

Applicant Guidance – Part 2

**Recruiting for:
Dental Core Training Levels 1, 2 and 3**

September 2021

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1 Situational Judgement Test (SJT)

1.1 Introduction

The Situational Judgement Test (SJT) is a computer-based assessment that has been fully researched and evaluated and has shown to have high predictive validity. It is delivered in partnership with Work Psychology Group and Pearson VUE, which has been designed to assess some of the essential competences outlined in the Dental Core Training (DCT) Person Specifications.

1.2 Sitting the SJT

All applicants who apply to DCT in any given recruitment year are required to sit the SJT. There are no exceptions or exemptions to this requirement. Your SJT outcome **cannot** be carried over into successive recruitment years.

The SJT will be delivered on a number of consecutive days in a large number of Pearson VUE Computer Testing Centres, globally. The SJT window will run from **Wednesday 17th March to Wednesday 24th March 2021 (inclusive)**. Test Centre appointments are subject to availability, and not all centres will have appointments available on every day of the test delivery window. You can find your nearest Pearson VUE test centre by visiting the [Pearson VUE website](#).

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.

As Critical Workers, travel to UK Test Centres to sit the SJT as part of the DCT National Recruitment Process is considered essential travel. All applicants are expected to attend a test centre unless the following circumstances apply.

1.3 Remote Testing Requirements

Applicants who are shielding in line with government advice due to COVID-19 can request remote testing by completing [this form](#) **by Monday 22nd February 2021 at 4 pm**.

Should you test positive for COVID-19 or fall into any of the 4 categories detailed on the Pearson VUE webpage (<https://home.pearsonvue.com/coronavirus-update>) close to the time of your booked SJT, please email dctnro@hee.nhs.uk to request remote delivery.

Evidence of the requirement to test remotely will be requested. The DCTNRO will approve requests on a case-by-case basis. Remote testing is not available to applicants for any non-COVID-19 related reasons.

1.4 Structure of the SJT

The SJT will be taken under exam conditions, there will be 60 questions in total and it will carry 33% weighting of an applicant's final score.

The timings of the exam are detailed below in minutes:

	Tutorial	SJT	Survey	Total
Standard Time	15	115	15	145
Applicants with approved 25% additional time	15	144	15	174

Applicants will be assessed on the following non-academic, professional attributes expected of a trainee soon to enter Dental Core Training:

- Coping with Pressure
- Critical thinking, Appraisal and Decision Making
- Patient Centred Care
- Professionalism

The time remaining on your SJT is denoted by an onscreen countdown timer.

There are 2 types of questions in the SJT (ranking and multiple choice). Two Sample SJT Questions (one of each type) can be found on the [DCTNRO website](#).

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 the [Pearson VUE website](#).

1.5 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 (reasonable adjustment) by the DCTNRO. Comfort aid items are listed on the [Pearson VUE Comfort Aid List](#).

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 the Pearson VUE Comfort Aid List document.

1.6 Overseas Test Centres

If you are outside of the UK during the SJT window, you will have the opportunity to sit the test at your nearest Pearson VUE test centre, subject to availability.

To assist applicants with overseas availability, the DCTNRO reserves seats in a number of pre-approved core locations and you will have been presented with the opportunity to register your interest 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.

1.7 Invitation to the SJT

If your application has been assessed as demonstrating evidence of eligibility against the essential criteria outlined in the national DCT Person Specifications, you will be **invited to sit the SJT on Friday 19th February 2021 via the Oriel messaging system**. You will also receive 2 automated emails from Pearson VUE, indicating your web username and temporary password. Follow the instructions in the emails to complete your login for the VUE appointment scheduling webpages.

1.7.1 Booking a Test

After the SJT booking opens at 6 am (UK time) on Tuesday 23rd February 2021, you will be required to log in (using the 'Sign In' button on the right of the [DCT Pearson VUE webpage](#)) and schedule your assessment.

If you have requested a 'test accommodation' (reasonable adjustment) other than, or in addition to extra time, the DCTNRO will advise you with regards to the booking process for your slot.

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 amend your search criterion.

Failure to book an appointment before the end of the SJT booking window, i.e. **Thursday 25th February 2021** will result in your DCT application not progressing further.

1.7.2 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.

1.8 Admission Policy

You should arrive at the test centre 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time. This will give you adequate time to complete the necessary sign-in procedures.

If you arrive more than 15 minutes late to your appointment, you may be refused admission.

