



Trust Headquarters
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12th September 2022

Email:

Dear,

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI 220822.

You requested the following information, please also see our response below:

Recruitment & Selection

- 1. Are dispatchers predominantly recruited internally?**
 There is a mix of internal and external applicants more so in the East. The West is predominantly Internal.
- 2. What is the minimum qualification and experience criteria/requirement for dispatcher job applicants?**
 Taken from role requirements:

Criteria	Assessment method	Essential criteria	Actions
Qualifications	Application form	Guidance Educated to GCSE level , with 3 Grades A-C (or equivalent) 1 which must be English Language	
Experience	Application form	Guidance Experience with prioritising tasks, and managing conflicting demands on time and resources Experience within a customer orientated organisation	
Skills and Knowledge	Application form	Guidance Able to communicate effectively (including producing good written information)	

Training & Assessment

1. What is the training and assessment process from initial recruitment through to being qualified/signed off as an ambulance dispatcher?

The Dispatch course is 7 days, in that time they learn the process of dispatch, the CAD (computer aided dispatch system) ICCS (the radio system) they have a written assessment paper at the end of the dispatch course and a written paper at the end of the ICCS course, both of which they must pass in order to start mentoring in the dispatch room. They then go into the dispatch room and have 121 mentoring for 15-20 shifts when they are being constantly assessed by form of a passport, which captures their progress and highlights in real time any strengths and weaknesses that need to be worked on. Once this passport has been signed off then they dispatch alone for 7 shifts before having a final assessment - this assessment is completed by a Team Leader, who sits beside them for a shift and signing off the competencies in real time. Once this has been completed they are deemed fit and signed off as a trained dispatcher.

2. How long is the training and assessment process?

10 weeks but may last longer if the student needs extended mentoring.

3. What are the assessment criteria and how is this undertaken? Please share any assessment sheets used when scoring. Are any competency assessments undertaken once in post? How is underperformance managed?

There are resit papers for written assessments. If the student doesn't pass the initial 7 day training course, after completing resits, their employment with the trust is terminated. Assessment papers attached.

4. What formal training and assessment skills do dispatcher educators/trainers hold?

They have to be a dispatcher for over 1 year, their audits must be Compliant. They are continually managed under trust procedures. They are overseen by a senior manager who has PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate of Education) and therefore is a fully qualified teacher/assessor. We are in the process of getting all trainers a recognised training qualification.

5. What methodology is used to measure the effectiveness of dispatcher training and education?

Feedback from students and peer review. Results in passing of courses. The courses are constantly reviewed and adjusted in line with trust policies and procedures.

Performance and Monitoring

1. Are dispatchers individually monitored on their performance? If so, how is poor performance managed?

Individual dispatchers have KPI's, if a dispatcher is struggling with their performance they will receive support and guidance on areas for improvement, this may be a 1 to 1 informal or documented formally if there is a requirement. Support plans are put in place and areas identified that need improvement are aligned to SMART objectives. Additional mentoring and side by side support is also available with regular check ins to ensure the staff member is fully appraised.

2. How many training & update days do dispatchers receive and what do these days consist of

Key Skills are delivered 4 times a year. This always includes; Major Incident Training, Safe Guarding & Information Governance. Other subjects are more fluid - they will be learning from Serious Incidents, complaints and things like Neurodiversity training, human factors training, Cardiac Arrest training etc

I hope you find this information of some assistance.

If for any reason you are dissatisfied with our response, kindly in the first instance contact Caroline Smart, Head of Information Governance via the following email address:

FOI@secamb.nhs.uk

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Coordinator
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust**