts available**

Indicative posts available nationwide (Please note these numbers are indicative and will vary up until the interview process is complete):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NTN Posts</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>4 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mersey</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>Up to 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severn/Southwest Peninsula</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>1 (TBC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>3 - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wessex/Oxford</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and the Humber</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that allocation of NTN’s at ST3 level is done via the SAC and at the time of application will be provisional numbers only.

However, it is likely there will be 20+ posts in 2014. It should be noted that fewer ST3 posts are likely in the 2015 round due to the influence of ST1 trainees. There may be as few as 10 posts only in 2015.
**Outcome of Assessment Centre – Offer of a Training Post**

Offers will be made by Health Education Wessex for all posts nationwide. Your ranking at the assessment centre will be used in conjunction with the preferences that you made on the UK Offers System.

Please note that in 2014 the UK Offers System will be used to process ALL offers.

**Further Information**

For any further information or queries please refer to the Cardiothoracic Surgery Recruitment website or contact the Recruitment Team details as above.