

# National training survey 2020

## Updating programme specific questions

This briefing note sets out the process for reviewing programme specific questions for the 2020 national trainee survey.

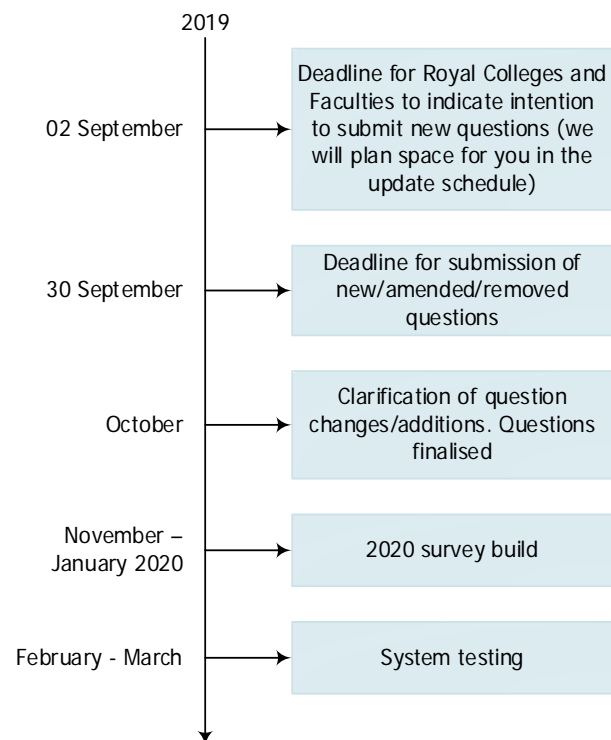
### Background

This briefing note is for medical royal colleges, faculties and the UK Foundation Programme Office.

Programme Specific Questions (PSQs) are included in the trainee survey each year to help colleges understand how their curricula are being delivered and explore issues specific to their specialty.

The questions can be used to explore short term issues or to track long term patterns and emerging trends. Given the high response rate each year the PSQs are an invaluable resource and should be used by colleges as fully as possible.

We recommend the use of PSQs to help improve specialty curriculum and assessment systems. Should you intend to make changes to your curriculum, questions should be introduced to provide an evidence base, or to evaluate changes already implemented.



We recognise the benefit of trend data across different years, therefore there is no obligation to change your questions. However, we do ask that you review the content of your questions each year to ensure that they continue to provide useful and relevant results. You are encouraged to remove any questions which are no longer needed or relevant.

## Key points

1. The questions should be important to the delivery of the curriculum and assessment system, and remain relevant each year.
2. Questions that are no longer useful should be removed.
3. Questions can be introduced to provide an evidence base for curriculum changes, or to evaluate existing changes.
4. Avoid asking questions that can be answered via other data sources (for example ARCP). This particularly includes quantitative questions such as 'how many X procedures have you done?' We recommend you aim for questions about the quality of trainees' experience.
5. Each question should be underpinned by a clear rationale and consideration should be given to how answers will be used.
6. You should avoid covering any of the generic question themes in your questions so that trainees in your programmes don't have to answer similar questions multiple times. You can find the [full generic and demographic question set](#) from 2019 on our website.
7. We cannot support the analysis of free text responses due to the level of resources required to read and categorise them. Colleges/faculties would be expected to resource the review of, and response to, free text answers should they choose to include them.
8. We encourage you to test any proposed changes with your trainee network.
9. Please find attached to this note some general guidance on question setting best practice (annex A).

## Completing the question document

We have attached your 2019 programme specific questions alongside this briefing note in a word document with track changes enabled.

- If you would like to amend questions please keep track changes on and edit the document where you would like changes to be made.
- If you would like to add new questions please add extra rows at the bottom of the table and type in 'new question' under the question name column, add in your new question, answer scale and trainee grade in the appropriate columns.
- Be sure to give a rationale for each new question by leaving a comment on track changes. This will help us to understand your reasoning when reviewing the questions for the final survey design.

## Support available

We will provide survey question writing review support for you as standard. We will review your change requests and provide feedback for where the following apply:

1. A question is ambiguous.
2. The potential responses appear not to provide the required information.
3. Where a question is duplicated in the generic or demographic question set.
4. Where the terminology used doesn't match that used throughout the survey.
5. Where the question style greatly differs from that used in the core question set or in the rest of your question set.

Should you wish to obtain any additional advice on writing or reviewing your questions please contact us for further information and guidance.

## Contact information

Surveys team

General Medical Council

3 Hardman Street, Manchester, M3 3AW

Email: [NTS@gmc-uk.org](mailto:NTS@gmc-uk.org)

Website: <http://www.gmc-uk.org>

Telephone: 0161 923 6602 (+44 161 923 6602 from outside the UK)