



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Guide to

HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

**For Higher Specialist Trainees, GP
Registrars & Streamline Training Year 3
onwards (ST3 - 8)**

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The HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

The medical workforce is changing and, over recent years, numerous reports have pointed to the importance of providing flexible working arrangements for doctors. The HSE National Flexible Training Scheme for Higher Specialist Trainees, GP Registrars and streamlined trainees in year 3 and above (HST/ST3 - 8) is a national scheme managed and funded by the Health Service Executive – National Doctors Training & Planning (NDTP).

The scheme provides for a limited number of supernumerary places to facilitate doctors at higher specialist training level to continue their training in a flexible manner for a set period of time. Trainees must be enrolled in a HST/GP/ST3-8 Programme under the auspices of one of the postgraduate medical training bodies recognised by the Medical Council in Ireland.

This Guide sets out details of the National Flexible Training Scheme and provides information for trainees, training bodies and employers about the programme.

Funding Arrangements and Flexible Training Places

As of July 2015, the equivalent of 12 whole time funded places are available on the HSE's National Flexible Training Scheme. The number of higher specialist trainees engaged in the Scheme at any given time will therefore be a maximum of 24.

Funding is provided by NDTP directly to the employing authority for each flexible trainee on the Scheme. The funding provided covers:

- Flexible trainee's salary
- Associated Employers PRSI

In addition, trainees on the National Flexible Training Scheme are entitled to apply through their training body for the HSE Specialist Training funding scheme and through their employer for the HSE Clinical Course / Exam Refund Scheme. Both of these programmes are funded by NDTP.

Employers should note that other costs, including on-call costs / other additional payments/ trainers' grants/ overtime payments etc. are not provided within NDTP funding for this programme.

NDTP will designate the whole time equivalent (employment ceiling adjustment) for the relevant hospital / service for the duration of the flexible training post and this will be notified by NDTP to the HSE's National Employment Monitoring Unit.

Who Can Apply to the National Flexible Training Scheme?

Applications may be made for flexible training :

1. By trainees who have been accepted onto the next immediate intake to HST/ST3-8/GP Reg. Such applicants may apply for flexible training prior to commencing their next stage of training;

OR

2. Existing HST/ST3-8/GP Reg may apply for a position on the HSE National Flexible Training Scheme at any stage throughout his / her training but it is generally recommended that the final year of higher specialist training/streamline training be full time.

Trainees must be enrolled in a specialist training programme under the auspices of one of the postgraduate medical training bodies recognised by the Medical Council in Ireland at the time of commencement of flexible training and throughout their flexible training post.

All applicants must have well founded individual reasons for flexible training. Applications for flexible training in order to pursue other paid work, paid non-medical interests or to engage in research will not be considered by NDTP. The most common reasons to date for individual higher specialist trainees making an application to the National Flexible Training Scheme include

- Responsibility for caring for others (e.g. children or elderly relatives) and
- Personal family circumstances.

When Can Trainees Apply to the National Flexible Training Scheme?

Flexible training posts will ordinarily be assigned for the period July to July each year, in line with the training year. If vacancies arise on the Scheme at other times of the year, applicants may be allocated to available slots.

In order to allow the timely management of the allocation of higher specialist trainees/streamline trainees to clinical sites, and to minimise any potential service implications if an application for flexible training is successful, potential applicants must give as much notice as possible of their intention to apply for flexible training from a specific date to both NDTP and their respective training body.

Applications for flexible training may be made up to 12 months in advance of the proposed date of commencement of flexible training and no later than 4 months in advance of the proposed date of commencement.

Whilst a trainee can apply for flexible training to NDTP at any point in the year, prospective applicants should note that applications are considered by the HSE's National Doctors Training & Planning in the order in which they are received so early application is advised. Historically, all slots available in July have been allocated by the previous October.

Structure of Flexible Training Posts on the National Flexible Training Scheme

Applicants may propose the structure of flexible training posts within certain parameters. Each flexible training post must be 50% of full time. The working pattern of a flexible trainee must be managed over a maximum of a two week reference period, meaning that of every two week period at least 50% of time must be worked, with the exception of approved leave in line with the NCHD Contract 2010.

