

Freedom of Information Act Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I would be grateful if you could provide the following data related to the number of vacant posts within your Trust. Requested Information:

1. Workforce & Recruitment

o Number of vacant posts for surgical doctors, broken down by Grade (e.g. Consultant, ST3+, ST1-2, FY1-2) and Specialty (e.g. General Surgery, ENT, T&O).

o The current vacancy rate within the Trust for surgical doctors, broken down by Grade (e.g. Consultant, ST3+, ST1-2, FY1-2) and Specialty (e.g. General Surgery, ENT, T&O).

We have carefully considered your request and can confirm that the Trust does not hold this data in a centrally reportable format. While some information may exist across different systems or departments, it is not held in a way that would allow us to extract and compile it by Grade and Specialty without a significant manual review of records.

As such, we are unable to provide the information requested within the statutory cost limit. Under section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, the Trust is not obliged to comply with a request if it would exceed the appropriate cost limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. The appropriate limit for NHS organisations is £450, which equates to 18 hours of staff time.

Therefore, this response serves as a formal refusal under section 17(1) and section 12(1) of the Act.

o The average number of days to recruit and onboard a new surgical doctor, broken down by Grade (e.g. Consultant, ST3+, ST1-2, FY1-2)

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o If this data is stored in a structured report, please provide it in your available format.

We are unable to provide the requested information as it is exempt under Section 12 (Exemption Where Cost of Compliance Exceeds Appropriate Limit) of the Act.

To extract and collate the necessary data across different grades of surgical doctors would require a significant amount of manual work. While some of this information may be available through Medical HR records, retrieving and analyzing it to provide an accurate breakdown would exceed the cost and time limits set by the FOI Act.

However, we can confirm that we work towards specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for time to hire. These KPIs set targets for recruitment timelines, but actual timeframes may vary due to factors such as service pressures, notice periods, and relocation requirements. Any delays are regularly reviewed.

Start point	End point	KPI (days)
Request authorisation	VCP Outcome	0
VCP outcome	Advert live	1
Advert live	Closing date	10
Closing date	Shortlist sent to recruiting managers	1
Shortlist sent to manager	Shortlist completed	5
Shortlist completed	Interviews set up on Trac	2
Interview invites	Interview date	10
Interview date	Outcome of interview	1
Outcome of interview	Conditional offer letter	2
Conditional offer	ID appointment booked	5
Reference requested*	Reference received	10
OH link sent*	OH cleared	5
DBS link sent*	DBS cleared	10
Checks all ok	Unconditional offer letter	2
Unconditional offer letter	Start date booked/moved to starting in Trac	5
Start date confirmed	Contract sent	5

2. Recruitment and Workforce Contacts

o The department or team for medical workforce recruitment, including their general contact details (e.g. HR, Medical Staffing Officer, or Recruitment Team email address).

Medical HR – dbth.medicalhr@nhs.net

2. Challenges in Recruitment

o Does the trust record key challenges affecting its ability to fill these vacancies (e.g. budget constraints, geographical location, shortage of candidates)?

NO

o If so, please provide any available summary or insight on these challenges.

N/A

Our Ref: 178

March 2025