

Survey development briefing note 1

This briefing note sets out the work we have undertaken to review the questions and indicators that make up the National Training Survey.

Background

For the 2012 survey you provided new questions for each specialty. This year you have the opportunity to change or update those questions. This briefing note sets out the process for updating the questions.

You may wish to retain the questions so that you can carry out trend analysis on the results from 2012 to 2013. After significant improvements in 2012, we will be making only minimal changes to the survey this year.

Generic and demographic questions

We will not make any changes to the generic questions in 2013. Following analysis we are currently undertaking, we may improve some of the demographic questions to give us better information about, for example, multi-site working.

You should avoid covering any of the generic question themes in your questions. You can find the full generic and demographic question set [on our website](#).

Time line

We recognise that in many areas, the survey provides important information to deaneries and local education providers and that wholesale changes to the survey would have a big impact on deaneries' quality management systems across the UK, as well as those of other stakeholders. We will not make wholesale changes without broader and more rigorous stakeholder engagement (see future changes to the survey, below).

With this in mind, our aim has been to be economic with our improvements, to make the best improvements possible with the least negative impact on stakeholders in the time available.

Royal Colleges and Faculties to indicate
intention to submit new questions

30 September 2012

Royal Colleges and Faculties
to submit draft questions

15 November 2012

GMC to provide feedback on questions

30 November 2012

Royal Colleges and Faculties
to submit final questions

31 December 2012

Completing the template

We have created a template for you to complete. We hope that this will make question setting easier for you. When designing your specialty specific questions please consider the following points.

- The questions should be important to the delivery of the curriculum and assessment system.
- Avoid questions on themes covered by the generic or demographic questions.
- 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.
- Avoid overcomplicated questions and complicated logic that supports the questions.
- Last year we worked hard to cut the length of the survey and achieved a 50% reduction. We want to keep it as short as possible, so please keep the number of questions you ask to around 10 per trainee, unless there is a clear justification for asking more.
- Last year's good practice guide is included here as an annex.

Our input

We will not change any question that you set without your approval, but please bear in mind we will provide feedback when the following apply.

- We believe that a question is ambiguous or if we believe that the potential responses will not provide the required information.
- A question is duplicated in the generic or demographic question set.
- The terminology used doesn't match that used throughout the survey.
- The question style greatly differs from that used in the core question set. We intend for the survey to have one narrative voice so we may suggest amendments to bring the question in line with our style.

Fields

The aim of the template is to help guide the question development process. We hope you find this helpful.

Please note, these questions will be presented to trainees based on their training programme (for example Cardiology questions will not be presented to Foundation or Core trainees in Cardiology posts).

Aim	What is the purpose of the question? What do you want to find out by asking the question? Example: I want to find out if X is being effectively delivered.
Rationale	The rationale for asking the question and therefore seeking the information. How is it important to the delivery of the curriculum and assessment system? Example: End of year assessments have identified a lack of knowledge in this area of the curriculum.
Question	The question itself. The question as you would like it to appear.
Answers	The possible answers to the question. Please consider whether there may be a situation in which none of the possible answers is applicable to the trainee and therefore a 'not applicable' option should be available. Please also tell us if you would like branching logic (i.e. if the trainee answers 'yes', they must answer question X, if 'no', question Y). Example: Yes/No or Likert scale response (strongly agree – strongly disagree).
Training level	Is the question specific to a certain training level or should all of your specialty specific trainees be asked the question? Example: This question is only applicable to ST3 and ST4