Examples of acceptable flexible training working arrangements are

- Three days one week, 2 the next;
- 2.5 days on, 2.5 days off per working week;
- 5 mornings per week; or
- One week on, one week off.

It is important that a flexible trainee has similar exposure to learning and experience – including on-call duties – as their full-time colleagues. Therefore, trainees on the National Flexible Training Scheme will be expected to partake in on-call duties / on-call rotas on a pro-rata basis.

Trainees who are accepted onto the National Flexible Training Scheme will be managed on a supernumerary basis. This means that such trainees join their designated clinical service / department and will be additional to the allocated establishment of trainees in that service or department.

It is essential that there is enough training capacity within the proposed department/service to enable the flexible trainee to continue to progress along their HST/ST3-8 training pathway and achieve the required educational credit from their respective postgraduate medical training body.

In line with HSE regulations for the appointment of locum / temporary consultant posts, no flexible trainee is permitted to “act up” during their flexible training post.

Duration of Flexible Training Posts

The number of available flexible training posts is limited. Each approved flexible training post will ordinarily be approved for up to 12 months, and will ordinarily commence in July each year, in line with the training year.

Any trainee appointed to a flexible training post and who wishes to continue in flexible training after this period will be required to re-apply. No preference will be given to trainees already on the flexible training scheme for subsequent periods on the scheme.

Participation on the flexible training scheme will be restricted to a maximum of two years and will only be extended by NDTP in exceptional circumstances.

Where vacancies on the scheme arise at other times of the year, applicants may be allocated to available slots. In such cases, trainees will ordinarily be allocated to a flexible training post up to the end of the training year and such trainees will be required to re-apply for any subsequent period of flexible training.

Prospective applicants should note that deferral of flexible training places is not permitted. An applicant who cannot take up a flexible training post on the specified date of commencement must re-apply.

Eligibility Criteria to Apply

Applicants to the National Flexible Training Scheme must meet all the following eligibility criteria:

1. Be registered (or registered on the date of commencement of higher specialist training) on the **Trainee Specialist Division** of the Register of Medical Practitioners maintained by the Medical Council (of Ireland). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they are appropriately registered; the process for registration is entirely separate to the process for application for flexible training.
2. Be enrolled on a HST/ST3-8/GP Reg programme or have been accepted onto the next immediate intake to HST/ST3-8/GP Reg under the auspices of one of the Irish postgraduate medical training bodies. This process is completely separate from the application process for the National Flexible Training Scheme and is managed directly by the relevant postgraduate training body.
3. Hold the **NCHD Contract 2010** at the time of commencement of the flexible training post.
4. Have a **valid reason** for applying for flexible training.
5. Have completed and submitted all of the **required documentation** at the required times, to the satisfaction of NDTP.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

All individuals participating in the HSE National Flexible Training Scheme are issued with the NCHD Contract 2010 by the relevant employing authority, and are subject to the terms and conditions of that employment contract.

Issues like salary, annual leave, educational leave etc. will be managed on a pro-rotta basis by the employer in line with the agreed clinical work patterns of the individual higher specialist trainee.

Application Process

The application process for the National Flexible Training Scheme is a two step process. Each step is outlined below. Application forms referred to below are available in word format at www.hse.ie/doctors

Application Stage 1: Expression of Interest

The purpose of this stage is to allow the trainee to formally register their interest in the National Flexible Training Scheme with NDTP and to provide information to NDTP which will enable the HSE to make an initial assessment of the application.

If you wish to apply for flexible training, you should:

1. Determine whether you are eligible to apply by consulting the eligibility criteria above and, if eligible,
2. Complete and submit an *Expression of Interest Form*, a copy of which is provided at Appendix A, to the National Doctors Training and Planning (NDTP).

NDTP will consider the application and will contact the applicant, advising them whether:

1. A post is expected to be available and the trainee may proceed to stage 2 of the process, OR
2. A post is not available but the application is appropriate for inclusion on the reserve list for vacancies. The applicant will be informed of their position on the reserve list. Vacancies will be filled in the order of the placement of applicants on the reserve list, which in turn is based on the order in which applications are received OR
3. The application is not appropriate for a flexible training post.

