**NHS Education for Scotland**

**GMC Recognising & Approving Trainers (RoT) and Use of Appraisal**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**

# 1. Introduction

This document sets out the principles agreed between the Parties to this MoU in respect of the use of appraisal to meet the GMC requirements for Recognising & Approving (Medical) Trainers (RoT) in Scotland. The Parties to this MoU are set out in paragraph 5 and include NHS Education for Scotland (NES), NHS Boards in Scotland and the five Scottish Medical Schools.

These principles specifically apply to secondary care trainers, as Primary Care trainers have their own arrangements for the Approval of GP Trainers[[1]](#footnote-1). However, there are a number of trainers who are GPs and who are not approved as GP trainers and will require to meet the RoT requirements.

# 2. Background

The GMC introduced new requirements for Recognising & Approving Trainers that are set out in their Implementation Plan published in August 2012[[2]](#footnote-2). The overarching principle behind the GMC RoT requirements is to ensure that all medical trainers are fit for purpose. The concept of the term Education Organiser (EO) has been introduced by the GMC and it is EOs (medical schools and postgraduate deans) who have ultimate responsibility for recognising trainers eligible for the four named medical trainer roles[[3]](#footnote-3). NHS Education for Scotland (NES) has led a project to introduce a single system across Scotland to meet the new requirements.

Key to the new requirements is the concept of a named medical trainer (“named trainer”), defined in the GMC implementation plan as four distinct roles, two undergraduate and two postgraduate. A database of named trainers who are covered by the RoT requirements in Scotland has been developed and all trainers on the database have been given provisional recognition status, so meeting the GMC’s third milestone (by July 2014) in the Implementation Plan.

The Implementation Plan requires that by July 2016 all on the database of named trainers require to have achieved full recognition. Trainers who fail to meet the required criteria by July 2016 will not be eligible for recognition and will not be able to continue acting in a GMC named trainer role. [[4]](#footnote-4) The GMC draft guidance[[5]](#footnote-5) includes the need for routine appraisal of the trainer role.

In Scotland medical appraisal is supported by the Scottish On-line Appraisal and Revalidation (SOAR) system that is managed by NES. Appraisers are to be trained by NES in the role of appraisal and the use of SOAR, and since 2014 this training has included appraising the doctor in their named trainer role where relevant. For the 2015/2016 cycle, the SOAR system has been updated to facilitate its use by appraisees as trainers in support of their RoT needs, enabling document storage of relevant supporting information to facilitate appraisal discussion.

# 3. Commencement and Term

This MoU will commence in September 2015 and will remain in place until revoked. The MoU will be reviewed at least every three years.

# 4. Purpose of this Agreement

The purpose of this MoU is to confirm the principles for the use of the secondary care appraisal and revalidation process in Scotland to support the GMC’s requirements for RoT.

This MoU does not cover the approval of Primary Care Trainers who are currently the subject of a separate approval process.

This MoU also only covers those trainers on the GMC Register who can be recognised by the GMC. However, similar arrangements are being put in place in Scotland for non-medically qualified trainers who are on the data-base of named trainers.

# 5. Roles and Responsibilities of Parties to this Agreement

## 5.1 NHS Education for Scotland – Scotland Deanery

Defined by the GMC as an EO for RoT purposes. NES is responsible for ensuring all trainers on the NES-managed named trainer data-base holding postgraduate roles meet the Scottish Trainer Framework Criteria and hence the GMC RoT requirements. NES makes the final decision on whether an individual can be ‘recognised’ as a named secondary care postgraduate medical trainer in Scotland.

The NES Medical Appraisal team are also responsible for maintaining the SOAR system and the training of secondary care appraisers.

## 5.2 The Five Scottish Medical Schools

Defined by the GMC as EOs for RoT purposes. The Medical Schools are each individually responsible for ensuring all their trainers on the named trainer data-base holding undergraduate roles meet the Scottish Trainer Framework Criteria and hence the GMC RoT requirements. The Medical Schools also collaborate with DMEs to appoint trainers to the undergraduate named trainers’ role. The Medical Schools make the final decision on whether an individual can be ‘recognised’ as a named undergraduate medical trainer in Scotland.

## 5.3 – NHS Boards in Scotland

## 5.3.1 Medical Directors

Medical Directors as Responsible Officers (ROs) must ensure the GMC statutory arrangements for revalidation are met within Health Boards. They must ensure that processes are in place to support Secondary Care Appraisal and must identify appraisers to undertake the annual appraisal process. Engagement with annual appraisal is a key component of the RO recommendation for revalidation decision, and a doctor needs to be appraised across the entire scope of their practice, including any named GMC trainer role(s).

This puts the RO in a position of needing assurance that the appraisal process is working, including for RoT. They are required to review the reports that they exclusively receive from SOAR Form 4s, together with other relevant information they hold such as Fitness to Practise information.

## 5.3.2 Directors of Medical Education Group

DMEs, on behalf of their Boards and respective ROs, are responsible for keeping the NES trainer database up to date with their LEP’s named postgraduate medical trainers. They select and appoint named trainers to the role, support their trainer training needs for compliance with the STF criteria, and advise individual trainers on their required time base for undertaking their trainer role – this is based on the number of trainees they are responsible for. [[6]](#footnote-6) DMEs work with the Medical Schools to appoint trainers to the undergraduate named trainers’ role.

EOs will also communicate to DMEs any decision made not to recognise a trainer in a named trainer role which will result in the need to reappoint to the role.

# 6. Principles on the use of Appraisal to support RoT

# 6.1 Overview

It has been agreed that in Scotland secondary care appraisal is an appropriate way for named medical trainers (as appraisees) to reflect on their trainer role, present supporting information of compliance with the STF criteria, and declare if they have met the necessary requirements set out in the GMC implementation plan [[7]](#footnote-7) for the EOs to recognise them as a named medical trainer

In line with the agreed approach to secondary care appraisal and revalidation in Scotland, the appraiser will not be asked to determine whether an appraisee should be recommended to the EOs for trainer recognition. Rather the appraisee should self-declare that they are, or are not, ready for recognition. The appraiser will confirm that they have viewed the supporting information presented for appraisal.

# 6.2 Support for Trainers - Scottish Trainers Framework

The Scottish Trainers Framework[[8]](#footnote-8) is an on-line resource designed to support all current and aspirant named medical trainers in meeting the GMC RoT requirements whether they are seeking recognition for their role in a Scottish Health Board or Scottish Medical School. For individual trainers and their appraisers, the Framework demonstrates how a portfolio of supporting information for trainer appraisal could be structured and accredited, and for employers, it provides guidance on job planning and educational tariffs. It also provides guidance on the role of appraisers in RoT.

# 6.3 Use of SOAR for RoT

The SOAR system will support trainers (as appraisees) in their self-reflection and documentation as they prepare for appraisal. All trainers on the database of named trainers will be identified in the SOAR system. However, all doctors in Scotland can access the SOAR trainer "pages" if they are not on the database of named trainers but want to use the “trainer pages” for their own personal development.

EOs will have access only to trainer-relevant SOAR content through the development of a Form 7 function where all such information will be collated.

Appraisers are not expected to take a view on Job Plans (and whether time to train is included). However, as time to train is one of the Scottish Trainer Framework[[9]](#footnote-9) criteria, appraisees will be required to self declare that they do have appropriate time in job plans.

# 6.4 EO Recognition Decision

The annual appraisal will be used to review the supporting information provided to meet the GMC RoT guidelines and assist the trainer to determine whether they are ready for recognition as a named trainer. However, GMC guidance is unequivocal that it is the responsibility of the EOs to recognise trainers and EOs will review all the available evidence (self-declaration and any RO held relevant information) when making a decision on recognition. This process may also include the relevant quality data available from the NES undergraduate student survey reports[[10]](#footnote-10), Scottish Trainees’ Survey[[11]](#footnote-11) and the GMC National Training Survey.[[12]](#footnote-12)

NES will provide training for appraisers on the RoT requirements to enable them to support the trainer in reflecting on whether they can self-declare that they are ready for recognition. The RO is not recognising or endorsing the trainers, despite the fact that the trainer role falls within the scope of practice of an individual and within their Job Plan, as there is a time tariff. It is perfectly possible that an RO will recommend a doctor for revalidation who as a named medical trainer cannot be recognised by the EO.

