

Rotations and Placements Policy 2021

Background

Health Education England West Midlands is the second largest Region in England and currently has around 172 trainees in Obstetrics and Gynaecology holding an approved National Training Number (ST1-7). Details of LEPs (Trusts) within the West Midlands and numbers and types of trainees at each level can be found on the website and additional information in the trainees' rotations booklet.

<https://www.westmidlandsdeanery.nhs.uk/postgraduate-schools/obstetrics-gynaecology/hospitals-posts-and-college-tutors>

In previous years trainees who are appointed into the Training Programme could expect to rotate to any of the LEP's throughout the region depending on their educational needs and the needs of the School to fill training posts. As part of Junior Doctor's New Deal, and issues regarding rotations the English Deans have asked us to look at rotations and redesign them to allow posts longer than one year in the one Trust and reconfigure it to minimise travel between Trusts. In 2018 we circulated a document outlining how the West Midlands will reconfigure into 3 hubs, Northern, Central and South West and Central and East. After discussion with the newly appointed Training Programme Directors and feedback from several trainees we felt it wouldn't be possible to rigidly implement the hub change in 2018 but would be working towards it. Normally ST1-3 will be within hub (which is based on the hospital they were appointed to at ST1), other years ST4-7 can currently move between hubs. Having re-surveyed the trainees in 2020, the majority voted in favour of maintaining the 3-hub system.

Northern Hub

Trust	ST1/2	ST3	ST4-7
UHNM	3	6	7
Telford	3	0	6
Burton	0	0	4
Wolverhampton	3	0	7
Walsall	2	0	5
Total	11	6	29

Central South West

Trust	ST1/2	ST3	ST4-7
BWH	4	8	10
City/Sandwell	4	5	5
Russells Hall	2	0	4
Worcester/Redditch	3	0	10
Hereford	1	0	1
Total	14	13	30

Central and East

Trust	ST1/2	ST3	ST4-7
UHCW	4	5	5
Heartlands	4	5	5
Good Hope	3	0	6
George Eliot	3	0	3
Warwick	0	0	2
Total	14	10	21

Trainees applying for a placement this year should be mindful of which hub that hospital belongs as the placement this year may influence your placement in 2022 depending on your year of training.

Purpose of this Placements Policy is to ensure

- Each trainee's educational training needs are met
- **Exceptional** personal requirements of each trainee are considered – with confidential supporting information provided
- Local Educational Providers (LEPs) are supported equally.

Changes from Previous Years

1. Heartlands and Good Hope

These two hospitals are under one managerial Trust (University Hospitals Birmingham) and integration of services are ongoing. Currently all elective gynaecology is on the Good Hope site with Gynaecology assessment Units on both. Emergency gynaecological patients requiring surgery move to the Good Hope site where stable. High risk Obstetrics and elective Caesarean sections take place on the Heartlands site. This means that there will be cross-site training for trainees placed at either Good Hope or Heartlands. However, trainees at ST1 will be more based at Good Hope with trainees at ST2/ST3 more at Heartlands to comply with RCOG recommendations that ST2 and ST3 is in the same hospital and ST3s supported within a 2-tier rota. ST3 trainees would be out of hours on call at Heartlands site so that they are supported with a more senior trainee on site.

Burton/Derby

Burton hospital is now managed by Derby (which sits within East Midlands Deanery). At present trainees from West Midlands work solely in Burton but it is probable that future integration will mean some cross site working. Burton trainees holding a West Midlands NTN will subsequently rotate only within West Midlands hospitals and will not of course move to East Midlands Deanery. Negotiations are ongoing between East and West Midlands and it is likely that in future years Burton will be staffed exclusively by East Midlands trainees.

2. The West Midlands agreed to (where possible) place ST2s and ST3s within the same LEP, the rationale being that the transition between these grades will be smoother. The 2-tier hospitals are listed below.

Birmingham Women's & Children's Hospital

City/Sandwell

Birmingham Heartlands

University Hospital of Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW)

University Hospital North Midlands (UHNM)

For historical reasons, there are not enough ST2 posts at UHNM to feed into the ST3 posts. Therefore, for doctors wishing ST3 at UHNM, the ST2 year will either be UHNM, Wolverhampton or Telford.

As in previous years, trainees at ST3 will normally be placed in a 2-tier Trust which at West Midlands we have always had in place to enhance patient safety.

3. **Maternity Leave:** At the point of taking maternity leave a Trust is responsible for a maternity leave package for that trainee. Where possible a trainee should return to this Trust at the end of their maternity leave. Anyone returning from maternity leave should therefore select on the relevant form the Trust that they left and make this hospital their 1st preference, indicating that they are returning from maternity leave. There may be exceptional circumstances whereby that hospital is not appropriate to your training e.g., your selected ATSM is not delivered there, in which case you should highlight this on the form and the panel will consider your placement.

Process

Once a year, trainees must complete the relevant Placement Form dependent on their level of training. **One form** should be completed per trainee and you should ensure you fill in the correct form.

