

National Training Survey 2024

Briefing note 3

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Four questionnaire scripts accompany this briefing note:

- **Annex A:** the demographic and generic questions for all doctors in training (the 'trainee survey')
- **Annex B:** questions specifically for doctors training in the foundation programme
- **Annex C:** provides the questions for clinical and educational supervisors (the 'trainer' survey)
- **Annex D:** questionnaire for clinical and educational supervisors on GP programmes

Details of new, amended, and deleted questions can be found in the tables at the end of this note.

Summary of 2024 Questionnaire Developments

Trainee survey

- In 2023 we piloted fifteen questions on discriminatory behaviours in the trainee survey. Of these, nine questions will be included in the 2024 survey. The set remains optional.
- We are adding two questions to the trainee survey on feedback quality, and one on mentoring. These are based on questions that were part of last year's discriminatory behaviours question set.
- We have introduced three new questions to the Less Than Full Time (LTFT) section of the survey. These ask about experiences applying for LTFT training and challenges faced whilst working LTFT. They will only be seen by trainees who currently train LTFT.
- We have removed three pandemic-related questions. Answer options referring to the pandemic have also been removed from one question.
- Two study leave questions have been entirely removed from the trainee survey.
- We have updated the response options for two questions within the induction indicator and the educational supervision indicator.
- Our approach to the programme-specific questionnaires is unchanged for 2024. The wording of the one mandatory question has been slightly amended to clarify the period trainees are being asked to reflect on. We have also amended one craft-only optional question and added two new questions to the foundation script on preparedness.

Trainer survey

- We've made minimal changes to the trainer questionnaire for 2024.
- 'Cross-cultural communication' has been added as a response option to a question on training for trainers.
- One question has been removed from the survey on disagreeing with senior colleagues.

Trainee survey changes

New questions

Feedback

We've added two new questions on feedback to the survey for 2024. These explore the quality of feedback trainees receive from senior colleagues/supervisors in their current post.

The new questions are derived from two questions on discriminatory behaviours that we piloted in the survey last year. After consulting with stakeholders, we have rephrased and integrated these questions into the main survey. We did this as we know high-quality, learner-centred feedback is an important driver for performance, and insufficient or inadequate feedback can contribute to workplace stress and impact the retention of doctors. We want all trainees to have the opportunity to tell us about the quality of the feedback they receive from senior colleagues.

- The first question asks the extent to which feedback trainees receive is fair and constructive.
- The second asks about the extent to which sensitive feedback is given appropriately.

The new questions will sit with the feedback indicator questions but will not be included in the indicator score for the first year.

Less than full-time training (LTFT)

Three new questions have been added to the LTFT section of the survey. We currently ask three questions to gauge the amount of less than full-time working trainees are doing and their reasons for doing so. The new questions widen the scope of this section to cover:

- the application process and whether applicants had access to clear and helpful guidance. These two questions will be presented to those who applied for LTFT and were successful and to those who applied and were not.
- challenges trainees may have experienced working LTFT. This is one question and will only be presented to trainees who currently work LTFT.

Amendments

Mentoring

In 2023 we introduced a question asking about trainees' experiences of mentoring. This was only seen by trainees who chose to answer the discriminatory behaviour questions. Mentoring is an established professional development device in medicine, and is known to help build inclusive working environments and to support the development of leadership behaviours. For

this reason, we have moved the question into the main survey script to be answered by all trainees.

We have made the following changes to the question wording for 2024:

- We amended the question preamble to strengthen our definition of mentoring and mentors.
- Added 'your trust or site' as employer examples.
- Added a response option to capture royal college or faculty schemes.
- Amended the informal mentoring answer options, to differentiate informal clinician mentors from other informal mentors.

Other amendments

We have made other minor amendments to the survey for this year. They are:

- Added more detailed 'no' response options for two questions on induction and educational supervision. This is to capture: where an activity hasn't happened yet, but will; and where it hasn't happened yet and is unlikely to happen.
- Amendments have been made to the preamble for the discriminatory behaviour questions.
- The introductory text for the bullying and undermining section now includes 'blaming someone for something they didn't do' as an example of bullying.
- Three pandemic-related answer options have been removed from a question on future intentions.
- References to 'HEE local office' have been replaced with 'NHSE regional team' throughout.