EOs will arrange to follow up with individual trainers on the database of named trainers who have declared they are not ready for recognition. In the first instance this follow up review will be carried out by DMEs on behalf of the EO, or by the EO in the case of a University-employed trainer where no DME is involved. A dash-board will be available in SOAR to EOs and DMEs to show details of the status of all relevant trainers. This dash-board will allow EOs/DMEs to access details of those trainers who have been identified as “Not Ready for Recognition” and these individuals will be asked to submit details of where they have been unable to meet the requirements, including where they have not been able to identify any time in job plans, and provide any relevant supporting information. All available evidence will be reviewed before the EO makes a final decision on recognition.

# 6.5 Trainer Notification of Other Information to EOs

At the point of recognition, named trainers will also be asked to notify EOs if there are any other issues of which they are aware which may impact on the appropriateness of named trainer recognition. Trainers are also required to report to EOs if they are subject to any GMC Fitness To Practise Investigations or if there is any other issue that may impact on the appropriateness of recognition as a named trainer. As well as fitness to practise, this could include health or human resource issues but this is not an exclusive list.

# 6.6 Quality Assurance of the Recognition Process

A key GMC requirement to ensure RoT compliance is the need undertake a review of the supporting information provided to support the self declaration and, as a result, EOs in Scotland will introduce a system to quality assure the recognition process. A detailed quality assurance system will be put in place before July 2016 and the EOs will be supported in this process by DMEs. EOs will have access to relevant information on SOAR.

# 6.7 Appeals System

The GMC also requires EOs to have their own appeals system in place on whether they support individuals being on the recognised trainer list.[[13]](#footnote-13) An appeals system will be introduced in Scotland by July 2016.

# 7. Information Governance

The existing named trainer data-base is being transferred into Turas during 2015. NES is developing the appropriate links between SOAR and Turas.

In addition, SOAR can also assign trainer "pages" on the request of a doctor who is not on the database of named trainers and wishes to use the “trainer pages”. For trainers who are not in a named role there is no requirement to have appropriate time in their job plans. However, all trainers who can complete all other RoT requirements can be identified as “conditionally recognised” and SOAR will also contain details of trainers in this category. It is intended that this group of “conditionally recognised” trainers could be available to be appointed to named trainer roles in future.

# 8. Resolution of Disagreements

It is anticipated that most disputes will be settled between DMEs and the relevant representatives of the EOs responsible for the RoT process. However, in the event of any dispute which is not settled in this way the following escalation procedures will apply;

Health Boards – via Medical Director and if necessary Chief Executive.

Medical Schools – via Teaching Dean and if necessary Head of School.

NES – via Medical Director and if necessary Chief Executive.

# 9. Amendments

Any amendments to this MoU will be added below.

# 10. Signatures

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| For and on behalf of NES |
| Date |
| Signed by |
| Print Name |
| Designation |
| Address Westport 102, Edinburgh, EH3 9DN |
|  |
| For and on behalf of ...................................................................... |
| Date |
| Signed by |
| Print Name |
| Designation |
| Address |

1. [GMC Approval of GP Trainers](http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/approval_trainers.asp) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [GMC Implementation Plan](http://www.gmc-uk.org/Approving_trainers_implementation_plan_Aug_12.pdf_56452109.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Scottish Trainer Framework: Roles requiring recognition](http://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/trainer-information/scottish-trainer-framework/roles-requiring-recognition/) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [GMC Implementation Plan](http://www.gmc-uk.org/Approving_trainers_implementation_plan_Aug_12.pdf_56452109.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/10264.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. EO/LEP/Trainer Responsibilities / Definitions Paper [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.gmc-uk.org/Approving_trainers_implementation_plan_Aug_12.pdf_56452109.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [Scottish Trainers Framework](http://www.scotlanddeanery.nhs.scot/trainer-information/scottish-trainer-framework/roles-requiring-recognition/) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/2700065/nes_draft_scottish_trainerdevelopment_framework_26-05-14.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. [Link to NES RAG reports](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/medicine/about-medical-training/quality-management/gmc-regulation/gmc-reports,-surveys-and-visits.aspx) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Link to STS [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [Link to NTS](http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/national_summary_reports.asp) [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. [Draft GMC position statement February 2015](http://www.gmc-uk.org/Role_of_the_trainer.pdf_53816777.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-13)