

## Terms and Conditions for the BBTS Specialist Certificate in Clinical Transfusion Practice

**Please read the terms and conditions carefully. If required, additional clarification on any of the rules may be obtained by contacting the BBTS Office.**

### General

1. The BBTS Specialist Certificate in Clinical Transfusion Practice is overseen by the Professional Affairs and Education Committee (PAEC), who act as the exam board and approve and appoint the Chief Examiner.
2. The BBTS Specialist Certificate in Clinical Transfusion Practice is accredited by the University of Manchester and is equivalent to 45 level 7 points (Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme, CATS).
3. The course fees include access to the BBTS virtual learning environment, guided study programme, additional course materials, examination fees and certificate.
4. Applicants must be a member of the BBTS. Membership must be valid at the time of enrolment and continuous for the duration of the course and any re-sit period. **BBTS membership fees are not included in the course fees.**
5. Travel to the exam centre and any associated costs remain the responsibility of the student.
6. The format to the examination / assessment might vary but due notice will be given to applicants of such changes.
7. Applicants are automatically registered for the exam at the point of enrolment. This is non-negotiable.
8. The course begins each November and is of 12 months duration.
9. Due to the nature of the online resources and activities, applicants *must* have access to a reliable internet source.
  - BBTS cannot be held responsible for inability to view online resources due to inconsistent access to the internet.
10. BBTS reserves the right to rescind places/withdraw approved students from the course if fees/membership fees remain unpaid (without prior notification/discussion with the BBTS office) and if there is no response to repeated correspondence.

### Eligibility

11. The BBTS Specialist Certificate in Clinical Transfusion Practice is designed for UK Nursing and Midwifery (NMC) registered professionals and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) registered Biomedical Scientists (BMS) working in transfusion either in a hospital clinical environment, a hospital transfusion laboratory or blood establishment (blood centre).
12. Republic of Ireland Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland (NMBI) registered Nurses/ Midwives and Academy of Medical Laboratory Science (AMLS) registered Medical Scientists are also welcome to apply.
13. Non-registered NHS employees working in transfusion must be working at career grade 5 (or higher) to be eligible. This is typically equivalent to entry-level registration grade.
14. Applications from trainee registrants will not be considered.
15. Applications from international (non-UK/ non-Republic of Ireland) scientists working in blood transfusion will be considered on a case-by-case basis but must also meet the minimum eligibility criteria. *Please note that this qualification is based on UK practices and guidelines.*
16. All applicants must:
  - have a BSc in a relevant healthcare science or demonstrable equivalent
    - e.g. candidates with NMC or NMBI/ HCPC or ACSLM registration, but without a BSc, are deemed to have demonstrable equivalence
  - be working at practitioner level (NHS career framework grade 5 equivalent) or higher
  - be working in a transfusion laboratory environment during the programme of study
    - applicants not working in a transfusion environment are not eligible for this programme
  - be a member of the BBTS

- on application
- throughout the programme (including any deferral period)
- at examination

And preferably have:

- previous experience of working in a transfusion environment at practitioner level (recommendation: minimum of 6 months))

17. Overseas transfusion scientists are required to submit a statement of practice as part of their application. This must include reasons for applying and a detailed description of transfusion practice experience and duties currently, and previously, undertaken.

- Such applications will be considered by the Chief Examiner who may refer to other members of PAEC for further evaluation.
- **English Language Proficiency for International Applicants**
  - Where English is an additional language you must provide the following test certificate(s):
    - 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

All test certificates must be dated within 2 years of the date on which we receive your application

## Applying for the Programme

18. Registration for the Specialist Certificate in Clinical Transfusion Practice is through the BBTS website.

19. Enrolment is open for a period of 6 weeks once a year. Specific dates will be announced via the BBTS website.

20. The application form is provided on the BBTS website which will clearly state the eligibility requirements.

21. All applicants are checked against the eligibility criteria for approval.

22. If the applicant meets the criteria, they will be approved though not yet enrolled.

- The applicant is required to pay a deposit of 20% of the full fee during the application process.
- The deposit **must** be made by the individual applicant, regardless of whether their employer will be fully funding the programme. This will be requested by email, once the application has been approved.
- A provisional place will be allocated until a proof of full payment contract is confirmed.
- Once received, the applicant is enrolled onto the course.

