

National School of Healthcare Science

Scientist Training Programme (STP)

Principles for In-Service MSC training routes for 2017

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1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide guidance when scientific staff in the NHS undertake a Modernising Scientific Careers (MSC) Training Programme (Scientist Training Programme (STP)).

2 Background

2.1 In Service

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*”(page 10, para 6). Although there are well described and fulfilling careers to be had as outcomes from each of the described programmes, e.g. as an Associate, a Practitioner or as a Scientist, the MSC programme also provides a mechanism for moving into these training programmes whilst in employment, to enable the training needed to change from one role to another, e.g. from Practitioner to Scientist, or from Scientist to Senior Scientist/Consultant Scientist. This paper addresses the way in which staff currently employed within the NHS scientific workforce can participate in all of a training programme whilst still retained in employment, now designated as the “**in service**” training route (in service programme route). Employees also still have the option to apply to the National Recruitment of direct entry training posts, and resign their substantive post if successful.

2.2 The current direct entry routes into training programmes are:

via a national recruitment and selection process led by the National School of Healthcare Science (NSHCS). Candidates apply to a competitive recruitment and interview framework, usually (but not always) from outside the NHS. Successful candidates are employed on three year fixed term training contracts of employment.

3 Principles for In Service training routes

3.1 The main pathway through the in service training route for the purpose of this document is as follows and will need the support of the individual’s employer so that workforce needs and future

requirements are taken into account is the:

In Service (Programme): candidates entering the training programme via local training commissioning processes and application to the national recruitment process, who hold a substantive contract of employment in the NHS specialism for which they are applying prior to the training programme. They are employed and salaried by the Employer throughout the programme, but released from service duties as appropriate to undertake the training. Candidates follow the whole programme and all the 'In-Service (Programme)' processes through to awardⁱ.

3.2 Trainees undertaking the In Service (Programme) training path will:

- be part of the workforce planned numbers required for training, and have occupied an existing substantive NHS salaried post (within the same departmentⁱⁱ 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 via the same national online process as the direct entrants (including any online testing used), but will not be entered into the short listing process, since they are not in competition for their substantive post.
- meet the same quality assurance criteria applied to the appointment (or admission) of direct entry candidates (including interviews at the National Assessment Centre to ensure equity of standards and process), but not in competition for their substantive post.
- be trained in accordance with the same quality assurance and/or accreditation standards which apply to the workplace and to the supervisor/trainer of direct entry trainees.
- be allocated a National Training Number (NTN) by, and register with, the NSHCS.
- be assessed using the Online Learning and Assessment Tool (OLAT) and/or any other monitoring and quality assurance processes utilised by the NSHCS, including the Objective Structured Final Assessment.
- for the master's programme in STP, candidates have academic fees for the master programme provided by Health Education England.

4 Considerations for the Employer and the In Service Candidate

In adopting the principles above, it is recommended the following points should be used as a prerequisite checklist for Workforce Commissioners to consider prior to agreeing In Service training places:

4.1 That 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.
- 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 just employed 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. *[It is recommended that the employer establishes an agreement with the candidate on*

these points before the candidate is put forward for the training programme. It should be noted that in all instances of a trainee in difficulty whilst in the Programme, the National School of Healthcare Science should be contacted for support at an early stage.]

4.2 That the In Service (Programme) 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 the probable provider of the relevant MSC-accredited degree that they will need to attend, and have obtained confirmationⁱⁱⁱ from the provider that their qualifications would meet the admissions criteria of the provider, if they are successful at the interview stage, and agree to undertake all the required elements of the training 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 any interview and online testing - and that their training place is dependent on these criteria and standards being met. *[The current minimum academic requirement is an undergraduate degree in a relevant science subject awarded an upper second class honours or equivalent. Agreement should be reached with your employer as to the consequences of any potential lack of success in terms of either Admission to the programme - or on the Programme itself before requesting a training place.]*

5 Definitions

5.1 External (Direct Entry): candidates entering the training programme via the National Recruitment/Appointment process from outside the NHS, who do not hold a substantive employment contract in the NHS (NHS employees wishing to access this route must resign from any existing post to do so, applying as a Direct Entry candidate). Candidates follow the whole programme full time and all the 'External (Direct Entry)' processes through to awardⁱ, whilst occupying a fixed-term three-year training contract of employment with the host Trust. Trainees are issued a NTN by the NSHCS.

5.2 In Service (Programme): candidates entering the training programme via local training commissioning processes and application to the national recruitment process, who hold a substantive contract of employment in the NHS specialism for which they are applying prior to the training programme. They are employed and salaried by the Employer throughout the programme, but released from service duties as appropriate to undertake the training. Candidates follow the whole programme and all the 'In-Service (Programme)' processes through to awardⁱ.

ⁱ *In this context the term 'award' refers to the relevant academic Degree conferred by an HEI, and/or the workplace-based Certificate of Attainment conferred by the NSHCS.*

ⁱⁱ *The In-Service (Programme) training route is specifically to enable Service Departments to develop their existing staff, and not for new staff transferred or employed into the Service Department (whether or not from other NHS employment) specifically for the purpose of training.*

ⁱⁱⁱ *It is the responsibility of the In-Service (Programme) candidate to ensure that their offered academic qualification is at least a 2:1 classification at Bachelors level or equivalent, and that any required judgement of 'equivalent' by the provider has been confirmed as being acceptable by them for admission to the Masters degree, **before** putting themselves forward for candidacy. If, for whatever reason, an In-Service candidate's proffered academic qualifications are deemed to be unacceptable by the HEI provider – or some other breach of these criteria becomes apparent **after** the interview stage, any offer of a training place made at that point by the recruitment process will be null and void*