IMS1 Recruitment – information to support choosing programme preferences

How to use previous years' recruitment data to help you choose a programme

Introduction

This document has been produced to assist candidates for Internal Medicine Stage 1 (IMS1) with choosing their programme preferences, which, along with ranking, will determine the offers process. The data provided can be used as an indication about the relative competitiveness of each region and therefore the likelihood of receiving an offer for any given ranking.

In 2023 there were, initially, 1,526 separate options across all regions so preferencing can be a time-consuming task. To assist with choosing options, the Physician Specialty Recruitment Office (PSRO) have done the following:

- Designed the timetable so that appointability and ranking can be confirmed before programme preferences need to be selected; this allows candidates to know whether they need to preference and, if so, how many programmes they should preference to be sure of an offer. For example, you should not need to include more preferences than the number equal to your rank.
- Made data available, via this document, to allow candidates to interpret their ranking and competitiveness for each region. Knowing which regions are more popular will indicate whether you may need to consider alternative choices to be sure of an offer.

Data used

The data looks at the ranking and offering region for candidates that accepted an offer in the 2023 recruitment round. Only offers made before the upgrading deadline for the round have been included, which totals 1,527 programmes. Although further offers were made for unfilled or late-arising posts, these have been excluded as upgrading was no longer possible and these offers do not give a true reflection of the competitiveness of the programme.

How to use these data

The tables and chart in this document are an indicative reference for IMS1 candidates to compare their rank and the number of programmes available in this round to the success of similarly ranked applicants in the corresponding round in 2023.

- If your rank is better than the average rank of candidates accepting an offer in 2023 for a particular region, provided you include all of that region's programmes in your preferences, there is a good chance you will be made an offer.
- If you rank below this, and especially if you are in the bottom quartile, you may wish to consider additional regions to improve your chances of receiving an offer.
- Care should be taken if the above advice is utilised, given that this document contains data from only one previous year. While we expect similar trends in 2024, the outcomes of recruitment may vary based on differences in the programmes available and the candidate cohort.

Within all regions, some programmes will be more popular than others due to the specific rotations or training locations and may be more competitive than the regional average; this level of detail is not presented here.

Regional rank and vacancies data

Table 1 shows the median rank of candidates who accepted an offer in each region and the number of offers accepted.

Table 1: Median rank by region of candidates accepting an offer in 2023.

Region of accepted offer	Median rank	Programmes
East Midlands (EMD)	1330.5	82
East of England (EOE)	1278	133
KSS (KSS)	1147	102
London (LON)	322.5	250
North East (NE)	1208	77
North West – Mersey (MER)	1305	73
North West - North West (NW)	904	108
Northern Ireland (NI)	1343.5	44
Scotland (SCO)	906.5	118
South West – Peninsula (PEN)	1145	41
South West – Severn (SEV)	615.5	56
Thames Valley (TV)	662	51
Wales (WAL)	1409	77
Wessex (WSX)	1259	61
West Midlands (WMD)	1223.5	100
Yorkshire and the Humber (YH)	1491.5	154

Offers accepted by rank range

Table 2 shows ranks grouped into ranges of 200, and how many candidates within each range accepted an offer in each region. This is a different way of presenting the information in the box-plot chart in Figure 1. The code used for each region is referenced in Table 1.

Please note that the total number of offers accepted for a given rank range will not sum to 200. This is because not all appointable candidates accepted offers.

Table 2: Number of applicants who received an offer in each region, grouped by rank ranges for IMS1 2023 recruitment.

Rank range	EMD	EOE	KSS	LON	NE	MER	NW	NI	SCO	PEN	SEV	TV	WAL	WSX	WMD	YH
0-200	2	3	8	83	5	7	13	3	7	9	12	8	4	4	5	9
201-400	4	15	8	59	4	2	9	3	11	3	7	6	8	2	5	12
401-600	5	15	3	50	10	4	10	3	13	4	10	9	5	5	6	4
601-800	7	6	6	37	3	4	15	6	21	0	6	11	4	3	11	10
801-1000	9	11	14	16	7	3	20	3	14	2	11	7	8	4	9	7
1001-1200	8	13	16	6	9	10	16	3	15	5	2	4	3	11	14	11
1201-1400	13	15	18	0	7	13	5	4	10	2	1	4	7	11	15	19
1401-1600	11	18	14	0	8	12	6	4	8	2	2	4	6	12	16	13
1601-1800	11	14	7	0	10	11	5	3	10	5	5	0	3	6	16	26
1801-2000	11	16	6	0	7	8	9	3	5	7	0	0	10	2	5	18
2001-2200	3	9	3	1	9	1	2	5	6	4	2	0	8	3	0	24
2201-2326	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	3

Regional distribution of ranks

Figure 1 shows the distribution of ranks accepting an offer in each region in 2023 using a box-and-whiskers plot graph.