ALL trainees holding a West Midlands training number (NTN) need to complete a placement form. This includes trainees who will be taking OOP leave or on maternity/sick leave at any time between 5th August 2020 and 4th August 2021.

The table below details the two different forms

Placement Form 1 (August 2021)	Placement Form 2 (ATSM 2021)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Trainees in years 1 to 4➤ Trainees who will remain in year 5 for the entire year. If during the training year you will move to ST6 you must complete form 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Trainees in years 6, 7 and POG➤ Trainees who will move to ST6 during the training year (this is to accommodate ATSM requirement)

Forms should be returned electronically to the School dedicated email box: rotations.wm@hee.nhs.uk by the closing date detailed on the form. **Requests to any other email address will not be considered.**

Forms received after the closing date will only be considered once all other trainees who have complied with the deadlines have been placed. This will obviously reduce your likelihood of being placed at the LEP (Trust) of your choice. In the event of no form arriving, the School Placements Panel will make a placement on your behalf. Trainees should ensure they record 3 different LEP choices on the placements form.

Placement Process

The placements panel meets once a year, normally in March (because of the national timeline required by HEE). Prior to this meeting the applications submitted by trainees will have been processed to allow the placements panel to place trainees as per the policy.

Constitution of Placements Panel

Normally the Placements Panel will consist of: -

- Head of School
- Hub Training Programme Directors
- Chair, Recruitment
- Chair ARCP Panel
- ATSM Lead
- LTFT and Placements Lead
- Regional Ultrasound Lead
- Trainee Representation
- HEE WM Programme Lead
- Executive Support to the Head of School

A minimum of 4 panel members will be required to make the panel quorate. In the unlikely event the placements panel is not quorate it will be reconvened on another date.

The College Tutors are not included on the placements panel as there is a clear process which will be followed to ensure all Trusts are equally considered.

Process for Placements Day

1. Establishing the Grid for 2021-2022

- The HEE WM O&G Programme Lead will supply an up-to-date record of training posts for the year August 2021 to August 2022. The 2021 grid will then be created.
- The HEE WM O&G Programme Lead will confirm a list of all trainees on the programme as at August 2021 from the HEE database. This is to identify any trainees who have failed to submit a placements form.
- HEE West Midlands O&G Programme Lead will provide a list of trainees returning at any stage after July 2021. This includes trainees returning from out of programme, trainees returning from maternity leave and trainees returning from long term sickness.
- Academic placements will be entered as these posts do not rotate. The Panel will confirm the training year for academic lecturers and academic ACFs to ensure they are placed on the right level on the grid.
- Advanced Laparoscopic ATSM (if one or more in post) is placed in the relevant slot.
- The panel need to determine (from HEE numbers and LTFT working arrangements) how many gaps in the grid are predicted once all trainees are placed. This number of slots will be blocked out on the grid across all LEPs. The reason for this is to ensure there is an equal spread of gaps across the whole Region.

2. Placements

a. Exceptional Circumstances

If a trainee believes they have an exceptional circumstance that might affect their placement across the West Midlands, this should be declared on the application form. The panel do take into consideration exceptional circumstances, but these circumstances do need to be exceptional e.g., caring for children with special needs and on-going local hospital treatments. The School would require evidence to support the exceptional circumstance.

b. Trainees on ARCP outcome 3

The Chair of the ARCP Panel will provide details of doctors currently on an ARCP 3 (targeted training). If it is expected they will still need targeted training after August 2021, they will be placed as a priority at this stage. If it is anticipated that they are on track for a successful outcome they will be placed according to their year of training as all other trainees.

c. ST1

The Chair of Recruitment will confirm how many ST1/ACFs will be commencing in August 2021 and at what LEP they will be placed. These posts are then reserved on the grid.

d. ST2

The panel will determine the number of ST2 trainees to be placed. Where the number of applicants exceeds the number of posts available at our 2-tier hospitals, a randomisation process will take place to determine which trainees will be placed at one of the non-2-tier hospitals for their ST2 training, the only exception being the Hereford ST1 who will automatically be placed in one of the 2-tier placements.

Trainees randomised to the two-tier hospital will be placed according to the process used in previous years.

If your 1st choice post is available and there is no other competition you will be placed in this post. Where there is competition for the post, exceptional circumstances will be considered and given priority. A number of trainees will not achieve their first choice. The 2nd choice preferences are then considered and the above process repeated until all ST2s are placed. It is advisable that when considering 1st, 2nd, 3rd choices, to be realistic about which posts will be available once 1st choice has been filled. On placements day it might not always be possible to place all ST2 trainees in ST2 posts. The reason for this is that we over-recruit ST1 doctors in anticipation of an attrition rate which varies from year to year. The attrition usually happens after the March placements meeting but before August and so a few trainees may not have their final placement confirmed until closer to the time. These trainees will be placed in a

suitable placement once gaps are identified. Should no ST2 gaps become available, you will still be guaranteed a placement in August. The funding for the post will be managed by HEE WM.

