

# Foundation Training Year Scotland

## National Recruitment Outcomes Report 2026 – 27 Training Year



# Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Overview.....	3
Programme availability.....	4
1. Employing organisations, programmes, and training places.....	4
2. Training Provider Preferencing.....	6
3. Skilled Worker visa sponsorship.....	7
4. Multi-sector placements.....	7
Applicant outcomes.....	7
5. Applications.....	7
6. Longlisting.....	7
7. Assessment.....	8
8. Applications and programme.....	8
9. Group Differences at a Test Level for SJT & Numeracy.....	11
9.2 Age.....	11
9.3 Gender.....	11
9.4 Ethnicity.....	12
Summary.....	13
10. Differences in Performance Based on Date.....	13
11. Applicants with Student Visas.....	14
12. Final offers.....	15
Recruitment outcomes.....	16
13. Fill rates.....	16

# Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

## Executive Summary

In 2025 NHS Education for Scotland coordinated a national scheme for recruitment to foundation pharmacist training programmes in Scotland for the 2026-27 training year.

There were 566 training places available to preference across all training providers (TPs). The number of applicants was higher than the total number of places offered which changed the trend from previous years.

A total of 683 applicants applied on Oriel, 602 of whom attended assessment. At the end of the process, 55.3% (n=333) of applicants who were successful at assessment had received an offer through Oriel and 218 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 2025 recruitment process had a fill rate of 100% where all 218 NES funded posts were filled. This does not include 2 deferrals which takes the total to 220. Out of all training provider places available, 38.5 % were filled, and 31.9 % of all applicants were matched.

## Overview

Since 2006, NHS Education for Scotland (NES) (now PSD Scotland) 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 in Scotland have increased. All candidates 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 2025 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: [Pharmacy Foundation Training Year \(FTY\) – Scotland recruitment](#)

## Programme availability

### 1. Employing organisations, programmes, and training places

1.1. The 2025 foundation training year recruitment scheme listed 147 training providers for applicants to choose from, a 2.8% increase from 2024 recruitment. In total, 566 training places were available across all training providers, which was slightly less than the number of scheme applicants.

1.2. 83.7% (n=123) of training providers were community pharmacies, representing the majority of all available training places. 6.8% (n=10) of training providers were within the NHS hospital sector, 4.1% (n=6) of the training providers were offering modular programmes, 2.7% (n=4) of training providers were offering split programmes and 2.7% (n=4) 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 decrease in the number of places across all Training Providers' programmes in 2025 compared with the previous year (Figure 1).

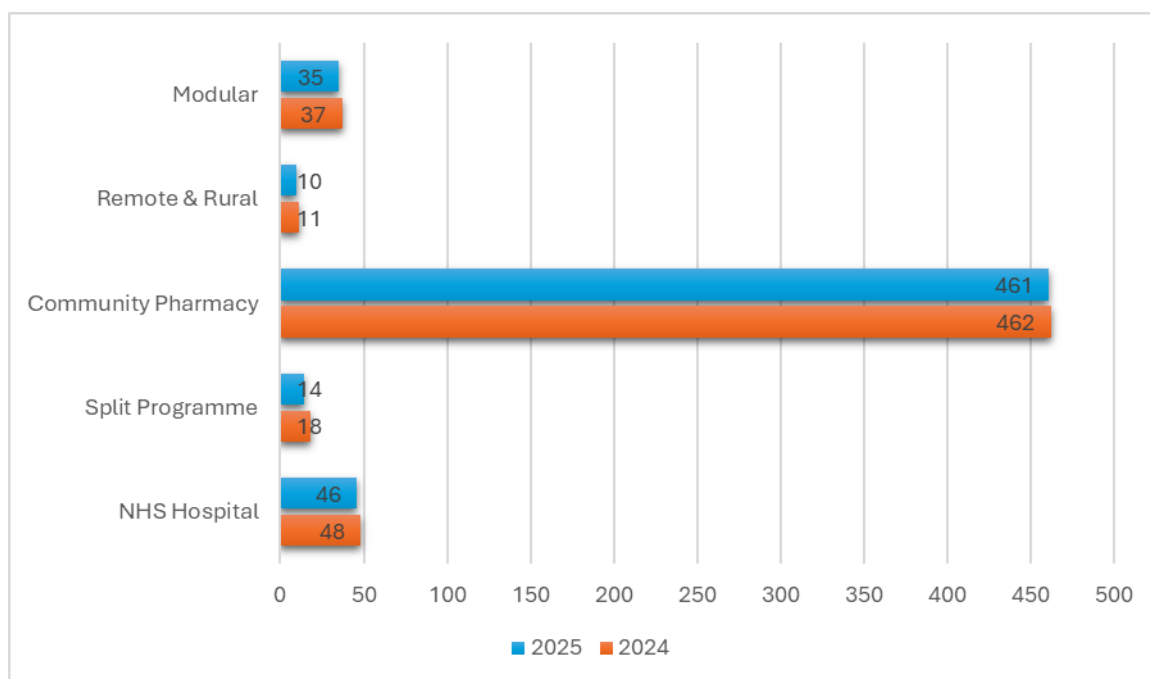


Figure 1 Year on year comparison of foundation training places across different types of training providers

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

1.4. Tables 1 and 2 below provide an overview of the numbers of training providers, training places and sponsorship available in the 2025 scheme, broken down by sector and geography.

