King's College Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

HIRING MANAGERS FAQs

April 2026

Understanding the New Process

1. **Why are we introducing strengthened vacancy controls?**
   We need to reduce our workforce-related expenditure this year. Strengthened controls ensure we only recruit into posts that are essential, affordable, and aligned to our establishment and budget.

2. **What are the key elements of the new process?**
   - All requests for substantive roles will now be made via Trac.
   - Temporary staffing requests will be managed via the spreadsheet process.
   - For roles within establishment and run-rate, Divisions hold decision-making authority.
   - KE will receive sight of roles going to recruitment for information only – if they are within run-rate and establishment.
   - There will be increased scrutiny of temporary resourcing requests and any roles beyond establishment and run-rate. These will be sent to KE for review under the new 'Break Glass' process.

3. **What does 'run-rate' and 'establishment' mean?**
   - Establishment: Your agreed WTE control total for the financial year.
   - Budgeted Establishment: The total WTE from all posts in the budget.
   - Headcount: The count/number of staff / heads.
   - Substantive Staff: The total WTE of substantive staff employed by the Trust.
   - Run-rate: The month-to-month total spend of substantive, bank and agency staff WTE vs budget.

4. **How will the move to Trac support this?**
   Trac will streamline approvals, reduce delays, and improve visibility of recruitment pipelines.

5. **Is this a short-term measure?**
   No. This is part of a long-term shift toward sustainable staffing and financial discipline.

6. **Who can I contact for support?**
   Your line manager, People Partner, People Director or Finance Business Partner.

Before You Recruit

7. **I have a vacancy - what should I do first?**
   Speak with your People and Finance Business Partners to confirm whether the role is within your run-rate and establishment.

In Scope Roles

8. **Are there any exclusions from the LPC process?**
   No. All vacancies will be required to go through this process prior to recruitment.

9. **Does this process apply to requests to transfer an FTC to permanent, a change in hours, FTC extensions?**
   Yes. There are no exclusions from the LPC process for pay budget impacting roles.

10. **Do maternity leave cover posts need approval?**
    Yes. Maternity cover roles require approval like any other vacancy. You must discuss them within your Care Group/Division to determine whether covering the role is a priority and whether you are within run-rate and establishment.

11. **How do I extend the end date of a fixed term post?**
    For externally funded fixed-term posts, KEIB business case approval is required before applying to LPC to extend the post and the individual's contract end date. Unfunded posts only require the LPC process.

12. **Does a Retire and Return case require LPC approval?**
    If the retiree is looking to return to the same role, you will not be required to go through the LPC process and should instead follow the Retire and Return process. However, if the retiree is moving into a different role, you will require LPC approval.

13. **I would like to extend a secondment. How do I process this?**
    You should follow the LPC process, requesting approval from the Divisional Panel.

14. **Do requests for additional PAs need approval by the LPC?**
    Yes. Divisional Panel approval will be required for additional PAs as well as transferring of PAs. If the PAs are externally funded, the Divisional Panel will require a business case attached to the request.

15. **I have a contract extension request for a Doctor, linked to a Visa requirement. What process do I follow?**
    The LPC process should be followed as this will be an extension to an FTC.

16. **What is the LPC process for Centralised Nursing?**
    The same LPC process applies to Centralised Nursing.

Divisional Panel & Approvals

17. **What information do I need to complete for the Divisional Panel to review the vacancy?**
    Depending on the role type that you are seeking approval to recruit into, will depend on the information you need to submit.
    A Recruitment Risk Assessment (RRA) should be completed if the Divisional Panel has approved the role, but the Division is currently over its run-rate and establishment and therefore, the request to recruit will need to be approved by the KE Break Glass process.
    The LPC Spreadsheet will need to be completed for all requests that aren't for substantive recruitment.

18. **When do I need to submit the Recruitment Risk Assessment spreadsheet?**
    If your request takes you over establishment and/or run-rate but has sufficient rationale for exception, the Divisional Panel will require a Recruitment Risk Assessment. This will then be submitted to KE for a final decision.

19. **What happens if a vacancy is not approved at the Divisional Panel?**
    You will not be able to recruit to the post.

20. **Will there be a cut-off to submitting vacancies for review by the Divisional Panels?**
    Yes. It is likely that the Divisional Panels will be held at the same time each week and to ensure roles can be reviewed sufficiently and to manage expectations, it is recommended that each Care Group and Division agree cut off days for Finance Partners, People Partners and Tri review.

    For roles that are being submitted to the KE via the Break Glass process, Divisional Panels will need to update Trac by cop on Thursday. For temporary vacancy requests where the spreadsheet needs to be completed, this will need to be sent to the kch-tr.approvaltorecruit@nhs.net email address by cop on the Thursday.

21. **How long should I plan for the end-to-end process to take?**
    There are a number of steps required to approve a vacancy. For roles that are within the run rate and establishment, Hiring Managers must submit their vacancy on Trac for manager and authoriser approval. Divisional Panels will meet weekly to review requests and if approved by Thursday each week, roles will then be sent to KE for information only, before being sent to the ICB for final approval.

    If the role falls outside of establishment and run rate but there is sufficient rationale to recruit, KE will review vacancy requests that fall within this category on a monthly basis, following the below sequence:

- 1st Friday of each month: Division A.
- 2nd Friday of each month: Division B.
- 3rd Friday of each month: Division C.
- 4th Friday of each month: Corporate.

