



Public Health
England



Recovery Test Sets for Red Flagged Graders in the Test and Training System

NHS Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

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Public Health England leads the NHS Screening Programmes

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health.

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About PHE Screening

Screening identifies apparently healthy people who may be at increased risk of a disease or condition, enabling earlier treatment or better informed decisions. National population screening programmes are implemented in the NHS on the advice of the UK National Screening Committee (UK NSC), which makes independent, evidence-based recommendations to ministers in the four UK countries. The Screening Quality Assurance Service ensures programmes are safe and effective by checking that national standards are met. PHE leads the NHS Screening Programmes and hosts the UK NSC secretariat.

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Executive summary

This guidance is for programmes that have red flagged graders in the test and training (TAT) grading management reports.

The grading management reports calculate the sensitivity and specificity to sight threatening diabetic retinopathy (STDR) for every grader participating in the tests. This is calculated by using the scores from a rolling 12 month period, and includes a maximum of 10 complete test sets. This figure has been statistically calculated to ensure maximum accuracy of the reports. When using the testing system for performance monitoring it is necessary to reliably detect sensitivity to STDR with a low chance of ascribing poor performance to a grader by random chance. The calculated size of test for that purpose is 191 cases. This can be met by completing 10 test sets of 20 images in a given year. The increased participation rate of 10 sets per year was implemented in the 'interim' QA standards released in April 2014 and the new participation in [TAT guidance was published in August 2015](#).

The cut off for adequate performance in the test has been set at a sensitivity of $\leq 85\%$ to detect STDR.

- sensitivity $\leq 85\%$ will attract an amber flag as a warning that additional training should be considered
- sensitivity $\leq 80\%$ will attract a red flag. Graders with a red flag should be withdrawn from unsupervised grading
- local programmes will need to implement and deliver targeted training to flagged graders to restore the grader back to satisfactory working

Full interpretation guidance is available on GOV.UK in the [grading management guidance document](#).

Background

The grading management reports for sensitivity and specificity to STDR are renewed every quarter. This means that any change in grading performance between quarters will not be seen in the normal reporting structure. Red flagged graders may be improving in performance due to re-training and grading support, but there is a lag in the TAT reporting to reflect this.

The test and training system now offers recovery test sets to graders who are red flagged in the reports. These extra sets will help graders who are on a recovery action plan to demonstrate their standard of grading within reasonable timescales. This is important to programme service delivery and the recovery test sets provide a significant level of support for programmes in these circumstances.

It is important to note that these recovery test sets are not training material and are purely a measure of current performance in the test. The tests must only be taken in combination with targeted training and grading lead support. They should be included as part of a recovery action plan, in which retraining and grading support are the main focus. Retraining and grading support are the main focus of any recovery action plan, which should continue until the grading lead is satisfied that the grader is grading to national standard in normal grading practice.

Graders who are taking the recovery test sets will have an additional report for sensitivity and specificity to STDR to allow real time tracking of their performance.

Guidance on the use of recovery test sets

Who has access to the recovery test sets.

Graders red flagged in the grading management reports will be able to take the recovery sets. The grading lead or programme manager can request the recovery test sets for graders who are red flagged. The sets have a limited time-period of six months. Once this period has expired, the sets will no longer be available. No further recovery tests will be available, even if some of the tests have not been taken.

How to access the reports

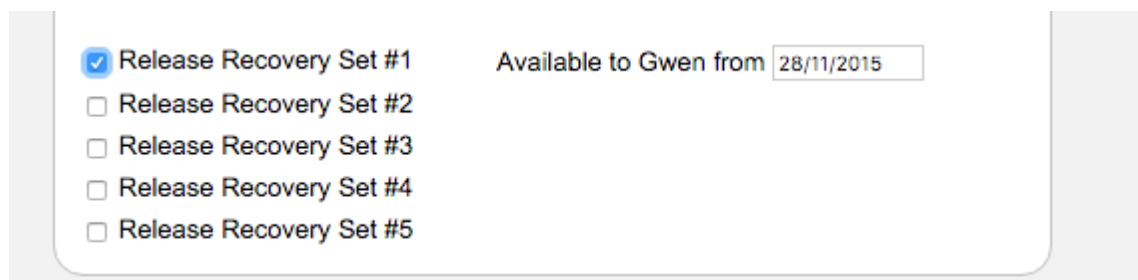
Full guidance on how to access the reports can be found on the drseqa.org website.

How many recovery sets are available.

There will be a maximum of five recovery sets available to an individual grader for six months after the activation of recovery set 1. If the grader is still red flagged after taking these recovery sets, the grading lead must take further action, and should consider following local performance policies.

How often can a grader take a test.

The recovery sets will be available over a period of six months. The sets will be presented to the grader in order starting with recovery set 1, recovery set 2 etc. The grading lead will set the date of release for each recovery set within the six month period.



The screenshot shows a user interface with a list of five recovery sets. The first set, 'Release Recovery Set #1', is selected with a blue checkmark. To the right of the list, there is a text label 'Available to Gwen from' followed by a date input field containing '28/11/2015'. The other four sets are unselected.

Release Recovery Set #	Available to Gwen from
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Release Recovery Set #1	28/11/2015
<input type="checkbox"/> Release Recovery Set #2	
<input type="checkbox"/> Release Recovery Set #3	
<input type="checkbox"/> Release Recovery Set #4	
<input type="checkbox"/> Release Recovery Set #5	

The date of release will depend on the training progress as determined by the grading lead. Graders must receive adequate retraining whilst in the period of recovery. The normal test sets will still be available and must be taken every month.

This period of retraining should form part of a grading improvement plan to help the grader identify and categorise disease and disease levels correctly, with a certainty that the grader can maintain a high level of accurate disease detection in normal grading

practice. There is supporting information about grading improvement plans in the **management of grading guidance** section 11.2 action planning and performance monitoring.

How the recovery sets are included in the grading management reports.

The grading management reports for sensitivity and specificity are renewed every quarter. This means that any change in grading performance between quarters will not be seen. Graders who are taking the recovery test sets will have an additional grading management report for sensitivity and specificity to STDR to allow the grading lead to track their performance in real time.

Will the grader be able to review the images following the test.

The recovery sets are not training material. The grader will not be able to review the recovery test set images from their history after taking the tests. This is to protect the images and results. Graders and the grading lead will have access to the over and under grading guide comparison chart.

What happens if a grader is still red flagged after taking the recovery sets.

The grading lead must take the decision on the next course of action based on the test results, ongoing training outcomes and live grading performance. If the grader is showing no signs of significant improvement, the grading lead should consider following local performance policies.

What happens if a grader is still amber flagged after taking these extra sets.

The grader can return to normal grading if the grading lead is confident that this grader is now grading to national standard. The grading lead can also continue to disallow unsupervised grading based on the outcome of the recovery action plan.

What happens if a grader is red flagged on a separate occasion after regaining a green flag grading status.

Graders with a red flag should be withdrawn from unsupervised grading. There are five recovery sets available to an individual grader. If a grader is red flagged again after regaining a green flag grader status, the grading lead must take local measures to ensure this grader is brought back up to national standard before allowing unsupervised grading. Where necessary the grading lead should follow local performance policies.