No personal items may be taken into the testing room. This includes all bags, books, notes, phones, pagers, watches and wallets.

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

1.8.1 Identification (ID) Requirements

You will be required to present one form of original (no photocopies), valid (unexpired) government issued ID that includes your name, photograph, and signature. The first and last name that you used to register must match exactly the first and last name on the ID that is presented on test day. To view the full ID policy, including any additional allowances to this policy, please visit <http://www.pearsonvue.com/policies/1.pdf>. If you have any questions or concerns about the ID you are required to bring with you to the testing centre for admittance to your exam please email DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk

1.8.2 Alternative ID documents & Name Discrepancies

If you are unable to present any of the documents listed in the Pearson VUE ID Policy or your registered first name and last name does not match EXACTLY with the ID that you intend to present on the day of your test, you must contact the DCTNRO at the earliest opportunity by emailing DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk for further advice and instructions on suitable alternatives.

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

1.8.3 Breaks and refreshments

You are prohibited from taking food and drink into the test room, unless this has been pre-approved as a reasonable adjustment. You may leave the test room for 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 or access any personal belongings placed in your locker.

1.8.4 Important Test Centre Delivery Information Pertaining to COVID-19

Before travelling to a test centre, it is vitally important that you familiarise yourself with the [health and safety guidelines](#) implemented at all Pearson VUE owned centres to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and for protecting testing applicants and their staff. The guidelines contain important applicant information and anyone who fails to comply with the guidelines will be denied their testing services.

1.9 Reschedule Policy

If you wish to reschedule your test, you may do this via your Pearson VUE account up until 48 hours before your appointment time. However, please note that availability may be limited. If you are an applicant with a pre-approved reasonable adjustment, other than or in addition to extra time, and wish to reschedule your test, please contact the DCTNRO at DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk

Please see section 1.11 if you wish to reschedule a test less than 48 hours away.

1.10 Cancellation Policy

If you wish to cancel your test, you may do this via your Pearson VUE account up until 48 hours before your appointment time. If you are an applicant with a pre-approved reasonable adjustment, other than or in addition to extra time, and wish to cancel your test, please contact the DCTNRO at DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk

Please see section 1.11 if you wish to cancel a test less than 48 hours away.

1.11 Missed Appointment

If you miss your test (or try to cancel/reschedule and cannot do this via your online account) you must contact the DCTNRO at DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk immediately.

You will **not be able to re-book online** via self-service **without first being re-authorised** by the DCTNRO. You should be aware that test centre availability is likely

to be limited at this point and that you may be required to travel beyond your preferred locality.

Regrettably, the DCTNRO will be unable to accommodate you if you miss an appointment on the final two days of the SJT window, **i.e. Tuesday 23rd and Wednesday 24th March 2021.**

1.12 SJT Outcomes

Applicants will be notified of their SJT result as per section 11 of this guide.

Your SJT score will form part of the final score you receive as part of the DCT recruitment process and thus your overall rank.

1.12.1 Scoring Scale & Maximum Achievable Score

The raw SJT scores for DCT applicants are normalised and then scaled. This is to ensure it carries the correct weighting in line with other elements of the selection process for the level of DCT applied to. There is no 'cut-off' score for the SJT.

1.12.2 Appealing the Outcome

All applicants will receive feedback which will notify them of their scaled SJT score. The score awarded is final and cannot be reviewed, re-marked or disputed. There is no appeals process.

If you feel your DCT application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, there is a national complaints policy and procedure. You should explore this route if you have any concerns about your application. A copy of the policy can be located on the [DCTNRO website](#).

1.13 Applicant Expenses

Expenses incurred by applicants attending the SJT will **not** be reimbursed by the DCTNRO.

1.14 Revision Materials

None of the DCT question writers take part in or endorse any preparation courses or books. The DCTNRO understands that applicants may wish to revise and prepare for the SJT with each other in small groups. However, sharing information about the SJT is unacceptable and is viewed as unprofessional behaviour.

2 Shortlisting

If the number of applicants who sat the SJT exceeds the approximate interview capacity detailed in the table below, the SJT score will be used to rank applicants and decide who will be invited to interview.

Grade	Approximate Interview Capacity
DCT1	510
DCT2	360
DCT3	180

3 Invitation to Virtual Interview

Applicants will be notified on Tuesday 13th April 2021 if they are invited to interview via Oriel and will be able to book an available interview slot on Oriel. It is important to note that interview slots are booked on a first come, first served basis.

