

Foundation Training Year Scotland
Outcome Report 2023



Executive Summary

In 2023 NHS Education for Scotland coordinated a national scheme for recruitment to foundation pharmacist training programmes in Scotland for Training Year 2024-25.

There were 557 training places available across all Training Providers, continuing the trend of number of places being higher than number of applicants.

A total of 548 applicants applied on Oriel, 484 of whom attended the assessments. At the end of the process, 62% (n=298) of successful applicants had received an offer through Oriel and 220 of these final offers were accepted by applicants. In Scotland the number of offers is capped by the number of Scottish Government posts available for that training year.

The 2023 recruitment process had a fill rate of 100% where all 220 NES funded posts were filled. Out of all places offered 39.5% were filled and 40.1% of all applicants were matched.

Overview

Since 2006, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) has facilitated the organisation, administration, quality management and funding of foundation training year (FTY) placements across all sectors of pharmacy practice. During this time the numbers of FTY trainee pharmacists have increased and all recruited into the FTY programme will receive the same basic salary, some stipulated core terms and conditions and follow the NES FTY curriculum.

This report provides information on applicants, applications and outcomes of the 2023 NES National Foundation Training Year Recruitment in Scotland.

Independent analysis undertaken by the Work Psychology Group examines fairness issues surrounding use of the SJT and Numeracy test and reports on any group differences in performance.

If you would like further information on the process of foundation pharmacy recruitment, please refer to the pharmacy recruitment web pages:

<https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/recruitment-and-careers/pharmacy-recruitment-foundation-training-year-fty-formerly-prps/>

Programme availability

1. Employing organisations, programmes, and training places

1.1. The 2023 foundation training year recruitment scheme listed 121 training providers for applicants to choose from, a 7.1% increase from the 2022 recruitment cycle. In total, 557 training places were available across all training providers, which was slightly higher than the anticipated number of scheme applicants.

1.2. 82.6% (n=100) of training providers were community pharmacies, representing the majority of all available training places. 9.1% (n=11) of training providers were within the NHS hospital, sector. 4.1% (n=5) of the training providers were offering modular programmes, 1.7% (n=2) of training providers were offering split programmes and 2.5% (n=3) of training providers nominated their posts as located in remote and rural areas using the Scottish Government urban rural classification categories 4-6 (which allows matching at post level).

1.3. There was a slight increase in the number of places across modular, hospital, split and remote & rural training providers and a slight decrease in places offered by community training providers, compared with the previous year (Figure 1)

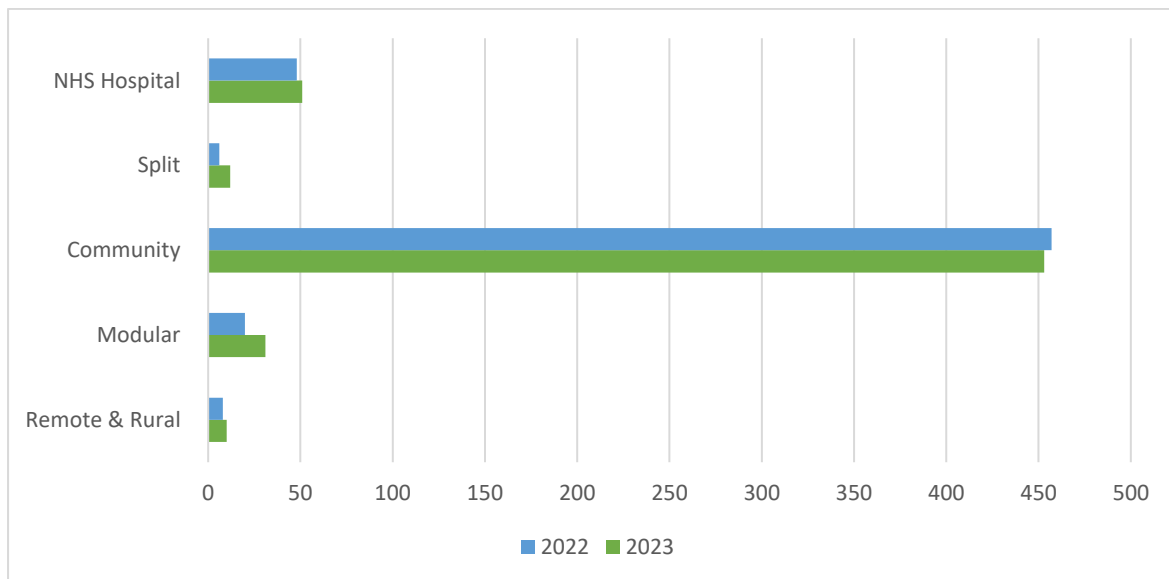


Figure 1 Year on year comparison of foundation training places across different types of training providers

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1.4. Tables 1 and 2 below provide an overview of the numbers of training providers, training places and sponsorship available in the 2023 scheme, broken down by sector and geography.

