Terms and Conditions for the BBTS Specialist Certificate in Transfusion Science Practice

Eligibility, Application and Enrolment

- This qualification is for UK Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered Biomedical Scientists (BMS) working in transfusion science either in a blood establishment (blood centre) or a hospital transfusion laboratory
  - Republic of Ireland equivalent; Academy of Clinical Science and Laboratory Medicine (ACSLM) registered Medical Scientists
- All applicants must:
  - have a BSc in a relevant healthcare science or demonstrable equivalent
    - e.g. candidates with HCPC registration, but without a BSc, have demonstrable equivalence
  - be working at practitioner level (NHS career framework grade 5 equivalent) or higher
    - trainee registrants are not eligible
  - be working in a transfusion laboratory environment during the programme
  - be a member of the BBTS
    - on application
    - throughout the programme (including any deferral period)
    - at examination
- Applications from international (non-UK/ non-Republic of Ireland) scientists working in transfusion science will be considered on a case-by-case basis
  - A statement of current practice must be submitted and include:
    - reason for applying
    - detailed description of transfusion science practice experience
    - current duties
    - any previous relevant experience
  - Where English is an additional language a test certificate* is required:
    - International English Language Testing System (IELTS Academic *or* General).
      - Minimum Score: 7.0 with no element below 6.5

    Or
    - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL iBT)
      - Minimum score: 100/120
      - TOEFL test scores undertaken in the United Kingdom are not accepted

    * The test certificate supplied must be less than 2 years old
- Application is open for 6 weeks (from October) via the BBTS website
  - Application forms must be submitted electronically via email to BBTS
- Applicants meeting the eligibility criteria receive a provisional place; completion of enrolment requires:
  - Deposit payment of 20% of programme fee (point 34)
  - Confirmation of support from the applicant's laboratory manager
- Where the course is oversubscribed the following criteria is applied:
  - Length of BBTS membership
  - Quality of personal statement
  - All requested information has been supplied by the applicant

Programme Format

- The programme is regulated by the Professional Education Committee (PEC), who appoint the programme committee, exam board and Programme Examiner
- The programme is accredited by the University of Manchester at 45 level 7/ Master's level credits (UK Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme)
- The 12 month programme comprises
  - Online Induction (May)/ Online Examination (the following May)
  - Course text book and student guide/ handbook
  - Online only resources and activities; released monthly
    - Applicants/ students must have access to a reliable internet source
    - Downloads/ printed versions of online presentations are not available
    - Compulsory discussion activities
      - Students must complete 75% (8 out of 11) to be eligible to sit the examination
      - Student participation in online activities is monitored
  - No part of the programme resources may be reproduced, stored or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of BBTS
- The online examination
  - Applicants are registered for the examination at the point of enrolment
  - Takes place online over the second weekend of May each year
    - The BBTS recognises that religious practice can make attendance at the examination an extra consideration for some faiths; as such we ensure that the examination dates do not fall on any significant religious holiday
    - The BBTS is not able to make realistic alternative arrangements based on an individual's religious preferences
  - Exam paper format is subject to change but due notice will be given
  - Students cannot change their specialism option at the point of examination

Examination Marking, Grading and Results

- Exam papers are weighted:
  - Paper 1, Multiple choice questions, 25%
  - Paper 2, Short answer questions, 25%
  - Paper 3 Data interpretation, 20%
  - Paper 4 Specialism paper: data interpretation and case scenarios, 30%

- Exam papers are double-blind marked and collated to a PEC approved marking scheme
  - Each of the 4 papers must achieve a minimum of a 40% mark
  - Students receive a final overall percentage score and average scores for each paper
  - The overall pass mark is 60%
  - Grades awarded:

Final overall percentage score	Grade awarded	Additional information
≥75 %	Distinction	AND must achieve ≥60% in papers 1, 2, 3 and 4
60 – 74.8 % *	Pass	AND must achieve ≥40% in papers 1, 2, 3 and 4
57.5 – 59.8 % *	Borderline	A third independent review is triggered; AND must achieve ≥40% in papers 1, 2, 3 and 4

<57.5%	Fail	N/A
	Automatic Fail	<40% in *any* one paper. All papers will be marked

* 'Rounding up' is permitted to 0.1% only

- Borderline exam papers are reviewed by a third independent marker; their decision is final
- Results are moderated and ratified by the BBTS exam board and Manchester University
- Results are emailed within 12 weeks following the examination date
- Successful students receive a hardcopy BBTS certificate and Manchester University transcripts (by post)
- Successful student names are published in Bloodlines.

