

# **ST4 Anaesthetics Applicant Guidance**

## **Round 2 August 2026**



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## 16. Raising Concerns

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## 1.1. Who are ANRO and what do we do?

The Anaesthetics National Recruitment Office (ANRO), part of NHS England (formerly Health Education England) based in the West Midlands, co-ordinates the nationally agreed process for recruitment to Higher Anaesthetics Training Programmes (ST4), working with the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA) to ensure it is quality assured and suited for this stage of training.

ANRO is available during the office hours of **Monday to Friday 09:00am to 17:00pm (UK BST/GMT)**. To contact us, please use the Freshdesk portal: Support : [midlands.freshdesk.com](https://midlands.freshdesk.com)

ANRO understands the importance of the selection process for an applicant's future career pathway. We would remind applicants of their responsibility to conduct themselves in a professional manner as outlined in the [Good Medical Practice](#) when in correspondence with ANRO team members.

Anonymous data from the recruitment process, including scores awarded and feedback collected, will be used to evaluate, and refine the national selection process. Data may be correlated with anonymised scores from outcome measures during your future training such as success in professional examinations and outcome of the Annual Review of Competence Progression.

## 1.2. One national application and single transferable score

The selection process allows applicants to demonstrate their abilities and suitability for ST4 Anaesthetics Training - applications are assessed by the demonstration of competences as outlined in the [Person Specification](#).

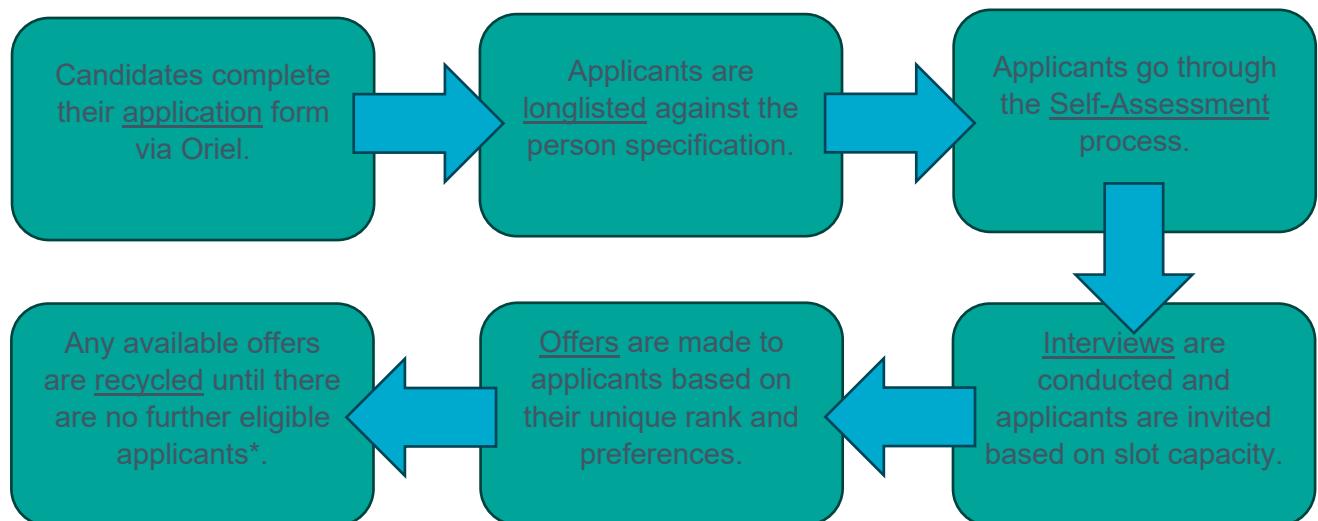
For an Anaesthetics training post, an applicant makes **one** application to **all** participating NHS England Local Offices, NHS Education for Scotland (NES), Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).

At the time of application, applicants will be required to choose one 'cluster' they want to be considered for i.e., posts in England & Wales **or** Northern Ireland **or** Scotland.

Each cluster requires the applicant to attend an online interview, and they will need to book onto a preferred slot for that cluster. They will only be considered for appointment to posts in the cluster they apply to.

The method used in England and Wales is known as a Single Transferable Score (STS) as applicants are not restricted to only being offered a post in the area in which they attended an online interview. The system is designed to maximise the numbers of applicants and opportunities for successful appointment.

The Anaesthetics recruitment process is as follows:



\* After recycling concludes, if there are posts available, a clearing round will be conducted. Applicants who have preferred the England & Wales and Northern Ireland clusters will be able to rank posts outside of their initial cluster.

For further information, please refer to [Clearing](#).

### 1.3. Timeline

#### ST4 Recruitment for August 2026

<b>Advert appears by (17:00PM UK GMT)</b>	Wednesday 19th November 2025
<b>Applications open (10:00AM UK GMT)</b>	Thursday 20th November 2025
<b>Applications close (16:00PM UK GMT)</b>	Thursday 11th December 2025
<b>Self-Assessment Applicant's Document Upload Opens</b>	Monday 5th January 2026
<b>Self-Assessment Applicants Document Upload Closes (23:59PM UK GMT)</b>	Sunday 11th January 2026
<b>Release Portfolio Verification Scores</b>	Monday 2nd February 2026
<b>Portfolio Review Window Opens (10:00AM UK GMT)</b>	Tuesday 3rd February 2026
<b>Portfolio Review Window Closes (10:00AM UK GMT)</b>	Friday 6th February 2026
<b>Invite to Interview &amp; Applicant Declaration</b>	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026
<b>Deadline for Interview Booking &amp; Applicant Declaration (16:00PM UK GMT)</b>	Thursday 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2026

<b>Interview window opens</b>	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> March 2026
<b>Interview window closes</b>	Friday 10th April 2026
<b>Evidence of Stage 1/Equivalence Deadline (13:00PM UK BST)</b>	Friday 10th April 2026
<b>Offers Released by no later than (17:00PM UK BST)</b>	Tuesday 14th April 2026
<b>Hold Deadline (13:00PM UK BST)</b>	Wednesday 22nd April 2026
<b>Upgrade Deadline (16:00PM UK BST)</b>	Thursday 23rd April 2026
<b>Paperwork must be submitted by</b>	Wednesday 6th May 2026