- The horizontal line inside each box represents the median rank value.
- The X represents the mean for each region.
- The upper limit of the box represents the 75th percentile and the lower limit the 25th percentile.
- The outer extremities of the whiskers show the highest (smallest value on the y-axis) and lowest ranked candidates accepting an offer in that region.
- The dots for London and South West Severn represent candidates qualifying on the special circumstances scheme, outside of the normal ranking process, which explains outlying data.

Figure 1: Box-and-whisker plots showing the distribution, by region, of candidate ranks who accepted offers in 2023 recruitment.
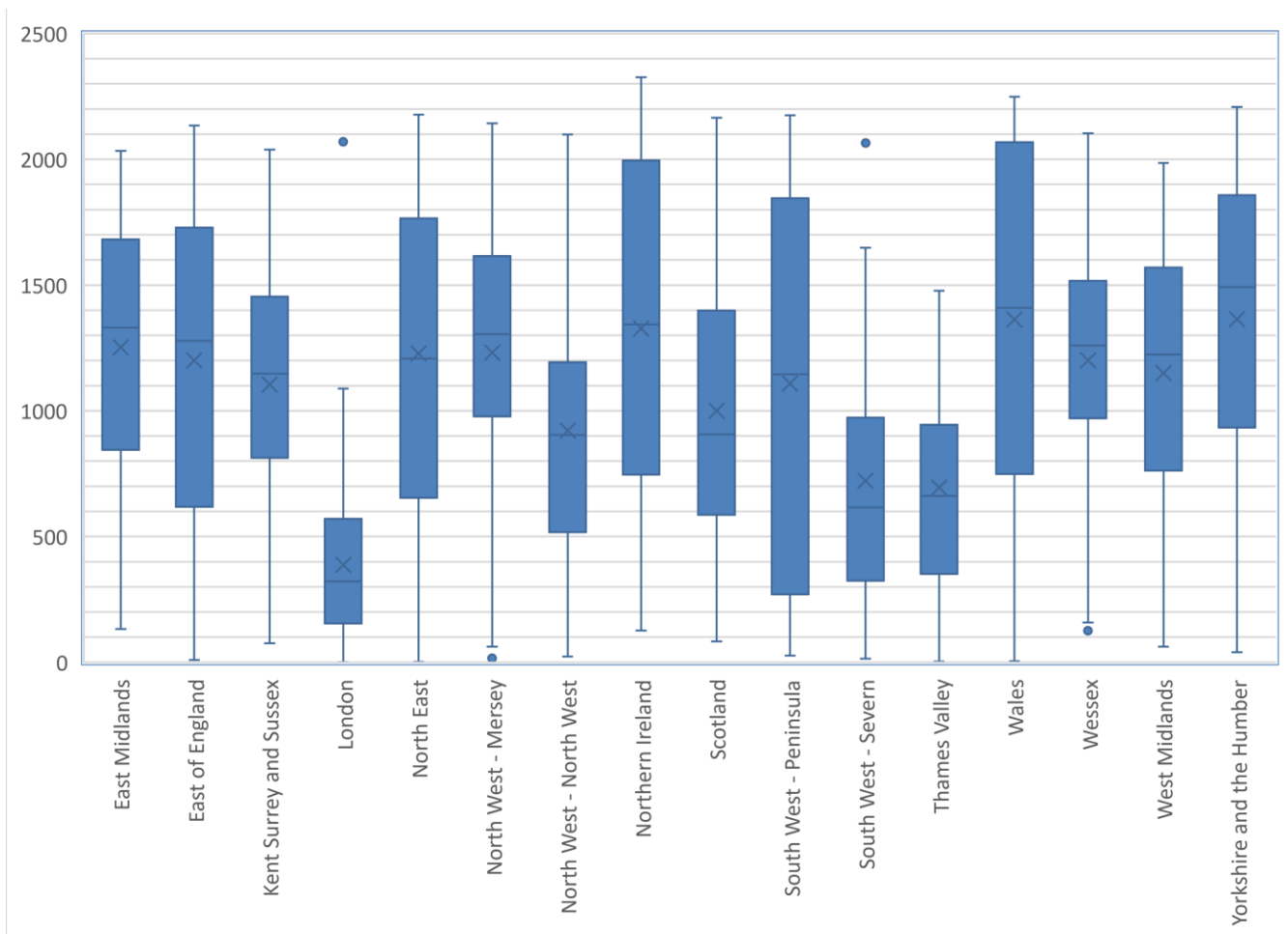
Example showing how to use these data

A candidate is ranked 800th

You will see that:

a) more than 75% of applicants accepting offers in the Kent, Surrey & Sussex region ranked lower than this, so they would have a strong chance of being offered if they preference all programmes in this region.

b) less than 25% of applicants who accepted offers in London ranked lower than 800, so the chances of this candidate being offered in this region are lower and they may wish to consider including other regions in their preferences.

It cannot be certain how the data will manifest in 2024 and caution should always be taken when interpreting and using this data.