Table 1 Training providers, training places and sponsorship availability in the 2023 Foundation Pharmacist Scheme

Training Provider type	Number of Training Providers	Number of Training Places	Number of Training Providers offering Tier 2 Sponsored posts	Number of Tier 2 Sponsored places available
NHS Hospital	11	51	4	4
Split Programmes	2	12	0	0
Community Pharmacy	100	453	10	94
Modular	5	31	0	0
Remote & Rural	3	10	1	8
TOTALS	121	557	15	106

Table 2 Geographical spread of training providers (and training places) by sector

Scotland Pharmacy Region	NHS Hospital	Split Programmes	Community Pharmacy	Modular	Remote & Rural	Total
North	3 (9)	0	19 (48)	3 (14)	3 (10)	28 (81)
East	3 (15)	1 (4)	18 (38)	1 (2)	0	23 (59)
West	5 (27)	1 (8)	42 (86)	1 (15)	0	49 (136)
National	0	0	21 (281)	0	0	21(281)
TOTALS	11 (51)	2 (12)	100 (453)	5 (31)	3 (10)	121 (557)

2. Training Provider Preferencing

2.1 In 2023 training providers had two options with regard to preference list submission:

Option A: Submit a Training Provider preference list of candidates that they would be willing to employ and work with over the training period.

Option B: Do not submit a Training Provider preference list of candidates.

2.2 59.5% (n=72) training providers decided to submit preference lists and 40.5% (n=49) opted to be matched with any appointable candidates and not submit a preference list.

Table 3a TP preference list submission comparing to previous year

TPs preference list	2023	2022
Submitted preference list	72	57
NOT submitted preference	49	56

2.3 66.6% (n=46) of all matched training providers were ones who decided to submit a preference list.

2.4 Training providers who decided to submit a preference list managed to fill 37% (n=82) out of all matched posts. This is lower than training providers who decided not to submit a preference list.

Table 3b TPs who matched and their preference list submission comparing to previous year

Training Provider Preference list breakdown	2023	2022
Matched TPs with preference lists	46	33
Matched TPs without a preference list	23	28

3. Skilled Worker Visa Sponsorship

3.1. Skilled Worker Visa sponsored training place availability increased across more than one sector in 2023. There was an overall increase to 106 sponsored places, 13% (n=12) more sponsored places in total than were available to applicants' requiring visas in 2022 (n=94).

4. Multi-sector placements

4.1 Modular programmes consist of three training blocks where trainees are placed within community, hospital and specific sector settings during their one-year placement. Split programmes are programmes where a majority of training is split between hospital and primary care (both with the same NHS Board).

4.2 In 2023 we had 5 Modular TPs and 2 TPs with split programmes offering 43 posts in total across the North, East and West of Scotland with the majority of the posts in the West region.

4.3 Only 1 post overall was left unfilled out of 43.

Applicant outcomes

5. Applications

5.1. The number of applications received via the Oriel system was 548 (not including incomplete applications), compared to 542 received in 2022, 448 received in 2021 and 350 received in 2020.

5.2 20.4% (n=112) of applicants were either currently enrolled on an accredited Overseas Pharmacists' Assessment Programme (OSPAP) or were OSPAP graduates.

6. Longlisting

6.1 All applicants who applied via Oriel progressed successfully through the formal longlisting process.

6.2 Three applicants subsequently withdrew their application, leaving 545 applicants invited to assessment: a 0.55% increase from the previous year and a 22.5% increase from recruitment year 2021.

7. Assessment

7.1 484 applicants attended their assessment. Of these 97% (n=468) were successful and subsequently received an overall ranking based on their test scores.