**Table 1 Training providers, training places and sponsorship availability in the 2025 Foundation Pharmacist Scheme**

Training Provider type	Number of Training Providers	Number of Training Places	Number of Training Providers offering Skilled Worker Sponsored posts	Number of Skilled Worker Sponsored places available
NHS Hospital	10	46	3	3
Split Programmes	4	14	0	0
Community Pharmacy	123	461	16	75
Modular	6	35	0	0
Remote & Rural	4	10	1	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>82</b>

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

Scotland Pharmacy Region	NHS Hospital	Split Programmes	Community Pharmacy	Modular	Remote & Rural
North	2 (6)	0	24 (57)	3 (18)	4 (10)
East	3 (13)	1 (5)	18 (36)	1 (3)	0
West	5 (27)	3 (9)	58 (109)	2 (14)	0

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

National	0	0	23 (259)	0	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>10(46)</b>	<b>4 (14)</b>	<b>123 (461)</b>	<b>6 (35)</b>	<b>4 (10)</b>

### 2. Training Provider Preferencing

2.1 In 2025 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 55.1% (n=81) of training providers decided to submit preference lists and 44.9% (n=66) 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	2025	2024
Submitted preference list	81	83
No preference list submitted	66	60

2.3 53.9% (n=41) of all matched training providers were ones who decided to submit a preference list.

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

Training Provider Preference list breakdown	2025	2024
Matched TPs with preference lists	41	49

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

Matched TPs without a preference list	35	31
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### 3. Skilled Worker visa sponsorship

3.1 Skilled Worker visa sponsored training place availability increased across more than one sector in 2025. There was an overall increase to 82 sponsored places, 9.3% (n=7) more sponsored places in total than were available to applicants' requiring visas in 2024 (n=75).

### 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 training is split between hospital and primary care (both with the same NHS Board).

4.2 In 2025 we had 6 Modular TPs and 4 TPs with split programmes offering 49 posts in total across the North, East and West of Scotland with the majority of the posts in the West region.

4.3 Only 6 posts overall were left unfilled out of the 49 offered by training providers.

## Applicant outcomes

### 5. Applications

5.1. The number of applications received via the Oriel system was 683 (not including incomplete applications), compared to 554 in 2024, 548 received in 2023, 542 received in 2022, 448 received in 2021 and 350 received in 2020.

5.2 20.5% (n=140) of applicants were either currently enrolled on an accredited Overseas Pharmacists' Assessment Programme (OSPAP) or were OSPAP graduates.

### 6. Longlisting

6.1 10 applicants did not progress through the formal longlisting process. 7 applicants withdrew their application during longlisting. All other applications (n=666) were longlisted successfully.

6.2 14 applicants subsequently withdrew their application, leaving 652 applicants invited to assessment.

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

### 7. Assessment

7.1 602 applicants attended their assessment. Of these 100% (n=602) were successful and subsequently received an overall ranking based on their test scores. In 2024 recruitment, the assessment outcome process changed whereby those not meeting the cut off score were no longer deemed unsuccessful at assessment and removed from the process, and instead, were provided the opportunity for remedial support from their university prior to commencing training, if matched to a post. Out of 602, 21 applicants were under the cut-off score. 1 for SJT, 17 for numeracy and 3 for both.

### 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 received (n=601)

**Offer** – applicants who received a post offer on Oriol (n=295) irrespective of whether this offer was accepted by the applicant

8.2 Table 4 provides breakdown of applicant gender, along with data pertaining to 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	27.79%	27.86%	23.39%	21.43%
Female	69.88%	70.19%	75.25%	76.53%
Non-Binary	0.17%	0.22%	0.34%	0.51%
Not disclosed/Other not listed	2.16%	1.73%	1.02%	1.53%
<b>Totals</b>	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.

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

**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	67.22%	69.55%	83.05%	85.79%
25-29 years	17.30%	17.93%	10.17%	6.60%
30-34 years	6.66%	5.18%	3.05%	3.05%
35-39 years	3.49%	2.81%	1.69%	1.52%
40-44 years	2.00%	1.73%	0.68%	1.02%
45-49 years	1.16%	1.08%	0.34%	0.51%
50-54 years	0.0%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
55-64 years	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Not disclosed	2.16%	1.73%	1.02%	1.52%
<b>Totals</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%

\*Age on 01 July 2025

8.4 54.74% (n=329) of applications were received from applicants of 'Black, Asian and minority ethnic' (BAME) origin and 40.44% (n=243) were received from applicants of 'White' origin. 4.83% of applicants (n=29) 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	21.30%	40.44%	25.27%	41.04%	36.95%	51.86%	44.16%	50.25%
	(128)		(117)		(109)		% (87)	
White - Irish	16.81%	(243)	13.39%	(190)	12.88%	(153)	4.57%	(99)
	(101)		(62)		(38)		(9)	

**Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025**

Any other white background	2.33% (14)		2.38% (11)		2.03% (6)		1.52% (3)	
Mixed White and Black Caribbean	0		0		0		0	
Mixed White and Black African	1.50% (9)	3.33% (20)	1.51% (7)	3.24% (15)	1.36% (4)	3.05% (9)	1.52% (3)	3.55% (7)
Mixed White and Asian	1.66% (10)		1.51% (7)		1.36% (4)		1.52% (3)	
Any other mixed background	0.16% (1)		0.22% (1)		0.34% (1)		0.51% (1)	
Asian or Asian British Indian	8.65% (52)	29.12% (175)	8.64% (40)	30.45% (141)	4.41% (13)	26.10% (77)	4.57% (9)	29.44% (58)
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	13.14% (79)		13.82% (64)		13.9% (41)		18.78% (37)	
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	0.99% (6)		0.86% (4)		1.36% (4)		2.03% (4)	
Any other Asian background	6.32% (38)		7.13% (33)		6.44% (19)		4.06% (8)	
Black or Black British Caribbean	0.16% (1)	10.98% (66)	0.22% (1)	10.37% (48)	0	6.78% (20)	0	5.58% (11)
Black or Black British African	10.32% (62)		9.94% (46)		6.78% (20)		5.58% (11)	
Any other black background	0.49% (3)		0.22% (1)		0		0	
Chinese	3.83% (23)		3.89% (18)		3.73% (11)		2.03% (4)	
Any other ethnic group	7.49% (45)		6.26% (29)		5.42% (16)		6.09% (12)	

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

Not disclosed/Not Stated	4.83% (29)	4.75% (22)	3.05% (9)	3.05% (6)
Totals	100% (601)	100% (463)	100% (295)	100% (197)

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

9.1. To examine 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 (n=2) with very low scores and / or missing data) had been removed.

#### 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 moderate, significant negative correlation (Pearson's r) between age and SJT score was found ( $r = -.32, p < .001$ ). This suggests that younger applicants typically performed better than older applicants on the SJT.

9.2.3. Numeracy: A moderate, significant negative correlation (Pearson's r) between age and Numeracy score was found ( $r = -.32, p < .001$ ). This suggests that younger applicants typically performed 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	371	143
	Mean	587.01	576.34
	Std. Deviation	28.32	28.65
Numeracy	N	371	143
	Mean	8.74	8.71
	Std. Deviation	1.41	1.42

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

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 on average scored significantly higher than males ( $t(512)=-3.81$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $d=-.38$ ).

9.3.3 Numeracy test: No significant differences in performance were found on the Numeracy test based on gender ( $t(512)=-.21$   $p=ns$ ).

### 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	225	274
	Mean	590.82	579.16
	Std. Deviation	27.14	28.69
Numeracy	N	225	274
	Mean	9.11	8.41
	Std. Deviation	1.06	1.59

9.4.2 SJT: Significant differences in performance between White and BME applicants were found on the SJT with a small effect size illustrating that applicants who indicated that they were ‘White’ perform significantly better than BME applicants ( $t(497)=4.63$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $d=0.42$ ). This indicates an improvement in the group differences observed when compared to data analysed in 2024, in which a significant difference in performance between White and BME applicants with a large effect size was observed ( $d=0.80$ ).

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

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

applicants ( $t(477.83)=5.91, p<.001, d=0.51$ ). This is comparable to differences identified in 2024.

### Summary

Moderate 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. No significant differences in Numeracy test scores based on gender were found.

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 were small for the SJT and moderate for the Numeracy test. The effect size for the SJT reflect smaller group differences than those found in 2024, in which significant differences were found with large effect sizes.

### 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 that were completed at the beginning (18th September – 24th September 2025), middle (25th September – 29th September 2025) or end (30th September – 4th October 2025) of the testing period. Analyses were conducted after outliers (applicants ( $n=2$ ) with very low scores and / or missing data) had been removed. Descriptive statistics are outlined in Table 9.

10.2 SJT: No significant differences in performance on the SJT were found based on the time point within the testing period it was completed, ( $F(2,597)=2.87, p=ns$ ). This reflects a slight improvement when compared to the findings in 2024, in which applicants who completed the test at the beginning of the testing window performed significantly better than applicants who completed the test at the end of the testing window, with a small effect size ( $d=.02$ ).

10.3 Numeracy test: An overall significant difference in performance on the Numeracy test was found based on the time point within the testing period it was completed, although the effect size was negligible, ( $F(2,597)=3.20, p=.04, d=.01$ ). Despite the overall significant effect, the differences between the individual groups are not large enough to be

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

statistically significant, so further post-hoc tests revealed no significant differences between applicants who completed the Numeracy test at different time points. It should be noted that, due to differences in sample size between the groups, this may have an impact on the analysis and therefore, these results should be interpreted with caution. In the 2024 testing cycle, applicants who sat the test at the beginning of the testing window performed significantly better than applicants who sat the test at the end of the testing window, with a small effect size.

**Table 9 Date of assessment - Descriptive Statistics by Selection Method**

Test	Descriptive	Beginning	Middle	End
SJT	N	201	248	151
	Mean	587.60	583.11	580.42
	Standard Deviation	28.34	27.85	30.45
	Minimum	506.50	499.60	483.70
	Maximum	649.50	657.00	649.00
Numeracy	N	201	248	151
	Mean	8.83	8.81	8.49
	Standard Deviation	1.36	1.35	1.51
	Minimum	4.00	2.00	2.00
	Maximum	10.00	10.00	10.00

### 11. Applicants with Student Visas

11.1 International students in the main, require a Student visa to undertake their academic study in the UK. 11.9% (n=79) of successfully longlisted applications were received from those who indicated that they were on a Student visa. These applicants would generally enter their FTY either by applying for a Skilled Worker 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, 79.7% (n=63) of applications with Student visas were deemed successful, amounting to 10.5% of all successful applicants. However, only 88.9% (n=56) of these 63 applicants submitted a preference list and therefore continued to offer stage.

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

11.3 Looking at those Student visa applicants eligible for offers (n=56), 53.6% were made an offer (n=30) and 14.3% (n=8) were matched to a training post in Scotland. Of the 46.4% of Student visa applicants who were not made an offer, 96.2% (n=25) of these were applicants who accepted another offer (i.e matched to a post in England/Wales).

11.4 Comparing with 2024 recruitment, where we had 57 Student visa applicants who continued to offer stage, 50.8% were made an offer (n=29) and 22.8% were matched to a training post in Scotland(n=13).

For training places there has been an increase of 33.3% (n=20) that offered Skilled Worker visa 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, 55.3% of successful applicants (n=333) had received a post offer. Of these, 95 offers were declined, 20 offers expired. Overall, 65.5% (n=218) of final post offers were accepted by applicants.

12.2 6.5% (n=39) of successful applicants were left without a foundation programme offer at the end of the process, which was five 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 NES-funded 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.

12.3 25.4% (n=153) of successful applicants were no longer eligible to be made an offer following withdrawal, this includes accepting a post in the England and Wales vacancy.

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

### Recruitment outcomes

#### 13. Fill rates

13.1 At the end of the recruitment process, 100% of available NHS Hospital training places were filled and 27.3% of community pharmacy training places.

13.2 The fill-rate of NES funded training places was 100% as we filled all 218 funded posts which make up for 38.5% 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	2025	2024
Number of TPs taking part	147	143
Matched TPs	76	80
Not Matched	71	63
TPs who matched and have posts left	31	38
TPs who matched and filled all posts	45	42

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

**Table 11 Training providers matched breakdown by employer type**

Employer type – Matched TPs	2025	2024
NHS Hospital	10	10
Community pharmacy	54	58
Split	4	4
Modular	5	5
Remote & Rural	3	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>80</b>

**Table 12 Training providers matched breakdown by geographical area**

Geographical area – Matched TPs	2025	2024
North	16	17
West	35	38
East	11	12
National	14	13
<b>Totals</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>80</b>

## Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025

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.

**Table 13 Candidates matched breakdown by employer type**

Employer type – Matched candidates	2025	2024
NHS Hospital	46	48
Community pharmacy	126	119
Split	14	18
Modular	29	32
Remote & Rural	3	3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>220</b>

**Table 14 Candidates matched breakdown by geographical area**

Geographical area – Matched candidates	2025	2024
North	35	41
West	91	86

**Public Services Delivery Scotland: Foundation Training Year Recruitment: Outcome Report 2025**

East	27	28
National	65	65
<b>Totals</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>220</b>

**END OF THE REPORT**