23. If the applicant fails to meet the criteria stated in the application form, he/she will not be approved.

24. All applications must be supported by your manager. Manager confirmation will be sought by BBTS.

25. Places on the programme are allocated on a case by case basis, dependent upon fulfilling the enrolment criteria, funding and availability.

26. 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

## Grading, Marking and Results

27. Assessment is a two-part process

- Part 1: Poster (25% weighting)
- Part 2: Written examination (75% weighting)

28. The poster is assessed to the following criteria

- Merit
- Aim and objectives
- Display
- Outcome
- Knowledge

Each criterion is graded out of 5; 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = average, 4 = good, 5 = excellent.

A total of 25 marks is available; this forms 25% of the final grade.

## 29. The written examination

- Applicants are registered for the examination at the point of enrolment
- Takes place at a centralised examination centre in Manchester on a Saturday (date to be confirmed after enrolment)
  - 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

## 30. The examination papers are weighted as follows:

- Paper A multiple choice questions 25%
- Paper B short answer questions 25%
- Paper C data interpretation and case scenarios 50%
- This total mark then forms 75% of the final grade

31. All examination papers are double-blind marked by two independent examiners to an approved marking scheme and schedule.

32. The two scores are blind collated, reviewed, weighting adjusted and averaged by the chief examiner. Candidates will receive average scores for each paper and an overall average final result.

33. The overall pass mark for this qualification is 60% with a minimum of 40% in each individual assessment.

34. Final grades are awarded as shown in the table:

Final overall percentage score	Grade awarded	Additional information
≥75 %	Distinction	Must achieve a minimum of 60% in each of the papers and the poster
60-74.8 %*	Pass	N/A
57.5 – 59.8 %*	Borderline	A third independent review is triggered
<57.5	Fail	N/A
N/A	Automatic Fail	<40% in <i>any</i> one written examination paper or poster Failure to submit a poster to the agreed schedule All papers will be marked

\* 'Rounding up' is permitted to 0.1% only

35. Where the outcome is a borderline result the exam papers will be reviewed by a third independent marker, appointed by the Chief Examiner. The decision of this third examiner will be final.

36. Candidates will be informed of their results by email within 12 weeks following the examination date. Successful candidates will receive their BBTS certificate and university transcripts.

37. A list of successful candidates will be published in the exam report available in the BBTS publication Bloodlines.

## Feedback

38. A performance breakdown of each programme cohort will be prepared by the Chief Examiner for the PAEC. This will be published in Bloodlines.
39. Individual written feedback on examination performance can be requested. Feedback requests must be received in writing by the BBTS office within four weeks of the examination results being published (issue date of the candidate result letter). Email is accepted as 'in writing'.
40. Students who have failed their first attempt cannot receive feedback on their examination performance or individual exam questions.
41. Examination papers remain the property of the BBTS and will not be returned to candidates, even if feedback has been requested.

## Student participation, deferrals and non-attendees

42. Student participation in online activities will be monitored throughout the programme.
43. Students must complete 75% of the online compulsory discussion activities to be eligible to sit the examination.
  - This is non-negotiable
44. Deferral of the final examination or early withdrawal from the programme may be possible dependent upon extenuating circumstances (see below). You may be able to:
  - Defer your first examination for 6 months (May) or 12 months (November)
    - Your access to the student area will continue (conditional upon active BBTS Membership status)
    - Deferral beyond this time would require you to restart the programme
    - The required compulsory discussion activities must be completed within the original programme schedule
  - Defer your studies to the following cohort
    - This requires you to restart the programme
  - Withdraw from the programme
    - Refund of fees is subject to conditions outlined in the Fees and Finance section

## BBTS explanation/ application of extenuating circumstances

*Applications for extenuating circumstances must be made at the earliest opportunity and before the date of examination (where possible). Without exception, you will need to complete and submit the BBTS 'Extenuating Circumstances Application Form (ECA1)'. You can request this form from [bbts@bbts.org.uk](mailto:bbts@bbts.org.uk)*

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 your 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 your performance
    - normally in the period leading up to the date of the examination
  - other serious circumstances beyond your control, which could not have been foreseen or prevented and which would detrimentally affect your performance
45. Evidence is required with independent verification for all claims i.e. a medical note and/ or note from your employer.
  46. Your BBTS membership must be maintained throughout your deferral period i.e. a lapse in membership or non-payment of fees may result in your place being rescinded.
  47. You may **not** claim extenuating circumstances on the basis that your performance has been or will be affected by family, financial or other lifestyle problems other than those listed above.