## 2. Dual Programmes with Intensive Care Medicine (ICM)

Applicants who currently hold a National Training Number (NTN) in ICM and are applying to Anaesthetics, in the hope of securing a dual programme, can only undertake a dual programme if:

1. The offer of an Anaesthetics NTN is in **the same region** as the one where their partner specialty training is being undertaken. **Please remember not all programmes span across all regions.** (*For example, NHS England working across South-West is made up of two programme regions, Severn and Peninsula. In this example, an applicant cannot dual train across both regions and must rank their sub-preferences accordingly.*)
2. The region is able to accommodate a dual training programme. *For any queries relating to this, the applicant should speak with the Training Programme Director (TPD) of their training area.*

If an applicant receives an offer for Anaesthetics and either of these conditions is not met, the applicant will need to decide whether to accept the Anaesthetics offer or not. If an applicant lists their preferences incorrectly and they accept an Anaesthetics post in a different region to where they currently hold an ICM NTN, then the applicant will be expected to resign their currently held NTN in order to take up their Anaesthetics training post.

ANRO reserves the right to withdraw an offer of training if an applicant has listed their preferences incorrectly and they wish to apply for Dual Training.

Applicants are only eligible for a dual Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) if they have not yet completed ST5 in their primary specialty by time of interview. ANRO will longlist out applicants who do not meet this criterion.

Please see information regarding recruitment into ST3 ICM and the specialty person specification [here](#).

## **2.1. Simultaneous recruitment for Anaesthetics and ICM**

From the 2024/2025 application window onwards, you will now be able to accept two offers at the same time; an offer for Anaesthetics ST at the same time as ICM ST. The most important proviso is as follows – the two offers at the time of acceptance must be in the same region – this is non-negotiable.

The process of preferences and upgrades will still apply as in previous years. In the event of offers and ranking producing two offers in geographically separate areas (even if they are neighbouring regions) you would still need to choose one programme over another. This is a stipulation of Conference of Postgraduate Medical Deans (COPMeD) and has been a non-negotiable component of dual CCTs since 2012.

## **3. Application on Oriel**

The application form is available on the Oriel system. Applicants can access the Oriel user guide [here](#) for detailed information on the application.

Applicants are advised to refer to both the Oriel\_Applicant\_User\_Guide (For general guidance on how to navigate Oriel and technical help with the on-line application form) and the Medical Specialty Recruitment website (for general information about the administration of national recruitment processes).

Advertisements will appear on the Oriel recruitment system on **Wednesday 19th November 2025**. Applications will be accepted from **10:00AM (UK GMT) on Thursday 20th November 2025** until **16:00PM (UK GMT) on Thursday 11th December 2025**. Applications must be made through the Oriel system; applications will not be accepted in any other way. Oriel can be accessed [here](#).

## **Part 1 (Oriel Application Form)**

The application form is set up in a particular order, for the first part of the application from which is the personal section, this includes contact information, equality and diversity information and employment. Below is further information for some of the sections to help guide applicants.

### **3.1. Contact Information**

Contact regarding applications will be via Oriel. Applicants are to ensure the most up to date email address is put into this section. If there are any changes to your email address, then this can be updated during the recruitment process. If you are using an academic/work email, please ensure emails are not blocked with your IT team.

It is recommended that applicants regularly check their Oriel account during the recruitment process to make sure to not miss any information that is sent out via Oriel. Applicants are advised to add [noreply@oriel.nhs.uk](mailto:noreply@oriel.nhs.uk) to their safe senders list to prevent notification messages being sent to the email junk/spam folder. ANRO cannot take responsibility for applicants missing messages sent via Oriel.

### **3.2. Right to work in the UK**

All applicants are requested to produce valid right to work documents. Applicants who do not have valid right to work documents will need to apply for Tier 2 / Skilled Worker sponsorship.

From 1 July 2021, EU/EEA citizens will need to either provide confirmation that they have obtained EU settlement or pre-settled status, have another valid right to work visa (e.g., dependent visa) or will need to apply for Skilled Worker sponsorship.

Please note that medical practitioners are now part of the Shortage Occupation List, and the Health and Care visa route is available to medical and dental practitioners. For applicants who require sponsorship, it is important to be aware of the [guidance from the UK Home Office](#). ANRO cannot give advice on whether your specific immigration status makes you eligible, how you can change your status or how to apply for different types of visas.

### **3.3. Employment History**

All applicants should fill out their employment history when completing their application. When completing the employment history section of the application form, all previous clinical experience should be declared; this includes experience inside and outside of the UK, in both training and service posts. Applicants should also ensure that they detail any time spent out of work to ensure that there are no unexplained career gaps.

Applicants must have evidence of completion of all Stage 1 Domains of learning evidenced by the Stage 1 certificate or equivalent by the advertised post start for the vacancy or offer date (if not completed or in a current UK Anaesthetics/ACCS Anaesthetics Core Training Programme).

Applicants who do not meet this criterion will be longlisted out.

Failure to complete an employment history is tantamount to not fully completing the application form. Applicants who do not complete their employment history will be longlisted out.

It is not possible for an application to be amended after submittance; this includes the employment history. Please ensure that all information provided is correct and accurate.

## Part 2 (Oriel Application Form)

This part of the application form covers training history/ Previous training details, References, Fitness to Practice, Competences/Eligibility and Declarations. The information below is supplementary information to the questions in this section.

### 3.4. Reapplication to Specialty Training

Specialty training posts and programmes are not normally available to any doctor who has previously relinquished or been released or removed from that training post/programme. However, the information below should be considered.

### 3.5. Support for Reapplication to Specialty

If applicants have previously resigned or been removed from a Training Programme in **any** specialty, they will need to provide full details of the resignation/release/removal. This must be provided on the [Support for Reapplication to a Specialty Training Programme](#) form and approved by both the Head of School/Training Programme Director **and** Postgraduate Dean in the NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW where training was previously undertaken.

**This includes if applicants who have/or:**

- previously resigned from a training programme with satisfactory ARCP outcomes
- received an ARCP outcome 4 at ARCP and released from training.
- received an ARCP outcome 3 and did not take an extension to training, they will also be considered to have been released from training.

