



National Institute for
Health Research

NIHR Integrated Academic Training

Academic Clinical Fellowship (Dental):
Guidance for Recruitment & Appointment

2019

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Introduction

1. The Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) represents the first substantive phase of integrated clinical and academic training for dental graduates whom have completed foundation training. ACFs spend 75% of their time undertaking clinical training and 25% undertaking research training.
2. The ACF phase is aimed at dentists at any of the following stages: the start of specialty training; those undertaking dental core training (DCT); and General Dental Practitioners (GDPs) who wish to develop an academic career.
3. This guidance is for NIHR Integrated Academic Training (IAT) Partnerships comprising Health Education England (HEE) Local Offices (formerly Local Education Training Boards; LETBs), Dental Schools, and NHS Organisations, to support the selection of individuals for NIHR ACFs in dentistry starting on or after 1 April 2019.
4. The primary purpose of a dental ACF is to provide a clinical and academic training environment for a dentist to prepare an application for a Training Fellowship leading to a PhD (or equivalent) or, in cases where the applicant has already undertaken a relevant PhD, a postdoctoral fellowship. Dental ACFs are also available to GDPs who wish to pursue an academic career.
5. Applications for a dental ACF in England will follow the same process for entry into normal specialty and/or dental core training programmes. This document sets out the broad framework regarding the eligibility for ACFs.
6. The principles set out in the [Dental Gold Guide](#) and [Dental Silver Guide](#) will still apply.

Recruitment and the Award of a NTN (a)

7. Recruitment to ACF posts is managed by the relevant HEE Local Office in the IAT Partnerships.
8. The award of a National Training Number (NTN) (a) will be made to applicants who are successful in the appointment process that enter a General Dental Council (GDC)-recognised specialty training programme. Since NTN(a)s are awarded by Postgraduate Deans, the HEE Local Office must lead the appointment process.
9. Applicants must meet the requirements of the clinical person specification for entry into either the specialty training or DCT programme, in addition to meeting the requirements of the academic appointment. Panels must ensure that both clinical and academic standards for appointments are met.
10. In the case of ACFs appointed at DCT level the award of a NTN(a) will not apply.
11. In the case of GDP ACFs, there is no recognised specialty training programme therefore the award of a NTN(a) will not apply.

Academic Clinical Fellowships Timetable:

<i>Advertisements & Applications open:</i>	Tuesday 30 October 2018
<i>Applications close:</i>	Tuesday 27 November 2018
<i>Interview window:</i>	Thursday 29 November 2018 – Friday 11 January 2019
<i>Initial offers released:</i>	Wednesday 16 January 2019
<i>Hold deadline:</i>	Wednesday 23 January 2019

UK National Recruitment

12. For recruitment to ACFs in GDC specialties using the National Recruitment to Specialty Training Process, ACF applicants deemed appointable at the joint clinical and academic ACF interviews who do not hold an NTN will need to be assessed/interviewed subsequently through the relevant national process for the specialty, during which they must pass the pre-determined “threshold of appointability” (also referred to as “the benchmark”) in order to be appointed to the ACF.
13. ACF applicants will be ranked on their performance at the ACF interview, **not** the national clinical interview.
14. For recruitment to GDC specialties where National Recruitment is not available, and for GDP ACF recruitment, recruiters should conduct the interviews ensuring that clinical suitability is adequately assessed.
15. ACFs appointed at DCT level will need to be assessed/interviewed through the national process for recruitment to Dental Core Training programmes.

Advertisement

16. Partnerships may advertise NIHR ACF posts in up to three GDC specialties (or General Dental Practice or DCT).
17. Posts should be advertised specifying: the GDC specialty/specialties if including specialist training; or that the ACF is linked to a DCT post or GDP post regardless of the level of entry.
18. Posts can be advertised at a specific entry level or at multiple levels. IAT partnerships will need to make it clear at what level or levels each ACF is being offered.
19. The recruitment round will open on 30 October 2018 and close on 31 March 2020. The 2019 ACF posts may not be advertised and closed before the national launch on 30 October. Please note that successful applicants may not take up their post until after 1 April 2019.
20. All ACF posts must be advertised and open for applications for at least 4 weeks.
21. The launch of the 2019 Dental ACF recruitment round will be advertised nationally by The NIHR Academy. Details of the available posts will be available on the NIHR website (www.nihr.ac.uk/ACFdentistry). Potential applicants will be asked to make contact locally via an identified IAT Partnership contact. The NIHR Academy will direct ACF applicants to the relevant HEE Local Office websites and Oriel (www.oriel.nhs.uk).
22. Organisational partnerships must inform The NIHR Academy when they are planning to advertise their posts and provide details of where their adverts will be placed. This should be done via e-mail to iat.management@nihrtcc.org.uk. All posts must be advertised nationally; local advertisements are also allowed should partnerships wish to do so.
23. Successful applicants must take up the post before 31 March 2020, therefore please allow enough time to advertise, shortlist, interview, and where required, allow notice periods to be given. Please note there will not be any extensions given beyond the 31 March 2020 deadline. Posts that remain unfilled ahead of 31 March 2020 will be withdrawn. It is anticipated that ACFs entering a GDC recognised specialty training programme should commence in post on the common start date of September/October.

Eligibility

24. NIHR ACF posts are awarded to IAT partnerships of Dental Schools, HEE Local Offices, and NHS Organisations. HEE Local Offices do not have permission to move any posts from one Dental School to another within the HEE Local Office boundary.