Applicants who do not rank highly enough to be invited to interview, based on the above approximate interview capacity, will be placed on a reserve list, and may be invited to interview at a later date.

The deadline for booking an interview slot will be **4 pm (UK time) on Thursday 15th April 2021**. Any applicants that have failed to book a slot by this deadline will have their application withdrawn from the process and they will no longer be considered for interview and ultimately appointment to a DCT post.

3.1 Virtual Interview Dates

The virtual interview dates, which will be delivered via Microsoft Teams are:

Wednesday 21st April 2021

Thursday 22nd April 2021

Friday 23rd April 2021

Tuesday 27th April 2021

Wednesday 28th April 2021

Thursday 29th April 2021

3.2 Confirmation of Interview Booking

Once you have booked your interview, you will receive an automated confirmation of booking message in Oriel and a secondary automated message will be sent to your

registered email address. If you do not receive confirmation, log into your Oriel account to confirm if the booking process was completed in its entirety.

4 Virtual Interview Process

The panel will consist of 2 panellists (Plan A) and 1 panellist (Plan B) who will assess your answers using an agreed national scoring framework. If the interview consists of 1 panellist, the interview will be recorded by the Recruitment Team in order to protect both parties.

On the day of the interview, please ensure that you allow yourself plenty of time to get the device you will be using set up and tested. You should also ensure you test your device prior to the day of the interview, as per the [2021 Dental Recruitment Applicant Declaration](#). You will need to have appropriate photographic identification to hand to show at the beginning of the interview and undertake fully all other requirements for the online interviews as outlined in the [2021 Dental Recruitment Applicant Declaration](#).

You will not be permitted any personal belongings within reaching distance during the interview e.g. paper, pens, pencils, wipeable board, stationery, any devices (other than the one you are using for the interview). The Administrator of the interview will ask you to show the entire room (including under the desk) on camera to confirm that this is the case and that you are alone.

Non-compliance to the above may lead to disqualification from the recruitment process.

If you are unable to attend due to unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, you must contact the DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk immediately to ascertain whether alternative arrangements can be made. It is important to note that alternative arrangements cannot be guaranteed.

4.1 Briefing, Conflicts of Interest and Issues on the Day

Applicants will receive a short verbal briefing by the Administrator of the interview before the panellists join the Microsoft Teams meeting. Your photographic identification will also be checked at this point.

Panellists will be provided with a list of names of applicants they are due to interview and will have the opportunity to raise any conflicts of interest prior to the day of the interview. A conflict of interest could be that you have a relationship outside of the working environment e.g. family member, partner etc. Alternative arrangements will be made, where possible. If it is not possible to make alternative arrangements, it may

be possible for a Lay Representative or another appropriate observer to sit in on the interview.

If you have any issues with the way that the interview is conducted, please raise these by email to DCTNRO@hee.nhs.uk on the same day as the interview takes place. Please note that the DCTNRO cannot perform any remedial action for operational issues that occur on the day of the interview.

4.2 Virtual Interview Format

The virtual interview will last for 15 minutes in total. There will be 2 parts to the interview and each part will last for 7.5 minutes. Applicants will be presented with a number of scenarios in advance of the interviews and subsequently asked questions, on the day of the interview, relating to 2 of those scenarios (1 x Clinical Scenario and 1 x Clinical Governance, Quality Improvement & Professional Skills).

The interview provides each applicant with a number of opportunities to demonstrate some of the criteria outlined in the Person Specifications. Each of the criteria will be assessed in the 2 exercises as follows:

Clinical Scenario

- Professionalism
- Clinical knowledge and expertise
- Teamwork and leadership
- Organisation, planning and problem solving
- Communication skills

Clinical Governance, Quality Improvement & Professional Skills

- Critical thinking, appraisal and decision making
- Professionalism
- Clinical knowledge and expertise
- Organisation, planning and problem solving
- Communication skills
- Empathy and sensitivity
- Commitment to learning and personal development

Please refer to the Person Specifications for more information about these.

4.3 Dress Code

Applicants are expected to dress in a professional manner for attendance at interview.

4.4 Observers at the Virtual Interview

There may be times during the interview where you are observed. This could be by a Lay Representative or External Assessor, where the purpose of these roles is to ensure that quality, consistency and standardisation is present throughout all interviews. Furthermore, it allows for areas of best practice to be established and shared. Inexperienced assessors and administrative staff may also observe and the purpose of this is to assist with their understanding of the recruitment processes so that they are able to carry out their roles effectively.

