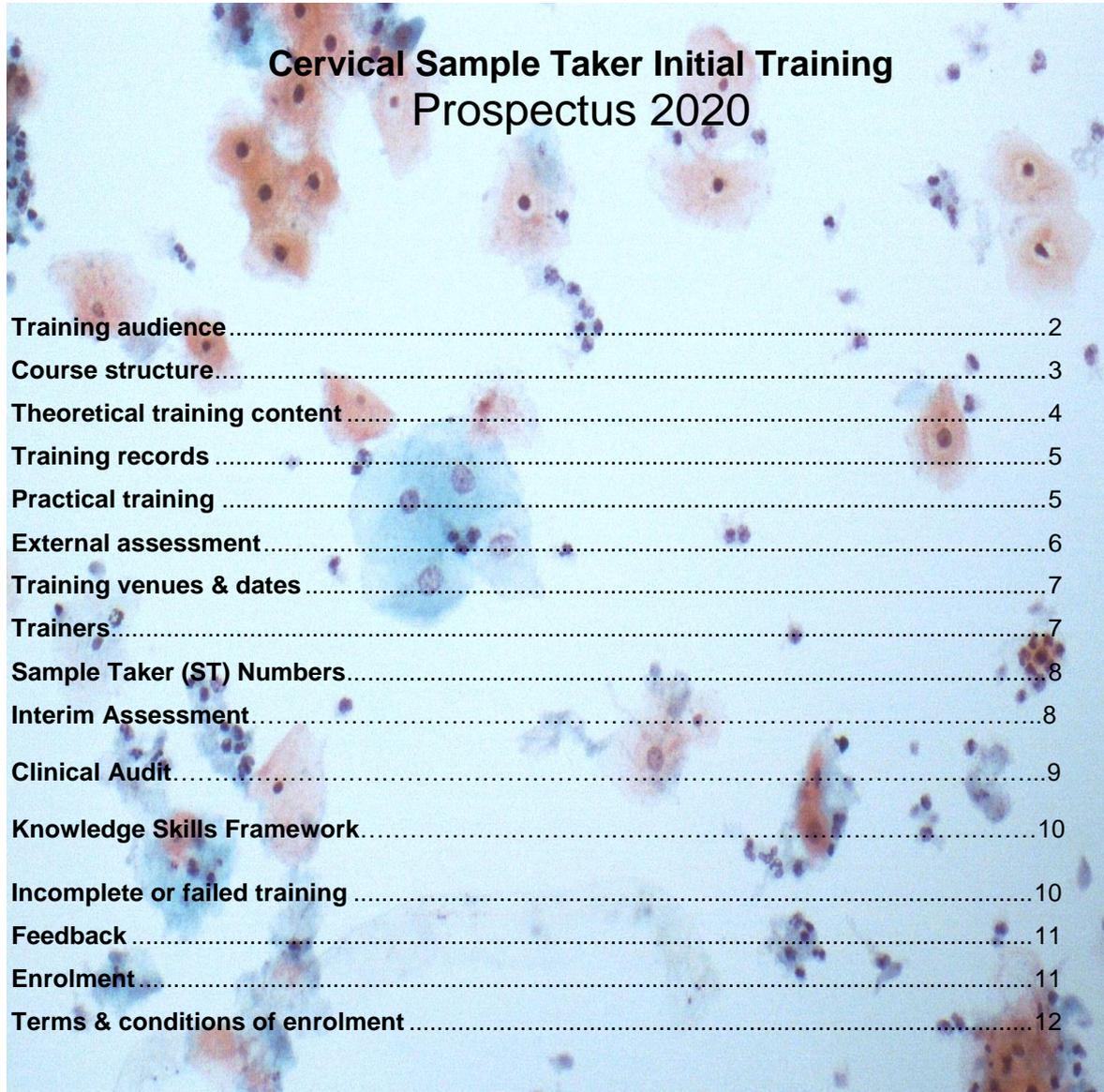


North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre



**Cervical Sample Taker Initial Training
Prospectus 2020**

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Administrators:

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|---|--|
| Surrey/Sussex Kent/Medway Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire & East Staffs Leicestershire, Lincolnshire & Northamptonshire Yorkshire & The Humber | amy.harris5@nhs.net kathryn.hawke@nhs.net Lindsay.owen@nhs.net Phone: 0113 246 6330 |
| Greater Manchester Lancashire Cumbria | jennifer.bradburn@mft.nhs.uk isabelle.caillet@mft.nhs.uk Phone: 0161 276 8804 |

Introduction

The NHS Cervical Screening Programme (NHSCSP) requires that all cervical sample takers have undertaken appropriate training in the cervical screening programme and sample taking technique.