25. NIHR Dental ACFs are available to dentally-qualified applicants entering dental core training, dental specialty training, or those already undertaking specialty training. Applicants (including GDPs) will have completed their dental foundation training (or equivalent) as appropriate.
26. NIHR Dental ACF posts are open to:
 - a. Specialist Registrars (SpR) or Specialty Registrars (StR) (those currently holding a NTN).
 - b. Dentists with specialist/ty experience who meet the entry criteria for entry into specialty training.
 - c. Dentists who meet the entry criteria for entry into DCT programmes.
 - d. GDPs.
27. ACF applicants would not normally be expected to hold a PhD or other higher degree, but applicants may include:
 - a. BDS/PhD graduates and those with a relevant intercalated PhD obtained during dental undergraduate training (to enable postdoctoral research applications).
 - b. Dentists who have previously undertaken a relevant PhD may apply to continue postdoctoral research as long as they possess the other entry requirements for the post. They will need to show that they have a commitment to academic dentistry.
 - c. Dental graduates who obtained PhDs prior to dental undergraduate training – their PhD may or may not be considered relevant by the appointment committee.
 - d. Dental graduates who have previously undertaken a specialty taught or research masters.
28. Please note: Applicants who have already gained a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training (CCST) cannot be appointed to NIHR Dental ACFs.

Run-through

29. Specialty-specific NIHR ACFs are considered as run-through posts for the duration of the ACF and beyond. Clinical progression is based on the achievement of competencies and satisfactory completion of an Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP). Specialty NIHR ACFs are considered to have entered into a programme that will take them through to gaining a CCST.

Additional Information for NIHR GDP ACFs

30. NIHR GDP ACFs are not appointed to a specialty training programme. Their academic training (25%) will thus be combined with clinical service (75%), as a salaried or self-employed GDP in Primary Care or Community Dental Care.
31. Early career GDPs are encouraged to align their clinical training to the DCT curriculum. Advanced career GDPs are expected to engage in appropriate continuing professional development.

Application

32. The National Application Form on Oriel (www.oriel.nhs.uk) should be used for 2019 Dental ACF recruitment.
33. HEE Local Offices should use the 2019 person specifications for the relevant specialty and level of entry and the generic academic person specification (Appendix 2).
34. An academic reference must be provided for applicants applying for ACF posts in addition to clinical references.

Job Description

35. The job description must be agreed by both the academic and clinical leads involved in the scheme and include the following information, as a minimum:

- a. Job title, level, and name of up to 3 GDC specialties (or GDP or DCT);
- b. Duration of the post, and what happens at the end of the post if an applicant is successful or unsuccessful in obtaining a research fellowship;
- c. Hospitals in which training will take place;
- d. Research institution(s) in which training will take place;
- e. Whether day release or block release will be used for protected research time;
- f. Description of the research component of the programme (minimum 250 words);
- g. Description of the clinical training component of the programme (minimum 250 words);
- h. Academic Programme Director name;
- i. Clinical Programme Director name;
- j. Programme contact for further information (phone or email);
- k. HEE Local Office contact for further information (phone or email);
- l. A link to the NIHR website (<http://www.nihr.ac.uk/acfs>) for further information; and
- m. Confirmation that the post attracts a NTN (a) (with the exception of DCT appointments and GDP ACFs).

Shortlisting

36. Applicants to ACF posts should have their application forms scored using the shortlisting guidance (Appendix 3). Shortlisted applicants should provide evidence of clinical competency appropriate for the specialty training level of the ACF.
37. Shortlisting must be undertaken by at least one clinician and one academic, both of whom should have received training in fair recruitment and selection and equal opportunities in the last 3 years.

ACF Interviews

38. ACF Interviews should last at least thirty minutes and follow the interview guidance in Appendix 4.
39. Partnerships should inform the NIHR Academy of when interviews will be taking place, as members of the NIHR Academy will be attending randomly selected interviews throughout the year.
40. Applicants will be initially ranked on their academic scores. In the event of joint academic ranking, clinical scoring will be used to order the applicants based on the NIHR ACF recruitment process. Scores are not transferable between posts/interviews. An interview panel briefing document and chair's briefing checklist can be found in Appendices 5 and 6, respectively.
41. The appointment panel should have both clinical and academic representatives that reflect the IAT partnership offering the ACF programme and specialty. It is expected, in addition to the clinical and academic representative, that the panel will include:
 - a. The lead of the ACF training programme or their representative;
 - b. Additional representation from the relevant academic community, if required;
 - c. An independent academic member (wherever possible, from outside the HEE local office boundary);
 - d. A lay representative or lay chair.
42. The academic referee's comments should be available to the appointment panel if required. The recruiter should request paper versions of the academic references if required at the ACF interview.
43. The appointment panel will have the authority to allocate an NTN, and successful appointees (with the exception of GDP ACF and DCT appointees) will gain an NTN (a) at entry.
44. The appointment panel members should have received training in fair recruitment and selection and equal opportunities (equality and diversity training) in the last 3 years.

ACF Interview Selection Criteria

45. The criteria at interview for assessing applicants should be derived directly from the person specification, including academic aptitude, commitment to an academic career, and the training and service requirements.
46. The NIHR ACF interview guidance may be found in Appendix 4.
47. The following should be remembered when formulating the assessment criteria:
 - a. NIHR ACFs are intended to offer training to those who can demonstrate outstanding potential for development as a clinical academic in research and/or educational research;
 - b. The training will require the ACFs to spend 25% of their time undertaking academic training combined with clinical training in the remaining 75%;
 - c. The expected outcome of an NIHR ACF is the preparation of a successful application for a research training fellowship or educational training programme leading to a higher degree, or if applicable a postdoctoral fellowship; and
 - d. Progress will be monitored, but in the event that an individual is unsuccessful in obtaining a research training fellowship/place on an educational training programme within three years, they will join a standard clinical training programme.
48. The selection criteria should require applicants to demonstrate:
 - a. High-level interest in the proposed academic field, backed up if possible by relevant publications, prizes or distinctions;
 - b. Their potential as a doctoral researcher; and
 - c. Clarity about longer-term career aspirations and how this Fellowship will provide opportunities for career development.
49. To assess the applicant's prior research experience, it is essential that the appointment panel have the applicant's application forms, including publication record, on the day of interview.

The Selection Process

50. Applicants will be assessed against the criteria in the appropriate clinical programme person specification for the specialty as well as the academic person specification (Appendix 2) in the same interview. Interview guidance notes and a chair's briefing checklist can be found in Appendices 5 and 6, respectively.
51. Applicants for ACF posts must be deemed clinically 'good enough' at their ACF interview(s). To address this a clinical question must be asked at the ACF interview.
52. If academic interview scores are tied, clinical performance at the ACF interview will determine ranking.
53. Applicants without an appropriate NTN will need to demonstrate their clinical competencies for the ACF post at clinical benchmarking.

Offers: Dental Core Training and GDC specialties with a National Recruitment Process

54. For recruitment to ACFs at DCT level, the top ranked applicant will be given a conditional offer. Applicants deemed appointable at the ACF interview will need to undertake clinical benchmarking (described below) to be appointed to the ACF post.
55. For recruitment to GDC specialties with a National Recruitment Process (for 2019 this is anticipated to comprise Orthodontics, Paediatric Dentistry, Restorative Dentistry, Endodontics, Periodontics, Prosthodontics, Oral Surgery, Special Care Dentistry, and Dental Public Health), the top ranked

applicant at the ACF interview will either be given a non-conditional or conditional offer. Conditional offers will be given to successful applicants at the ACF interviews that do not already hold a NTN in the GDC specialty and level to which they are applying. The condition of the offer relates to clinical benchmarking in the GDC specialty of the ACF post to which they are applying.

Clinical Benchmarking

56. A schematic overview of the clinical benchmarking process is provided in Appendix 7.
57. Clinical benchmarking relates to applicants reaching the threshold of appointability at the national standard clinical interviews/assessments for the GDC specialty and level of ACF post to which they are applying. Only applicants to GDC specialties for which a National Recruitment Process is in place who are successful at the ACF interviews that do not hold an NTN in the GDC specialty to which they are applying need to be clinically benchmarked.
58. All applicants to ACFs at DCT level will need to undergo clinical benchmarking and demonstrate that they have reached the threshold of appointability at the national standard clinical interviews/assessments.
59. Applicants who fail to reach the appointability threshold at clinical benchmarking will be ineligible for appointment to the ACF post in that recruitment round. Under these circumstances the conditional ACF offer will be withdrawn. If applicants require clinical benchmarking, then the HEE Local Office hosting the ACF post will need to ensure that the HEE National Recruitment Team are made aware of this in a timely manner.
60. Applicants who fail clinical benchmarking and become ineligible are still able to reapply in future recruitment rounds.

Appointments

61. Post holders will usually be employed by a NHS Organisation. Details of how the employing partnership will manage the appointment should be agreed with the trainee and each appointment should be managed according to the established practices and needs of local NHS Organisations. It is anticipated that appointments will reflect the principles outlined in the Follett review report of September 2001 (available on request).

Providing Information

62. IAT Partnerships are expected to provide up to date information on these posts. 100% of funding for each post comes from the Department of Health and Social Care Science, Research and Evidence Directorate R&D budget that is supported directly by funding from the Treasury. Funding arrangements do not now require HEE to part-fund posts, switch funding from standard clinical training posts, or arrange back-fill.
63. It is important that IAT Partnerships provide information on available and filled posts in a timely manner to ensure that applicants and potential applicants can have accurate information.

ACF Appraisals

64. The ARCP should comprise joint academic and clinical appraisal according to Follett principles with assessment according to College and HEE Local Office recommendations for ACFs. A general overview for reviewing the progression of trainees undertaking joint clinical and academic training programmes can be found in the Dental Gold Guide.
65. The Academy of Medical Sciences has formulated supplementary guidelines to aid trainees, supervisors, and assessors in reviewing academic training and progress. These are available at:

Completion of a NIHR ACF

66. The duration of a NIHR ACF will be for a maximum of 3 years. During this time the trainee combines clinical specialty training (or dental core training) with academic training which is geared to competing for a Training Fellowship.
67. When trainees successfully obtain a Fellowship, they normally spend 3 years outside of their clinical programme working towards the completion of a PhD (or equivalent). The trainees will need to obtain agreement from their HEE Local Office to take the time out of their clinical programme. This will not normally be refused. Agreement to taking time out of programme will require confirmation from the relevant HEE Local Office that the trainee has achieved relevant clinical competences and is ready to leave the clinical programme, and ideally that the research project has been peer reviewed and approved.
68. On completion of a Training Fellowship, they will return to the clinical programme and at an appropriate point may competitively apply for a NIHR Clinical Lectureship, subject to availability and provided that appropriate academic and clinical competences have been obtained, or continue in clinical training.

Completion of a NIHR GDP ACF

69. The duration of a NIHR GDP ACF will be for a maximum of 3 years. During this time the trainee combines further clinical training and/or service with academic training which is geared to competing for a Training Fellowship.
70. When trainees successfully obtain a fellowship, they normally spend 3 years outside of their standard clinical programme working towards the completion of a PhD (or equivalent).
71. On completion of a Training Fellowship, GDP ACFs will return to clinical practice and at an appropriate point may competitively apply for a NIHR Clinical Lectureship, subject to availability and provided that appropriate academic and clinical competences have been obtained.

Options for Less Than Full Time (LTFT) working

72. NIHR ACFs comprise 25% academic and 75% clinical training for up to 3 years.
73. LTFT ACFs can be extended up to a maximum of 5 years, with a stipulation that the academic component remains at 25% of Full Time Equivalent.
74. The maximum duration of both full and LTFT ACF posts stated above does not include any periods of statutory leave taken during the post.

Early Exit from Academic Training: NIHR GDC Specialty ACFs

75. There are several points at which an ACF may decide, or be advised, to leave the academic training pathway. For dentists undertaking specialty training, as long as clinical competencies have been successfully achieved, they would be able to re-join the non-academic specialty training programme, retaining their NTN and relinquishing the (a) suffix. In all instances, it is important to remember that the clinical Programme Director (acting on behalf of the Postgraduate Dental Dean) would have to identify a suitable placement in the clinical programme, and that in some cases this could take up to a year. It is therefore important to give warning to the Postgraduate Dental Dean as soon as the possibility of early exit from the programme is identified. It is hoped that it will not occur but it is possible that the individual leaving the academic career programme might have to wait for a suitable clinical placement

while retaining their NTN. During this time, they may have to find other work. To avoid this, it is essential that the trainee gives as much notice as possible of their intentions.

76. Early exit from academic training might occur at the following points:
- a. At the end of the ACF, the fellow may fail for whatever reason to obtain, or may decide not to pursue, a training fellowship award for PhD studies. Academic funding could not be guaranteed to continue beyond 3 years, so as much warning as possible is needed if the fellow wishes to continue in a clinical programme.
 - b. After completing a training fellowship and obtaining a PhD (or equivalent), a trainee may decide or be advised not to pursue academic training any further. Hopefully, this decision will have been arrived at over a period of time, so that maximum warning can be given to the HEE Local Office in order to avoid or minimise any wait to re-enter the clinical programme with their NTN.

Early Exit from Academic Training: NIHR DCT ACFs

77. For dentists appointed to an ACF at dental core training level, leaving the academic training pathway would result in the dentist joining a clinical DCT programme or becoming a General Dental Practitioner.

Early Exit from Academic Training: NIHR GDP ACFs

78. At the end of the NIHR GDP ACF, the fellow may fail for whatever reason to obtain, or may decide not to pursue, a training fellowship award for PhD studies. In such cases, the trainee would return to normal clinical service.

Out of Programme (OOP)

79. No Out of Programme (OOP) activity, other than for statutory reasons, is allowed for NIHR ACFs. Trainees can still apply to the HEE Local Office to go out of programme for other reasons; however, the NIHR ACF post will terminate and they will go into normal clinical training on their return from OOP. Any OOP must also be agreed with the employing organisation.

Guidance about Academic Referees

80. One of the referees for each applicant should be able to advise the recruitment panel of the applicant's academic strengths and weaknesses. The referee may be someone who has knowledge of the applicant's skills and attributes from some time ago, e.g. supervisor of an intercalated degree or special study module. It is important, however, that the academic referee carefully considers the suitability of the applicant for a long-term career in academic dentistry. Applicants are expected to discuss their application with the academic referee and to have established that the referee is happy to submit a reference.
81. Referees will be asked to comment on:
- a. Their perception of the commitment of the applicant to an academic career;
 - b. Academic competencies that they have already developed; and
 - c. The potential of the applicant for further development as a clinical academic.
82. Where appropriate and applicable the referee may also comment on the role played by the applicant in any scientific outputs.

Guidance for Completion of Appendix 1: “Supplementary Questions for NIHR Dental ACF Applicants”

83. In addition to the application form, please ensure that applicants meet the criteria in the Person Specification for a NIHR ACF and eligibility criteria outlined in Appendix 2. Applicants must also demonstrate the appropriate clinical competences for the post.

84. Academic Achievement and Professional Qualifications

University(ies) attended

- a. Please provide the name of the university or universities that you have attended with dates where you gained your professional or academic qualifications. For each, please name the Department or School where you were based for your study.

Degree/Diplomas

- b. Please provide all the qualifications that you have achieved which you feel are relevant to your application for a NIHR ACF. Where a class or grade was associated with your qualification, please provide this information. The date and awarding body of your qualification(s) should also be provided. Please note that original certificates will be requested at interview.

Prizes or other academic distinctions

- c. Please list any prizes or academic distinctions (maximum of six) which you have gained and provide the date of award and the awarding body for each.

85. Key and Relevant Academic Achievement

Research, whether past or in progress

- a. This section gives you the opportunity to explain the research experience you have. Give brief details of the projects with which you have been involved, both past or in progress and include the research methods you have learnt as a result. Please also include a description of your level of involvement and your exact role in the research team. For example, you might have had responsibility for collecting data from or analysing material with two other clinicians. You might have had overall responsibility, within the team, for collating all the data from one method of analysis and you helped write this section of the final publication where you featured as a co-author.

More detail of one of the research projects

- b. This section provides you with the opportunity to give more detail about one research project and your involvement. You only have 250 words but explain briefly what you feel you learnt from this project in particular.

86. Aims, Career Objectives and Commitment to a Career in Academic Dentistry

Medium- and long-term career goals

- a. Please indicate your medium- and long-term goals in relation to academic dentistry. You might wish to say what you are aiming to be doing in 5 and 10 years' time.

Why you want a NIHR ACF

- b. Please explain why you want a NIHR ACF and how it will support your longer-term career aspirations.

Appendix 1: Supplementary Questions for NIHR Dental ACF Applicants

Academic Achievement & Professional Qualifications

University(ies) attended. Please also indicate the Department or School.	Dates

Shortlisted applicants will be required to bring original certificates to the interviews

Degree/Diploma (include BSc, BDS, BChD, MBBS, MSc, MB/PhD, PhD, MD or equivalent) – state class of degree awarded, where appropriate.	Awarding Body	Dates

Prizes and other academic distinctions	Awarding Body	Dates

Key & Relevant Academic Achievement

Research, whether past or in progress. Please give brief details of all research projects and/or relevant research experience that you have undertaken or are undertaking, including methods used. Indicate your level of involvement and your exact role in the research team.

Please describe in more detail one of the research projects highlighted above (Up to 250 words).

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Aims, Career Objectives, and Commitment to a Career in Academic Dentistry

Please indicate your medium and long-term career goals in relation to an academic career.

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Please say why you want a NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship. Explain how the hosting research department will support your research aims and career objectives.

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Appendix 2: Supplementary Person Specification for NIHR Dental ACF Applicants

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	WHEN EVALUATED
ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of achievement of general professional competencies Completion of Foundation Training (or equivalent) by time of appointment, as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of commitment to specialty Intercalated honours for BSc and/or additional qualifications e.g. MSc etc. Distinction or honours during BDS programme Completion of Academic programme or equivalent 	Application Form
KNOWLEDGE & ACHIEVEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration of acquisition of the level of knowledge and skills necessary for the completion of general professional training with an emphasis on academic competencies Demonstration of understanding of, and commitment to, an academic career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration of good general knowledge/ broad interest in science and academic dentistry Prizes or distinctions Presentation of work at a national or international meeting Publications in peer reviewed journals Intercalated degree or MSc in relevant subject area Research experience Demonstration of knowledge of the clinical academic career pathway 	Application Form and interview/selection centre
EDUCATIONAL & PERSONAL ASPECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration of understanding and commitment to academic career 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstration of educational reasons for applying for this Academic Clinical Fellowship Programme Demonstration of personal reasons for applying for this Academic Clinical Fellowship Programme 	Application Form and interview/selection centre
COMMUNICATION SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As for standard person specification criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of team working skills Evidence of leadership potential Evidence through scientific publications and presentations 	Application Form and interview/selection centre

Please note: Applicants with relevant higher degrees are eligible for this scheme.

Appendix 3: Shortlisting Guidance Notes

The shortlisting assessments for NIHR dental ACF posts should be appropriate for appointment to the ACF in the specialty and at the training level advertised. Each application should be rated as either “Shortlisted” or ‘Not Shortlisted’ for interview to the particular Integrated Academic Training post.

Dental/clinical experience: Select appropriate evidence of experience relevant to ACF post entry level						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) Minimum relevant clinical experience	iii) Average relevant clinical experience	iv) Above average relevant clinical experience	-	/3
Score	0	1	2	3		

Degree in a relevant subject area: Only score the highest degree awarded * BSc/BA/MSc/MRes or equivalent						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) 2-1 Intercalated Degree*	iii) 1st Intercalated Degree*	iv) Masters/MPhil/PhD/MD in a relevant subject area	-	/3
Score	0	1	2	3		

Prizes: Awarded appropriate prizes indicating excellence /potential excellence for ACF						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) One or two undergraduate/post-graduate	iii) More than two undergraduate/post-graduate	-	-	/2
Score	0	1	2			

Teaching experience: Score formal teaching role where evidenced or higher education teaching qualification e.g. FHEA						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) Formal teaching role	iii) Any higher education teaching qualification	-	-	/2
Score	0	1	2			

Evidence of scientific publications						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) Good quality published abstract(s) as a co-author	iii) Several good quality published abstracts as a first author	iv) Publication(s) in a major journal as a co-author	v) Publication(s) in a major journal as a first-author	/4
Score	0	1	2	3	4	

Evidence of scientific presentations						
Criteria	i) No evidence	ii) Limited to local/regional levels	iii) National level	iv) International level	v) Several presentations at international level	/4
Score	0	1	2	3	4	

Language skills and content of evidence: Assess the written English and how applicants link their experience to the post they are applying for						
Criteria	i) No evidence of competence in written English	ii) Competence in and reasonable use of written English	iii) Criteria ii) with some relevant evidence linked to the application	Clear and concise use of appropriate written English, providing relevant evidence throughout	-	/3
Score	0	1	2	3		

Academic experience: Rate a subjective assessment of academic experience balancing achievements with career stage. For example, an applicant currently at DCT1 level with the same quantifiable academic achievements (publications, prizes, degrees etc.) as an applicant at DCT3 level would score highly						
Criteria	i) No evidence of relevant academic experience	ii) Evidence of minimum relevant academic experience	iii) Evidence of average relevant academic experience	iv) Evidence of above average academic experience	-	/3
Score	0	1	2	3		

Academic potential: Rate a subjective assessment of academic potential balancing achievements with career stage.						
Criteria	i) No evidence of relevant academic potential	ii) Evidence weak	iii) Evidence limited	iv) Evidence ample	v) Evidence outstanding	/4
Score	0	1	2	3	4	

Shortlisting Outcome

Total score = /28

Select:	Not Shortlisted for ACF Interview	Shortlisted for ACF Interview
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Appendix 4: Interview Guidance Notes

The interview for NIHR dental ACF posts should be at least 30 minutes in duration and appropriate for appointment to an ACF at the training level advertised. Each applicant should be rated as either 'Appointable' or 'Not appointable' to the particular Integrated Academic Training post. Applicants should be ranked on their total score, with the highest scoring applicant being offered the post, dependent on clinical benchmarking. The remaining appointable applicants are to be informed that they are appointable but are reserve applicants.

'Average', 'Good', 'Very good' and 'Exceptional' relate to comparison with ACFs already in the programme where appropriate (at the time of their appointment).

The non-linear scoresheets below should be used as a minimum for questioning under the various headings, however the proposed questions are **examples only**. The actual questions used at interview are at the interview panel's discretion, following Follet Principles.

All applicants to an ACF post should assess the same datasets/publication and be asked and scored on the same questions.

ACADEMIC: SCIENTIFIC

Understanding of data

Applicant provided with a generic dataset/publication (e.g. outcomes following an intervention) to consider for 10 minutes immediately prior to being interviewed. The dataset/publication should be appropriate for assessment in 10 minutes and should be no longer than two sides of A4.

Ability to explain a dataset concisely to a scientific audience

"Please explain the data you have been shown"

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Little appreciation of issues such as experimental design, statistics, power calculations, appropriate controls.			Clear communication; Ability to summarise data/design succinctly. Discussion of relevant controls and confounders; discussion of statistical analysis			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	2	4	6	10	16
Comments						

Ability to explain the result to a lay audience

“Please briefly explain this data for a lay audience”

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Inappropriate use of technical terms, technical language and complicated sentence structures.			Clear communication; clear, plain English summary; able to explain significance in lay terms.			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	5	8
Comments						

Evidence of academic achievements to date

This should reflect demonstrable achievements rather than ‘just’ posts held.

“Please summarise your academic achievements and your personal contribution”

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Little demonstrable academic activity; academic activity without productivity			Degrees; publications; prizes; posters; presentations; projects completed*			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	5	8
Comments						

*Scoring should reflect whether prizes etc. were at a local, national or international setting.

Knowledge of science/academic dentistry related to the advertised ACF post

“Can you tell us what area of research linked with this ACF post interests you?”

Negative indicators		Positive Indicators				
Little evidence of prior thought about specific projects; little evidence of knowledge of local expertise; little knowledge of relevant methodological approaches, does not know the research theme of the competition ACF post		Knowledge of area of endeavour; knowledge of local expertise; appropriate ideas for a possible project*; Understanding of relevant methodological approaches (e.g. strengths and limitations), research theme if competition post				
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	2	4	6	10	16
Comments						

*Applicants are not expected to have planned a specific research project/programme since this will be achieved during the ACF time, but should be able to discuss possible themes, ideas, or research questions relevant to the academic/research environment.

Experience of research

“Can you describe your personal practical experience of research (in any form)?”

Negative indicators		Positive Indicators				
Little experience; little or superficial understanding of challenges, pitfalls, need for funding		Relevant practical experience; understanding of the pitfalls and limitations from practical experience; ability to discuss how research activities proceed in principle (in any field); ability to discuss PPI/PPE (patient/public involvement/engagement)				
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	5	8
Comments						

General/broad knowledge of other areas of science/academic dentistry

“Can you share with us some aspect of academic dentistry / clinical or basic research that you have read recently that excited you, outside of your immediate area of interest?”

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Little evidence of reading or exploration; little understanding of relevant methodological approaches available across biomedicine			Knowledge and understanding of new findings in their field; evidence of reading across fields outside their immediate interest; evidence of ability to identify a research development outside their field which could be utilised in their area of interest. Understanding of relevant methodological approaches; (e.g. strengths and limitations)			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	5	8
Comments						

Balancing your clinical and academic responsibilities

“What do you see are the challenges to balancing the clinical and academic roles? Give an example of how you have overcome similar career challenges so far. What skills will you need and how will you develop them?”

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Little appreciation of issues such as time management, clinical / externally driven pressures, recourse to the support of others in protecting academic time			Clear communication; example of time management/ protecting time given; clear on need for skills to protect academic time; recourse to academic supervisor/programme director			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	4	5
Comments						

Appointability to Integrated Academic Training Post

The panel should consider the local academic research training environment and any academic research aspirations of the applicant and determine whether those aspirations can be fulfilled through appointment to this post.

Outcome	No	Yes
Score	Unsuccessful	0

Interview panel to determine whether applicant is appointable to the ACF post at the institution in which it is to be held

Academic Outcome	Unacceptable for appointment to ACF at training level advertised	Acceptable for appointment to ACF at training level advertised
Select	Unsuccessful	Successful

Applicants Name/Reference Number

Panel Member Declaration

I will ensure that I have read the relevant 2019 NIHR ACF Guidance for Recruitment and Appointment, and as a member of the Interview Panel, understand:

The requirements I have in respect to:

- Confidentiality;
- Storage of Personal Data;
- Declaring a potential conflict of interest; and
- Equality.

That in considering the applicant and in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Equality Act 2010, the scores and comments I have provided will be used to:

- Provide an assessment for ranking purposes; and
- Inform discussion at the meetings and may be used to provide anonymised information and feedback to applicants.

Panel member name (PLEASE PRINT):

Panel member signature:

Date:

Oriel privacy policy: <https://www.oriel.nhs.uk/Web/Home/InformationPage?Type=PrivacyPolicy>

Optional - Additional questions

The heading, questions, negative and positive indicators should be determined prior to interview.

Heading:

Question:

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	4	5
Comments						

Heading:

Question:

Negative indicators			Positive Indicators			
Outcome	Little or no evidence	Acceptable	Average	Good	Very good	Exceptional
Score	0	1	2	3	4	5
Comments						

Appendix 5: Interview Panel Briefing Document

Interview process

Recruitment offices should use the nationally agreed NIHR ACF scoresheets for the ACF interviews. The interviews should be at least 30 minutes in duration. The IAT partnership hosting the ACF post should provide the recruitment team with the appropriate dataset/publication ahead of the interviews. The questions, negative and positive indicators on the scoresheets for any additional questions must be completed ahead of the interviews. Panel members should have access to applications and academic references at interview and have a full briefing on the process, the use of the scoresheets, and sign the code of practice.

Panel members should score individually and should not confer prior to awarding a mark. Where clinical concerns are raised about an applicant, based on their performance at interview, then they must be deemed unappointable.

Panel “wash ups” should take place throughout the day, and no less frequently than twice per day. “Wash ups” should only include panel members who have interviewed and scored an applicant.

The recruitment leads should ensure that all panel members are aware that the outcome of the interviews should not be revealed until the offers are released on 16th January 2019.

Interview roles and responsibilities

The appointment panel should have both clinical and academic representatives that reflect the IAT partnership offering the ACF programme and specialty. It is expected, in addition to the clinical and academic representative that the panel should include:

- **A lay representative** - who is not dentally qualified but has experience of healthcare management. Their role is to provide impartial oversight of the process, ensuring that interviews are appropriate and fair. They will observe interview panels and be available to answer questions or deal with concerns on the day. If there is an issue with the interview, the applicant should request to speak with the lay representative at the first opportunity.

The following panel members are usually dentally qualified specialists who are responsible for delivering the content of the interviews and providing quality assurance of the process. They are available to answer questions that require clinical or academic clarification during the interviews:

- **Lead of the ACF training programme** or their representative;
- **Additional representation from the relevant clinical academic community**, if required;
- **An independent clinical academic member** (wherever possible, from outside the HEE local office boundary);

At interviews, the following additional personnel should be available:

- **Recruitment Officer** - This person is responsible for the smooth running of the interview process. They are usually senior administrators in the HEE Local Office/Deanery hosting the interviews and are responsible for ensuring that interview materials and data are handled appropriately. They are usually the point of contact for messages handled via helplines, escalating them appropriately.

Equality and diversity training

All interview panel members are required to have undertaken Equality and Diversity training in the last 3 years. Recruiters **must** obtain evidence of completion of this training from the interviewers. This would normally be in the form of a certificate to confirm completion of training. Verbal confirmation from the interviewer is not acceptable evidence.

