



# ST3 Recruitment 2018

## Re-offering Frequently Asked Questions

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1.0	8 May 2018	Original version
2.0	10 May 2018	Section 6 added on outcome of offers – responding, preferences and upgrades Extra detail added to 5.9 on Tier 2



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## 1 Introduction

This document has been written to address as many queries from trainees as possible about the period of re-offering caused by the error in scoring and ranking discovered after initial offers had been made.

We would also like to reiterate our sincere apology to all those caught up in this issue and assure you all that we do not underestimate the upset it has caused. Your welfare is of paramount importance and we hope you are able to support each other in these difficult times.

This has been drafted in partnership with organisations responsible in each of the four nations for medical training and recruitment (Health Education England, Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency, NHS Education for Scotland, Wales Deanery), the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine and the British Medical Association.

If you cannot find the answer to your query in the document, please email [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk).

## 2 Timeline

The table below shows the anticipated timetable for what will happen during the reoffering period:

Event	Timescale
Application statuses are reverted on the Oriel system back to the pre-offer state ('Interview complete') by the Oriel system providers	by 2pm on Wed 9 May
Corrected scores and ranks for each RCP-coordinated recruitment are uploaded by RCP to the Oriel system and trainees notified via email by RCP	Afternoon of Wed 9 May
First set of offers made for all affected specialties – offers will be released throughout the afternoon with timing variable as each specialty can be confirmed – this is expected to be between 12-6pm	Thurs 10 May (pm)
Response deadline for first set of offers (the exact time will vary on when on Thursday the offers are released and will be 48 hours, not including the weekend)	Mon 14 May
Second set of offers made – as before this will happen throughout the afternoon	Tues 15 May (pm)
Holding deadline – this has been set so all trainees can see within the two iterations of offers whether they will be offered their preferred specialty	Thurs 17 May (11am)
Response deadline for second set of offers (the exact time will vary as before)	Thurs 17 May
Third reiteration of offers made – if possible some offers may start the day before	Fri 18 May
Upgrading deadline – after this time it will not be possible for any further upgrades to be made and all offers accepted can be confirmed	Fri 18 May (6pm)
Further iterations offers – whilst it is expected that nearly all offers will be resolved within the previous week, if necessary further iterations of offers will be made to match trainees to unfilled posts	from Mon 21 May



## 2.1 National clearing timeline

National clearing, including all offers, will be managed by the RCP:

Event	Timescale
Final offers for specialties which involve national clearing (acute internal medicine, cardiology, endocrinology and diabetes, geriatric medicine, renal medicine)	Mon 21 May
National clearing open to preference programmes – open for 48 hours	by Wed 22 May
First set of clearing offers made	by Friday 24 May
Deadline for first set of clearing offers (this will be earlier if offers can start earlier than 22 May)	Tue 29 May
Further clearing offers – most clearing offers will be made in the first round but further iterations will be made as necessary to match trainees with unfilled posts	from Wed 30 May

## 3 Frequently asked questions – cause and extent of issue

### 3.1 What has happened

An error in the process for uploading scores to ST3 medical specialties coordinated by the RCP has resulted in most trainees' final score being incorrect and having a knock on effect on their ranking. Two sets of scores were transposed which means that they have been applied to the wrong question. The alteration to the total score is due to the variable weighting applied to each question.

The scores that were transposed were:

- Station 2 – interviewer 1's second question score with interviewer 2's first question score
- Station 3 – the same issue as above

In most cases the effect on the ranking and total score will be comparatively small but as even small changes can make a difference to the offers process we are not underestimating the impact this could have.

#### 3.1.1 Clinical oncology and intensive care medicine

No issues with scores and ranks but due to crossover these specialties will be affected as trainees for medical specialties may have different outcomes to their original offer.

### 3.2 How did this happen?

A spreadsheet error was made in transferring data from one system to another. Data is downloaded into a spreadsheet from the digital marking system used at interview. This is then copied into another spreadsheet which is used to check that appointability criteria have been applied in accordance with the rules.

This data is then transferred into a new sheet with a different format to be uploaded to Oriol. It was at this point that the error occurred as there was an error in some of the formulas which transferred data from one sheet to the next.

