

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

### **Decision notice**

**Date:** 4 June 2025

**Public Authority:** NHS England

**Address:** Quarry House  
Quarry Hill  
Leeds  
LS2 7UE

#### **1. Request:**

The complainant requested the following information from NHS England on 18 November 2024:

"I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: North West.

I kindly request the following information

1. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.
2. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white space questions.
3. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.
4. Do interview candidates perform an appraisal of evidence (e.g. a manuscript) as part of the interview? Please answer Yes or No.

5. What is the relative weighting of the shortlisting score and the interview score? For example, the candidate is selected on the interview score alone, or 20% for shortlisting score and 80% for interview score.

6. How many applications do you receive to your Specialised Unit of Application in total?

7. Do you subscribe to the Disability Confident Scheme, where interviews are offered to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. Please answer Yes or No.

8. Have any candidates been interviewed via the Disability Confident Scheme? Please answer Yes or No.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria, white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.

AND

I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: Severn and Peninsula

I kindly request the following information:

1. What are the person specifications used when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By person specifications we are referring to an outline of the essential and desirable attributes of candidates)

2. What selection criteria do you use when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By selection criteria we are referring to the criteria used by the committee to shortlist candidates). Please provide the score available for each criterion and the total score available for each section. For example: 'Publications: 1 point per PubMed indexed publication; total 5 points available'.

3. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

4. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white space questions.

5. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria, white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.

AND

I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: East of England.

I kindly request the following information:

1. What are the person specifications used when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By person specifications we are referring to an outline of the essential and desirable attributes of candidates)

2. What selection criteria do you use when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By selection criteria we are referring to the criteria used by the committee to shortlist candidates). Please provide the score available for each criterion and the total score available for each section. For example: 'Publications: 1 point per PubMed indexed publication; total 5 points available'.

3. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

4. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white

space questions.

5. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes,

please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

6. Do interview candidates perform an appraisal of evidence (e.g. a manuscript) as part of the interview? Please answer Yes or No.

7. What is the relative weighting of the shortlisting score and the interview score? For example, the candidate is selected on the interview score alone, or 20% for shortlisting score and 80% for interview score.

8. How many applications do you receive to your Specialised Unit of Application in total?

9. Do you subscribe to the Disability Confident Scheme, where interviews are offered to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post? Please answer Yes or No.

10. Have any candidates been interviewed via the Disability Confident Scheme? Please answer Yes or No.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria, white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.

AND

I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: London

I kindly request the following information:

1. What selection criteria do you use when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By selection criteria we are referring to the criteria used by the committee to shortlist candidates). Please provide the score available for each criterion and the total score available for each section. For example: 'Publications: 1 point per PubMed indexed publication; total 5 points available'

2. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

3. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space

questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white space questions.

4. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

5. Do interview candidates perform an appraisal of evidence (e.g. a manuscript) as part of the interview? Please answer Yes or No.

6. What is the relative weighting of the shortlisting score and the interview score? For example, the candidate is selected on the interview score alone, or 20% for shortlisting score and 80% for interview score.

7. How many applications do you receive to your Specialised Unit of Application in total?

8. Do you subscribe to the Disability Confident Scheme, where interviews are offered to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post? Please answer Yes or No.

9. Have any candidates been interviewed via the Disability Confident Scheme? Please answer Yes or No.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria, white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.

AND

I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Wessex

I kindly request the following information:

1. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

2. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions

when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white space questions.

3. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

4. Do interview candidates perform an appraisal of evidence (e.g. a manuscript) as part of the interview? Please answer Yes or No.

5. What is the relative weighting of the shortlisting score and the interview score? For example, the candidate is selected on the interview score alone, or 20% for shortlisting score and 80% for interview score.

6. How many applications do you receive to your Specialised Unit of Application in total?

7. Do you subscribe to the Disability Confident Scheme, where interviews are offered to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post? Please answer Yes or No.

8. Have any candidates been interviewed via the Disability Confident Scheme? Please answer Yes or No.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria, white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.

AND

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, I am seeking information regarding the 2024 Specialised Foundation Programme application cycle for the Specialised Unit of Application: West Midlands.

I kindly request the following information:

1. What are the person specifications used when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By person specifications we are referring to an outline of the essential and desirable

attributes of candidates)

2. What selection criteria do you use when shortlisting applicants for your Specialised Foundation Programme positions? (By selection criteria we are referring to the criteria used by the committee to shortlist candidates). Please provide the score available for each criterion and the total score available for each section. For example: 'Publications: 1 point per PubMed indexed publication; total 5 points available'.

3. Do you use white space questions to shortlist candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

4. What is the relative weighting of the criteria and white space questions when shortlisting applicants? For example, criteria and white space questions are weighted equally, or 20% for criteria and 80% for white space questions.

5. Do you use an interview following shortlisting of candidates? And if yes, please provide the questions and marking proforma that you use.

6. Do interview candidates perform an appraisal of evidence (e.g. a manuscript) as part of the interview? Please answer Yes or No.

7. What is the relative weighting of the shortlisting score and the interview score? For example, the candidate is selected on the interview score alone, or 20% for shortlisting score and 80% for interview score

8. How many applications do you receive to your Specialised Unit of Application in total?

9. Do you subscribe to the Disability Confident Scheme, where interviews are offered to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post? Please answer Yes or No.

10. Have any candidates been interviewed via the Disability Confident Scheme? Please answer Yes or No.

We kindly request that you provide this information in the form of the documents you use to shortlist candidates. In the event that these documents are not available, please provide the answers to each question as a text response.

If your Specialised Unit of Application covers multiple regions, foundation schools, or universities, and the person specifications, selection criteria,

white space questions, or weighting differ between these locations, we kindly request separate responses for each distinct location.”

## **2. Commissioner’s Decision:**

A public authority will breach section 10 of FOIA if it fails to respond to a request within 20 working days. Based on evidence available to the Commissioner, by the date of this notice the public authority has not issued a substantive response to this request. Therefore the Commissioner finds a breach of section 10.

## **3. Steps:**

The public authority must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.

The public authority must take this step within 30 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.



#### **4. Right of Appeal:**

Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from:

First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)  
General Regulatory Chamber  
PO Box 11230  
Leicester  
LE1 8FQ

Tel: 0203 936 8963

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: [grc@justice.gov.uk](mailto:grc@justice.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Information Commissioner  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF**