

New Guide Prepares Consultant Interview Candidates for 25?26 November Strike

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Medical Interview Preparation, the one-to-one coaching practice for NHS consultant interviews, has published a candidate's guide to the consultant strike in England on 25 and 26 November 2026, which lands in the middle of consultant recruitment season.

The guide, "Your consultant interview now sits inside a strike," explains a problem most coverage of the dispute has passed over. An Advisory Appointments Committee, the panel that interviews and selects consultant candidates, is constituted in law around consultant members, including a trust consultant, an external consultant and a royal college representative. During the strike, consultants will provide Christmas Day cover only, meaning emergency and immediately life-saving care. Sitting an interview panel is neither, so panels booked for the strike window cannot sit as constituted and are already being moved, merged or cancelled by trusts.

"The appointment cannot proceed on paperwork," said Nalin Wickramasuriya, a retired consultant paediatrician and founder of Medical Interview Preparation. "Regulation 8(3) requires every candidate to be interviewed, so a moved panel delays an appointment, it does not cancel it. But a rescheduled panel

re-enters a five-way diary, and the new date depends on whether the trust kept a contingency slot. Candidates who act in the first 48 hours after a postponement do measurably better."

The guide sorts winter interview dates into three risk windows, sets out the five steps to take in the 48 hours after a postponement email, and covers how to prepare for a reshuffled panel whose members no longer share the shortlisting context of the original group.

It also addresses the question candidates are beginning to ask: what to say when the dispute itself comes up in the interview room. Panels this winter may include consultants who were on the picket line days earlier, colleagues who chose to work, and the medical director who built the emergency rota. The guide advises demonstrating understanding of the issues, the proposed 2.4% pay uplift against 3.9% RPI inflation, the dispute over guaranteed SPA time, and the twelve-month ballot mandate running to around July 2027, without campaigning for either side.

The full guide, with sources from the BMA, NHS Employers, the Royal College of Physicians and the NHS (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations 1996, is available at medicalinterviewpreparation.com.

About Medical Interview Preparation: founded by retired consultant paediatrician Nalin Wickramasuriya, the practice provides one-to-one coaching and an online video course for doctors preparing for NHS consultant, specialist training, GRID and fellowship interviews.

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Medical Interview Preparation

We coach doctors, mainly based in the UK, to improve their interview technique when aiming to progress their careers by getting into a specialist training program, or onto a fellowship or to obtain a consultant position in an NHS hospital.

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