The DCTNRO can confirm that the observers will have no role in the assessment of an applicant and nor in deciding the appointability of an applicant.

4.5 Interview Courses, Websites and Books

It should be noted that the DCTNRO and COPDEND do NOT recommend that you book commercial courses, sign up to websites or purchase advice and guidance books specifically aimed at dentists undertaking the DCT Selection Process. None of the DCT assessors or members of the DCT Recruitment Steering Group take part in or endorse any preparation courses, websites or books.

5 Tie Breaks

In the event of tied rankings, scores will be differentiated using the scores from the following 3 aspects of the selection process, in the following order:

1. Clinical Governance, Quality Improvement & Professional Skills
2. Clinical Scenario
3. Situational Judgement Test

6 Appointability Threshold and VETO

For an applicant to be deemed 'appointable', they need to score a minimum of 40% of the total marks available at the SJT and interview.

An applicant can have a 'red flag' raised against them at any point during the interview. A 'red flag' can be raised if the assessor considers that the applicant may not be suitable for appointment to the post as they are not meeting one or more of the required characteristics. A review will take place for any applicant that receives a 'red flag' which will result in either:

- The applicant remaining with a red flag and therefore being deemed 'unappointable'
- The applicant being deemed appointable and the red flag removed.

7 Outcome following Interview

All applicants will be notified of their final outcome, i.e. appointable or unappointable, on **Wednesday 26th May 2021**. Further detailed feedback about performance will come at a later date as described in section 11.

7.1 Composition of Final Result

The final mark for all applicants that have undertaken DCT selection is calculated by combining results from both the SJT and interview. To give an applicant's final selection score, the SJT and each element of the interview is weighted as detailed in the table below.

Weighting of Selection Assessments

Selection Assessment	% Weighting Applied
Clinical Governance, Quality Improvement & Professional Skills	33.5%
Clinical Scenario	33.5%
SJT	33%
	100%

7.2 Appealing the Outcome

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

If you feel your application has not been managed correctly and have evidence of a failure in the process, there is a national complaints policy and procedure. You should explore this route if you have any concerns about your application. A copy of the policy can be located on the [DCTNRO website](#).

8 Offers

All offers will be made via Oriel by the DCTNRO. Offers received in any other way will be deemed invalid. If you are made an offer, you will need to respond to this on Oriel.

Applicants will be ranked nationally, in a single list for each vacancy (e.g. DCT1, DCT2 and DCT3), based on their performance in the SJT and at interview. Offers are made in rank order based on this national ranking.

Initial offers will be released on **Wednesday 26th May 2021**. Please do not contact the DCTNRO about offers prior to this date, as it could delay the release.

You will be given 48 hours (exclusive of weekends) to respond to an offer and have the options to accept (accept/accept with upgrades), hold (hold/hold with upgrades) or decline. Only one offer can be held at any one time, across all applications in a round. If you fail to respond to an offer within the 48-hour window you will be deemed to have declined the offer and your application status will change to 'offer expired'.

If you are holding an offer and try to hold another, the original held post will be automatically declined by the system.

Once you have accepted a post, you will not receive any further offers this round (i.e. it will withdraw you from any other applications you have in the same recruitment round).

Offers that are declined will be reoffered in rank order to other applicants.

If you choose to hold an offer, you can keep this offer held up until 1 pm (UK time) on **Thursday 3rd June 2021**. Before this deadline, you will be required to go back into Oriel and make a final decision on the offer. Any offers still held when the deadline is reached will be deemed to have been declined and the system will automatically change your status to show that you have declined the post.

After the hold deadline has passed, any new offers made will only have the option of accept (accept/accept with upgrades) or decline.

For further detailed information on the offers process, please refer to section 6 of the [Dental Recruitment Applicant Handbook](#).

Applicants who let their offer expire (and are withdrawn from the recruitment process) may be reinstated if they contact the DCTNRO immediately; however, their original offer cannot be guaranteed.

8.1 Withdrawing from an Accepted Offer

Due to the potential patient impact, the DCTNRO strongly discourages applicants from accepting an offer if there is a potential for them to withdraw at a later date. However,

it is appreciated that at times this is necessary due to a change in personal circumstances.

The DCTNRO considers it unprofessional to withdraw from an offer at very short notice, i.e. less than one month prior to the start date, as patient safety may be affected if there is insufficient cover within a unit.

Therefore, applicants must take up any post that they have formally accepted and work the contractual notice period before leaving a job, unless the employer has reasonable time to make other arrangements.