North of England Pathology Screening & Education Centre currently offers the basic training course in cervical cervical sample taking, and has recognised accreditation from the Royal College of Nursing for the theoretical elements.

The course is not intended to be used for three yearly update training for experienced sample takers – that training is provided separately or available elsewhere.

The training is in two parts - a theoretical course plus a 9 month period of mentored practical training.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the face-to-face learning package has been converted into a blended learning package, which includes distance learning and self-directed study, plus a face-to-face practical session in small groups to allow for appropriate social distancing measures to be maintained.

The course is run a number of times each year in the areas indicated on the front page. It is also offered as a module on the BSc/PG Certificate in Practice Nursing course with De Montfort University and Bishop Grosseteste University.

After theoretical study, practical on-the-job training will take place in the trainee's place of work and must be supervised by an appropriate nominated mentor. As part of this trainees must also visit a cytology laboratory (or undertake an approved virtual tour) and a colposcopy clinic local to their practice during their training. All training must be completed within a nine month period.

Training audience

This training course is intended to be used for training qualified doctors, registered nurses because it assumes prior knowledge and experience of professional standards and delivery of patient care. It is anticipated that the majority of trainees will be practice nurses whose employers require them to commence cytology sample taking in the NHS cervical screening programme. Suitably accredited Physician Associates and RCN registered Nurse Associates may also undertake this programme. When a nursing associate has registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), a registered professional listed under the legislation (registered nurse or GP) will need to supervise their practice. The individual who provides this professional support must be present at the workplace in order to undertake indirect supervision of the nursing associate when carrying out the procedure.

The trainee's employer must consider whether the trainee is employed for a sufficient number of hours to allow them to complete the minimum requirements of this programme of learning within the given timeframe. It is suggested that trainees work in practice for a minimum of 15 hours per week and must anticipate continued stable employment for at least 9 months following theoretical training for the practical training under the supervision of a mentor to be effective.

This is a comprehensive RCN accredited course that requires full commitment to the nine month training period. **Please do not underestimate the time and commitment required to successfully complete the course.**

Course structure

The course will consist of:

- Directed pre-course reading (approximately 3 hours)
- Theoretical training delivered by distance learning and video-link session, with a practical/simulated learning element in a classroom setting.
- Observation of mentor taking at least two samples.
- Five samples taken from women attending for screening, directly supervised by a mentor, with reflective practice recorded in clinical training record book.
- Completion of a documented interim assessment before commencing unsupervised sampling practice
- 20 samples taken from women attending for screening, unsupervised (without direct supervision but with a mentor available), with reflections recorded in clinical training record book.
- Completion of an audit of 'acceptable' cervical samples.
- Completion of a reflective account of sample taking to include any 'rejected' samples
- A reflective accounts of Laboratory and Colposcopy Service tours/visits
- Assessment of competence by an external assessor (observation of the trainee conducting at least three samples) on completion of 20 unsupervised 'acceptable' samples.
- Limited sample taking is permitted between completion of 20 unsupervised samples and final assessment (after assessment arrangements have been made) but **no more than 25** unsupervised samples may be taken before assessment without permission from the training provider.
- Completion and submission of course work to the Training Provider, including reflective practice on **all** elements of the learning pathway.
- If a trainee has undertaken their final assessment without significant negative feedback and submitted their course work, they can continue to take a limited number of samples but **must not** exceed a further **10** samples in the interval before receiving notification of their training outcome. This is subject to the trainee having enough trainee sampling capacity remaining. The maximum number of samples a trainee may take in total is 45 (see table on page 4). Trainees should pursue notification of their training outcome if nearing that limit.

Theoretical training content

The theoretical training course content will contain the following as a minimum:

- Anatomy & physiology of female reproductive system
- Overview of the NHS Cervical Screening Programme
 - Aims of the NHSCSP
 - History of the screening programme
 - Current statistics/success of the programme
 - Important elements in the success of the programme
 - Uptake, coverage and cancer prevention rates
 - Recommended screening intervals
 - Unscheduled screening tests
- The background to cervical screening
 - Epidemiology and HPV
 - Risk factors
 - Principles of cervical screening
 - Effectiveness and limitations of cervical screening
 - Future developments of cervical screening
- Organisation of the NHSCSP
 - NHSCSP activities
 - Screening protocols
 - Sample Taker responsibilities
 - Commissioning
 - Call/Recall
 - General Practice
 - Other clinicians who provide cervical screening services
 - The role of the laboratory – including visit and reflection
 - The role of colposcopy – including visit and reflection
 - The role of the Hospitals Based Programme Coordinator
 - The role of Quality Assurance
 - National co-ordination and the role of the SITs and local cervical screening committees
- Equality of Access to cervical screening
 - Invitation information
 - Informed choice
 - Checking for understanding
 - Women from minority ethnic groups
 - Female Genital Mutilation
 - Women with learning disabilities
 - Women with physical disabilities
 - Female to male transgender
 - Women who are not registered with a GP
 - Ceasing or withdrawal criteria
- Understanding the test results
 - Cytology results
 - HPV testing
- Legal & Professional issues
 - Professional responsibility and accountability
 - Confidentiality
 - Obtaining informed consent
 - Medico-legal considerations
 - Preparing a room
 - Equipment for taking LBC samples

- Checking identity
- Taking clinical history
- Taking screening history
- Preparing & completing the request form
- Choosing the appropriate speculum
- Appearance of the cervix
- TZ Sampling
- Taking the sample
- Infection control
- Ending the consultation
- Sending the sample
- Auditing test results
- Local practice & issues
- Allocation and use of sample taker numbers

Training records

Each trainee should keep a record of their practical training in a Personal Training Record Book (commonly known as Log Book or Portfolio), which will be provided to them prior to the commencement of the theoretical course. Trainees must record the topics covered by theoretical training in their personal training record and must document their practical training. A Practical Record Sheet must be completed for **every** sample taken – it will be necessary for trainees to take some copies of the blank record sheets provided.

Trainees should also document and reflect on their visit to colposcopy clinic and also their laboratory tour (virtual or physical). Trainees are strongly advised to undertake those visits soon after the theoretical training days and they **MUST** take their personal training record book with them to allow an appropriate person to sign the appropriate sections.

Practical training

Before enrolling, a trainee must identify a suitable mentor for their sessions of practical observation and training. This individual will usually be an experienced sample taker working at the trainee's practice or clinic, who is able to provide day to day support to the trainee sample taker as they commence sample taking, and after they have attended theoretical sample taker training. In some circumstances the mentor may need to be someone external and this should be discussed with the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre in the first instance.

In accordance with national guidance it is recommended that trainees are given **30 minute appointment slots** throughout their training period.

Mentors are there to provide support for trainees and new sample takers by allowing them to observe their practice, advising them on their own clinical practice and observing their counselling, documentation and sample taking technique to ensure that they are competent. Mentors will also undertake an Interim Assessment with the trainee as outlined in the NHSCSP Guidance for the Training of Cervical Sample Takers and accessible by the e-llfh.org.uk portal.

Mentors take on this role as part of their professional responsibility to share education and skills, however they are expected to join the Training Providers list of approved mentors and

receive appropriate Mentor Training related to this programme of learning. This session lasts approximately 2 hours and is delivered by video-link. The cost of it is included in the trainee's course fee.

Should there be a necessity to change mentor for any reason during the 9 months training, this must be discussed directly with the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre and the course facilitator before it occurs.

Mentors should have effective teaching and communication skills and ideally hold a relevant mentoring and/or teaching qualification. They must:

- Be a practicing cervical sample taker
- Have had a minimum of 12 months continuous experience following completion of initial cervical sample taker training
- Have undertaken a minimum of 50 adequate samples following completion of initial cervical sample taker training
- Have undertaken cervical screening update training at least every three years
- Have undertaken NEPSEC Mentor training within the last two years

Additionally, the Mentor must be able to show continuing competence in taking samples for cervical screening with particular reference to:

- Equipment and sample preparation
- Sampling technique
- Audit of sampling results
- Have read:
 - The relevant and most current training course prospectus.
 - NHSCSP Guidance for the training of cervical sample takers.

External assessment

The final practical assessment will be arranged by an external assessor appointed by the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre.

Assessors are experienced sample takers who are employed by the training centre to visit a trainee in their place of work (or in exceptional circumstances have them visit the assessor's place of work), to observe their practice and provide a response on their competence. An assessor must observe the trainee taking at least three samples, although at least five appointments should be made for the assessment session, to allow for non-attendance. Patients attending the assessment session must be told that the assessment is taking place and must give consent to the presence of the assessor.

*If less than five patients turn up on the day, the Assessor is not permitted to make a decision about the nurses competency without observing the minimum three samples. Therefore a return visit may be necessary. **This will be an additional cost to the practice.***

The nominated mentor should ideally be available after the external assessment for final discussion with the assessor and trainee, although this may not always be possible.

Before completing their course work, each trainee must arrange to visit a colposcopy clinic and undertake a cytology laboratory tour. Trainees are responsible for making their own arrangements for this, but where possible contact details may be given at the theoretical training days.

Training venues & dates

Theoretical training practical/simulated learning will usually be delivered in suitable premises in locations considered reasonably accessible to sample takers:

- North West – delivered from the NEPSEC training facilities at Manchester Royal Infirmary
- Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire & Leicestershire – usually delivered at Primary Care Training Hub approved premises
- Northamptonshire & Lincolnshire – usually delivered at Primary Care Training Hub approved premises
- De Montfort University and Bishop Grosseteste University – delivered at a location within the university buildings or at Primary Care Training Hub approved premises
- Kent & Medway – delivered at suitably risk assessed premises spread throughout the Kent/Medway area
- Surrey & Sussex – delivered at suitably risk assessed premises spread throughout the Surrey/Sussex area
- Yorkshire & The Humber – delivered from the NEPSEC training facilities at Wakefield Office Village

It is impossible to identify locations convenient to everyone but it is hoped to keep travel to a minimum. Trainees or their employers are responsible for the cost of travel to the venue, parking and any overnight accommodation costs. Unfortunately the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre cannot help with arrangements for overnight accommodation.

Training dates have not been included in this prospectus as they are subject to demand and availability of trainers and venue. For a list of planned dates, please contact the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre (Wakefield: 0113 246 6330, Manchester 0161 276 5114).

Trainers

Training will be delivered by our specialist trainers: Jenny Greenfield, Gail Oliver, Jane Manning, Sarah Pountain, Lesley Crewe, Valerie Steele, Wendy Patrick or Rachel Lyon. They are all appropriately qualified and experienced members of the NEPSEC Team. They will be supported by external contributors who have specialist knowledge of different topics relevant to cervical screening.

The trainers have administrative support from Kathryn Hawke, Amy Harris, Lindsay Owen, Jen Bradburn and Isabelle Caillet at the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre. Students are advised to keep regular contact with the administrators in order for progress records to be maintained.

Sample Taker (ST) Numbers

In order to ensure all cervical samples taken as part of the NHS Cervical Screening Programme in [all areas](#) are taken by suitably trained individuals, it is essential that each sample taker has a unique Sample Taker ID number. This number denotes that the sample taker has undergone basic training in Thinprep® LBC technology and is registered on the central database of sample takers held at the following locations:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| South East Coast: | South Central and West CSU |
| Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire/DMU/BGU: | Regional CSTD support service, Derby Royal Hospital |
| North West: | Regional CSTD support service, Manchester Royal Infirmary |
| Yorkshire & Humber: | Regional CSTD support service, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Gateshead |

Trainees will be allocated a Sample Taker Number prior to taking any samples. This may be suffixed with a 'T' or may have some other trainee identifiable mechanism. That number is unique to the individual and must not be shared. No sample taker should use another person's Sample Taker Number. The trainee must insert their number on the request form of all samples sent to the cytology laboratory in the training period. However, the T may not be accepted on the ICE system. In such cases submit the request using your unique sample taker number without the 'T', but also handwrite Trainee on the printed request form.

Samples will be rejected by the cytology laboratory if the sample is not received in accordance with National Specimen Acceptance Guidance. This includes if documentation is not completed with the inclusion of the trainees valid sample taker number.

When a trainee has completed theoretical and practical training and has successfully passed all elements of the programme of learning, they will be notified of their pass by the training provider. Where the 'T' is used they will be told that it can be removed from their Sample Taker Number or they will be issued with a permanent PIN/code.

On successful completion of theoretical and practical training, the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre will issue trainees with a Certificate of Completion, which should be kept in their personal file.

Interim Assessment

Before moving on to unsupervised clinical practice, the trainee must undertake an interim assessment and complete it successfully. This is facilitated by the nominated mentor. Instructions for the mentor on how to conduct and record the interim assessment can be found in the NEPSEC Mentor's Guidance document. Guidance for this will also be discussed during the nominated mentor training session.

Clinical Audit

Students will need to provide evidence of their cervical sampling results in order to fulfil the audit requirements within this programme of learning. The results should be printed from the computer system within the practice. These must be printed out and all patient identifiable information blacked out. This includes full NHS numbers.

In order to ensure excessive sample taking is not undertaken before qualification, the following limits have been placed on numbers of samples which may be taken at each stage of the training process following theoretical training and must not be exceeded:

Table 1: Number of samples permitted by stage of training

| Training phase | Notes | Number | Max |
|--|--|-------------------|-----------|
| Observation | Observation of mentor taking samples | Minimum 2 | n/a |
| Supervised | <i>Samples taken under direct supervision of mentor</i> | Minimum 5 | 15 |
| Unsupervised | <p><i>Samples taken under indirect supervision of mentor (often referred to as "unsupervised")</i></p> <p><i>Additional samples beyond the minimum 20 must ONLY be taken IF a sample has been reported as INADEQUATE* <u>or</u> has been REJECTED.</i></p> <p><u>The training centre should be contacted before taking additional samples.</u></p> <p><u>Failure to comply with this requirement will lead to you failing the course</u></p> | Minimum 20 | 25 |
| STOP! | | | |
| Calculate your sampling audit with the results you have before requesting an assessment visit | | | |
| Assessment | Book 5 appointments in case of DNAs (3 required for assessment) | Required 3 | 5 |
| Absolute maximum in training period | | | 45 |

Practice Managers are requested to arrange for the trainee to be allowed 30 minutes per patient when taking cervical samples. This will give the student sufficient time to think carefully about their actions and reflections during their practical learning experience and complete the extra record keeping required for their portfolio of evidence.

In accordance with advice received from the Regional Quality Assurance Teams the sample taker trainee may continue taking further unsupervised samples as a trainee, up to a maximum of 10 additional samples

| | | | |
|---|---|--------------|---------------|
| Interval between passing the final practical assessment and awaiting the result from the submitted coursework | Continuation is only applicable if at the time of the practical assessment the sampling standard has been achieved on a minimum of 20 samples AND if the absolute maximum sampling allowance has not been reached | Min 1 | Max 10 |
|---|---|--------------|---------------|

Knowledge Skills Framework

Students will be expected to answer a suite of 20 questions in the Personal Training Record Book, which is designed to ensure that they have the necessary theoretical knowledge and understanding of the cervical screening programme to support their clinical skills. The pass mark for this element is 65%

Incomplete or failed training

The course may be failed due to;

- failure to attend or undertake a virtual or face-to-face training session,
- failure to achieve 65% in the knowledge skills framework test,
- failure to achieve the minimum 80% in the sampling audit,
- failure to submit coursework,
- coursework reflection which does not demonstrate sufficient understanding,
- failure of final clinical assessment
- leaving the course and so failing to complete within the given timeframe
- failure to follow the requirements of the learning pathway or NHSCSP policies.

If a trainee cannot attend a scheduled theoretical training session due to unforeseen circumstances, they will be offered a place on another scheduled session.

If a trainee is aware they have not understood the training content sufficiently at a theoretical training session, they must raise their concerns with the trainer at an opportune time. If they become aware of training issues after the theoretical training sessions, they should discuss the matter with their mentor in the first instance. If the mentor is unable to help, the trainer and/or the training provider will be very glad to provide assistance and support. It is far better to resolve issues early on than continue with difficulty.

If a trainee leaves employment or wishes to cease training for another reason during the practical training period, they are asked to notify North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre and the course facilitator.