This resulted in two sets of marks being mixed up and, as a result, the wrong weighting being applied to the wrong mark in these instances. This has led to the total score used for ranking being slightly different for most trainees with resulting incorrect rankings given for a significant number of trainees.

There is a checking procedure followed each time a set of scores are confirmed as ready to upload to Oriol, but when the spot checks were made between the digital scoring system and the spreadsheet, these were incorrectly made against the first spreadsheet rather than the second; ie before the data had been transposed.

### 3.3 Was this an error with an IT system?

No, this was a human error caused by an incorrect formula in the spreadsheet used to transfer data to Oriol, which was not picked up before confirming it as ready to use. The digital scoring and Oriol systems were nothing to do with the error and there is no suggestion of an error with either of these systems.

### 3.4 How and when was the error spotted?

Feedback with the scores and comments made by each interviewer were emailed to all trainees on Wednesday 2 May. At this point trainees now had feedback of the scores uploaded to Oriol and via the digital scoring system. This was the first time in this process that trainees were able to check scores from both sources against each other and



realise there were discrepancies. A candidate email received on the morning of 3 May prompted this to be checked and the error was realised.

### 3.5 Have recruitment rounds in previous years been affected?

No, we are confident in the results from previous years, the error occurred this year when the spreadsheet used was adapted to be more compatible with the digital scoring system. It was in this adaptation where the error occurred and checking procedures were not adequately applied.

### 3.6 I received feedback via Oriel and a PDF with the interviewer comments, which is correct?

The PDF with the interviewer comments is produced directly from the digital scoring system and is correct. The error occurred when transferring scores from this system to Oriel and so the scores on Oriel will be slightly different for most trainees.

Please note that the total raw score (out of 60) reported on Oriel is correct as it was a case of two scores being mixed up between questions.

### 3.7 Why did the announcement go out on the Friday afternoon before a bank holiday weekend?

We appreciate that the timing of the communication was very bad timing for most people. However, we decided that it would be even worse to keep the information to ourselves for three days just as we know many people will be making important choices about their careers and lives. We felt it was better to communicate at the first opportunity and be as transparent as early as possible.

We found out about the issue on Thursday, and worked as fast as possible to identify the extent and nature of the problem and how to fix it. We decided it was important to resolve how this could be addressed in the fairest way possible and put the technical arrangements in place. This process was done quickly in liaison with the four nations and the Oriel system provider and but it took until Friday afternoon to be complete which was when we communicated.

### 3.8 Who is affected?

This has affected all trainees found to be appointable for the 24 RCP-coordinated medical specialties at ST3 level. Although there is no suggestion of any errors with the process for clinical oncology and intensive care medicine, due to the high crossover in trainees applying to one of these specialties and one of the RCP-coordinated specialties it is necessary for offers for these specialties to be re-run.

### 3.9 Who is not directly affected?

The national **CMT/ACCS-AM** process is **not** affected as a different upload template was used which did not have an incorrect formula and so these offers are completely unaffected.

Anyone applying just to be benchmarked for an **academic clinical fellowship (ACF)** programme is unaffected because there is no question regarding the appointability outcome. If you were originally deemed appointable this stands and your ACF programme can be confirmed.



We recognise that there are a number of other specialties/vacancies where there may be a degree of crossover in applications with the affected specialties. The decision has been made that any issues that arise from crossovers will be managed on an individual basis to ensure trainees are supported.

### **3.10 I applied to a specialty in the readvertised round for ST1/CT1 specialties (eg general practice), how will this application be affected?**

Offers between the two rounds are unaffected so, if you accepted an offer for a specialty in this round, you can still be considered in the re-offer period.

If you declined an offer in the readvertised round for ST1/CT1 specialties on the basis that you were made an ST3 offer, we advise you to wait for the outcome of offers from the re-offer period as many trainees will not see a change. However, you are welcome to contact the lead recruiter for the relevant specialty (eg the GP National Recruitment Office) to look at your individual circumstances and what can be done at that stage.

### **3.11 I applied to an ST3 medical specialty in Northern Ireland as well as to the RCP-coordinated process, how will my applications be affected?**

The circumstances will depend on the stage your Northern Ireland application reached:

- If you accepted a Northern Ireland offer, your RCP-coordinated application will not be eligible to be considered for a re-offer.
- If you declined an offer for Northern Ireland on the basis that you had accepted another offer, you should wait for the outcome of the re-offers period as in most cases an offer will be able to be remade. However, if you are not successful in being made a re-offer, you can contact the RCP so we can review your individual circumstances. We will liaise with the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency to assess your situation and the options available.

### **3.12 Is the appointable/not appointable outcome affected?**

No. While non-appointable trainees may have their score altered, the error did not affect the application of the appointability criteria. Decisions communicated about appointability stand.

### **3.13 How many trainees are affected overall?**

At the point the issue was discovered there were approximately 970 doctors with offers accepted within the 24-RCP coordinated specialties and a further 340 applications (some trainees have more than one application) on the reserve list across all specialties. These figures do not include clinical oncology and intensive care medicine trainees.

### **3.14 How can I be sure that the revised scores and ranks will be correct?**

The initial formula has been revised and checked to ensure this is now correct. Following this, the revised upload spreadsheets have been created and the RCP has conducted quality assurance checks to compare with the digital scoring system. The weightings applied have also been checked to ensure the total score applied is correct.

We are working with experienced recruitment staff from Health Education England, NHS Education for Scotland and the Wales Deanery who are familiar with specialty recruitment and the two systems used. They are also carrying out checks against all spreadsheets to provide additional assurance.



### **3.15 Why couldn't offers that had been made be honoured? Why can't you honour the existing jobs whilst simply upgrading people that were under-ranked?**

We needed to be fair to everyone who had been to the interview process and reflect their real scores in the offers to be made. If we had honoured existing offers we would have knowingly disadvantaged trainees who had in reality achieved higher scores, and therefore rankings. The duty of candour means we had to acknowledge the error and work with our partners to agree the fairest way forward.

Following discussion with the education bodies that actually make the offers, the impact on distribution of trainees in different specialties which could be caused by honouring all offers was too unclear and there was a significant risk of aggravating rota gaps. However, we will work with all individual trainees requiring support to look at their situation once the outcome of the re-run is clear.

### **3.16 What happens to trainees that accepted an offer so didn't even go to later interviews if they find out the original offer was wrong?**

As the majority of offers were released after most interviews were completed this should affect a small number of trainees. However, if after the re-offering period has been finalised you have been left without an offer, please contact the RCP at this time so your individual circumstances can be reviewed.

## 4 Frequently asked questions – how will this be resolved

### 4.1 What are you going to do to rectify this?

Unfortunately, due to the complexity and interlinked nature of the offers process, it will be necessary to reset the status of all trainees who were deemed appointable at interview and reissue the scores and ranks to Oriel. Following this, offers will be re-run for the [24 RCP-coordinated ST3 level medical specialties](#), as well as the national ST3 clinical oncology and intensive care medicine processes.

The [timetable](#) at the front of this document details when this will take place.

### 4.2 When will I know if my ranking has changed?

We will upload the revised scores and ranks for all trainees to Oriel on Wednesday 9 May. Trainees will be emailed when this is ready. This will be done across several hours whilst each specialty is updated.

### 4.3 What is the timescale for resolving this?

A full [timetable](#) can be found at the front of this document but the key dates are as follows:

- Wednesday 9 May
  - application statuses rolled back to pre-offer state ('Interview complete')
  - revised scores and ranks loaded to Oriel
- Thursday 10 May – first iteration of offers
- Tuesday 15 May – second iteration of offers
- Thursday 17 May (11am) – holding deadline
- Friday 18 May
  - third iteration offers
  - upgrade deadline (6pm)
- Week commencing 21 May – further offers and [national clearing](#).

### 4.4 If I declined an offer can I be reconsidered?

Yes, trainees will have their offers reset back to the point that enables them to be considered for an offer. However, if you know that you no longer want to receive an offer, we would be grateful if you could withdraw your application after the status is reset to 'Interview complete'; this will allow the offers process to proceed as quickly as possible.

### 4.5 Are cross-over specialties (ie not coordinated by the RCP) re-running their recruitment processes as well?

The national ST3 offers for clinical oncology and intensive care medicine will be re-running their offers but no other specialties are currently planning to re-run. It is appreciated that there will be some trainees who applied to other specialties where this will impact and, once offers are released, trainees can contact the organisation managing the recruitment process for their affected offer for support.



