

Applying for paediatric specialty training at ST1 - guidance

[Medical Recruitment team](#)

Most doctors enter paediatric training at Specialty Training 1, or ST1, starting their posts in August or September each year. This is known as 'National Round 1'.

Applications for 2025-26 recruitment (for posts starting in August/September 2025) are open from 10:00 Thursday 24 October - 16:00 Thursday 21 November 2024.

ST1 applicants to paediatrics are required to have no more than 2 years experience in paediatric posts (excluding Foundation posts), at the point they are making their application, in order to be eligible. Applicants with more than 2 years experience should aim to apply to ST3 in 'National Round 2'.

You can find information and updates on the ST1 recruitment process here, including the applicant guide, person specification and other documents in the Downloads box.

Update, 23 October 2024 - The full applicant guide is now available in the downloads box. Indicative post numbers are also now published for all regions.

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National recruitment processes for 2025-26 (new)

The format for recruitment into ST1 is the same as last year. It involves a shortlisting process - based on part of the application - which determines those applicants invited to interview. Interviews will be held virtually.

New for 2025-26

The format for shortlisting is adapted to include a shorter, more defined entry method for applicants, with no long "white-space" answers. In short, this means:

- All "written" answers input into the Oriel application form will be limited to a maximum of 50 words per section
- Some items may be entered via drop-down boxes
- Applicants will be asked to identify the best examples of skills/attributes/experience from their career against the scoring criteria
- There will be no 'Supporting statement'
- Scoring sections will be:
 - Additional qualifications
 - Transferable Clinical skills
 - Transferable Clinical experience and reflection
 - Quality Improvement Project/Audit
 - Academic achievements
 - Teaching

Full details and an updated 'Shortlisting Scoring' document will be published shortly. These updates to the application process were also discussed at our 17 October 2024 webinar on ST1 and ST3 recruitment - and we will publish the recording on this page when applications open.

Paediatric recruitment 2025-26

Recruitment for ST1 paediatrics is composed of two elements:

1. **Application form** for shortlisting: to cover Past achievements, Clinical experience, Career motivation, Transferable Skills, Governance
2. **A virtual interview**, consisting of a two-station multi-scenario format performed online via Qpercom. Each station will be 20 minutes in length and the whole process should last 45 minutes overall, to cover Communications, Career Motivation, Clinical Reasoning and Reflective Practice.

The number of eligible applicants (after longlisting) has exceeded the interview capacity available across our virtual interview centres in recent years by a good number, so application scores will be used as a shortlisting tool to determine invites to interview against overall capacity. Interview capacity will likely be in the region of 800 places, though this may be subject to change.

Appointability will then be determined using the interview scores, with a final appointability threshold of 55% or more.

Note: We can confirm that there is no plan to reintroduce the Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA) into the paediatric recruitment process.

National round 1 paediatric recruitment timelines for 2025-26

Timelines for Paediatric National Recruitment for ST1 entry posts, starting in August/September 2025 are as follows:

Advert appears	Wednesday 23 October 2024, by 17.00
Applications open	Thursday 24 October 2024, 10.00
Applications close	Thursday 21 November, 16.00
Shortlisting window opens	Wednesday 18 December 2024

Shortlisting window closes	Friday 10 January 2025
Interview invites*	Monday 20 January 2025
Interview booking closes*	Wednesday 22 January 2025, by 16.00
Interview window	Between Thursday 30 January to Friday 7 March 2025
Preferencing window opens	Monday 10 February 2025, from 10.00
Initial offers released	Tuesday 18 March 2025, by 17:00
Hold deadline	Thursday 3 April 2024, 13:00
Upgrade deadline	Tuesday 8 April 2024, 16:00

*Applicants who have been successfully shortlisted will also receive the 'Applicant Declaration' form along with their invite to interview. This must be completed and returned when the interview booking window closes.

The [HEE Medical Specialty Recruitment website](#) also provides general information on national recruitment, including full national timelines and 2025-specific guidance documents.

Guidance

Full guidance on each part of the recruitment process is available in the ST1 Applicant Guide - all applicants are advised to read through this carefully. You should also refer to the new 2025 ST1 application scoring criteria and person specification. These resources can all be [downloaded below](#).

We also ran a live Q&A event/webinar on 17 October 2024 and a recording will be posted below and to our Youtube channel for anyone not able to tune in on the day. The session included information on both the application and interview process, for both ST1 and ST3 entry in 2025. The recording will be available to coincide with applications opening on Thursday 23 October 2024.

Interview dates for 2025

ST1 paediatric interviews take place virtually, managed by the local teams. The exact dates will be confirmed from the start of November 2024.

Interview team*	Interview dates
West Midlands	Thursday 30 January, Friday 31 January, Tuesday 4 February, Wednesday 5 February
Thames Valley	Wednesday 5 March, Thursday 6 March, Friday 7 March
Scotland	Friday 31 January, Monday 3 February, Tuesday 4 February
Northern Ireland	Thursday 6 February, Tuesday 25 February
North East	Wednesday 5 February, Monday 3 March, Tuesday 4 March

*All interviews are virtual, so location does not have any bearing on what dates you may want to go for, if you are invited. However, in order to share the administrative burden, the running of the dates is split between the five NHSE, NES and NIMDTA regional offices in the table above.

Indicative post numbers for 2025 and preferencing

The table below shows the indicative ST1 post numbers for all UK regions that are advertising in the 2025-26 recruitment round, for posts starting in August/September 2025. Please note that these are indicative post numbers and may change before the preferencing window opens. Therefore, order

Northern Ireland		18
Scotland	15	16
South West Peninsula	11	11
South West Severn	15	15
Thames Valley		16
Wales	16	20
Wessex		16
West Midlands	33	34
Yorkshire and The Humber		56

The preferencing window will be opened, from 10.00 on Monday 10 February 2025, after the shortlisting has been completed. Applicants invited to interview will then be able to rank their choices on the Oriel system. The final post numbers for each region will have been confirmed by this point and will also be published here, as soon as they are available.

Note: Preferencing is not therefore available during the application window.

Past application numbers and competition ratio

Some regions do prove more popular than others. However, applicants can choose any or all of the preferences for any or all regions, so it is not possible to give an accurate competition ratio by region.

Both overall application numbers, and consequently also competition ratios, saw a considerable increase for the 2024-25 national recruitment round 1 and no post were therefore put into the national round 1 re-advert round for the third year in succession.

1583 applications were made to ST1 in 2024 (up from 1231 in 2023), for a total of 479 posts. The final fill rate at ST1 was 99.79%, with 478 of those posts filled, at the end of the overall Round 1 process.

Paediatric specialty training webinar and Q&A - 17 October 2024

The RCPCH Medical Recruitment team hosted a webinar and Q&A, for anyone planning to apply to ST1 or ST3, on Thursday 17 October 2024. This was presented by Dr Blanche Lumb, RCPCH Trainee Representative for Recruitment, Dr Simon Broughton, RCPCH Officer for Recruitment, and James Clark, RCPCH Head of Medical Recruitment.

The audience was guided through all parts of the recruitment process and provided with tips on what makes a successful application, including completing the application form and how to start preparing for the interview.

Here is a recording of the webinar:

Contact

For any queries, please contact england.paedsnro@nhs.net

External links

[HEE Specialty Recruitment - all person specifications, including Paediatrics ST1](#)

Downloads

[ST1 Paediatrics Applicant Guide 2025-26](#) 436.18 KB

[Paediatrics ST1 Person Specification 2025](#) 302.21 KB

[ST1 Application form scoring framework 2025-26](#) 249.54 KB