Trainees randomised to a non-2-tier hospital for ST2 will be placed in available gaps at appropriate LEPs and Hub to support their choice of ST3 placement.

e. ST3

Trainees entering year 3 will be placed in a hospital with a 2-tier structure as per the policy of ST2&3s normally being in the same hospital or moved to the appropriate 2 tier hospital within their hub if in a non 2-tier hospital at ST2 level.

f. ATSMs – Year 6/7

The Educational purpose of ST6/7 is to obtain their ATSMs and experience in supervising more junior trainees. The School Board have this year decided that it is important to have senior trainees in a two-tier hospital to enhance training and safety and placement choice may have to be reviewed to ensure both delivery of ATSM and 2-tier experience. Trainees below ST5 should not be on the second tier.

An updated list of ATSM's available in each of our hospitals can be found on the West Midlands Deanery website West Midlands Deanery Homepage:

<https://www.westmidlandsdeanery.nhs.uk/postgraduate-schools/obstetrics-gynaecology/training-in-the-west-midlands/atms>

The Panel will consider the applications made on Form 2. The following principles will apply:

- Trainees commencing in year 7 will take priority over those in year 6 as they have least time remaining to complete their requirements.
- Trainees commencing year 7 in August 2021 will take priority over those entering year 7 later in the year.
- Difficult to deliver ATSMs will be placed before those ATSM's delivered in the majority of units. e.g., Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology
- In the event of competition for a post, priority will also be given to trainees who still need to complete their two mandatory ATSMs.
- Year 7 trainee's 1st choice of ATSMs will be considered. Where there is no competition for an ATSM that trainee will be allocated that post. Where more than one trainee has requested the same ATSM and hospital – the trainee allocated to the post will depend on whether or not they have already completed two ATSMs, any special circumstances and if remains equal - random selection will be applied.
- An ATSM in progress is not a guarantee that a placement will continue in that unit after rotation even if there is local college tutor/ES support for this
- If it is anticipated that ATSMs in progress will NOT be completed by rotation and additional time will be required this should be made clear on the application form as it will assist placements. However, this is also not a guarantee that a placement will continue in the same unit.

The finalisation of placements will follow the same principles as described for ST2. The ST7 doctors are all allocated before considering ST6.

g. Trainees selected for Intermediate Scan Modules 3, 4 and 5

The Regional Ultrasound Lead will provide a list of trainees approved for training in the Intermediate Scan Modules. Trainees completing placement forms should ensure that each of their preferences can deliver the Intermediate Scan Module in which they have received approval. An updated list of Intermediate Scan Modules including locations will be circulated. An application does not guarantee a placement and where oversubscription of intermediate scanning occurs, senior trainees will have preference. However, if a trainee in

ST6/7 has requested intermediate scanning that does not form part of their ATSM requirement, their intermediate scanning will only be allocated if there is a availability of opportunities after the ST3-5 have been considered. **If intermediate scan modules are in progress and it is anticipated that they will not complete within the year and additional time will be required this needs to be highlighted on the placement form and intermediate scan application form so that an appropriate placement can be made to complete training.** This however does not mean that the placement will necessarily continue in the same unit. Trainees should make it clear if they wish to prioritise the hospital choice over scan training (which may be available in a hospital not in their choices) or whether they would rather be placed in a hospital of their choice and not undertake scan training if it is no longer available there in the **OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS** section of the placement form 1.

h. **Year 5 Trainees**

If your 1st choice post is available and there is no other competition you will be placed in this post. Where there is competition for the post, exceptional circumstances will be considered and given priority. A number of trainees will not achieve their first choice. The 2nd choice preferences are then considered and the above process repeated until all ST5s are placed. It is advisable that when considering first, second and third choices, to be realistic about which posts will be available once first choice has been filled.

i. **Year 4 Trainees**

Trainees in this year will be placed following the process as described for ST5

j. **POGs (Period of Grace)**

Trainees in this year will be placed following the process as described for ST4.

3. **General principles**

- Priority will be given to trainees with **exceptional circumstances** – e.g., own health problems under care of clinicians at specific hospitals, caring for children with major needs. This policy adheres to the HEE WM guidance on disability. Confidential information must be provided.
- LTFT trainees are treated the same as their Year peer group. **LTFT trainees will not be advantaged or disadvantaged over full-time trainees with regards to placements.**
- Allocations made by the Placements Panel will be final unless there are exceptional circumstances. No changes to August Placements will be permitted within 12 weeks of the start date without permission from the Post-graduate Dean as directed by Health Education England.
- Rarely, in exceptional circumstances, the Head of School (with permission from Postgraduate Dean) may move a trainee before or after the Annual August rotation. The panel/rotations lead are not permitted to do this without this process.
- Trainees and RCOG College Tutors should **refrain from lobbying** the Rotations and Placements Committee about specific trainees' placements and familiarize themselves with this Policy.

Ellen Knox
Chair, Rotations and Placements Panel

Richard Cartmill
Head of School, O&G

Jay Ghosh
On behalf of the West Midlands Trainees Committee

Jane Panikkar
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November 2020