Removals

Discriminatory behaviour questions

In 2023, we piloted fifteen new questions on discriminatory behaviours in the trainee survey. After reviewing response data and consulting with stakeholders, including doctors in training, we have decided to keep nine questions in the survey for 2024. We're confident that the questions we have retained will allow us to capture the breadth of discriminatory behaviours trainees may experience in the training environment.

We have removed five questions:

- Unfair scrutiny (now included as an example of a microaggression).
- Being disproportionately asked to carry out tasks.

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- Blame for something you didn't do (now included as an example of bullying and undermining)
 - Giving sensitive feedback in an inappropriate way (see table 1 for new feedback questions)
 - Unfair or overly critical feedback (see table 1 for new feedback questions)

The question set will remain optional, and we will report on the findings in the individual question item reports.

Pandemic-related questions

Three pandemic-related questions have been removed from the survey. These questions were first introduced in 2021 to monitor the impact of the pandemic. Analysis of the last survey's response data showed that they are no longer relevant to the experiences of most doctors in training.

The removed questions are:

- Opportunities to backfill what has been lost due to Covid-19.
- Use of simulation facilities/activities to support training.
- Use of virtual learning environments.

We have retained an optional question in the programme-specific questionnaires on the impact of Covid-19 on working arrangements.

Study leave

After reviewing the study leave indicator and gathering feedback, we have decided to remove two questions. Stakeholders have informed us that study leave arrangements have changed and these questions are no longer relevant to today's training environment.

The removed questions are:

- funding available to cover the cost of advised courses.
- use of study leave allowance to attend compulsory courses.

The study leave indicator now comprises of two questions, which can be seen in Annex A accompanying this briefing note.

Programme specific questionnaires (PSQs)

We've made a few changes to the PSQs for 2024.

- We made a small amendment to the GMC mandatory question on any unmet curriculum competencies/outcomes/activities to make the time frame we are asking trainees to reflect on clearer.
- A craft-only question on opportunities to backfill the indicative number of operative/practical procedures has been reworded to apply to gaps that occurred for any reason, rather than as a result of the pandemic. We also added a timeframe for trainees to reflect upon.
- Two new questions on preparedness have been added to the foundation script.

Trainer survey changes

There are no new questions in the trainer survey for 2024.

Amendments and removals

- We added 'cross-cultural communication' as an answer option to a question on areas where trainers could benefit from more training.
- We entirely removed a question on disagreeing with senior colleagues from generic version of the trainer survey. This question was part of the supportive environment indicator, which now comprises of two questions.
- A reference to 'HEE' has been replaced with 'NHS England'.

Contact

If you have any questions, please get in touch with the surveys team via NTS@gmc-uk.org.

Table one – new questions (trainee)

	Topic	Question	Response options
New question	Feedback	<p>The following questions are about the quality of feedback you've received in this post. This can be formal or informal.</p> <p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? The feedback I receive from supervisors/senior colleagues in this post is fair and constructive.</p>	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
New question	Feedback	Sensitive feedback is always given in an appropriate way. (E.g. timely, face-to-face, privately, in person or via an electronic tool following a face-to-face conversation.)	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
New question	Less than full time training	<p>This question is about challenges you may have faced training less than full time in your current post.</p> <p>In this post have you experienced any of the following challenges working less than full time?</p>	<p>N/A - I've not experienced challenges LTFT in this post</p> <p> Balancing work and personal commitments Financial concerns Negative workplace attitudes towards LTFT Changing posts process Availability of LTFT posts Administrative issues e.g. annual leave allocation or being paid incorrectly Other</p>
New question	Less than full time training	<p>The next two questions are about your experience of applying for less than full time training (LTFT).</p> <p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <p>The application process for LTFT was straightforward.</p>	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable – I don't remember
New question	Less than full time training	When I applied for LTFT I received clear and helpful guidance from my NHSE regional team/deanery.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable -

		This may be through a LTFT champion, Training Programme Director or other person.	I don't remember Not applicable - I didn't require any guidance from my NHSE regional team or deanery
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Table two - removals and amendments (trainee survey)*

	Topic	Question	Response options
Amended question	Mentoring	The next question is about your experience of mentoring. This is separate to the support you receive as part of educational supervision. Mentoring is a learning partnership between a mentor who shares their expertise, skills and experience with an often more junior mentee. Guidance is focused on long-term development and career progression. It can be formal or informal. It could be with a more senior trainee, a consultant, specialty or associate specialist (SAS) doctor or someone else	Yes - formal mentoring scheme through my employer (e.g. your trust or site of work) Yes - formal scheme through my deanery/NHSE regional team Yes - formal mentoring scheme with an external organisation (not employer or deanery) Yes - informal mentoring from a colleague Yes - formal scheme through my royal college or faculty Yes - formal scheme through another organisation Yes - informal mentoring from another clinician Yes - informal other No support from a mentor
Amended question	Future intentions	Please indicate which of the following are important to you in making your plans for the future. (please select as many as apply)	Financial gains Intellectual stimulation Preference to work in a particular part of the UK The fit between my skills/personality and the

* New or amended text is in blue. Removed text is red. Where an entire question has been removed the cell is greyed out.

			specialty Wanting to gain further experience before making a decision Work/life balance Recover from working during the Covid-19 pandemic Needing to make up the clinical experience lost due to the Covid-19 pandemic To consider a change in speciality after working during the Covid-19 pandemic Other
Removed question	Study leave	In this post, is funding available to cover the cost of courses you've been advised to complete?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know Not applicable
Removed question	Study leave	In this post, are days subtracted from your study leave allowance to attend compulsory training (in or out of hospital)?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I've been given enough training opportunities to back fill what has been lost due to the Covid-19 pandemic.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable – I haven't needed any opportunities to back fill I can't say
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Simulation facilities and/or simulation exercises are being used effectively to support my training.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Virtual learning environments (VLEs) are being used effectively to support my training (e.g. webinars, web-based teaching, online discussion groups etc).	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know – I'm not aware of any Not applicable – VLEs are not being provided at all

Removed question	Discriminatory behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all have you had your work overly or unfairly scrutinised?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a once Never
Removed question	Discriminatory behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all do you feel you are disproportionately asked to carry out specific tasks?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a once Never
Removed question	Discriminatory behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all are you blamed for something you didn't do?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a once Never
Removed question	Discriminatory behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all are you given sensitive feedback in an inappropriate way? (e.g. in a public place or via electronic tools without discussion)	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a once Never
Removed question	Discriminatory behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all do you receive unfair or overly critical feedback?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a once Never

Table three – programme-specific questionnaires*

New or amended	Topic	Question	Response options
Amended	Mandatory	Please select which (if any) of the following curriculum competencies/ outcomes/ activities you had not fully met or undertaken by the end of the last training year, but would have expected to. Gaps may have occurred for any reason. (tick all that apply).	N/A - I had reached all my required curriculum outcomes and/or experiences Clinical outcomes / competencies Experience in clinical settings Operative or procedural outcomes / competencies Experience in operative / practical procedures Passing of relevant exams Workplace-based assessments Completion of courses relevant for my

* New or amended text is in blue.

			speciality Research Audit Teaching Quality improvement Management and leadership skills Other non-clinical skills Not applicable
Amended	Craft only optional	Going into this training year, have you had opportunities to backfill the indicative number of operative / practical procedures? Gaps may have occurred for any reason.	Yes - all in the independent sector Yes - a mix of independent sector locations and my NHS location Yes – all in my NHS location No - I've not been given opportunities in either location Not applicable - I've not needed to backfill
New	Foundation	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My clinical knowledge was adequate to prepare me for my first foundation post.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know
New	Foundation	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? My skills in the diagnosis and management of patient presentations were adequate to prepare me for my first foundation post.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know

Table four – removals and amendments (trainer survey)*

	Topic	Question	Response options
Amended question	Supporting trainers	Which of the following (if any) would you benefit from more training in? (tick all that apply)	Giving effective feedback as an educator Supporting trainees with exams Identification and management of trainees requiring extra support Curriculum coverage The ARCP process Coaching and mentoring Writing effective supervisor's reports Balancing the needs of service delivery with education Leadership and management Equality, diversity and the support needs of trainees with protected characteristics Differential attainment Supporting a return to training after time out Careers guidance Unconscious bias Cross-cultural communication None of the above
Amended question	Supportive environment	If I were to disagree with senior colleagues where I work, they would be open to my opinion.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know / can't say

* New or amended text is in blue. Removed text is red. Where an entire question has been removed the cell is greyed out.