#### **4.6 You stated that there was no error in the clinical oncology and intensive care medicine recruitment process. Does that mean I will receive the same offer?**

Although scores and ranking were unaffected by this issue, unfortunately it is not possible to be sure prior to offers being run as the most recent applicant preferences stated on 4 May will be used (see 4.7 & 4.8 below).

The knock-on effect from a change to ranking in a medical specialty may mean that someone either receives or does not receive an offer which has a resulting impact on offers for clinical oncology and intensive care medicine. It is anticipated that most trainees will receive the same offer but it is not possible to confirm until they are run and decisions made.

#### **4.7 My circumstances have changed, can I revise my preferences ahead of any re-run of offers?**

Unfortunately no. We appreciate that some trainees would have wanted to review their preferences before the first round of offers starts. The decision was taken after consultation with a range of people including Health Education England, the BMA and the RCP trainees committees, was viewed to be the fairest approach overall and also allows offers to begin more quickly.

We recognise that for some trainees this may have an adverse effect. We will work with partner organisations involved in recruitment from the four nations to ensure individuals are supported. Once the offers start, affected trainees will be able to contact us for support.

#### **4.8 What will happen to national clearing (previously due to start in w/c 7 May for five specialties)**

National clearing will need to be delayed until this re-offering period has concluded. The timetable in [section 2.1](#) of this document shows that this will involve a delay of two weeks.

Please note that national clearing only applies to the following specialties: acute internal medicine, cardiology, endocrinology and diabetes, geriatric medicine and renal medicine.

#### **4.9 I had my special circumstances approved, will this affect my offer?**

You will have your special circumstances considered in the same way as before. This means it is still necessary to score highly enough in-line with the guidance on this policy:

<https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Recruitment/Application-guidance>

It is not possible to offer absolute assurances but as differences in most people's rankings are small, we anticipate either all or almost all offers will be made as before. We appreciate that this leaves some doubt and ask that you wait until offers are processed and then contact us if necessary at that stage.



#### 4.10 What are you doing to make sure that all trainees are aware and will know the outcome of offers?

We are aware that this period of re-offering is unplanned and trainees may have circumstances which makes it difficult for them to access Oriel when offers are made. The following will help to ensure trainees are aware of the re-offer period and make arrangements accordingly:

- The first set of offers are being made on a Thursday and, as the 48 hour period does not include weekends, this gives trainees an additional two days to respond.
- In addition to the emails, news items, social media and SMS messages (for those who have opted in to receive them) that we have sent to date, we will be attempting to contact trainees who have not made a decision on their offer in the run-up to the offers deadline for each iteration.
- As usual, all trainees will be emailed after the first set of offers have been made to confirm whether or not they have been offered and all trainees opting in will also receive an SMS.
- Regular news items will be published on the ST3 Recruitment and RCP websites with progress to date.
- In addition to the above, we have asked College Tutors and RCP regional advisers to alert anybody affected by this situation who they think may not be aware.

## 5 Frequently asked questions – outcome of offers

### 5.1 Will my personal circumstances be taken into account if I get a different offer in the re-run process?

Initially we are asking all trainees to wait for the resolution of the offers process. At this stage, if a less favourable offer has been received, you are encouraged to contact the RCP for an individual review of your circumstances.

Emails with the outcome of offers will contain information about how best to contact us.

However, we are expecting the majority of people to receive the same offer as before.

### 5.2 Will I be left jobless if I turned down a different job because I got a post in ST3 the first time the process was run, but do not get an offer in the re-run process?

This could conceivably happen if the revised rankings result in you no longer ranking highly enough to be considered for an offer. As with the first set of offers, this is likely to affect a small number of trainees. We acknowledge that this will be highly distressing for anyone in that situation and we will be available to support those trainees individually.

Those who find themselves in this position are encouraged to contact the RCP after offers are finalised so their individual circumstances can be reviewed. Emails with the outcome of offers will contain information about how best to contact us.