8. Applications and programme

8.1 For the purposes of this section, we have removed applicants who did not consent for their personal data to be used for research purposes, therefore, refer to the following

Application – the number of applications successfully longlisted (n=493)

Offer – applicants who received a post offer on Oriol (n=266) irrespective of whether this offer was accepted by the applicant

8.2 Table 4 provides breakdown of applicant gender, along with data pertaining successful applicants and programme offers received by these groups.

Table 4 Applications and post offers by gender

Group	Percentage of applications	Percentage of successful applicants	Percentage of offers made	Percentage of offers accepted
Male	25.2%	24.4%	19.9%	18.0%
Female	72.2%	73.5%	78.9%	80.9%
Non-Binary	0.4%	0.2%	0%	0%
Not disclosed	2.2%	1.9%	1.1%	1.0%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

8.3 Table 5 below provides a breakdown of applications received, along with data pertaining to the percentage of successful applicants and programme offers received, for each of the age categories.

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Table 5 Applications and post offers by age group*

Group	Percentage of applications	Percentage of successful applicants	Percentage of offers made	Percentage of offers accepted
19-24 years	65.9%	68.6%	79.5%	82.7%
25-29 years	17.3%	16.5%	11.1%	9.5%
30-34 years	6.2%	5.3%	2.0%	1.4%
35-39 years	6.0%	5.8%	4.7%	3.6%
40-44 years	1.8%	1.9%	1.3%	1.4%
45-49 years	0.5%	0.6%	0.3%	0.5%
50-54 years	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
55-64 years	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Not disclosed	2.0%	1.3%	1.0%	0.9%
Totals	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Age at 01 July 2023*

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8.4 56.9% (n=281) of applications were received from applicants of ‘Black, Asian and minority ethnic’ (BAME) origin and 37.9% (n=187) were received from applicants of ‘White’ origin. 5.0% of applicants (n=25) chose not to declare their ethnic origin.

Table 6 Applications and post offers by ethnic group

Group	Percentage of Applications		Percentage of Successful Applicants		Percentage of Offers Made		Percentage of Offers Accepted	
White – British	27.6% (136)	37.9% (187)	29.9% (126)	40.8% (172)	44.4% (118)	56.8% (151)	57.2% (111)	67.5% (131)
White - Irish	3.9% (19)		4.3% (18)		6% (16)		4.1% (8)	
Any other white background	6.5% (32)		6.6% (28)		6.4% (17)		6.2% (12)	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	0	3.8% (19)	0	3.8% (16)	0	3.8% (10)	0	3.6% (7)
Mixed White and Black African	0.6% (3)		0.5% (2)		0.4% (1)		0	
Mixed White and Asian	2.4% (12)		2.4% (10)		2.3% (6)		2.1% (4)	
Any other mixed background	0.8% (4)		0.9% (4)		1.1% (3)		1.5% (3)	
Asian or Asian British Indian	12% (59)	27.6% (136)	10.9% (46)	24.9% (105)	4.5% (12)	16.2% (43)	3.6% (7)	14% (27)
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	7.9% (39)		7.6% (32)		7.1% (19)		8.2% (16)	
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1.2% (6)		0.5% (2)		0.8% (2)		1% (2)	
Any other Asian background	6.5% (32)		5.9% (25)		3.8% (10)		1% (2)	

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Black or Black British Caribbean	0		0		0		0	
Black or Black British African	13% (64)	13.2% (65)	12.3% (52)	12.5% (53)	10.5% (28)	10.5% (28)	7.7% (15)	7.7% (15)
Any other black background	0.2% (1)		0.2% (1)		0		0	
Chinese	7.7% (38)		8.8% (37)		4.9% (13)		1% (2)	
Any other ethnic group	4.7% (23)		4.3% (18)		4.5% (12)		4.1% (8)	
Not disclosed	5% (25)		5% (21)		3.4% (9)		2.1% (4)	
Totals	100% (493)		100% (422)		100% (266)		100% (194)	

9. Group Differences at a Test Level for SJT & Numeracy

9.1. Independent analysis undertaken by the Work Psychology Group examined fairness issues surrounding use of the SJT and Numeracy test. Group differences in performance between applicants were analysed on the basis of age, gender and ethnicity. Analyses were conducted after outliers (applicants with very low/high scores and/or missing data) had been removed (n=6).

9.2 Age

9.2.1. Pearson's correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between age and scores on the SJT and Numeracy Test

9.2.2. SJT: A small significant negative correlation (Pearson's r) between age and SJT score was found ($r=-.43$, $p<.001$). This suggests that younger applicants typically performed slightly better than older applicants on the SJT.