Examination Feedback

- An anonymised student cohort performance is reported to PEC and published in Bloodlines
- Successful students may request feedback in writing (email accepted) within four weeks of the examination results (issue date of the student result email)
- Students who have failed their first attempt are not eligible for feedback on their examination performance or individual exam questions
- Exam papers remain the property of the BBTS and will not be returned to students
- The BBTS reserves the right to contact supporting managers or work place supervisors for those students whose attempt is unsuccessful and for whom the responses to exam questions causes concern in relation to patient safety. This step will only be undertaken following discussion with the particular student.

Student deferral/ withdrawal application

- Students may withdraw at any point from the programme
  - The BBTS education officer must be informed as soon as possible
  - Refund of fees is subject to conditions outlined in the Fees and Finance section on page 6.
- Deferral options:
  - One deferral of a first examination for 6 months (to sit the following November)
    - Access to the student area will continue
    - Compulsory discussion activities (CDAs)must be completed within the original programme schedule
  - One deferral of the programme (to re-start on the next cohort start date (May)
    - Access to the student area will be suspended
    - Any completed CDAs in the forum will be reset
    - **Programme deferrals will only be considered if submitted prior to and including month 8 of the programme – please contact Michaela.cheetham@bbts.org.uk directly if you require advice/assistance after this cut-off**
  - All deferring students must:
    - Submit an extenuating circumstances claim
    - Maintain active BBTS membership status throughout their deferral period
    - Advise BBTS of any change in employer, supporting manager, role/discipline that may affect eligibility, and/or contact details
    - Complete the programme within 3 years from their original induction date

- BBTS defines extenuating circumstances as:
  'circumstances which are beyond the control of the candidate, which could not reasonably have been foreseen or prevented by the candidate and which would substantially impact on a candidate's performance in assessment'
  - The grounds on which extenuating circumstances can be claimed are normally limited to:
    - a serious illness which would detrimentally affect performance
      - on the day of the exam
      - in the revision period leading to the exam
    - the death of a close family member or personal friend which would detrimentally affect performance
      - normally in the period leading up to the date of the exam
    - other serious circumstances, which could not have been foreseen or prevented, and which would detrimentally affect performance
- Applications for extenuating circumstances:
  - Must be made at the earliest opportunity and before the examination date
  - Must be submitted via the BBTS 'Extenuating Circumstances Application Form (ECAF1)'
    - Available on request from bbts@bbts.org.uk
  - Evidence is required with independent verification for all claims
    - e.g. medical note and/ or supporting statement from the relevant employer
- Students must plan for the demands of employment, home life, study workloads and other commitments
  Extenuating circumstances will <u>not</u> be granted for any of the following reasons (this list is not exhaustive)
  - Study related circumstances
    - Inadequate planning, organisation or management
    - Timetabling of examinations
    - Misreading of assessment dates and times
    - Personal computer, internet or printer problems
    - Difficulty with the English language
  - Personal illness or disability where reasonable adjustments are already in place
    - Specific requirements must be highlighted to the BBTS at application (if known) or as soon as diagnosed (if new)
    - A previously undisclosed disability or long-term medical condition cannot be taken into account once the examination is taken
  - Minor illnesses/ injuries e.g.
    - Cold, sore throat, cough, hay fever
    - Sprains (other than in the writing hand /arm)
    - Accidents / illness affecting relatives or friends (unless serious or if the student is the sole carer)
  - Normal examination stress or anxiety
  - Normal domestic or personal disruptions including
    - Holidays
    - Social occasions (e.g. weddings, christenings, religious celebrations)
    - Moving house
    - Financial difficulties
    - Normal work patterns and pressures of employment
    - Transport problems
    - Change of job
  - Pregnancy (unless unexpected complications occur)

    - BBTS should be informed as soon as possible of pregnancy and expected date of delivery so reasonable adjustments can be made (where necessary/ possible)
- Failure to attend the exam without permission* from BBTS will incur:
  - an automatic fail grade
  - forfeit of refund of fees
  - forfeit of re-sit examination

*If you experience extenuating circumstances immediately prior to the examination (e.g. the evening before/morning of the examination) it is recognised that you may not be able to contact BBTS office staff until after the examination. Under these conditions you must contact the BBTS office by telephone at the earliest opportunity. A written application for extenuating circumstances must be submitted within 2 weeks of the examination date.