Conflicts of interest

Recruitment leads should ensure there is a mechanism in place for interviewing panel members or trainees to declare any conflict of interest e.g. knowing an applicant. This could be achieved by providing a list of prospective applicants to the interview panel(s) before the interviews commence.

If a panel member or applicant know one another then their conflicts of interest should be declared prior to interview.

Where possible, applicants known to one or more panel members should be switched to another panel. If this is not possible then the administrative team should arrange for a lay representative or other member of the recruitment team (e.g. the recruitment lead) to be present, in addition to the interviewers, at the relevant panel.

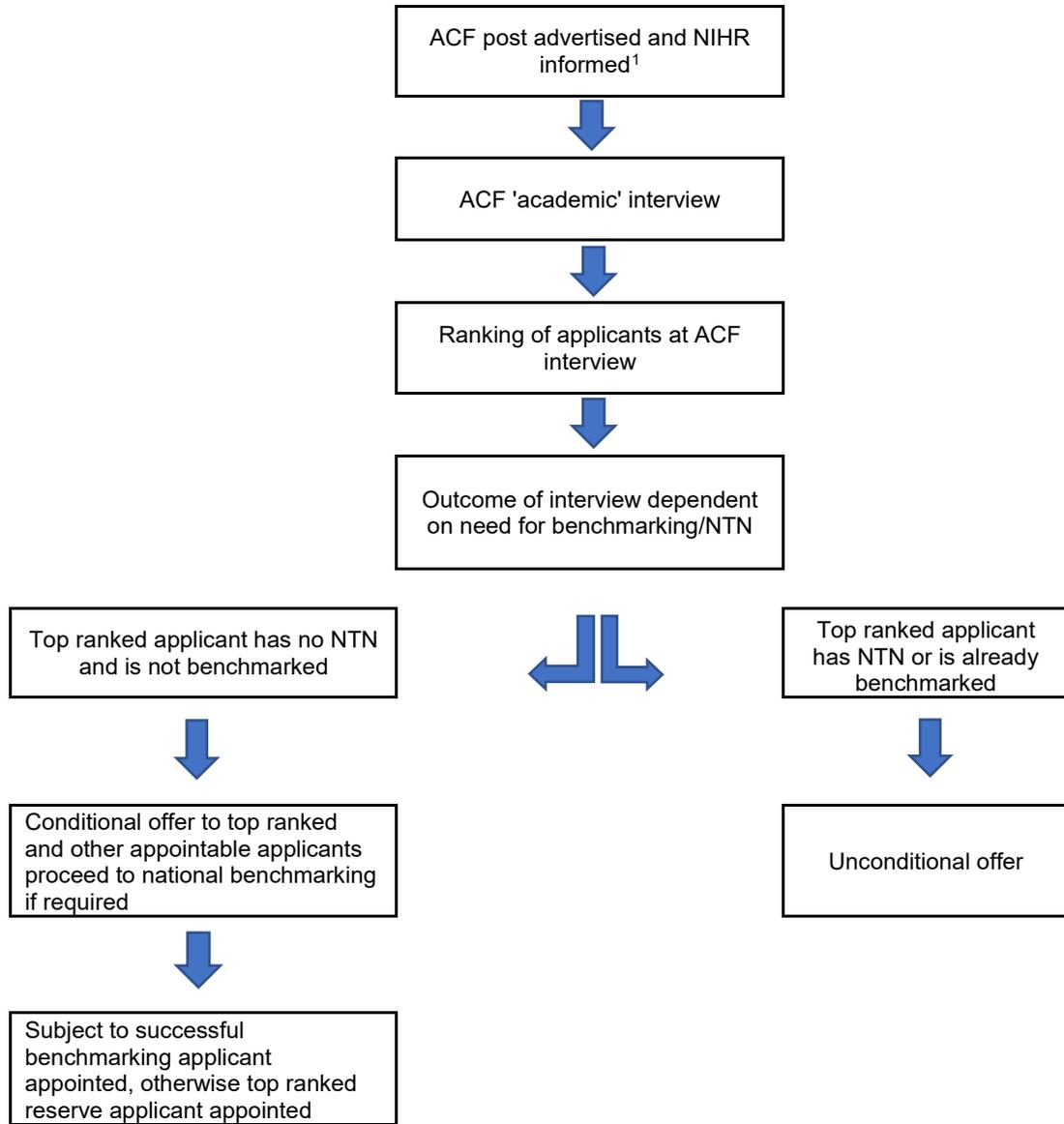
A list of panel members should be available for applicants to review for conflicts of interest prior to interview(s). If it is not recognised in advance of the interview that an applicant is known to a panel member, and there is no opportunity to implement the measures described above, the interviewer should note their prior knowledge of the applicant on the scoresheet, allow the other panel members to lead the questioning for that applicant and also notify the selection team of this before or during the post interview wash up, to ensure that any potential aberrant scores can be reviewed.

Appendix 6: Chair's Briefing Checklist

Agenda Item	Notes
<p>1. Chair's welcome</p>	<p>Welcome to Panel and Introductions</p> <p>Attendees should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lay representative – who is not dentally qualified but has experience of healthcare management. Their role is to provide impartial oversight of the process, ensuring that interviews are appropriate and fair. They will observe interview panels and be available to answer questions or deal with concerns on the day. If there is an issue with the interview the applicant should request to speak with a lay representative at the first opportunity. <p>The following panel members are usually dentally qualified specialists who are responsible for delivering the content of the interviews and providing quality assurance of the process. They are available to answer questions that require clinical or academic clarification during the interviews:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead of the ACF training programme or their representative - who represents the specialties of the ACF being offered and should have an awareness of the research projects/training available at the locality; • Additional representation from the relevant clinical academic community, if required; • An independent clinical academic member (wherever possible, from outside the HEE local office boundary); <p>At interviews, the following additional personnel should be available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment Officer who is responsible for the smooth running of the interview process. They are usually senior administrators in the HEE Local Office/Deanery hosting the interviews and are responsible for ensuring that interview materials and data are appropriately handled. They are usually the point of contact for messages handled via helplines, escalating them appropriately <p>Please thank members for their involvement.</p>
<p>2. Code of practice</p>	<p>Please remind the panel that:</p> <p>HEE is committed to eliminating unjustified discrimination and to promoting equality of opportunity for all applications to our Fellowships and other training schemes. HEE welcomes applications from all sections of the community and does not discriminate on the grounds of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion or philosophical belief or sexual orientation.</p>