### 5.3 What other support is available?

The BMA has a dedicated [counselling and doctors for doctors service](https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing/bma-counselling-and-doctor-adviser-service) (<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/work-life-support/your-wellbeing/bma-counselling-and-doctor-adviser-service>) that can be used by doctors that need support and advice for non-employment matters. This service is available 24 hours, 7 days a week for doctors that need it. BMA counselling services are staffed by trained professional advisors, with the option for a telephone consultation with another doctor.

Doctors who need dedicated support in relation to the issues raised in these FAQs can contact the [BMA's advisors](https://www.bma.org.uk/contact-bma): (<https://www.bma.org.uk/contact-bma>), or via [support@bma.org.uk](mailto:support@bma.org.uk).

### 5.4 Will additional posts be made available for those who lose out in the re-running of the offers process?

At this point it is not possible to comment on this as we need to see the outcome of offers and what the overall effect will be. We will be available for all our trainees to contact us so we can review each situation on an individual basis.

### 5.5 I haven't been made an offer in the first iteration, how can I know if I'm likely to be made an offer?

Due to the variables involved, it is not possible to be definite about whether you would then be likely to get an offer in subsequent iterations. This is because it will depend on the decision-making of other trainees as to which programmes will be declined and offered to lower ranked trainees.

If you find yourself in this position you can email [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk) and we will advise as far as we are able to what the position is for your specific circumstances.

## 5.6 How many trainees are expected to be offered different jobs?

This is not possible to answer before offers are made unfortunately. Due to the interlinked nature of the offers process across specialties there are too many variables to make an accurate prediction. However, we are anticipating that most will get the same offer and will be cross-checking after offers have been finalised.

## 5.7 I have accepted an offer, is that not legally binding?

All partners involved in recruitment are currently seeking legal advice on what legal protection is involved. We are anticipating that in most cases this will not be necessary and will publish more information as it is available.

## 5.8 Will I be eligible for compensation?

The first stage is to establish exactly who is affected by re-running the offers process as we believe this will see most offered in line with their original offer.

However, where this is not the case we will be looking at individual situations to see what support can be provided.

We will be working with our partners to establish how best to support trainees who have experienced difficulty because of the re-running of offers, including compensation.

## 5.9 I'm on (or will need to apply for) a tier 2 visa, how will this delay to offers affect me?

If you have already submitted your application for a Certificate of Sponsorship, you do not need to do anything currently. However, if your offer detail changes as a result of the re-offer process, then you should make contact with the relevant nation's team at the earliest opportunity:

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Nation	Email
England	<a href="mailto:tier2@hee.nhs.uk">tier2@hee.nhs.uk</a>
Northern Ireland	<a href="mailto:hr.nimdt@hscni.net">hr.nimdt@hscni.net</a>
Scotland	<a href="mailto:Tier2Sponsorship@nes.scot.nhs.uk">Tier2Sponsorship@nes.scot.nhs.uk</a>
Wales	<a href="mailto:NWSSP.EmploymentServices.Enablement@Wales.NHS.UK">NWSSP.EmploymentServices.Enablement@Wales.NHS.UK</a>

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The relevant team will be provided with the details of applicants requiring a Certificate of Sponsorship, as soon as the upgrading deadline has passed, and additional administrative support will be provided to ensure that applications are processed in a timely manner.



## 6 Frequently asked questions – outcome of offers – responding, preferences and upgrades

The FAQs in this section are specifically on the process from when offers commence, focussing on issues such as:

- the outcome of an offer iteration
- revising preferences
- upgrading.

### 6.1 Is there anything I can do to help during this time?

If you know that you will be accepting or declining an offer, it will be very helpful to make a quick decision to enable us to better guide other trainees and free up programmes to be re-offered in subsequent iterations of offers.

Of course if you need more time to decide then please take the time available.