This evidence **must** be uploaded to an applicant's Oriel account via the *Document Upload* dashboard as *supporting evidence* and attached to the application **at the point of application**. A new form must be completed, with appropriate support for application, in each recruitment year. Forms completed in previous recruitment years will not be accepted.

Any applications from excluded trainees without submitted evidence **will not** progress any further in the recruitment process.

### 3.6. Support for Reapplication to Specialty Training in a Different Region

Trainees currently working in an Anaesthetics Training Programme, applying to continue their training in another NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW, without a break in service, will need to provide information relating to this. They must gain support from their current employing region by completing the [Support for Reapplication of Specialty Training in a Different Region form](#). This form exists to ensure that any applicant moving region is currently performing to the required standard (i.e., satisfactory progress at ARCP).

This evidence **must** be uploaded to Oriel via the *Document Upload* dashboard as *supporting evidence* and attached to the application **at the point of application**. A new form must be completed, with appropriate support for application, each recruitment year. Forms completed in previous recruitment years will not be accepted.

Any applications without submitted evidence **will not** progress any further in the recruitment process.

### 3.7. Flexibility in Deployment of Trainees (UK)

There are formalised processes to assist applicants to train in desired locations.

#### 3.7.1 Special Circumstances

A standardised national process is available for all specialty recruitment to ensure that applicants with special circumstances and a requirement to train in a specific region are treated in a fair and consistent way.

Any applicant who falls into one of the following eligibility criteria can apply to have their circumstances taken into consideration, allowing them to be pre allocated into a post, subject to it meeting the requirements of entering Anaesthetics training:

- **Criterion 1** – the applicant is the primary carer for someone who is disabled, as defined by the Equality Act 2010,
- **Criterion 2** – the applicant has a medical condition or disability for which ongoing follow up for the condition in the specified location is an *absolute* requirement.
- **Criterion 3** – the applicant is in the process of adopting a child where there is a requirement to remain in the current location

Applicants wishing to be considered for special circumstances pre allocation should ensure they state this on their Oriel application form and complete the Special Circumstances Application Form (available from the [Medical Specialty Training site](#)) and forward this, together with the appropriate supporting evidence as a single scanned document by email to [MDRS](#) as soon as their application has been submitted.

Full details can be found [here](#).

## 4. Part 3 and Self-Assessment

This part of the application form covers experience, qualifications, and the Self-Assessment questions. Applicants will be required to fill the Self-Assessment form out **at time of application**.

In a situation where the number of eligible applicants exceeds interview capacity, the score generated from the verified Self-Assessment is used as a shortlisting tool to determine whether applicants are invited to online interview.

Applicants can award themselves a **maximum of 50 marks** in unverified Self-Assessment.

ANRO are not at liberty to give advice to applicants on their scores/answers. Self-Assessment is a tool intended to reflect an applicant's strengths deemed important to higher training in Anaesthesia.

If an applicant feels they can justify giving a certain score, they are encouraged to put this score on their application form. If applicants require further advice, ANRO recommend applicants speak with their Educational Supervisor and/or College Tutor.

Please read the Self-Assessment Criteria and Guidance that is located under the ST4 section on our website [ANRO](#). A recording of the ST4 portfolio webinar and advice on the best way to approach this is available on the [RCoA website](#).

### 4.1. Unverified Self-Assessment

When completing their application, applicants will be required to complete Self-Assessment, which involves scoring themselves against the scoring criteria provided. This is considered unverified self-assessment; unverified scores will later be assessed by a clinical assessor during *Verified Self-Assessment*.

Applicants will not be required to upload any documents to support their self-assessment scores with their application form. They will be contacted after applications close with further instructions on where to upload their evidence.

It is imperative applicants answer the Self-Assessment questions accurately and honestly. Self-Assessment scores **cannot** be amended once an application is submitted on Oriel.

Applicants are expected to score themselves using the scores provided on the Oriel form and using supporting documents found on the [ANRO website](#). These documents include:

- Self-Assessment Criteria Grid
- Self-Assessment Guidance

- Portfolio Organisation Guidance

Applicants should ensure they are using the **2026 guidance**. Using previous and out-of-date guidance could result in applicants scoring themselves incorrectly and having their scores subsequently impacted during verification.

Clinical assessors will **also** use this guidance when completing verification. It is important applicants refer to this when scoring themselves initially.

Applicants are advised to award themselves a score which they are able to provide evidence to support. Where the evidence submitted is found not to support the score awarded, a clinical assessor will adjust the score accordingly during verification.

## 4.2. Document Upload

After applications close, applicants will be contacted by ANRO and asked to upload evidence to support the scores they have awarded themselves in Self-Assessment.

The Applicant Document Upload window runs from **Monday 5th January 2026 to Sunday 11th January 2026**. All evidence to support unverified self-assessment should be uploaded by applicants to Qpercom system. **Evidence submitted after this deadline or in any other way will not be considered.**

Applicants will not have further opportunities to upload supporting evidence. All evidence required to support Self-Assessment must be uploaded during this window.

Further guidance and instructions on accessing the portal and uploading evidence will be provided to applicants by ANRO at the beginning of the Document Upload window.

Failure to submit all evidence by the stated deadline will result in your application form being withdrawn by the recruitment team. It is recommended that you prepare your evidence alongside your application form.

Recruitment administrators will not be able to upload evidence on your behalf and once the deadline for submission has passed, your access will be withdrawn.

## 4.3. Verified Self-Assessment

Once the Document Upload window has concluded, all applicants who meet the required longlisting criteria will have their scores and evidence verified by a Clinical Assessor. Clinical assessors will use the same guidance and criteria which applicants should have used when completing their unverified Self-Assessment. These documents will be available [here](#) on the ANRO website throughout the recruitment process.

Verified Self-Assessment has a **maximum of 55 marks** available, inclusive of the 5 marks available in [Verified Self-Assessment Portfolio Organisation Score \(POS\)](#).

ANRO strongly advises applicants to ensure they have electronic copies of evidence in an appropriate format (PDF/JPG) in advance of the need to upload.

Verified Self-Assessment scores will be released on **Monday 2nd February 2026**.

Applicants will also receive their verified Self-Assessment scoresheets. These will include feedback and comments from the clinical assessor who verified their scores and evidence. Applicants are advised to add [feedback@qpersoft.com](mailto:feedback@qpersoft.com) to their safe senders list to prevent scoresheets being sent to the email junk/spam folder.

#### **4.4. Verified Self-Assessment Portfolio Organisation Score (POS)**

The Portfolio Organisation Score is scored **out of 5 points**. It covers organisation, planning and how the candidate has followed the accompanying guidance document. All applicants start with 5 points.

Applicants do not award themselves a POS, this score is awarded by the clinical assessor who verifies their self-assessment during verification.

Marks will be deducted if the portfolio upload does not follow the criteria set out in the guidance document. This includes the following:

- evidence is difficult to find, not labelled or unclear to the assessor.
- the number of documents per domain exceed the recommended 4 documents.
- uploads are of poor quality (difficult to read, upside down etc).

Any evidence must be presented or translated into English including letters from supervisors.

The same name must be used throughout the uploaded evidence. If you use two different names, make sure this is clearly explained i.e., birthname, married name etc.

The verified Self-Assessment Portfolio Organisation Scoring Framework can be found on the [ANRO website](#) along with the other Self-Assessment documents.

#### **4.5. Verified Self-Assessment Review Process**

On completion of self-assessment verification, applicants will be sent their verified scoresheet, together with feedback explaining any changes to their unverified score.

Applicants may have their score reviewed in any Self-Assessment scoring criteria domains where they feel there has been an error made.

Applicants may request a review of the score awarded to them in verification for any of the Self-Assessment domains where they feel an error has been made, or the score awarded during verification does not reflect the evidence they have provided, in line with the guidance and criteria.

Applicants must submit their request for a review through the Microsoft Form for which a link will be sent with their verified Self-Assessment scoresheet. Applicants should confirm through the form which domains they wish to be reviewed, including an explanation with the request as to why they are requesting a review of the domain score.

Applicants are also able to request a review of their Portfolio Organisation score if they feel an error has been made against the criteria set.

Reviews against scoring must be lodged within 72 hours of the scores being sent to applicants. No additional evidence can be submitted. The review should highlight why the applicant feels that the score should be adjusted, based on the evidence that was **initially** submitted and verified.

Reviews received after the 72-hour deadline will not be considered.

The outcome of the review is final and there is no further recourse for dissatisfied applicants.

Disagreements over self-assessment scores fall out of scope of the [Medical and Dental Recruitment and Selection \(MDRS\) Complaints Policy](#).

The review window in which applicants can request a review is **Tuesday 3rd February 2026 (10am) to Friday 6th February 2026 (10am)**.

## **5. Next Steps in the process**

Once applications are submitted on Oriel, applicants will be longlisted against the Person Specification and invited to upload evidence to the Qpercom system. **IMPORTANT TO NOTE:** this does not mean that applicants have been longlisted at this stage.

## **6. Longlisting**

All applications will be assessed against the essential criteria outlined in the ST4 Anaesthetics Person Specification (2026) which can be found [here](#).

Applicants that fail to demonstrate that they meet all the essential criteria by the closing date for applications will not progress any further. It is the applicant's responsibility to fully demonstrate in the application form their eligibility for the post applied for.

### **6.1. Assessment of Completion of Stage 1 Training**

All applicants to ST4 posts are required to provide evidence of achievement of Stage 1 Domains of Learning or equivalent at time of application; OR that they will have achieved these by time of appointment in August 2026. This can be demonstrated in the below ways:

- **Currently in a UK Anaesthetics training post:** Applicants who are currently in a UK approved Anaesthetics training programme (NTN holder) and who will achieve all required Stage 1 Domains of Learning evidenced by Stage 1 Certificate by intended start date.
- **Currently employed in a UK Anaesthetics Post:** Applicants who are currently in a UK Anaesthetics post and who will achieve all required Stage 1 Domains of Learning evidenced by a Stage 1 Certificate / EQ1A/EQ1B Certificate by time of initial offers.

Any applicants in a CT3 top-up year are expected to provide a signoff for expected completion of CT3 top-up training by a UK Anaesthetics College Tutor at time of application. Please note these applicants **still** must provide a Stage 1/Stage 1 Equivalence Certificate by initial offers.

**NB: The Core Level Training Certificate/Confirmation of Core Level Equivalence Certificate confirms completion of core training on the 2010 Anaesthetics Curriculum and is required as part of the sign-off of the EQ1A.**

- **Already completed UK Anaesthetics training:** Applicants who have already completed a UK approved Anaesthetics training programme and have a Stage 1 Certificate/ EQ1A/EQ1B Certificate.

**NB: The Core Level Training Certificate/Confirmation of Core Level Equivalence Certificate confirms completion of core training on the 2010 Anaesthetics Curriculum and is required as part of the sign-off of the EQ1A.**

- **Anybody who is not covered by the above:** Applicants who do not fall into any of the above categories will be required to demonstrate that their experience to date has enabled them to successfully complete capabilities equivalent to those of a trainee in a UK approved Anaesthetics core training programme. Applicants will need to provide evidence by time of initial offers (via Oriel) by submitting a completed Confirmation of Stage 1 Equivalence Certificate. This certificate can be found on the [RCoA website](#).

Applicants who must provide their Stage 1 / Stage 1 Equivalence Certificate by initial offers will have evidence requested from them by ANRO prior to offers being released. The deadline to provide this evidence is **13:00pm (UK GMT) Friday 10th April 2026**. Evidence submitted after this deadline will **not** be accepted.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all evidence of Stage 1 / Stage 1 Equivalence is provided satisfactorily and in full to ANRO when requested and by the above deadline.

Applicants unable to provide evidence of achievement of Stage 1 Training or equivalent by the correct deadline will be considered to have not met the eligibility criteria and their application will be withdrawn from the recruitment process.

Further information on evidencing completion of Stage 1 Training can be found on the [Stage 1 Training](#) page of the RCoA website.

## 6.2. Achievement of the Full Primary FRCA

All applicants are required to demonstrate achievement of the Full Primary FRCA exam to be considered eligible to start specialty training.

Applicants should present evidence of the Full Primary FRCA exam to ANRO **by the date of initial offers**. ANRO will request applicants demonstrate they have achieved the full exam prior to this date, in line with the examination dates that can be found on the RCoA website below:

[FRCA MCQ Examinations](#)

[FRCA OSCE Examinations](#)

[FRCA SOE Examinations](#)

Failure to provide evidence of a pass in the Primary FRCA by the deadline will result in withdrawal from the recruitment process.

**Important:** The Final FRCA will **not** be accepted as a substitute for the Primary exam.

## 7. Preferencing

At the time of application, applicants will be asked to preference one of the three clusters (England and Wales **or** Northern Ireland **or** Scotland) that they are prepared to work in. An applicant's choice of cluster **cannot** be amended once an application has been submitted.

Successful applicants will **only** be considered for posts in the cluster region they have preferenced at time of application. Applicants can only make one application for one of the three clusters.

Should posts be available after the recycling of offers has concluded, a clearing round will be conducted. Please refer to the Clearing section.

Applicants will have the opportunity to preference more specific geographic locations within their chosen cluster during [Sub-Preferences](#).

A list of the NHS England Local Offices, NES, NIMDTA and HEIW posts recruiting at this level are available on the [ANRO website](#).

Please be reminded that the recruitment process is competitive with more applicants applying than posts available.

## 7.1. Deferment of Start Date

Deferments to start dates will only be considered on statutory grounds as stated in the [Gold Guide](#). Deferment for any other reason will not be permitted.

If an applicant wishes to request a deferment to their start date, they must declare this on their application form. If an applicant accepts an offer they should contact their training region's NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW as soon as possible regarding the deferment. ANRO are not responsible for deferments to start date.

## 7.2. Document Upload

As applicants progress through the recruitment process, they may be required to upload additional evidence to their application on Oriel to allow ANRO to assess their eligibility.

If applicants are required to do this, then to help ANRO, the following steps must be followed. Applicants must:

- ensure the document is appropriately named.
- ensure the document is uploaded into the correct section.
- upload the document as one single upload and not as multiple pages where possible.
- ensure all required documentation is uploaded by the set deadlines.

ANRO reserves the right to request re-submission of documentation if the above process is not followed.

**IMPORTANT: Applicants are advised not to upload anything other than documents to support the longlisting process at this stage.**

## 8. Invitation to Online Interview

Applicants who are successful at both the Longlisting and Self-Assessment stage, will be invited to attend an online interview. Applicants will be invited to attend *one* online interview and will be considered for appointment within their preferred cluster **only**.

Applicants who choose the England and Wales cluster will be invited to attend an online interview of their choice in these nations. The region within the England and Wales cluster that an applicant interviews with will not affect any offer they are made in the England and Wales cluster, should they be successful at interview.

Applicants who choose the Northern Ireland cluster will be invited to attend an online interview conducted by Northern Ireland and will be considered for posts in Northern Ireland only.

Applicants who chose the Scotland cluster will be invited to attend an online interview conducted by Scotland and will be considered for posts in Scotland only.

A list of all the online interview dates for the interview window can be found on the [ANRO website](#).

### **8.1. Booking an Online Interview**

If an applicant is invited to attend an online interview, they will be required to log into their Oriel account and use the self-service functionality to book an online interview on a date and time of their choosing, subject to availability.

When booking an online interview slot, it is strongly recommended to avoid booking from a mobile device or on internet browsers that have reached the end of their product support lifecycle such as Internet Explorer as these are unlikely to be supported.

The Online Interview booking window is **Monday 2nd March 2026 to Thursday 5th March 2026**. Slots will be available on a first come; first served basis.

Applicants who incur any problems whilst booking an online interview slot should contact ANRO immediately using the Freshdesk portal. [Support : midlands.freshdesk.com](#)

### **8.2. Adjustments under the Equality Act 2010**

All recruiters are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate applicants at online interview provided these are made known in advance. Applicants who require adjustments (e.g., extra time) will be required to submit supporting evidence to substantiate the required adjustment. This evidence will need to be uploaded to Oriel via the Document Upload dashboard as “Supporting evidence” and attached to the application form at the point of application.

**ANRO will be unable to review the request if supporting evidence is not provided.**

When booking interview slots, applicants are advised to add detail of their reasonable adjustments as a confirmation on their online booking notes. Failure to provide this information in your booking notes may result in ANRO not being able to accommodate your adjustment.

Any additional adjustment requests, not already in your application form, need to be reviewed by ANRO, applicants will need to contact ANRO using the Freshdesk portal. [Support : midlands.freshdesk.com](#)

Once applicants have booked a slot for an online interview, ANRO expects the applicant to forward any reasonable adjustment requests to the lead contact of the region that is conducting their interview.

If applicants would like their assessors to be aware of the reasons for the reasonable adjustment requests, they will need to let the lead contact of the region that is conducting their interview know when they contact them.

*Further information is available on the [MDRS Website](#).*

### **8.3. Confirmation of booking**

Once applicants have booked their online interview, they will receive an automated confirmation of booking message in Oriel and a secondary automated message will be sent to their registered email address.

If this confirmation is not received, applicants are advised to log into their Oriel account to confirm if the booking process was completed in its entirety.

### **8.4. Online Interviews**

The online interview window is between **Monday 16th March 2026 to Friday 10th April 2026**.

**Please note** regions will select dates for their interviews within the specified window. It does not mean there are interviews on each day of the window.

All online interview dates can be found on the [ANRO](#) website.

If applicants are invited to participate in an online interview, instructions regarding access to the online system, proof of ID and participation guidelines will be provided in due course.

If applicants are invited to an online interview and are unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, they must contact the region directly to ascertain whether alternative arrangements can be made. It is important to note that alternative arrangements cannot be guaranteed.

### **8.5. Online System and Interview Format**

All online interviews will be a two-station format performed online via Qpercom. Candidates will be assessed in a clinical judgement station and a general interview station against the domains described. Each station will last 15 minutes and the whole process should take 50 minutes. This includes ID checks prior to interview, 5 minutes reading for the clinical judgement station, and 5 minutes waiting prior to the general station.

