

National Training survey – briefing note 3

Changes to the questionnaire for 2023

This briefing note explains the changes made for the 2023 surveys.

The most significant change for this year is the introduction of a new set of questions on discrimination. Following consultation with stakeholders and doctors, together with an online pilot, fifteen new questions have been developed to explore the experiences of doctors in training. These questions will be voluntary. The ten pandemic-related questions, first introduced in the 2021 survey, have also been amended with some questions removed.

The survey for clinical and education supervisors remains the same with no amends or new questions. Our approach for the programme specific questionnaires (PSQs) also remains the same with just a couple of minor amendments.

Four main questionnaires 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:** a slightly modified questionnaire for clinical and educational supervisors on GP programmes to reflect their different working arrangements.

All new, amended, and deleted questions for the 2023 NTS can be found in the tables at the end of this note.

Summary of 2023 questionnaire developments

- In 2021, ten new questions were introduced in the opening section in the trainee survey to explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on training. These have been reviewed with five questions removed and five being retained but integrated into the main script (out of the opening section).
- The question relating to the quality of the car park facilities has been removed.
- The introductory text for the question on reasons for working Less Than Full Time has been amended and a new answer option relating to caring for a child with additional needs has been added.
- The introductory text for the academic questions has been amended slightly.
- A 'not applicable' option has been added to the answer options for the question about the quality of clinical supervision out of hours.
- Fifteen new questions on the topic of discrimination have been added to the trainee questionnaire. The questions ask trainees about specific behaviours as well as their views on reporting and challenging discrimination. There is also a question on mentoring.
- There are no changes to the trainer questionnaire. However, the indicators for this survey have been changed following a statistical review.
- Apart from some minor edits to three questions, the programme specific questionnaires remain the same as for 2022. The questionnaires include a small number of mandatory and optional questions that colleges can select if they wish. Colleges also have the option of including a small number of questions of their own that are specialty/college specific.

Trainee survey changes

Pandemic-related questions

Following a review of the ten pandemic-related questions in the trainee survey, five of the questions have been removed as they are no longer considered to be relevant for the training environment:

- Three relating to exams and workplace-based assessments
- One question on meeting curriculum requirements

-
- One question on being able to compensate for loss of training opportunities through transferable skills.

Five of the questions have been retained and incorporated into the main script with some slight amendments to the wording for three of the questions.

Removals and amendments

One question has been removed completely:

- The question on the quality of the car park facilities (relating to rest and study facilities)

Three questions have been amended:

- The introductory text for the question on reasons for working Less Than Full Time has been amended and a new answer option relating to caring for a child with additional needs has been added. This is a separate option to 'childcare'.
- The introductory text for the academic questions has been amended to invite all trainees on the foundation programme to answer the question accurately.
- A 'not applicable' option has been added to the answer options for the question about the quality of clinical supervision out of hours.

New questions

Following extensive consultation with GMC teams, external stakeholders and doctors in training, a new set of questions exploring discrimination has been introduced to the trainee questionnaire. These questions will be optional. The NTS confidentiality and data privacy policy applies to these questions; as it does to all multiple-choice questions within the survey.

We know that discrimination and unprofessional behaviours are taking place in healthcare environments. However, there is very little data available that explores the scale and extent of the specific behaviours that doctors are experiencing and where there may be difficulties with reporting and challenging discrimination in workplaces. As well as identifying where discrimination is taking place, we also aim to use the findings to understand if doctors from different demographic groups are having differing experiences. This will support our work, and those of education providers, to reduce differences in educational outcomes.

The questions will be an additional set and won't replace the current bullying and undermining section in the NTS. Trainees will still be able to report instances of bullying, undermining and discrimination using the free text comment facility in the closing section of the survey.

Using a range of recent research in this area as well as qualitative feedback from doctors, we've explored and tested a set of questions that we hope trainees will feel comfortable with.

The questions cover:

- specific behaviours that trainees may have experienced from colleagues / other healthcare professionals and the frequency (11 questions)
- knowledge of how to report discrimination in the workplace (one question)
- confidence to report discrimination (one question)
- confidence to challenge discrimination with the individual(s) concerned (one question)
- whether trainees have the support of a mentor (one question).

The fifteen new questions are presented in [table two](#).

Programme specific questionnaires (PSQs)

There have been very few changes to the PSQs for 2023. Three questions have had some small edits: two questions for the craft specialities and one for all specialities. The three questions for craft specialities (working in the independent sector) are now optional rather than mandatory.

One new question has been added to the foundation questionnaire on the factors affecting preparedness for F1.

The amendments to the PSQs are set out in [table three](#).

Trainer survey changes

There are no changes to the trainer survey for 2023 – no questions have been removed and there are no new questions.

Trainer indicators

However, the indicators for the trainer survey have changed for 2023. Last year, we significantly reduced the length of the trainer survey, with approximately half of all questions removed. Although we had a set of test indicators in place for the 2022 survey results, our statistical review identified that some of these indicators were not as robust as we wanted. We have therefore adapted them again for the 2023 survey. These are presented in [table four](#).

The biggest change is that three of these indicators are based on just a single question. Due to the reduced number of questions for trainers, it's not possible to find a meaningful way of grouping all questions as part of a multiple-question indicator. We know that most people who use the data (both within the GMC and externally) engage primarily with the indicators. If certain

questions are not part of an indicator there is a risk the topic may be lost or overlooked. We therefore believe the new indicators will be the best way for people to access and use the data effectively.

The revised trainer indicators are:

- Educational Governance
- Professional Development
- Appraisal
- Supportive Environment
- Time to Train
- Rota Issues
- Handover
- Resources to Train
- Burnout (reported separately to other indicators).

Contact

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

Table one - removals and amendments (trainee survey)

	Topic	Question	Response options
Amended 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
Amended 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
Amended question	Pandemic	<i>*Question moved from opening script – no change*</i> 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
Amended question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? This post is providing me with enough training opportunities to adequately prepare me for my next relevant professional exam(s).	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable
Amended question	Pandemic	GP trainees: please consider the Clinical Examination and Procedural Skills (CEPS) when answering this question. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know Not applicable - operative/practical

		I am on course to gain enough experience in the operative/practical procedures needed for my stage of training.	procedures are not part of my curriculum
Amended question	Less than full time training	<p>The following question asks about your reasons for working Less Than Full Time (LTFT). There are two options for caring for a child - to separate out those caring for a child with additional needs. Feel free to select both if applicable.</p> <p>Which of the following best describes why you chose (or have considered) to work on a Less Than Full Time (LTFT) basis?</p> <p>(Tick all that apply)</p>	<p>Disability</p> <p>Illness or health related reason</p> <p>Childcare</p> <p>Caring for a child with a disability, long term illness or additional needs</p> <p>Caring for an adult (e.g. a parent, family member or friend)</p> <p>Other work commitments (e.g. professional development opportunities)</p> <p>Other external commitments (e.g. leisure, religious or community commitments)</p> <p>To have a better work life balance</p> <p>To support my return to work following time out of clinical practice</p> <p>I'm part of a current (or previous) LTFT pilot offered by my speciality</p> <p>Other</p>
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly

		I'm on course to meet my curriculum competencies/outcomes for this stage of my training.	disagree I don't know Not applicable
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I have been able to compensate for loss of training opportunities through transferable skills gained from other aspects of my training.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable
Removed question	Pandemic	Since the start of this training year, have you been able to participate in the expected number of workplace-based (or local) assessments (WPBA)?	Yes - more than the expected number Yes - the expected number No - not quite the expected number No - significantly below the expected number I've not been able to participate in any workplace-based/local assessments I don't know Not applicable
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement about Workplace-based Assessments (WPBA)? The Adapted workplace-based assessments offer the same (or improved) learning opportunities as they did prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree I don't know/can't say My workplace-based assessments were already online I've not participated in any workplace-based assessments
Removed question	Pandemic	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? I've been able to access a slot(s) to sit my relevant professional exams for my stage of training.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Not applicable
Removed question	Facilities and resources for rest and study	Please rate the quality of car park facilities in your current post. (Please consider the following: sufficient number of spaces,	Very good Good Neither good nor poor Poor Very poor Not applicable

		reserved spaces after dark, safe/short route from place of work, well-lit.)	
--	--	---	--

Table two - new discrimination questions (trainee survey)

Question subtopic	Question	Response options
	Would you like to answer the following questions about discrimination?	Yes No
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... do you hear insults, stereotyping or jokes in your presence on the grounds of age, race (colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin), sex, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy/maternity?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Specific 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 month Never
Specific 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 month Never
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... are you intentionally humiliated in front of others?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... are you ignored or excluded from conversations, groups or meetings?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... do you experience unwelcome sexual comments or advances causing you embarrassment, distress or offence?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Specific 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 month Never
Specific 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 month Never