Please also consider other applicants/colleagues who may not have received an offer via the national recruitment process and remain on the reserve list for an offer. If you withdraw from a post at very short notice, it is unlikely that this post could be re-offered to another applicant, thus removing the opportunity of a training placement for a colleague.

9 Upgrading of Offers

If you rank highly enough to be made an offer, this will be made to the highest ranked Training Programme preference that is available when your final rank is reached. If this Training Programme offer is suitable for you and you do not want to be considered for any other preferences you have ranked higher, you can choose to simply accept it.

However, applicants do have the option of getting one of their higher ranked DCT programme preferences, should they become available, by opting into upgrading. The upgrading option is available to all offers that have been accepted or held, but not where an offer has been declined. An applicant who has accepted or held an offer, can opt in or out of upgrading at any time during the window which runs until **4 pm (UK time) on Thursday 10th June 2021**. Please be aware that due to the ranking of your DCT programme preferences you may move into a different region if you are upgraded.

If you opt into upgrading and a higher preferenced offer becomes available, the upgrade will be automatic. You will be placed in the higher preferenced post without the DCTNRO making any further contact with you and you will not be given 48 hours to decide whether you wish to accept or decline the new post. If an upgrade is made, the previously accepted or held post will be released and will be reoffered to another applicant.

Once you have been upgraded, you will be sent an automated message through Oriel to inform you of this. Details of the upgrade made will be available in the relevant section on Oriel.

Once the upgrading deadline has passed, no further upgrades will be offered, even if one of your higher preferred DCT programmes becomes available at a later date.

9.1 Offer Exchanges/Enhanced Preferences

The DCTNRO understand that applicants can have a change in circumstances for any number of reasons in the time between programme preferences initially being made and offers being released.

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

The above process will continue up until the upgrading deadline at **4 pm (UK time) on Thursday 10th June 2021**.

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

Applicants who have not been made an offer may also have a change in circumstances that requires them to make amendments to their expressed preferences. DCTNRO will keep their programme preferencing open throughout the recruitment process, however this will be temporarily disabled before each offer algorithm is run, until the offers have been released.

10 Clearing

Due to the Single Transferable Score model that is being used in DCT recruitment, there will be no option for clearing. Therefore, if you do not receive an offer in this round of recruitment it will be for one of two reasons:

1. All of your DCT programme preferences have been accepted before your rank is reached (this could happen even if you are considered appointable in the process).

2. You were unsuccessful at a certain part of the recruitment process (you will be notified if this is the case).

11 Feedback

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

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

If shortlisting is enacted, applicants will receive their equated SJT score and rank on Tuesday 13th April 2021.

Feedback sent by Thursday 3rd June 2021 will consist of the following:

- Scaled SJT Score
- SJT Band
- Raw interview scores
- Weighted interview scores
- Panellist interview comments
- Total weighted selection score
- Maximum scores available (raw and weighted)
- Minimum total weighted selection score required for appointability
- Overall rank and appointability

There is no further feedback that can be provided.

12 Remaining vacancies

Any vacancies that are left unfilled at the end of this process will be handed back to the HEE Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW for local recruitment.

There will be no more posts entered into national recruitment until 2022. In England, any Trust posts advertised and appointed after the national recruitment round will be Locum Appointment for Service (LAS) posts and not training posts.

13 Offers of Employment & Pre-Employment Checks

The offer and allocation of a Training Programme referred to above is NOT an offer of employment. An employment contract detailing the terms and conditions of

employment will be issued by the responsible employing organisation and is made subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks. Your offer of employment will include the name of your employer, the start date and length of the period of employment, the location, the hours, the minimum rate of remuneration and the notice period applicable.

Information regarding pay, hours, sick pay and annual leave entitlements, notice period, study leave, pension scheme etc. are set out in the national terms and conditions available from NHS Employers. Individual HEE Local Office, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW websites may also provide additional local information and links to individual employer websites.

The employing organisation carry out a number of pre-employment checks before an offer of employment can be confirmed. These will include verification of identity, registration and qualifications, right to work (immigration), employment history and employment reference checks, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and an occupational health check. Some of these (verification of identify, registration and qualifications and right to work for example) may also be undertaken by the HEE Local Offices, NES, NIMDTA or HEIW during the recruitment process.

Important: Applicants should not attempt to contact an employing Trust until they have confirmed their placement, i.e. they have accepted the offer without upgrades, or the upgrade deadline has passed.