### 6.2 I haven't received an offer yet, what advice can you give?

There are a few things to bear in mind and that you can do:

- What was the outcome the first time the offers process was run? If you did not receive an offer in the first iteration last time, as rankings have not on the whole changed significantly, it would not be unexpected for you to not receive an offer in the first iteration this time. This is also true for subsequent iterations.
- You can review your preferences and include more options, but only include programmes you would genuinely accept if offered (see [FAQ 6.6](#) below).
- Wait for future iterations of offers. We appreciate that this will be an anxious time, and you will be keen to know as much as possible about your chances of receiving an offer, but if it is possible to wait for the outcome of future iterations that will help us to respond to queries as quickly as possible. Details on the timing of future offers can be found in [section 2](#).
- Review the FAQs throughout this document.
- If you would like to contact someone for support there are some options for you:
  - Get in touch with the BMA. Their dedicated team of advisers are on hand to provide career coaching sessions, planning advice and counselling. They will also be able to liaise directly with the RCP, or the teams managing offers for clinical oncology and intensive care medicine, to seek advice on your behalf:
    - Telephone: 0300 123 1233
    - Email: [Support@bma.org.uk](mailto:Support@bma.org.uk)
  - Email the relevant organisation from the email address in which your Oriel account is held and quote your PIN and leave a contact telephone number:
    - RCP-coordinated specialties: [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk)
    - Clinical oncology: [https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form\\_1=true](https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_1=true)
    - Intensive care medicine: [icmnro@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:icmnro@hee.nhs.uk)

### 6.3 I have received an offer but for a programme I know longer want?

The initial guidance is to hold the offer if it is received in the first batch of offers and opt in for upgrades to allow you to revise your preferences and see if it will be upgraded in the second iteration of offers.

Aside from this the guidance in the FAQ above and other FAQs also apply so follow these and contact us if you are unsure. Remember that declining an offer will see you no longer considered for that specialty.



## 6.4 I did not make a decision on my offer in time and it has expired but I still want to be considered, what can I do?

The offer will be considered as declined and you would not be considered for any further offers. However, you can email us to have your application reinstated and considered in the next iteration of offers. It is important to note that if offers are run again before your email is received we cannot guarantee whether or not it will be possible to get the same offer back as it may have been offered to another candidate. For this reason please contact us as soon as possible:

- RCP-coordinated specialties: [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk)
- Clinical oncology: [https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form\\_1=true](https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_1=true)
- Intensive care medicine: [icmnro@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:icmnro@hee.nhs.uk)

## 6.5 How can I be sure my offer decision has been recorded?

When confirming your decision on Oriel you will undergo a two-step process to confirm the response to your offer: once to select the option and then again to confirm it; if you do not go through both stages your decision will not have been made. There are three ways you can confirm that a decision has been registered:

- You will receive an automatic email confirming your decision. Please note that the email may not arrive immediately, in busy times there can be a significant delay in when this email is received.
- Check your messages in your Oriel account. Any emails sent to you via the application system will be stored in your candidate portal on Oriel (ie your 'account') in the 'My Messages' section of your Dashboard.
- Check that your application status has been updated from 'Offer made' to the relevant decision. This can be seen in the 'My Applications' area of your Dashboard.

If you are still concerned, contact the offering region as soon as possible so it can be investigated. Offers without a decision come the deadline are considered to be declined and will be offered to someone else where possible.

## 6.6 How can I get more detail about the programme offered?

You can check the relevant regions' websites for programme information and/or email the region where the programme is based to request further detail. Contact details for each region are available on our website:

<http://www.st3recruitment.org.uk/contacts/region-contacts>

In your email you should state that you have received an offer, providing details of the offers and give the date/time you need to respond to the offer by. This will enable the relevant contacts to prioritise responses.

## 6.7 I want to revise my preferences, how do I do this?

This will depend on whether or not you have been made an offer:

- If you have not been made an offer – you will be emailed when preferences are available to review and revise. After the first iteration of offers this is expected to be on Friday 11 May.

You can revise your preferences by selecting the application you wish to amend preferences for on your Oriel dashboard. Once the relevant application has been selected, there will be an option on the right-hand side of the page to 'Update preferences'. Selecting this will take you to the preference screen where you initially selected your preferences. Preferences can then be amended. Always remember to save after making any changes.



- If you have been made an offer – first you will either need to accept or hold the offer and opt in for upgrades. This will then allow you to revise your offer preferences from the ‘Offer’ screen in Oriel.

If the option to update preferences is not there, it will be due to offers being currently run for that vacancy and the option to update preferences will be temporarily unavailable until the offers are released.

Consequently it is advised to be aware of the [offer timelines](#) when planning to review your preferences.