9.2.3. Numeracy: A small significant negative correlation (Pearson's r) between age and Numeracy score was found ($r=-.31$ $p<.001$). This suggests that younger applicants typically performed slightly better than older applicants on the Numeracy Test.

9.3 Gender

9.3.1 Independent t-tests were conducted to examine whether there were significant differences in SJT and Numeracy Test scores based on gender. The descriptive statistics can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7 Gender – Descriptive Statistics by Selection Method

		Female	Male
SJT	N	316	106
	Mean	579.53	564.09
	Std. Deviation	37.88	43.35
Numeracy	N	316	106
	Mean	8.28	8.12
	Std. Deviation	1.74	1.86

9.3.2 SJT: A significant difference in performance on the SJT based on gender was found with a small effect size, indicating that females scored significantly higher than males ($t(420)=3.499, p<.001, d=0.39$).

9.3.3 Numeracy Test: No significant differences in performance were found on the Numeracy test based on gender ($t(420)=.801, p=ns$).

9.4 Ethnicity

9.4.1 Ethnicity options provided to applicants when collecting data included: ‘White’, ‘Asian’, ‘Black’, ‘Chinese’, ‘Mixed’ and ‘Other’. Applicants were also given the response option ‘Prefer not to say’, however these individuals were not included in the analysis. Due to small sample sizes in some ethnicity sub-groups, to reach an appropriate sample size for analysis ‘Asian’, ‘Black’, ‘Chinese’, ‘Mixed’ and ‘Other’ were combined into a “BME” category. Therefore, independent t-tests were conducted to investigate whether there were significant differences on the SJT and Numeracy Test scores dependent on ethnicity, comparing White and BME applicants. Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Ethnicity – Descriptive Statistics by Selection Method

		White	BME
SJT	N	173	237
	Mean	595.91	561.70
	Std. Deviation	28.37	40.80
Numeracy	N	173	237
	Mean	8.77	7.85
	Std. Deviation	1.52	1.83

9.4.2 SJT: Significant differences in performance between White and BME applicants were found on the SJT with a large effect size6 illustrating that applicants who indicated that they were ‘White’ performed significantly better than BME applicants ($t(407.10)=10.01, p<.001, d=0.95$)

9.4.3 Numeracy Test: Significant differences in performance between White and BME applicants were found on the Numeracy Test with a moderate effect size, illustrating that

applicants who indicated that they were 'White' performed significantly better than BME applicants ($t(401.16)=5.54$ $p<.001$, $d=0.54$).

9.5 Summary

Small significant correlations were found in both the SJT and Numeracy test for age, younger applicants scored higher on average than older applicants.

Test scores on the SJT for gender with a small effect size, females scored higher on average than males.

Regarding ethnicity, significant differences were found in both the SJT and Numeracy test, White applicants scored higher on average than BME applicants. The effect size of these differences ranged from small to large.

10. Differences in Performance Based on Date

10.1 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were conducted to investigate whether performance differs on the SJT and Numeracy Test based on when applicants complete the Numeracy Test and SJT. This was operationalised as whether the assessments were completed at the beginning (21st September – 30th September), middle (1st October – 3rd October) or end (4th – 10th October) of the testing period. The majority of applicants completed the assessment in time period one, specifically, $n=209$ (43.18%) applicants completed the assessment in time period one, $n=130$ (26.86%) in time period two, and $n=145$ (29.96%) in time period three. Analyses were conducted after outliers (applicants ($n=6$) with very low scores and / or missing data) had been removed. Descriptive statistics are outlined in Table 9.

10.2 SJT: No significant difference in performance on the SJT was found based on the time point within the testing period it was completed ($F(2,475)=1.06$, $p=ns$).

10.3 Numeracy Test: No significant difference in performance on the Numeracy Test was found based on the time point within the testing period it was completed ($F(2,475)=0.41$, $p=ns$).