There is no Curriculum Vitae (CV) station. Your CV will have been assessed as part of your self-assessment portfolio.

Before the online interview date, applicants will receive information regarding how to log into the Qpercom system as well as a walkthrough video showing how the system works and looks. Applicants will be expected to login before their interview date to complete a compatibility test on their device for the Qpercom system.

Each station is assessed by 2 assessors who score the applicant independently in each of the scoring domains with a global rating score.

Applicants are permitted to make notes during the interview process but are also allowed to bring notes with them to support them in answering the interview questions. Applicants should be advised of this in their invitation to interview. This is open to all applicants.

Interview panels should be advised that notes are permitted.

Notes should only be on paper and **not** on an electronic device and should be prepared by the applicant i.e a book would not be counted as notes.

Applicants should be advised that while notes are permitted, relying on these too much could disrupt the flow of the interview and engagement with the panel members. Applicants should ensure that when using notes, that they only use these to answer the question being asked and don't just read everything they have prepared on the subject area.

## Online Interview Domains

Applicants will be assessed and scored on a set of domains in relation to a clinical scenario and a general interview. The two stations are:

- Clinical Judgement (5 minutes reading time & 15 minutes interview, 15 marks per assessor and 10 marks per assessor for Global Rating, **50 marks in total**)
- General interview (15 minutes, 15 marks per assessor and 10 marks per assessor for Global Rating, **50 marks in total**)

This makes the total interview score out of 100. This is demonstrated in the scoring matrix which can be found on the [ANRO website](#).

There is no Curriculum Vitae (CV) station. Your CV will have been assessed as part of the self-assessment process.

At the end of each online interview day, all scores are reviewed by the panel, the Recruitment Lead, and/or Clinical Lead. Any significant discrepancies in scores between assessors are highlighted and discussed. Where discrepancies in scores are deemed to be justified - specifically, each assessor has scored consistently within set scoring parameters - the score

stands; where deemed not to be justified, the score is amended. An amendment is a rare occurrence.

### **Clinical Judgement Station (15 minutes)**

This station assesses the domains of Clinical Judgement & Decision Making, Reflective Practice and Working Under Pressure. These have equal weighting and score 5 points each. This is per assessor so both assessors scores could amount to a maximum of 30 marks. Each assessor will also give a global rating score out of 10 (see below).

Applicants will be given a clinical scenario prior to entering the interview room. The applicant will have 5 minutes preparation time to read and digest the information. Applicants may take notes during this time. The clinical scenario will have information added in by the Assessor at various points for the applicant to consider.

### **General Interview (15 minutes)**

This station assesses the domains of Professional Behaviour & Communication Skills, Teamworking and Demonstration of generic professional capability either Safety and QI **or** Research and Data **or** Education and Training **or** Health Promotion. These have equal weighting and score 5 points each per assessor. Each assessor will also give a global rating score out of 10 (see below).

Applicants will be asked questions around their training to date. Candidates will be given the opportunity to demonstrate their achievements during Stage 1 training or equivalent as well as demonstrate their skills in leadership, teamworking, their knowledge of the wider NHS and its influence on anaesthesia as a specialty.

### **Global Rating Score**

This relates to the assessor's professional judgement of the overall performance of the applicant across the interview station. A global rating score is awarded per assessor in both the clinical and general interview stations. This is scored out of 10 per assessor.

Further information on this domain can be found in the appropriate scoring guidance document available on the [ANRO Website](#).

### **8.6. Observers present during the Online Interview**

As well as the two assessors, there may be observers during an interview. These include Lay Representative, External Assessors for the RCoA and consultants or senior trainees learning to assess for national recruitment. These roles ensure that quality, consistency, and standardisation is present throughout the interview process.

Only the two assessors on the panel will take part in scoring the applicant. Observers have no role in the assessment of an applicant nor in deciding the appointability of an applicant at any

stage of the process. Any observer will have their camera and microphone off and will not be visible to the candidate once they have been introduced at the start of the interview station.

## 8.7. Appointability

For an applicant to be deemed successful they need to score a **minimum of 60 out of 100** in the online interview.

The applicants Verified Self-Assessment score will then be combined with their interview score. For further information on scores and ranks, please refer to [Offers](#).

If an applicant is given a Global Rating score of 1 from each of the assessors in one of the stations, the applicant will potentially be vetoed. However, an applicant could score two 1s and a decision could be made not to veto. A discussion between the assessors and the Clinical Lead will take place for any applicants who could potentially be vetoed, and the final decision will rest with the Clinical Lead.

Applicants can score above the national cut-off and still be vetoed out of the process for serious concerns around behaviour, performance, and dangerous decisions. Vetoed applicants will not be considered for appointment in any region.

- **'Serious concerns'** indicated on the scoresheet on any station by either or both assessors (Serious concerns will only be indicated if an applicant's response to a scenario highlights genuine patient safety issues, probity concerns or behaviours that could not be easily modified in their early training.)
- **Low scores of 25%** (or next highest denomination based on scoring structure) on any station by either or both Assessors. This may result in a referral to the applicant's Responsible Officer, where applicable. If the applicant is not currently employed in the UK, the Lead Postgraduate Dean may be notified.

A discussion between the assessors and the Clinical Lead will take place for any applicants who have any of the above raised before a final decision is made.

## 8.8. Online Interview Courses and Websites

ANRO and the RCoA do **not** recommend potential applicants book commercial courses, sign up to websites or purchase advice and guidance books specifically aimed at doctors undertaking the Anaesthetics selection process.

The RCoA has prepared free guidance for preparation of the ST4 interview which will be available on the [RCoA website](#) prior to the interview in 2026.

## 9. Sub-Preferences

Once an applicant is invited to an online interview, they will be asked to make more detailed programme and geographical preferences, known as Sub-Preferences. Sub-Preferences

must be made on Oriel, these Sub-Preferences will be used when offers are made. Please be aware that Sub-Preferences expressed in any other way will not be taken into consideration.

For applicants allocated to the England and Wales cluster, they have the ability to rank Sub-Preferences across the two nations and can be considered for appointment in any of these nations. This means they are not restricted to one single region for appointment and can rank their Sub-Preferences with increased flexibility. There is no standardised level of detail for Sub-Preferencing in this cluster so applicants may note that some regions provide more information than others. The ANRO inform all regions that they must provide as much detail as they can to assist applicants when ranking their Sub-Preferences.