- As the Specialist Certificate is a distance learning programme, it is expected that you to plan your work in order that you allow sufficient time to cope with the demands of employment, home life, study workloads and commitments.
- Extenuating circumstances will **not** normally 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 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 BBTS at application (if known) or as soon as diagnosed (if new)
    - A disability or long-term medical condition cannot be taken into account after the examination papers have been marked
  - 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
  - Non serious domestic or personal disruptions
    - 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)
    - It is expected that you inform BBTS as soon as possible of your pregnancy and expected date of delivery so reasonable adjustments can be made (where necessary/ possible)

48. Candidates who fail to attend the exam without appropriate notification\* and permission from BBTS will not be:

- Eligible for any refund of fees
- Eligible to attend the 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 it is expected that you contact the BBTS office by telephone at the earliest opportunity. You will be asked to complete and submit the written application for extenuating circumstances as soon as possible.

### Appeals and Re-sits

49. All appeals must be made in writing to the BBTS Office within four weeks of the results being published (issue date of the candidate result letter).

- Email is accepted as 'in writing'.

- Details of the reason for the appeal must be given. These will be forwarded to the Chief Examiner, then if necessary, to the Chair of PAEC for resolution.
- Final appeals may be made to the President of the BBTS, or an independent person holding a senior position within the Society (nominated by the President).
- Requests for re-marking of papers will be considered by PAEC and subject to a charge.
  - Borderline candidate papers are automatically reviewed by a third marker and are therefore not eligible for this service.

50. Candidates who have failed the examination can re-sit once.

- If you fail the examination you will be automatically enrolled for the resit examination (six months from date of original examination)
  - This is subject to email confirmation of your intention to resit
- *You may only resit once*
  - There is no fee for this
- You may defer this *once* to the next examination date (extenuating circumstances provided)
- All re-sit results will be capped at 60 (pass mark) which is the maximum mark overall that can be awarded for a resit for this qualification (this applies to the individual papers and final mark)
- Students who have passed cannot re-sit the exam in an attempt to attain a better mark

## Fees and Finance

51. The cost of the programme is £891. This includes the access to learning materials, online resources, examination fee and one potential re-sit fee.

52. You must keep up your BBTS membership for the duration of the programme (including examination)

53. The available finance options are as follows:

Payment Options	Self-funded					Employer-funded		
	20% Deposit	Instalment 1	Instalment 2	Instalment 3	Total payment	20% Deposit^	Balance	Total payment
<b>Option 1*</b>	£178.20	£249.48	£249.48	£249.48	£926.64*	£178.20	£712.80	£891
<b>Option 2</b>	£178.20	£712.80	N/A	N/A	£891			
<b>Due Date</b>	31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	13 <sup>th</sup> May	31 <sup>st</sup> July	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct		31 <sup>st</sup> Dec	31 <sup>st</sup> March	

\* *payment by option 1 is subject to an administration charge*

^ the deposit must be paid by the applicant; employer-funded applicants must claim the deposit back from their employer

54. The balance instalment(s) is payable by debit/ credit card or cheque by the due dates (shown in the table)

- Non-payment/ late payment of course *and/or BBTS membership fees* will result in suspension from the programme
  - This includes any delayed payment by your employer
  - Online access will be suspended until payment is received
- Persistent non-payment of any fees may result in your place being rescinded

55. Programme Withdrawal Refund Policy:

- Deposit Payments are non-refundable under all circumstances
  - Refunds are not given to any individual who withdraws from the course from week 23 onwards
- Where extenuating circumstances criteria have been met* the following refund options may be available to you dependent on your payment option:
- *Payment Option 1*
    - Any instalment payments to date (i.e. at the time of withdrawal) will not be refunded.
    - You will not be pursued for any instalments due after your withdrawal date.
  - *Payment Option 2:* The following applies to individuals or employers who have paid the balance in full at the time of withdrawal
    - An individual who withdraws from the course prior to the course start date may receive a refund to the maximum of £712.80
    - Individuals who withdraw from the course in week 1 to week 14 inclusive may receive a refund to a maximum of £475.20
    - Individuals who withdraw from the course in week 15 to week 22 inclusive may receive a refund to a maximum of £237.60

### Bribery Act

56. Students who are 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

57. 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 must be made within 6 years of the date of student original induction
- NB. these terms exclude personal data required for BBTS membership records