The ‘Oriel Applicant User Guide’ contains further guidance on these functions:

<https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/ResourceBank/Edit/MQ%3d%3d>

## 6.8 How and when will I know if an upgrade has been found?

If you have opted into upgrades when accepting or holding your offer, your offer will be **automatically** upgraded to your highest preference available based on your preferences at the time the offers are run.

At this point the upgraded offer will replace your current offer on your Oriel dashboard and an email will be sent to advise you of this upgrade. This will continue until the upgrade deadline – Friday 18th May, 6:00pm.

Please note that upgrades can only be made when the offers process is run so check the timeline to see when these will be done.

We will confirm to all those currently still in competition for offers and upgrades after each iteration of offers are complete.

## 6.9 I’ve been offered a less preferred specialty but not my preferred one, what should I do?

You can **hold** or **hold with upgrades** the offer you have received until the holding deadline. By holding an offer you are eligible to receive any offers for any other specialties as offers become available at your ranking.

You can only **hold one offer at any given time**. After the hold deadline (11am on 17 May), you must decide whether to accept/accept with upgrades or decline the offer within the timeline given in the offer (usually 48 hours).

If you decline you will receive no further offers from the specialty you declined, you would still be eligible for any other specialty offers should any you included in your preferences become available when your ranking is reached.

If you do not return to your Oriel portal and make an informed decision on your held offer by the holding deadline you will be deemed to have declined the offer.

## 6.10 I am holding an offer and want an upgrade but the holding deadline is approaching, what should I do?

You must make a firm decision on the offer that you are holding and confirm this decision in Oriel, before the hold deadline is reached. If you are not willing to accept the currently offer you should not accept it.

If your offer has a held status, it will be automatically rejected by Oriel once the hold deadline has passed.

If you are not able to accept it and wish to be considered for future offers, contact the relevant organisation to discuss whether it is possible to be included in further iterations of offers:

- RCP-coordinated specialties: [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk)
- Clinical oncology: [https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form\\_1=true](https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_1=true)
- Intensive care medicine: [icmnro@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:icmnro@hee.nhs.uk)



## 6.11 How will I know when my offered programme is final?

Once you have accepted your offer this will either be:

- You have opted out for upgrades and do not opt back in.
- The upgrade deadline has passed; no more upgrades are possible after this time; see the [timeline](#) for details.

## 6.12 Where can I get support/advice during the offers period?

We appreciate that this will be an anxious time. If you do not receive the offer you wanted initially, if possible we would ask that you wait for the outcome of future iterations before making contact.

If you would like to contact someone for support the following options are available:

- The BMA have a dedicated team of advisers on hand to provide career coaching sessions, planning advice and counselling. They will also be able to liaise directly with the RCP, or the teams managing offers for clinical oncology and intensive care medicine, to seek advice on your behalf:
  - Telephone: 0300 123 1233
  - Email: [Support@bma.org.uk](mailto:Support@bma.org.uk)
- Email the relevant organisation from the email address in which your Oriel account is held and quote your PIN and leave a contact telephone number:
  - RCP-coordinated specialties: [st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk](mailto:st3recruitment@rcplondon.ac.uk)
  - Clinical oncology: [https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form\\_1=true](https://lasepgmdsupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_1=true)
  - Intensive care medicine: [icmnro@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:icmnro@hee.nhs.uk)

## 6.13 I am subject to the resident labour market test – will I receive an offer?

Before an offer can be made to you, immigration regulations require the resident labour market test to be satisfied, meaning that all appointable candidates with right of residence in the UK must be offered first.

The chances of being made an offer will depend on several factors:

- The competitiveness of a specialty/region – some specialties are more competitive than others and it is rare for anyone with restrictions to be made an offer.
- Does the specialty use national clearing – if you have applied to acute internal medicine, cardiology, endocrinology and diabetes, geriatric medicine or renal medicine you cannot be considered until national clearing; see [section 2.1](#) for the timeline for this.
- As your ranking will effectively be lower due to other candidates having to be considered first, you may receive an offer in subsequent iterations.

Further information on the resident labour market test is available in the Applicant Guide on the 'Specialty Training' website: <https://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/Recruitment/Application-guidance>