Examination Re-sits and Appeals

- Students who fail the examination are enrolled for the re-sit the following November
  - The student must confirm their intention to re-sit
  - Only one re-sit is permitted (no fee)
  - Re-sit results are capped at 60% (pass mark)
    - This is the maximum mark overall that will be awarded for a re-sit for this qualification
- Re-sitting the exam to attain a better mark is not permitted
- Requests for re-marking of papers must be made through an appeal application and will be considered by PEC and subject to an administrative charge
  - Borderline candidate papers are not eligible for this service
- Appeals must be made in writing (email accepted) to the BBTS Office within four weeks of result notification (issue date of the student result email)
  - Reason(s) for the appeal must be stated along with the relevant 'grounds' for appeal in line with the guidance available. This will be emailed to those requesting an appeal.
  - Appeals are reviewed by the Programme Examiner and PEC
  - Appeal decisions will be returned to the student by email within 8 weeks of the date of initial appeal
  - Students have the right to a final appeal to the President of the BBTS

Fees and Finance

- Programme fees: £891
  - This includes the course text book, student guide/ handbook, online resources, online examination, certificate and university transcripts
- Additional costs not included in the programme fees:
  - BBTS membership

- Finance options:

Payment	Self-funded					Employer-funded		
	20% Deposit	Instalment 1	Instalment 2	Instalment 3	Total payment	Full payment upfront	20% Deposit	Balance
Option 1	£178.20	£249.48	£249.48	£249.48	£926.64*	£891	£178.20	£712.80
Option 2	£178.20	£712.80			£891			
Due Date	31st January	14th May	31st July	31st October		31st January	31st January	30 days post invoice date or 31st March (post approval date)

** Option 1 is subject to an administration charge*

- Payments
  - The deposit must be paid in order to receive a full confirmation email. **Please note: If employers are paying the full amount, confirmation of your place will not be issued until full payment has been received.**
  - Remaining instalments are payable, by debit/ credit card or cheque, by due dates shown above
  - Late payment of programme or membership fees incurs suspension of online access and exam eligibility
- BBTS reserves the right to withdraw students from the course where:
  - Programme or membership fees remain unpaid
  - There is no response to repeated correspondence from BBTS
- Programme Withdrawal Refund Policy:
  - Deposit payments are not refundable
  - Withdrawals from programme week 23 on; payments received to date are not refundable
  - *Where extenuating circumstances criteria have been met* the following refund options are available:
    - Payment Option 1
      - Payments received to date are not refundable
      - Any further instalments due will be cancelled
    - Balance paid in full (student or employer funded):
      - Withdrawal prior to induction; maximum refund £712.80
      - Withdrawal in week 1 to week 14 inclusive; maximum refund £475.20
      - Withdrawal in week 15 to week 22 inclusive; maximum refund £237.60
    - Where the employer has paid the student fees, the student cannot claim a personal refund

Bribery Act

- Students receiving the Services under this Agreement, shall:
  - comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations and sanctions relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption, including but not limited to the Bribery Act 2010 and any guidance provided from time to time
  - comply with any policies and procedures relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption which are provided
  - not engage in any activity, practice or conduct which would constitute an offence under sections 1,2 or 6 of the Bribery Act 2010 if such activity, practice or conduct had been carried out in the United Kingdom
  - promptly report to the BBTS any request or demand for any undue financial or other advantage of any kind received in connection with the performance of this Agreement

Record Retention

- Student data is collected for the sole use of education purposes
  - Student records held by BBTS:
    - Application form and data collected within
    - Examination papers
    - Examination results
    - Documents to support extenuating circumstances (where claimed and submitted to BBTS by individual students)
  - All personal data is stored digitally, where possible, and securely on BBTS premises
  - All student records are retained for a minimum of six years following programme induction
    - After this time records undergo secure disposal
  - All claims brought with respect to the programme <u>must</u> be made within 6 years of the date of student original induction
  - NB. these terms exclude personal data required for BBTS membership records