Table 9 Date of assessment - Descriptive Statistics by Selection Method

Test	Descriptive	Time Period One	Time Period Two	Time Period Three
SJT	N	206	128	144
	Mean	579.26	575.45	573.21
	Standard Deviation	35.88	44.37	39.25
	Minimum	444.00	428.00	463.00
	Maximum	656.00	652.00	643.00
Numeracy	N	206	128	144
	Mean	8.29	8.15	8.13
	Standard Deviation	1.78	1.83	1.87
	Minimum	1	3	3
	Maximum	10	10	10

11. Applicants with Tier 4/Student Visas

11.1 International students in the main, require a Tier 4/Student visa to undertake their academic study in the UK. 20.9% (n=103) of successfully longlisted applications were received from those who indicated that they were on a Tier 4/student visa. These applicants would generally enter their FTY either by applying for a Skilled Worker (formerly Tier 2) Visa (requiring employers to be registered as sponsors) or obtaining a training place via the Graduate Visa route of entry.

11.2 Following the assessment, 81.5% (n=84) of applications with Tier 4 visas were deemed successful, amounting to 18% of all successful applicants. However, only 74% (n=76) of these 84 applicants submitted a preference list and therefore continued to offer stage.

11.3 Looking at those Tier 4 applicants who were eligible for offers (n=76), 39.5% were made an offer (n=30) and 10.5% (n=8) were matched to a training post in Scotland.

Of the 60.5% of Tier 4 applicants who were not made an offer, 96% (n=44) of these were applicants who accepted another offer (i.e matched to a post in England/Wales)

11.4 Comparing with 2022 recruitment, where we had 96 Tier 4 applicants who continued to offer stage, 78% were made an offer (n=75) and 30% were matched to a training post in Scotland(n=29)

For training places there has been an increase of 13% in places that offered Tier 2 sponsorship. The recent introduction of the Graduate Visa route is affording a variety of training environments for applicants to select from. Any applicant wishing to utilise the Graduate Visa route of entry could select any training place, as this route does not require employers to be registered as sponsors for overseas trainees.

12. Final offers

12.1 At the end of the process, 63.7% of successful applicants (n=298) had received a post offer. Of these, 67 offers were declined, 11 offers expired. Overall, 73.9% (n=220) of final post offers were accepted by applicants.

12.2 5.3% (n=25) of successful applicants were left without a foundation programme offer at the end of the process, which was nineteen more than the previous year.

Candidates may not be made an offer for the following reasons:

- A candidate has not been successful in meeting the score threshold to secure one of the NES-funded places. Being eligible to receive an offer via Oriel does not guarantee that a candidate will receive an offer.
- The number of candidates who are taking part in the recruitment process is higher than the number of places offered.
- A candidate may not match to a Training Provider if the Training Provider chose to submit a preference list and the candidate's name does not appear on this list.
- A candidate has been unable to make a successful match due to limited spaces with Training Providers. We have always strongly recommended that candidates do not limit their preferences. Some Training Providers are extremely popular with all candidates and have a very small number of places available and because of this, these Training Providers can become unavailable very early on in the matching process.

Recruitment outcomes

13. Fill rates

13.1 At the end of the recruitment process, 100% of available NHS Hospital training places were filled and 28.3% of community pharmacy training places.

13.2 The fill-rate of NES funded training places was 100% as we filled all 220 funded posts which make up for 39.5% of all places offered by Training Providers.

13.3 Tables 10-12 below provide a breakdown of training providers matched by employer type and geographical area compared to last year's recruitment.

Table 10 Training provider fill rates

Training Providers	2023	2022
Number of TPs taking part	121	113
Matched TPs	69	60
Not Matched	52	53
TPs who matched and have posts left	33	30
TPs who matched and filled all posts	36	30

Table 11 Training providers matched breakdown by employer type

Employer type – Matched TPs	2023	2022
NHS Hospital including split	13	12
Community pharmacy	52	44
Modular	4	3
Remote & Rural	0	1
Totals	69	60

Table 12 Training providers matched breakdown by geographical area

Geographical area – Matched TPs	2023	2022
North	15	12
West	31	28
East	11	7
National	12	14
Totals	69	61

13.4 Tables 13 and 14 below provide a breakdown of candidates matched by employer type and geographical area compared to last year’s recruitment.

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Table 13 Candidates matched breakdown by employer type

Employer type – Matched candidates	2023	2022
NHS Hospital including split	63	54
Community pharmacy	127	155
Modular	30	19
Remote & Rural	0	1
Totals	220	229

Table 14 Candidates matched breakdown by geographical area

Geographical area – Matched candidates	2023	2022
North	40	34
West	81	68
East	29	22
National	70	105
Totals	220	229

END OF THE REPORT