Specific 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 month Never
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... are you not given the same training opportunities as your peers at the same stage of training? (e.g. opportunity to observe an unusual case)	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Specific behaviours	In your current post how often, if at all... do you experience micro-aggressions, negative comments or oppressive body language from colleagues?	Daily Weekly Monthly Less than once a month Never
Reporting discrimination	I am confident that I know how, or could find out how, to report discrimination where I work.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
Confidence to report discrimination	I feel confident about reporting discrimination where I work without fear of adverse consequences (reporting can be during your post or afterwards)	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
Challenging everyday discrimination and unprofessional behaviours	In this post, I feel confident to challenge discrimination and unprofessional behaviours amongst my colleagues and healthcare professionals	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
Mentoring	Do you have support from a mentor (excluding the meetings you have with your education or clinical supervisor) who supports and guides you with your career and/or personal development? (Tick all that apply)	Yes - formal mentoring scheme through my employer Yes - formal scheme through my deanery/HEE office Yes - formal mentoring scheme with an external organisation (not employer or deanery) Yes - informal mentoring from a colleague Yes - Informal mentoring from another clinician who is not a colleague Yes - other route No

Table three - PSQ amendments

	Question	Response options
PSQ - all	<p>We'd like to know how any changes in working arrangements to manage the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic may have affected your current training year.</p> <p>Please select the one description that best fits your experience from the following.</p>	<p>I've developed clinical skills I would not have otherwise gained I've developed professional / wider skills I would not otherwise have gained There's been no change - my training has continued as normal I've worked in a service provision role that has slowed down my training I've worked in a service provision role that has had no benefit at all for my training Other</p>
PSQ – craft specialities only	<p>So far in this training year, are you on course to undertake the indicative number of operative / practical procedures needed for your stage of training?</p>	<p>Yes - more than the indicative number Yes - undertaken the indicative number No - not quite the indicative number No - significantly below the indicative number No - not undertaken any operative/practical procedures at all Not applicable</p>
PSQ – craft specialities only	<p>Have you been given opportunities to make up the indicative number of operative / practical procedures to back fill what has been lost as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic?</p>	<p>Yes - all or predominantly in the independent sector Yes - a mix of independent sector locations and my NHS location Yes - within my NHS location No - I've not been given any additional opportunities at all in either location Not applicable - I've not needed any</p>
Foundation PSQ	<p>If applicable, which of the following factors do you think contributed to you feeling less prepared? (for your first F1 post)</p> <p>(Tick all that apply)</p>	<p>Not applicable – I felt adequately prepared</p> <p>Geographical re-location</p> <p>Lack of information about support for re-location (e.g. removal expenses)</p> <p>Living away from family / limited support networks in my training location</p> <p>Working in a different type of hospital or health system, compared to previous experience (e.g., working in Scotland after training in England, moving from a district general hospital to an acute trust etc)</p> <p>Lack of contacts (friends/family etc) already working in the NHS to talk to</p> <p>Late notice of my training location</p>

		<p>Late notice of my rota</p> <p>Limited knowledge of the day-to-day reality of working as a foundation doctor</p> <p>Lack of information on escalating concerns/speaking up, contact points etc</p> <p>Inadequate training in how to use the IT hardware / software in my hospital</p> <p>Lack of knowledge and guidance on the paperwork and documentation required for a foundation post</p> <p>Medical school curriculum didn't sufficiently cover the required clinical knowledge</p> <p>Other</p>
--	--	---

Table four – revised indicators for 2023 trainer survey

2023 TRS Indicators		Generic Script		GP Script	
Indicator RT name	Question status	Master Q Ref:	Question	Master Q Ref:	Question
Burnout	No Change (& still reported separately to other indicators)	TGENQ102	Is your work emotionally exhausting?	TRGPQ99	Is your work emotionally exhausting?
		TGENQ103	Do you feel burnt out because of your work?	TRGPQ100	Do you feel burnt out because of your work?
		TGENQ104	Does your work frustrate you?	TRGPQ101	Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?
		TGENQ105	Do you feel worn out at the end of the working day?	TRGPQ102	Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?
		TGENQ106	Are you exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work?	TRGPQ103	Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?
		TGENQ107	Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?	TRGPQ104	Do you feel that every working hour is tiring for you?
		TGENQ108	Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?	TRGPQ105	Do you have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time?

