

The Royal College of Anaesthetists National Recruitment Workshop – 14th June 2010

Background

1. A National Recruitment workshop to consider the issues and to look at solutions for all aspects of coordinated recruitment took place on 14 Jun 10. RAs, DRAs, HoS, TPDs and CTs were invited to attend. A total of 40 attended and included members of the National Recruitment Working Party (NRWP) and some Deanery HR staff. Most areas of the country were represented.
2. The workshop involved discussing the key issues in syndicate groups and then feeding back to the NRWP Chair (Dr J-P van Besouw). Following a summary of the 2010 recruitment at CT2 and ST3 and an outline of the proposal for 2011, the following topics were discussed:
 - Topic 1 - CT1 Application Form and shortlisting.
 - Topic 2 - CT2 and ST3 Application Form and shortlisting.
 - Topic 3 - Interviews.
 - Topic 4 - Offers and Clearing.
 - Topic 5 - ACCS.
 - Topic 6 - DH Offers Process.

Summary of Discussions and Feedback on Topics

3. CT1

- The aim of recruitment to CT1 must be to identify the trainable candidate in anaesthesia.
- Anaesthesia is competing against all other specialties and best applicants will get most interviews and so the approach must aim to capture the best candidate available.
- Applicants will also apply for ACCS and a decision will be required on whether ACCS (Anaes) and Anaesthesia applications will count as one or two choices.
- No firm decision on whether to shortlist (S/L) or interview all applicants.
- Question posed on whether S/L be based on one 'White Box' question; 'Why do you think you would make a good anaesthetist?' with everything else assessed at a portfolio station at interview.
- Self assessment considered but if used it would have to be rigidly defined. Majority view supported an element of S/L as opposed to self assessment.
- If S/L occurs then the focus must be to remove the bottom 10-20% and any process should reflect that aim.
- **Action:**
 - Proposal on S/L or interviewing all to be presented to NRWP for a decision and planning on either option to take place before DH Task & Finish Group (T&F) in Jul 10.
 - Decision required on giving everyone 2 interviews, 1 interview or S/L in the traditional way.
 - Numbers to be collated on possible applications for CT1 to inform decision on S/L vs interviewing all applicants.

4. CT2 and ST3

- Further discussion was held on S/L, self assessment and interviewing everyone.
- The interview is key aspect of the selection process, particularly at ST3.
- For ST3 the general view was that the 'white box' questions should be assessed at interview.
- Majority view was that some form of S/L must be conducted for CT2 and ST3.
- There was a view that Category 2 applicants should not be considered for 2011. The Chair of the NRWP stated that Category 2 applicants would remain for 2011. It could then be reconsidered for 2012, particularly if 2 recruitment rounds were conducted nationally.
- Agreement that Category 3 should not be considered for 2011. This would reduce interview time as the Resident Market Labour Test (RMLT) would not have to be adhered to.

5. Interview

- Overall support for standardised interview format for all Points of Entry.
- Up to 2 interviews for 2011.
- Not important to have a centralised question bank; the framework and standardisation is important.
- There should be flexibility for UoAs to use additional stations.
- There should be a process for QA by RCoA on UoA questions.
- General agreement that coordinated recruitment centres are the direction of travel.

6. ACCS

- It was agreed that ACCS posed a number of unique challenges in regards to coordinated recruitment.
- Anaesthesia and ACCS (Anaes) combined applications were seen as the better approach.
- Important to remember that ACCS is not a speciality.
- Understanding that considerably more work has to be done with all 3 specialties before a workable plan can be proposed.

7. Clearing

- Standardised interviews = centralised clearing but...
- Concerns over not interviewing applicants for a 5 year post.
- Clearing interviews is the safe option.
- There must be an agreed cut off score.
- There was an understanding that clearing would involve small numbers and as such should not dictate how the interview process is run.

8. Offers

- Offers will be on I:CAMS coordinated by W Mids.
- Similar process as 2010.
- LATs to be offered locally.
- Decision to be made on involvement for DH Offers for 2011.

9. General Points

- Widespread support for 2 nationally coordinated rounds in Aug and Feb. Agreed that NRWP would take this forward in discussions with DH.
- Likely that S/L will evolve into MMT type tests in the future following successful DH and AoMRC pilots.

10. Next Steps

- NRWP to produce a detailed plan based on workshop views, NRWP work and other input.
- Plan to be sent for Peer Review including workshop attendees for feedback.
- T&F and Peer Review in July.
- Refining of plan with consultation. But decisions will have to be made and 'you cannot please all of the people all of the time'.
- Evolution not Revolution. This is a longer process than just next year...