Applicants should include all Sub-Preferences they wish to be considered for appointment to in the “*Preference*” box.

If applicants place any of the Sub-Preference options in the “*Not Wanted*” box, they will **never** receive an offer for these rotations/programmes, even if this means that they are bypassed in the offers process and a lower ranked applicant is made an offer. ANRO therefore suggest that applicants should only move Sub-Preferences to the “*Not Wanted*” box if they are certain they would not want to receive an offer for that rotation/programme.

Applicants that fail to rank their Sub-Preferences on Oriel should expect that they will **not** be made an offer at any point in the process.

The Sub-Preferencing window will be opened at regular periods. The window will initially be open from **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026** (this date can be subject to change – applicants will be informed of any change via e-mail direct from Oriel and a message will be posted on the ANRO website). ANRO will then close the window at **23:59pm (UK BST) Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026** to allow for the preparation of offers to take place. Once the first wave of offers has been released, the Sub-Preferencing window will be re-opened in between each offer recycle to allow applicants to update their Sub-Preferences should they wish. This process is described in *Upgrading of Offers* and will continue up until the Upgrading deadline at **16:00pm (UK BST)** on **Thursday 23rd April 2026**.

## 9.1. When to Rank Sub-Preferences

All applicants who have been invited to attend an online interview should rank their sub-preferences. Sub-preferences should be ranked prior to date of initial offers and in the process described above.

Failure to rank sub-preferences will result in no offer being made, regardless of eligibility. Applicants who do not rank sub-preferences prior to initial offers will be able to go into their application and rank sub-preferences when the window is opened again following the initial iteration of offers.

Being invited to rank sub-preferences is not confirmation of an offer being made. Applicants who are not made an offer during the initial wave may still be matched to a preference during recycling.

## 10. Offers

Applicants who have preferred England & Wales will be ranked in a single national list based on their performance throughout the selection processes. Applicants who have preferred Northern Ireland **or** Scotland will be ranked against other applicants who preference Northern Ireland **or** Scotland. Offers are made in rank order based on the national ranking.

Tied ranks occur when applicants achieve the same overall score. The applicants' unique rank will be achieved in the following order:

1. Overall Score
2. Interview Score
3. Global Rating
4. Professional Behaviours and Communication
5. Clinical Judgement & Decision Making
6. Reflective Practice
7. Demonstration of GPCs
8. Team Working
9. Working under Pressure
10. Self-Assessment

The first wave of offers will be sent out by ANRO no later than **17:00pm (UK BST) on Tuesday 14th April 2026**. We ask that applicants do not contact ANRO about offers prior to this date, as it could delay the release.

Applicants will be given 48 hours (exclusive of weekends) to respond to an offer. Applicants have the option to accept, decline or hold.

If an applicant fails to respond to an offer within the 48-hour window, the offer will expire, and the applicant will be deemed to have declined the offer.

Please note, if applicants find themselves in this position, ANRO are only able to reinstate the application *status* back to Interview Complete if requested, so the applicant can be included in the upcoming offer recycling. ANRO are unable to reinstate the *original* offer.

Once an applicant accepts an Anaesthetics post they will be withdrawn from any other specialties within the same recruitment round and will not receive any further offers from them.

Offers that are declined will be recycled and offered in rank order to the next eligible applicants.

Only **one** offer can be held at any one time, across all specialty applications in the same recruitment round. If applicants are already holding an offer, and try to hold another offer, the original held post will be automatically declined by the system. If they choose to hold an offer, they can hold this up until **13:00pm (UK BST) on Wednesday 22nd April 2026**. Please be aware that ANRO are unable to reverse this.

Before this deadline, applicants must go back into Oriel and make a final decision on the offer. Any offers still held when the deadline is reached will be deemed to have been declined and the system will automatically change the status to Offer Declined.

After the hold deadline has passed, any offers made will only have the option of being accepted or declined.

For further information, please refer to the Medical Specialty Recruitment website page on [Offers](#).

### **10.1. Upgrading of Offers**

Up to the offers stage, applicants will have the ability to rank preferences for training programmes and geographies within their allocated cluster. If an applicant ranks highly enough to be made an offer, this will be made to the highest ranked preference that is available when their rank is reached. If they are happy with this offer, they can choose to simply accept it.

However, if an applicant would prefer the option of a higher ranked preference, should they become available, they can opt into upgrading. The upgrading option is available to all offers that have been held or accepted, but not where an offer has been declined. An applicant who has accepted or held an offer can opt in or out of Upgrading at any time during the window which runs until **16:00pm (UK BST) on Thursday 23rd April 2026**.

If an applicant opts into upgrading and a higher preference post becomes available, subject to their ranking, the upgrade will be automatic. They will be placed in the higher preference post *without* ANRO making any further contact with them and they *will not* be given 48 hours to decide whether they wish to accept or decline the new post. If an upgrade is made, the previously held or accepted post will be released and will be reoffered to another applicant. This automatic upgrade **cannot** be reversed. Applicants must opt **out** of upgrading if they do not wish to be considered for a higher preferred post than the one they have.

Once applicants have been upgraded, they will be contacted via an automated email message to inform them of this. Details of the upgrade will be made available on the Oriel System.

**Once the upgrading deadline has passed, no further upgrades will be offered, even if a higher preference becomes available at a later date. Upgrading of offers will not**

continue beyond the stated Upgrade deadline, even if a preferred post becomes available later. Vacant posts will be offered to the next eligible applicant who has preference the post and is yet to receive an offer, not to applicants who have already accepted a post. This can include new or additional posts submitted to ANRO after the upgrade deadline.

## 10.2. Offer Exchanges/Enhanced Preferencing

There is increased applicant flexibility for upgrading of offers as described in Section 7.2. Any applicant that has accepted or held an offer, and opted into upgrades, can amend their preference options as many times as they like up until the upgrade deadline. Applicants will be able to re-rank their preference options so that they can move lower ranked preferences, or preferences originally not wanted, into a higher ranked preference than their current offer. This will then mean that these newly ranked preferences are considered for an upgrade in subsequent offer iterations

***Please note: Any changes to preferences made between the offers' algorithm being run and offers being released will not be considered until the next offers match is run.***

The above process will continue up until the Upgrade deadline at **16:00pm (UK BST)** on **Thursday 23rd April 2026**.

