

UK Public Health Specialty Training – An Introduction

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HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



Workshop session support

Joining me, Fiona Telford / Josh Phillips from the Careers Service today we have some **Public Health Specialty Registrars** who have kindly given up their lunchtime to be available on this session, to answer questions in the chat as the session goes along and, to be available to live Q&A at the end of the session:

Rosie Thistlethwayte

Public Health Specialty Registrar (ST2)

Second year of training, non-medical background



Liam Stout

Public Health Specialty Registrar (ST2) in London

Second year of training, medical background

- Please keep mics on mute
- Feel free to use the chat box
- Trouble with sound? Try leaving and coming back, try a different browser
- The session will be recorded and put on Moodle along with the slides

This workshop – objectives

- Introduction to UK Public Health Specialty Training programme
- Application process
- Insight from two current trainees

UK Public Health Landscape: A Snapshot

- **Across the four UK nations**
 - England: Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
 - Scotland: Public Health Scotland
 - Wales: Public Health Wales
 - Northern Ireland: Public Health Agency
- **Implementation level** – local authorities (Directors of Public Health), NHS bodies, charities/NGOs
- **Other major players** – think tanks, consultancies, pharma
- **Research** – universities, pharma, research roles in other organisations
- Public Health Specialty Training programme → **Public Health Consultant** roles (most often in local authorities)

UK Public Health Specialty Training



- One of the **medical specialties**, also open to **non-medics**
- Usually **4 years full-time** if you already hold a relevant Master's (otherwise 5, including an MPH year)
- **Start in a local authority public health team** (12–30 months, depending on region), usually alongside an MPH/MSc in year one
- **Mandatory health protection placement** (minimum 3 months), then join the health protection on-call rota
- **Experience in at least two training locations**, plus optional specialist placements (e.g. national, academic, global)
- Options for '**Out of Programme**' experience (e.g. research or a PhD)
- **Two exams** – Diplomate (DFPH, knowledge-based) and Final Membership (MFPH, applying knowledge), plus an annual progress review (ARCP)
- **Leads to specialist registration** (GMC or UKPHR) and eligibility for consultant roles in public health

Eligibility to apply

- "Read the [Public Health ST1 2027 person specification](#) before applying. Eligibility criteria, including qualification grades, registration and experience requirements, are applied strictly. Ineligible applications are rejected at the eligibility-checking stage." ([NHS England](#))
- **Qualifications:**
 - a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (BMBS, MBBS) degree or other equivalent medical qualification; or
 - BA or BSc Undergraduate degree with 2:1 or higher classification; or
 - An integrated Masters degree, Masters or PhD (or equivalent grade Level 7 or higher UK qualification).
- Do you have to be from the UK? No but...
 - Applicants must show they have the **right to work in the UK** by the time they take up the post ([Entry Criteria](#))

Experience required

Applicants with a medical degree

"You must have a minimum of 2 years of postgraduate medical experience by the advertised post start date for the vacancy (equivalent to that obtained in a UK Foundation Training Programme)."

Applicants with a non-medical degree

"You must have at least 48 months (whole time equivalent) work experience by application closing date, of which at least 24 months (whole time equivalent) must be in an area relevant to population health practice. The 24 months should be at Band 6 or above of Agenda for Change or equivalent and a minimum of 3 months (whole time equivalent) at Band 6 level or equivalent in the three and a half years preceding the intended start date."

It will be down to you to evidence & demonstrate in your application.

- **Online application** via Oriel – eligibility checked first (criteria applied strictly)
- After that, the same process for medics and non-medics
- **Assessment centre** (5–6 January 2027) – three timed computer-based tests: critical thinking, numerical reasoning and situational judgement. Taken in person at Pearson test centres (UK and overseas); a minimum score is needed on each test
- **Selection centre** (virtual, March 2027) – online interview of up to 60 minutes: six questions across three stations, two with preparation material sent the day before
- **Candidates ranked** on performance; offers made in rank order, so the highest-ranked get first choice of region
- Indicate a **preferred region** when applying, then rank all available programmes later in the process
- Training is **organised regionally** – once on the scheme, you generally stay in that region

Competition

Intake	Posts	Eligible applicants	Ratio
2025	95	2,288	24:1
2024	106	1,508	14:1
2023	124	1,013	8:1
2022	95	897	9:1

London is the most competitive region by number of applicants, with 18 posts and 587 applicants in 2025.

[See here for competition ratios data](#)

Recruitment Timelines for 2027 intake

- Applications open: 10:00am 22 October 2026
- Applications close: 4:00pm 19 November 2026
- Assessment centre: 5-6 January 2027
- Selection centre (Virtual interviews): March 2027 (dates TBC)
- First offers released: by 5pm on 6 April 2027
- Training posts start: August 2027
- For all enquiries about the recruitment and selection process please contact publichealthrecruitment.em@hee.nhs.uk
- See Overview of Recruitment [here](#)

- All the information for UK Public Health Specialty Training is available on NHS England [HERE](#)
 - Application process [here](#)
 - Recruitment information [here](#)
- Public Health ST1 essential guidance from NHS England [here](#)
- Info booklet produced by Faculty of Public Health: '[Specialise in the bigger picture](#)'

Workshop session support

As mentioned earlier, also in attendance today we have some **Public Health Specialty Registrars** available for Q&A now:

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We value your feedback



<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/4p7U5N14cT>



Questions?

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Thank you

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