	In order to support this commitment, the Panel must ensure that the decisions and judgements about people are based on objective and justifiable criteria funding recommendations.
3. Quoracy	Please note that in order for the panel to have quoracy the minimum number of panel members listed in the NIHR recruitment guidance paperwork is required to take into account the balance of expertise required for the meeting.
4. Conflicts of Interest	You should remind the panel that they must declare all conflicts of interest with applicants. Where possible, applicants known to one or more panel members should be switched to another panel. If this is not possible then the administrative team should arrange for a lay representative or other member of the recruitment team (e.g. the recruitment lead) to be present, in addition to the interviewers, at the relevant panel.
5. Interview process	<p>You should remind Panel members of the purpose of the ACF interview and indicate if any of the posts are competition posts and that the applicants should demonstrate a knowledge/interest in the research theme associated with the post.</p> <p>Additional questions should be determined prior to the interviews.</p> <p>Determine who is leading on each interview question, with all panel members scoring each question, independently.</p>
6. Panel Process for discussion of applications	<p>On the basis of the scores and comments received from Panel members a rank list is produced. The panel should determine the cut off for appointability for the ACF posts. The top ranked applicant will be offered the NIHR ACF, if the applicant requires clinical benchmarking the offer will be conditional on them reaching the level of appointability at national clinical assessment.</p> <p>If the top ranked applicant withdraws or does not reach the level of appointability at clinical benchmarking then the post will be offered to the next highest ranked applicant.</p>
7. Closing Remarks	<p>Please remind Panel members that they should not discuss the outcome of today's interview. All enquiries about the outcome and requests for feedback should be directed to the HEE.</p> <p>The offers date to is 16 January 2019.</p> <p>Please thank the Panel.</p>

Appendix 7: Clinical Benchmarking Overview



¹ Advertising will use Oriel and may also involve local HEE and HEI websites or other professional publications

Appendix 8: Frequently Asked Questions

1. I wish to apply for a dental NIHR ACF post what is the process?

NIHR ACF posts are allocated annually to Integrated Academic Training (IAT) partnerships comprising a HEE local office, Higher Education Institute (HEI) and NHS Organisation. The recruitment process is managed by the relevant HEE local office in the IAT partnerships and advertisements will appear on their websites, Oriel, and potentially also in other professional publications, for example the British Dental Journal.

- **ACF application form:** applicants will need to complete the ACF application form for the ACF posts advertised in the relevant specialties and levels through Oriel.
- **Specialty training application form:** ACF applicants who require clinical benchmarking if they were successful at the ACF interview will need to complete the relevant specialty training application when the national recruitment application window opens.

Following assessment of the ACF applications, shortlisted applicants are invited for an ACF interview (also sometimes known as the 'academic' interview) by the HEE local office hosting the ACF post. The ACF interview has several components assessing the clinical–academic potential of the applicant and the panel will include relevant clinical academic representatives from the hosting HEI. Appointable applicants at the ACF interviews will be ranked and, subject to national clinical benchmarking, the top ranked applicant will be offered the ACF post when offers are made.

Please refer to Appendix 6 for a summary of the benchmarking process flow chart.

Conditional offers will be given to successful applicants at the ACF interviews who did not already hold a NTN in the GDC specialty and level to which they are applying. The condition of the offer relates to the clinical benchmarking in the GDC specialty of the ACF post to which they are applying.

If the top ranked applicant at the ACF interviews requires clinical benchmarking, then reserve appointable applicants from the ACF interview will also be invited for clinical benchmarking if required. An unconditional offer to reserve applicants, who passed clinical benchmarking, is dependent on the applicants ranked higher at the ACF interviews withdrawing to failing clinical benchmarking.

ACF applicants will be ranked and offered on their performance at the ACF interview and **not** the national standard clinical interview where they just need to pass the clinical benchmark. If applicants require clinical benchmarking then the HEE local office hosting the ACF post will need to ensure that the HEE national recruitment team are made aware of this in a timely manner, applicants should have been advised to apply to the relevant national recruitment.

2. What is clinical benchmarking?

Clinical benchmarking relates to applicants reaching the threshold of appointability at the national standard clinical interviews/assessments for the GDC specialty and level of the ACF post for which they are applying.

Applicants who fail to reach the appointability threshold at clinical benchmarking will be ineligible for appointment to the ACF post in that recruitment round. Under these circumstances, the conditional ACF offer will be withdrawn.

Applicants who fail clinical benchmarking and become ineligible are still able to reapply in future recruitment rounds.

3. Will all applicants need to attend clinical benchmarking?

No. If the applicant already holds a NTN in the same GDC specialty as their NIHR ACF application, there is no need for them to attend a national clinical assessment/interview as they will have previously met the required clinical standard.

4. Will applicants who hold a NTN in a different GDC specialty to the ACF they are applying for be required to attend clinical benchmarking?

Yes. Although they have met the required standard in a national clinical interview previously, it was not in the same GDC specialty. Different specialties assess different skills and competences at interview and therefore should not be assumed that success in one clinical interview is appropriate for all specialties.

5. What is the required standard for NIHR ACF applicants undergoing clinical benchmarking?

Applicants who do not hold a NTN will need to be assessed and interviewed through the relevant national process for the specialty. The applicant will be required to reach the threshold of 'appointability' at national selection assessment/interview. They **do not** need to have been ranked high enough to have received a specialty training post i.e. 'appointed'.

Applicants that do not reach the appointable score threshold at national selection assessment/interview will have their ACF offer (or place on reserve list) withdrawn.