Applicants will **not** be able to make changes to their preferences once the Upgrade deadline has passed.

## 11. Clearing

Clearing will be available to applicants who were deemed appointable in England & Wales and Northern Ireland who have not been made an offer in their chosen region. It will not include applicants who have been made an offer that they chose to decline. Clearing will only be run if there are available posts left in the England & Wales and Northern Ireland clusters.

Clearing will not be available to applicants who were deemed appointable in Scotland.

If any applicants are eligible for clearing, they will be contacted through Oriel, by ANRO, and will be asked to preference the available clearing posts. ST4 clearing posts and offers will **not** be subject to a further assessment.

Applicants will only be able to accept, **or** decline offers made in clearing. They cannot be held, and they will not be upgraded (as the deadlines will have passed), even if a higher ranked clearing post becomes available at a later date.

Applicants will receive a maximum of one offer in clearing. If this offer is declined, they will not receive any further offers.

## 12. References

Referees should be contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm that they are happy to support the application and provide a reference. Applicants are required to give details of three referees who have supervised their clinical training in the last 2 years.

The deadline for submitting references on Oriel is at **16:00pm (UK BST) Wednesday 6th May 2026**.

It is not the responsibility of ANRO or the region where an applicant's post is based to chase up outstanding references that may be requested once the Oriel deadline has passed. This responsibility lies solely with the applicant.

Once the deadline for submission of references to Oriel passes, the responsibility then moves to the employing organisation; any outstanding references will be requested from the referee by the employing organisation when they complete all pre-employment checks.

### 12.1. Reference Requests

Reference requests are an automated process in Oriel. A request will be triggered and sent electronically to an applicant's nominated referees when they accept or, accept with upgrades an offer of Anaesthetics training. To ensure that the requests are not blocked or filtered by their referees' email providers, applications are strongly advised to inform their referees to add [noreply@oriel.nhs.uk](mailto:noreply@oriel.nhs.uk) to their email whitelist.

Referees are required to submit references electronically, using the online referee portal in Oriel. Applicants will be advised, via their Oriel portal, when their referee has submitted a reference.

Should a referee have any issues accessing the request, please contact ANRO directly.

### 12.2. Changing Your Nominated Referee

For any references that have not yet been submitted applicants are able to update the details of, or change, their nominated referees. However, if a referee has already submitted the reference, applicants will not be able to make any changes to their details.

If changes to the email address for a referee is made, a new reference request will be sent to the newly provided email address, and the original request will be withdrawn.

## 13. Feedback

Applicants will be given feedback throughout the recruitment process and will not need to make a formal request to receive it.

Applicants who are rejected at the longlisting stage will be advised of the reason their application was rejected.

Verified Self-Assessment scores and scoresheets are sent to applicants once verification is complete. These will include feedback and comments from the clinical assessor who verified their scores and evidence. Applicants are advised to add [feedback@qpersoft.com](mailto:feedback@qpersoft.com) to their safe senders list to prevent scoresheets being sent to the email junk/spam folder. Total Verified Self-Assessment Score can also be found under the “Shortlist” tab of the Application Summary.

Overall scores will be published in an applicant’s Oriel account against their ST4 Anaesthetics application up to 5 working days after the initial offer date. This will be found under the “Interview” tab in their Application Summary and includes Total Interview Score, Total Self-Assessment Score, and the combined overall score (which is the Interview and Verified Self-Assessment score combined, this will be labelled “Interview Score”). The breakdown of the combined score into Interview and Self-Assessment can be found by clicking the “view station scores” button in this tab.

Detailed guidance on how to locate or view these scores is contained in the [Oriel Applicant User Handbook](#).

All applicants will receive their interview feedback scoresheets within 7 working days of initial offers. We ask for consideration to be given to ANRO staff by applicants in busy periods as their scoresheets could take longer to receive. We advise applicants to add [feedback@qpersoft.com](mailto:feedback@qpersoft.com) to their safe senders list to prevent scoresheets being sent to the email junk/spam folder.

If applicants do not receive their scoresheet, they will need to contact [ANRO](#) to request them.

There is no further feedback that can be provided after scoresheets have been received.

## 14. Offers of Employment & Pre-Employment Checks

The offer and allocation of a Training Programme referred to above is **not** an offer of employment. An employment contract detailing the terms and conditions of employment will be issued by the responsible employing organisation and is made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. An applicant’s offer of employment will include the name of their

employer, the start date and length of the period of employment, the location, the hours, the minimum rate of remuneration and the notice period applicable.

Information regarding pay, hours, sick pay, and annual leave entitlements, notice period, study leave, pension scheme etc. are set out in the national terms and conditions available from NHS Employers. A framework for a written contract of employment for Anaesthetic specialty registrars is also available from the BMA. Individual NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW websites may also provide additional local information and links to individual employer websites.

The employing organisations carry out several pre-employment checks before an offer of employment can be confirmed. These will include verification of identity, registration, and qualifications, right to work (immigration), employment history and employment reference checks (these are different from the clinical reference checks that the NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW needs), a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and an occupational health check. Some of these (verification of identify, registration and qualifications and right to work for example) may also be undertaken by the NHS England Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW during the recruitment process.

## **15. Complaints Procedure**

All National Recruitment Offices use a nationally agreed process for handling complaints about recruitment. If an applicant feels their application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, they should explore this route.

Complaints should be made in line with the MDRS Complaints Policy and Procedures. This can be found within the [MDRS Complaints Policy page](#) on the Medical Training website. A Complaints Policy Submission form is also available on this page.

## **16. Raising Concerns**

Applicants wishing to raise concerns about any part of the recruitment process, where this falls outside the scope of the complaints policy should forward these, in confidence to [MDRS](#).

Concerns raised without detail are difficult to investigate due to the volume of applications received. Applicants are therefore requested to provide details of the specialty and, where applicable, the applicants concerned. Any information provided would be treated in the utmost confidence.