Specialty Training in Ophthalmology

A Guide to the

Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment
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1. Introduction
The Multi-Specialty Recruitment Assessment (MSRA) is a computer-based assessment, delivered in partnership with Work Psychology Group and Pearson VUE, has been designed to assess some of the essential competences outlined in the CT/ST1 Person Specifications and is based around clinical scenarios.

The MSRA is utilised by a number of CT/ST1 postgraduate medical specialties. Each speciality considers the MSRA differently as part of its selection process. It is recommended that you visit specific national recruitment websites and familiarise yourself with the appropriate guidance for that specialty.

2. Sitting the MSRA
All applicants are required to sit the MSRA for the 2018 Ophthalmology Selection Process. There are no exceptions or exemptions to this requirement.

A successful outcome cannot be carried over into successive recruitment years.

3. Structure of the MSRA
There are two component parts to the MSRA –
- Professional Dilemmas (PD / SJT) paper (110 minutes)
- Clinical Problem Solving (CPS) paper (75 minutes)

The structure of both papers, including the question types, the competency domains being assessed and the scoring process is detailed in full in the MSRA Test Blueprint & Information document; you are strongly advised to read this document. Sample and practice questions for both of the papers are available from the GP Resource Bank.

In addition to the MSRA test blueprint document and sample questions, Pearson VUE offer a generic tutorial to aid you in familiarising yourself with the controls and screen layouts in advance of the test. This tutorial can be undertaken at http://www.pearsonvue.com/athena/

4. Adjustments under the Equality Act 2010
All HEE Local Offices and Deaneries are aware of the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate requests provided these are made known in advance. If you require any adjustments (e.g. wheelchair access, extra time, nursing mothers) you must inform the Ophthalmology National Recruitment Office (ONRO) of any special requirements, evidenced by supporting documentation at the earliest possible opportunity and by no later than the application closing date. Adjustments cannot be guaranteed if contact is made after the specified deadline and no adjustments can be made on the day of the test.

In some instances, in order to satisfy requests for adjustments, it may be necessary to schedule you in test centre at a specific time or in a specific location.
4.1 Nursing Mothers Policy
In line with the Equality Act 2010 the ONRO will consider requests from nursing mothers to provide suitable facilities in the MSRA test centres. If this applies to you then you must submit this information with your application form. The ONRO will then liaise with the central team and Pearson VUE in order to try and honour your request.

It is recommended that any nursing mothers check the location of the test centre before booking a test to ensure that nearby facilities meet any requirements you may have. Address details for each Pearson VUE Centre can be found at http://www.pearsonvue.com/nro/locate.

4.2 Comfort Aids
Pearson VUE list a number of medicines, medical and mobility devices as comfort aids which do not require pre-approval as an accommodation by the GPNRO. Comfort aid items are listed on the Pearson VUE website in the test accommodations section.

The items listed will be allowed in the testing room upon visual inspection by Test Centre staff. Visual inspection will be done by examining the item without directly touching it (or the applicant) and without asking the applicant to remove the item, unless otherwise stated in Pearson VUE’s comfort aid list.

5. Test Centre Locations
The MSRA is delivered on a number of consecutive days throughout the whole of the UK in a large number of Pearson VUE Computer Testing Centres.

All applicants who reside in or, are in employment in the UK (including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) during the assessment window are expected to attend a UK test centre.

5.1 Overseas Test Centres
If you are outside of the UK during the MSRA window, you will have the opportunity to sit the test at your nearest Pearson VUE test centre, subject to seat availability.

To assist candidates with overseas availability, seats in a number of pre-approved core locations are reserved and you will be presented with the opportunity to register your interest for one of these locations at the time of application. However, you should be aware that the number of places in centres is limited and overseas test places are available on a first come first served basis; whilst every effort will be made to accommodate you in your preferred location, this cannot be guaranteed and you may be required to attend the nearest location with availability.

6. Registering for the MSRA
Once the application window has closed, you will receive a message from the ONRO asking you to register with Pearson VUE using very specific account credentials provided in the message. If you have applied to other specialties, you may receive multiple messages containing the same credentials from each. In this instance, you only need to register once.
Pearson VUE credentials are unique to each recruitment round. Therefore, if you have previously sat the MSRA, you will be required to re-register with the details provided. Failure to register will result you being unable to sit the MSRA and your Ophthalmology application will be withdrawn.

It is important to remember that the registration correspondence is not an invitation to attend the MSRA; on completion of registration, your account will correctly state you do not have any pre-approved exams at this time.

6.1 Re-registering for the MSRA
Applicants who registered with Pearson VUE for the MSRA on or after September 2017 will not be required to re-register; the account registered will be valid for all future MSRA events.

Applicants who registered with Pearson VUE for the MSRA before August 2017 will be required to re-register. However, once a new Pearson VUE account has been registered, it will be valid for all future MSRA events.