Practical training is recorded in the personal training record book, which constitutes the coursework, and which must be submitted within nine calendar months of the practical/simulated learning sessions; a pass must be obtained within nine calendar months of the practical/simulated learning sessions, or the trainee will automatically fail.

Any mitigating circumstances must be submitted in writing and will be considered on an individual basis, but NEPSEC and/or the course facilitator will make the final decision.

If the External Assessor is not satisfied that the trainee is able to conduct a cervical screening consultation satisfactorily and/or has significant concerns about their sample taking technique, they will inform the trainee that they must take no more samples. The assessor will convey their concerns to the trainer and the training provider who will contact the trainee with regard to their training outcome.

If the coursework submitted to the trainer does not demonstrate sufficient understanding of the cervical screening programme and evidence of a learning curve, the trainee will fail the course and must enrol again if they wish to be a cervical sample taker.

At any point in supervision, the mentor may raise concerns about the trainee with the trainer, which could ultimately lead to failure of training.

The primary aim of the course is to train sample takers to provide high quality sample taking to women, backed up by a good understanding of the NHS Cervical Screening Programme. In all circumstances, the decision on pass or fail rests with the training provider and is not open to dispute, although the trainer will provide feedback and clarification of problem areas to the trainee, throughout the course as necessary.

In all instances, pass or fail results will also be advised to the trainee's employer, the regional CSTD Co-ordinator and the cytology laboratory to which their samples are submitted.

Feedback

Trainees will be asked to complete feedback forms at the end of the theoretical training and again on completion of coursework. Trainees are welcome to raise any issues with the trainer at any point in the training pathway.

Enrolment

Course fees are currently set at £550 per person, which includes the following;

- Theoretical study sessions
- Theoretical training packs
- Trainer support
- 1 Final Clinical Assessment
- Personal Training Record Book Marking Fees
- Certification

It also includes the training session designated for the nominated mentors.

On occasion a trainee may require further intervention training or additional assessment visits by members of the training or assessing teams. **Intervention training is chargeable at £30 per hour and additional assessment visits are chargeable at £120 per visit.** The training centre will arrange for an invoice to be sent directly to the employing organisation as appropriate.

Potential trainees must read the terms & conditions below and enrol directly with the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre.

A Sample Taker Initial Training application pack must be completed in full before confirmation of a place on the course can be confirmed.

A delegate pack containing course paperwork, supporting information and a personal training record book will be provided.

If there are insufficient trainees to run a course, all applicants will be notified and a place on the next available course will be offered.

Terms & conditions of enrolment

1. Trainees must be a registered nurse, registered doctor, RCN registered Nurse Associate or physician associate registered on the PAMVR. They must be anticipating stable employment in a place of work where regular cytology sample taking is undertaken for at least nine months following theoretical training.
2. Each trainee must identify a mentor with whom they have regular contact. The mentor must comply with the criteria in this document (pg. 6). The mentor's ST number must be provided on the trainee's enrolment pack, along with the completion of an Acceptance of Responsibilities Form. Should a change in mentor be necessary during the 9 month training period, this should be discussed directly with the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre and the course facilitator before it occurs.
3. Each trainee and their employer must consent to the presence of an external assessor for at least half a day in the trainee's place of work, and must allow the assessor access to cervical sample taking clinical consultations for observation purposes. It is advisable to book at least five patients for the half day in case of non-attendance. Patients attending the assessment session must be told that the assessment is taking place and must give consent to the presence of the assessor. Care must be taken to give the assessor sufficient notice of expected completion of 20 unsupervised samples – assessments can rarely be arranged at very short notice.
4. Each trainee should keep a record of their training in a personal training record book.
5. Each trainee must make their own arrangements to visit a colposcopy clinic or undertake a laboratory tour during the training period. It is advisable to do this as early as possible following theoretical training.
6. Each trainee must use their allocated ST number while in training and must not share that number. Where in use the 'T' may only be removed on successful completion of training (except whilst entering details onto the Manchester ICE system, which doesn't accept the T). The trainee sample taker number may only be used for a limited number of samples – it is vital that routine screening work is not undertaken until the trainee has passed the course.

7. The decision on training outcome rests with the trainer and training provider and is not open to dispute.
8. Practical training must be completed and reflected in coursework which must be received by the North of England Pathology & Screening Education Centre within nine calendar months of the practical/simulated learning sessions, or the trainee will be deemed to have failed.