All decisions made by NDTP at Stage One will be notified directly to the relevant training body representative (Dean/ National Specialty Director/ Programme Director) to ensure that all parties are aware of the status of applications for flexible training.

All decisions by the NDTP on each application received are final.

Application Stage 2 – Detailed Application Form

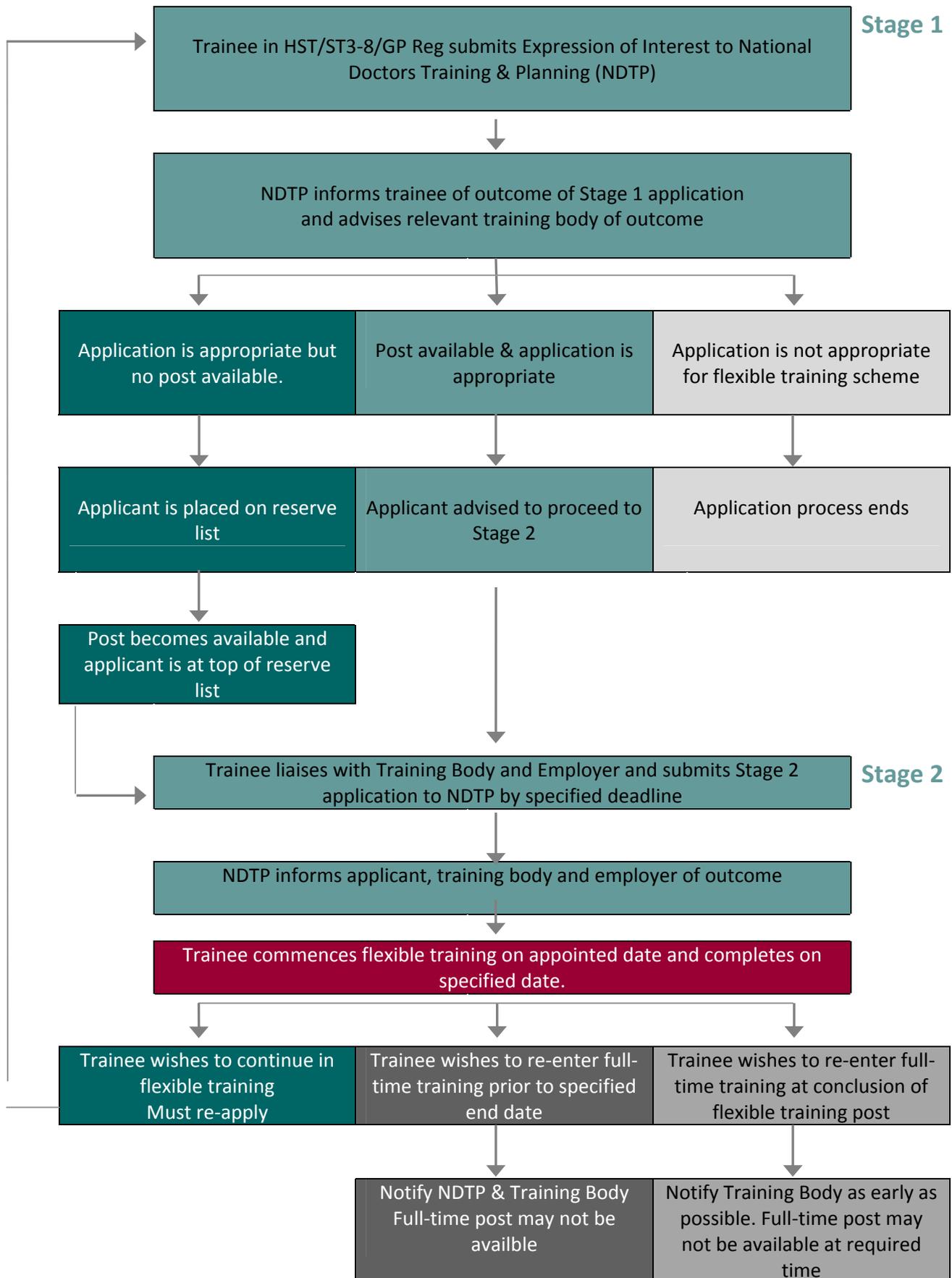
If an applicant is advised by NDTP that they may proceed to Stage Two of the application process, the applicant must complete and submit to NDTP the *Detailed Application Form*, a copy of which is provided at Appendix B.

The purpose of this stage is to provide NDTP with both the training details and the employment details of the proposed flexible training post. The *Detailed Application Form* must be signed by:

1. The applicant,
2. The relevant training body representative (Dean/National Speciality Director/ Programme Director) and
3. The employer (HR Manager/ Medical Manpower Manager/ Hospital Manager).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the necessary approval is obtained from both the training body and the employer in a timely manner. A deadline for submission of the Stage 2 application form may be applied by the NDTP in order to secure the flexible training post.

Application Process for National Flexible Training Scheme



Appendix A:

Stage 1: Expression of Interest for HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

Note: Stage 1 & Stage 2 application forms must be completed by typing in the responses and signing the form. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Section A – Personal Details

1	First Name:	
2	Last Name:	
3	Postal Address:	
4	E-mail Address (mandatory)	
5	Home Telephone Number (optional):	
6	Mobile Telephone Number (mandatory):	
7	Work Telephone Number (optional)	

For HSE Use only:	
	HSE Ref:
HSE Date of Receipt	Reviewed:
	Date:
	Signed:
	NDTP official:
	Status:

Section B – Medical Council Registration

- 8 Name in which you are registered with the Medical Council (of Ireland)
- 9 Medical Council registration number
- 10 Please indicate (with an “X” in the appropriate box) the division of the Medical Council (of Ireland)’s register you are currently registered
- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| (i) Trainee Specialist Division | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (ii) General Division | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (iii) Supervised Division | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (iv) Specialist Division | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (v) Not registered | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section C – Details of Higher Specialist Training

- 11 Name of Training Body enrolled with:
- 12 Name of HST/ST3-8+ Programme:
- 13 Date of entry onto HST/ST3-8 Programme: (DD-MM-YYYY) --
- 14 Current Year of Training:
- 15 Number of expected years of training remaining (on a full-time basis) prior to award of CSCST:
- 16 Name of National Specialty Director (/Programme Director/Dean of Training Programme)

Section F – Proposed Structure of Flexible Training

- 21 Proposed start date for flexible training:

		-			-				
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- 22 Proposed end date for flexible training:

		-			-				
--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--
- 23 Proposed % work commitment must be 50%.

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- 24 Proposed clinical practice working pattern (e.g. 2 days on/3 days off; one week on/one week off; 2.5/2.5 per week; 5 mornings a week etc.)
Note: working pattern must be over a reference period of 2 weeks i.e. at least 50% of every 2-week period must be worked

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Section G – Signature

- 25 Signature of Applicant:

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- 26 Printed name of Applicant:

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- 27 Date (DD-MM-YYYY):

		-			-				
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Submission of completed form:

Please return the completed application form:

1. by e-mail to Assumpta.linnane@hse.ie
- AND
2. original signed copy by post to Ms. Assumpta Linnane, HSE National Flexible Training Scheme Coordinator, National Doctors Training & Planning, Room 2.41 Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

Queries to: Assumpta Linnane
E: Assumpta.linnane@hse.ie
T: 01 635 2052

Appendix B:

Stage 2: Detailed Application Form for HSE National Flexible Training Scheme

Note: Stage 1 & Stage 2 application forms must be completed by typing in the responses and signing the form. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Note - This form must be completed and signed by:

1. The applicant
And
2. The relevant training body representative (Dean / National Specialty Director / Programme Director)
And
3. The relevant employer representative (HR Manager / Medical Manpower Manager / Hospital Manager)

Section 1 – Personal Details

(To be completed by Applicant)