7. Invitation to the MSRA
All applicants who have been assessed as demonstrating evidence of eligibility as outlined in the Longlisting section of the Applicant Guidance will be invited to sit the MSRA. If you are invited, you will be required to book an appointment and undertake the MSRA; failure to do so will result in your Ophthalmology application not progressing further.

7.1 Booking a test
If you are invited to the MSRA, you will be required to log into your Pearson VUE account and use the self-service functionality to book a test at a centre, date and time of your choosing, subject to availability. The only exception to this is if you have requested an overseas test centre or special accommodation under the Equality Act 2010; in this instance, you will be contacted directly by Pearson VUE with details of your appointment provided you have completed the registration process outlined in Section 6.

When booking your test, it is strongly recommended that you avoid booking from a mobile device or internet browsers that have reached the end of their product support lifecycle as these are unlikely to be supported.

When searching for seat availability at test centres by location, Pearson VUE will return a maximum of 30 test centres per location search. To view more test centres, you will need to alter your search criterion.

7.2 Confirmation of test booking
Once you have booked your test, you will receive an automated confirmation of booking email to your registered email address. If you do not receive confirmation, log into your Pearson VUE account to confirm if the booking process was completed in its entirety.
8. Admission Policy
You must arrive at the test centre at least 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time to complete the necessary check-in procedures. It is essential that you arrive on time as applicants who arrive late will NOT be admitted entry.

At reception, you will be required to present either a:

1. current valid passport,
2. a current valid UK or EU photo card driving licence (full or provisional) or
3. a biometric residency card.

If you opt to present a passport and it is a biometric passport with no signature, you will be required to present a secondary form of identification with your full name and signature e.g. a debit/credit card or NHS ID card.

Please check that your first name and last name, as declared on your Ophthalmology application form match EXACTLY with the identification documents that you intend to present on the day of your test.

You should note that children are not permitted at any of the test centres.

8.1 Alternative Identification Documents
If you are unable to present any of the three documents listed above or, your first name and last name does not match EXACTLY with the one of the three documents that you intend to present on the day of your test, you must contact the ONRO at the earliest opportunity at sevrecruitment.sw@hee.nhs.uk for further advice and instructions on suitable alternatives.

Failure to notify the ONRO of any discrepancies will result in you not being permitted entry to sit the test.

8.2 Personal belongings
You will not be allowed to take any personal items with you into the testing room. This includes all bags, books or other materials not authorised for the MSRA, notes, phones, pagers, watches and wallets.

8.3 Breaks and refreshments
You are prohibited from taking food and drink into the test room. You may leave the test room for water or a comfort break, but no additional time will be allowed in your test. If you wish to leave the room, you must ask the invigilator. Please note that you will not be permitted to eat whilst in the test centre.

9. Reschedule Policy
If you wish to reschedule your test, you may do this via your Pearson VUE account for the test in question, within the test booking period. If you are an applicant with a pre-approved adjustment or sitting the test overseas and wish to reschedule your test, please contact
Pearson VUE via email at nrocustomerservice@pearson.com. You must reschedule test appointments at least 24 hours before the appointment.

10. Cancellation Policy
If you wish to cancel your test, you may do this via your Pearson VUE account for the test in question, within the test booking period. If you are a candidate with a pre-approved adjustment or sitting the test overseas and wish to cancel your test, please contact Pearson VUE through email at nrocustomerservice@pearson.com. You must cancel test appointments at least 24 hours before the appointment.

11. Missed Appointment
If you miss your test and wish to schedule another appointment, please contact the ONRO at sevrecruitment.sw@hee.nhs.uk immediately; you will not be able to re-book online via self-service without first being re-authorised by the central team. You should be aware that test centre availability is likely to limited at this point and that you may be required to travel beyond your preferred locality.

Regrettably, the ONRO will be unable to accommodate you if you miss an appointment on the final day of the MSRA window.

12. Notification of Outcome
All applicants will be notified of their results, and thus their performance/outcome a short time. The results will be published in your Oriel account prior to the date of the interviews.

12.1 Appealing the Outcome
The outcome is final and cannot be reviewed, re-marked or disputed. There is no appeals process.

13. Applicant Expenses
Expenses incurred by applicants in attending the MSRA will not be reimbursed by the ONRO. The MSRA is delivered on a number of consecutive days throughout the whole of the UK in a vast array number of Pearson VUE test centres. You are therefore expected to attend a venue close to your residence or place of work.

14. Revision Materials
None of the question writers take part in or endorse any preparation courses or books.

The ONRO understands that applicants may wish to revise and prepare for the MSRA with each other in small groups. However, sharing information about the actual assessments is unacceptable and is viewed as unprofessional behaviour. The MSRA uses a large number of different equated test forms and therefore knowledge of questions in one paper will not necessarily benefit others. We would also remind all applicants that entry to specialty training is competitive.