For roles to be considered by KE under the Break Glass process, roles need to have been reviewed by the Divisional Panel by cop on the Thursday before the KE Panel for that Division.

Break Glass Process

22. What is the Break Glass process?
A route for Divisions to escalate priority roles when they have reached establishment and are operating above run-rate. Hiring Managers must complete a risk assessment, and the request will be reviewed by KE.

23. Which requests need to go through the Break Glass process?
Any request that exceeds run-rate and has sufficient rationale for exception.

24. Who should attend the KE Break Glass meeting?
Divisional Triumvirates will be expected to present the Recruitment Risk Assessments to their monthly KE Panel.

Corporate Roles

25. How are Corporate vacancy requests being managed?
Corporate vacancies will be reviewed by the weekly Corporate Panel. If the Panel recommends approval but the Department is above its run-rate and establishment, a Recruitment Risk Assessment will be required for review by KE under the Break Glass process.

Governance & Oversight

26. Is the ICB still required?
Yes. The ICB remains in place where the post is non-clinical/non-patient-facing, creates or continues pay expenditure, extends fixed-term employment, increases establishment, or may generate backfill or recurrent cost, it should be considered in scope of the Triple Lock process. Hiring Managers will be notified via Trac once ICB approval is granted and recruitment can begin.

27. What role does the Kings Executive (KE) play?
KE provides oversight of all non-substantive requests and any roles beyond establishment and run-rate.

Temporary Staffing & Exemptions

28. What Bank shifts are exempt from the LPC process?

- EX1 – Booking lasts fewer than 5 days
- EX2 – Rostered clinical Band 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6
- EX3 – Rostered Band 7 midwife
- EX4 – Junior doctor post funded by Health Education England
- EX5 – Role fully externally funded

29. If my LPC has been approved and I need Bank cover in the interim, do I need a separate LPC approval for this?

Yes.

30. How long is my LPC valid for?

The LPC approval is for a 3-month period from the date of issue or from the date of moving to Grant Authorisation stage in Trac.

31. If I need to extend Bank/Agency cover, do I need a new LPC?

Yes, the LPC approval is valid for a 3-month period. If you need to extend cover past this date, then you will need to seek LPC approval again 4 weeks in advance to avoid any breaks in cover.

32. If I just need ad hoc cover, do I need LPC approval?

If the short-term cover required is for less than 5 days in totality or you qualify for one of the exemptions, you will not need to obtain LPC approval.

33. What does it mean by 5 days or less?

If you need short term ad hoc cover for less than 5 days in totality, you will not need to obtain LPC approval. If however, the cover required is a regular requirement, i.e. 1 day per week for more than 5 weeks or 2 days per week for more than 2 weeks, you will need to obtain LPC approval as the total duration of the cover required is more than 5 days.

34. Can I cover sickness/annual leave with Bank? If so will I need LPC approval?

If the short-term cover required is for less than 5 days in total or you qualify for one of the exemptions, you will not need to obtain LPC approval

35. If I have LPC approval for 1WTE/37.5hrs, can I have more than 1 person cover.

Yes, you could have part time cover as long as it does not exceed the 1WTE cover approved.

36. What information does the Divisional Panel need to be clear on if a role is approved?

LPC approval needs to be clear on the following:

- Duration - Start and End date of approval (currently approved for 3 months but unclear from when so need an end date applied for clarity)
- Number of hours approved i.e. 1 WTE/37.5hrs
- What has been approved Substantive/FTC/Redeployment/Bank/Agency
- If Substantive/FTC/Redeployment can Temporary cover be used
- If Temporary cover only, is it Bank and/or Agency

37. If I receive LPC approval for Substantive/FTC recruitment, Can I use bank cover using the same LPC number whilst we recruit?

No, you would need a separate LPC number for Temporary cover.

38. If I have LPC approval for Bank/Agency cover at B7, can I book a lower band i.e. B6 if that is all that is available?

Yes.

39. If I have LPC approval for Bank/Agency cover at B7, can I book a higher band i.e. B8a if that is all that is available?

No, you can only fill with the banding approved (or lower). If all that is available is a higher band, then this will need to go back to LPC for approval.

Other Process Questions

40. Is the A2E process still applicable?

Yes. A change form must be submitted, which creates a new position. This must be completed before the LPC process, as the position number is required for Trac.

41. When is a business case required?

A business case is required when establishing a new post and externally funded posts. The business case approves the creation of the post, while the LPC process approves how the post is filled and is reviewed by the Divisional Panel.

42. Who are the Authorisers in Trac?

Hiring Managers always select only Recruitment Team kch.kingsrecruitment@nhs.net, same as they do when they submit a vacancy in Trac for advertising. The Recruitment Team will then add the appropriate Authorisers for the vacancy.

43. Can I recruit externally?

The Division may decide whether a role is recruited to internally or externally however, the default position is internal-only recruitment for two weeks unless there is a clear rationale as to why the role should be recruited to externally.

Some posts may be held at the HR/Finance stage to allow for redeployment where there are known Trust consultations and potential redeployees.

44. I have a query. Who should I contact?

Please contact your People and/or Finance Business Partner if you need support to understand the process. If your query relates to the current status of your request, please refer to Trac, as this provides the most up-to-date information and is updated in real time. For support with using Trac, please contact your Recruitment Partner.