Educational Governance	No Change	TGENQ72	I'm confident that my employer would act effectively if concerns about education were raised.	TRGPQ70	I'm confident that my local education team would act effectively if concerns about education were raised.
		TGENQ74	How effective or ineffective is your employer in making changes to help improve the provision of education?	TRGPQ140	How effective or ineffective is your local education team in making changes to help improve the provision of education?
		TGENQ133	I am supported by senior colleagues to balance trainee educational needs with service commitments where I can.	NO EQUIVALENT	
		TGENQ75	I'm confident that my statutory education body (SEB) works collaboratively with my employer to ensure trainees' educational needs are balanced with service commitments.	TRGPQ138	I'm confident that my statutory education body (SEB) works collaboratively with secondary care placement providers to ensure trainees' educational needs are balanced with service commitments.
Professional Development	No Change	TGENQ91	I am able to access learning and development opportunities for my role as a trainer when I need them.	TRGPQ88	I am able to access learning and development opportunities for my role as a trainer when I need to.
		TGENQ85	Please rate the access to professional development and training opportunities which your statutory education body (SEB) arranges for your role as a trainer.	TRGPQ82	Please rate the access to professional development and training opportunities which your statutory education body (SEB) arranges for your role as a trainer.
		TGENQ130	I have access to the resources I need to confidently support trainees of all backgrounds, beliefs and identities.	TRGPQ135	I have access to the resources I need to confidently support trainees of all backgrounds, beliefs and identities
		TGENQ131	I have access to the training and support I need to provide effective feedback on my trainees' performance.	TRGPQ136	I have access to the training and support I need to provide effective feedback on my trainees' performance.
Appraisal		TGENQ81	If you've had an education appraisal within the last 12 months, how effective was it in reviewing your EDUCATIONAL responsibilities?	TRGPQ77	If you've had an education appraisal within the last 12 months, how effective was it in reviewing your EDUCATIONAL responsibilities?

	New Indicator	TGENQ126	If you've had an education appraisal within the last 12 months, how effective was it for reviewing your DEVELOPMENT NEEDS as a trainer?	TRGPQ130	If you've had an education appraisal within the last 12 months, how effective was it for reviewing your DEVELOPMENT NEEDS as a trainer?
Support for training	New Indicator	TGENQ79	Please rate the support you receive from your employer in your role as a trainer.	TRGPQ131	Please rate the support you receive from your local education team in your role as a trainer.
		TGENQ127	Please rate the support available to you from your employer when you have a trainee requiring extra support.	TRGPQ132	Please rate the support available to you from your local education team when you have a trainee requiring extra support.
		TGENQ91	I am able to access learning and development opportunities for my role as a trainer when I need them.	TRGPQ88	I am able to access learning and development opportunities for my role as a trainer when I need to.
Supportive Environment	One question removed	TGENQ120	My employer provides a supportive environment for everyone regardless of background, beliefs or identity.	TRGPQ120	My practice provides a supportive environment for everyone regardless of background, beliefs or identity.
		TGENQ53	Staff are always treated fairly by my employer.	TRGPQ52	Staff are always treated fairly in my practice.
		TGENQ56	If I were to disagree with senior colleagues where I work, they would be open to my opinion.	TRGPQ55	The practice promotes a culture that values everyone's opinion.
Time to train	Renamed indicator, one Q removed	TGENQ86	My job plan contains enough designated time for my role as a trainer.	TRGPQ83	Enough time is allocated in my working week to fulfil my responsibilities as a GP trainer.
		TGENQ87	I am always able to use the time allocated to me in my role as a trainer specifically for that purpose.	TRGPQ84	I am always able to use the time allocated to me in my role as a GP trainer specifically for that purpose.
		TGENQ88	As an Educational Supervisor, my job plan contains enough time to meet with my trainee(s) as frequently as they require.	TRGPQ85	As an Educational Supervisor, my job plan contains enough time to meet with my trainee(s) as frequently as they require.
Rota issues	New indicator	TGENQ59	Gaps in the rota are always dealt with appropriately to ensure my trainee's/trainees' education and training is not adversely affected.	N/A – NO EQUIVALENT	

Handover	New indicator	TGENQ64	In my department, handovers are used as a learning opportunity for doctors in training.	N/A – NO EQUIVALENT	
Resources to Train	New indicator	TGENQ129	The resources I need to perform my role as a trainer are available to me in my workplace.	TRGPQ134	The resources I need to perform my role as a trainer are available to me in my workplace.