1	First Name:	<input type="text"/>
2	Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
3	E-mail Address:	<input type="text"/>
4	Mobile Telephone Number:	<input type="text"/>
5	Medical Council Registration Number:	<input type="text"/>

For HSE Use only:			
HSE Date of Receipt	HSE Ref:		
	Reviewed:		
	Date:		
	Signed:		
	NDTP official:		
	Status:		
Post:	Database ref:		TB ref:

Section 2 – Details of Higher Specialist Training Programme

(To be completed by Training Body Representative)

6	Name of Training Body:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
7	Name of HST/ST3-8 Programme:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
8	Original date of entry onto HST/ST3-8 Programme: (DD-MM-YYYY)	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
9	Original expected date of completion of training: (DD-MM-YYYY) – based on full-time training	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
10	Duration of HST/ST3-8 training completed to date:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
11	Duration of HST/ST3-8 training remaining (on a full-time basis) prior to award of CSCST:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
12	Is the Training Body supportive of the trainee's application for flexible training?	<table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 10px;">Yes</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 25px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>No</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; width: 40px; height: 25px;"></td> </tr> </table>	Yes		No	
Yes						
No						
13	Proposed date of commencement of flexible training:	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
14	Proposed date of completion of flexible training:	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
15	Proposed host institution for applicant (name of hospital / service):	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
16	Name of trainer to whom trainee will be assigned:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
17	Expected date of commencement in host unit:	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
18	Expected date of completion in host unit:	<input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> - <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 25px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				
19	Proposed % of full-time working which the training body is in agreement with:	<input style="width: 95%; height: 25px;" type="text"/>				

20 Proposed clinical work pattern

Typical weekly timetable (exclusive of on-call commitments)
State "work" or "off" in each box as appropriate

	AM	PM
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

If the working pattern is different in the second of the 2-week reference period, please complete the table below in respect of the second week

Typical weekly timetable Week 2 (exclusive of on-call commitments)

State "work" or "off" in each box as appropriate

	AM	PM
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

21 Proposed on-call commitment:

Typical Full-time on-call commitment: 1 in

Pro-rata on-call commitment: 1 in

22 Name of National Specialty Director (/Programme Director/Dean of Training Programme)

Training Body representative: please sign accompanying signature page (page 5)

Section 3 – Employment Details for post as agreed with Training Body

(To be completed by Employer representative – HR Manager / Medical Manpower Manager / Hospital Manager)

Employers please note that NDTP will transfer the basic salary cost and employer’s PRSI to the hospital / service and will transfer the WTE for the duration of the flexible trainee’s period of employment at the hospital / service whilst in an approved flexible training post.

23 Name of Employing Authority:

24 Address of Employing Authority:

25 Is the Employer supportive of the trainee’s application for flexible training within the capacity of the service / department and within the proposed start and end dates and within available funding?

Yes	
No	

Employers should note that the funding available for flexible trainees is for the trainee’s salary and associated employer’s PRSI. Other costs, including on-call, other additional payments, trainers’ grants etc. are not available within the NDTP funding for this programme.

26 Does the Employer approve of the proposed work pattern and on-call commitment for the proposed flexible training post?

Yes	
No	

27 Comments from Employer
The Employer should use the box below to provide any comments on the application, if required.

Employer: please sign accompanying signature page (page 5)

Section 4 – Signatures

28 Signature of **Applicant**:

Date:

29 Signature of **Training Body**
representative:

Printed Name of Training Body representative:

Title of Training Body representative:

Date:

30 Signature of **Employer's** representative:

Printed Name of Employer representative:

Title of Employer representative:

Date:

Submission of completed form:

Please return the completed application form:

1. by e-mail to Assumpta.linnane@hse.ie

AND

2. original signed copy by post to Ms. Assumpta Linnane, HSE National Flexible Training Scheme Coordinator, National Doctors Training and Planning, Room 2.41, Dr. Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

Queries to: Assumpta Linnane

E: Assumpta.linnane@hse.ie

T: 01 635 2052

Hard copy forms without the required three signatures should not be submitted to NDTP.