

Application Process for Entry to Foundation Training

Guidance for New Medical Schools

Introduction

This guidance seeks to provide information about the roles and responsibilities of medical schools in regard to the application process for the UK Foundation Programme for new medical schools.

Governance Arrangements

Medical schools should clarify the reporting structure for processing key recruitment activities by no later than July in the year preceding the first graduating cohort by notifying the UKFPO. New medical schools will either report into the local foundation school or directly to the UK Foundation Programme Officer (UKFPO) depending on the agreed governance arrangements.

UK medical schools typically work in collaboration with their linked foundation school in regard to the following activities. For new medical schools, it may be the case that the requirement will be to link into the UKFPO directly to fulfil these requirements, depending on local agreement.

- Submission of nominations data and decile scores
- Notification of withdrawals due to failed finals results
- Local special circumstances panels and application outcomes
- Liaison in regard to reserve list applicants
- Transfer of Information (TOI)

Decile Scores

As part of the application process, each applicant is given a medical school performance score which is calculated by the medical school. The medical school divides the year group into 10 equal groups (deciles) based on performance in a number of assessments.

Each UK medical school agrees the mechanism for calculation of the decile score with its students, i.e. which assessments will be included in this measure. Students who are in the first decile (the top 10% of the year), will receive a score of 43 and students in the tenth decile will be awarded 34 points.

Decile	Score
1	43
2	42
3	41
4	40
5	39
6	38
7	37
8	36
9	35
10	34

Decile scores are supplied by the medical school as part of the process of nominating students. The foundation school / UKFPO will then upload this information onto the national online application system (Oriol).

The decile scores are available for applicants to view on Oriel when registration opens on Monday 24th September 2018. Applicants are advised to contact the medical school if their decile score is not what they expected it to be when it is released on Oriel. More advice on calculating EPM deciles is available from the MSC Assessment on request.

Amending Decile Scores

In the event that a decile school needs to be amended, the medical school should contact the foundation school / UKFPO to make the necessary changes on Oriel. The deadline for amendments to be made is Thursday 13th December 2018. No further changes can be made beyond this date.

Nominations

Medical schools are responsible for nominating students for entry to foundation training.

Medical schools need to complete this data on the 'Student Nomination Data' template provided by the foundation school / UKFPO. This template will be provided by Thursday 28th June 2018. The foundation school / UKFPO will upload this to Oriel by Monday 17th September 2018. Defence Deanery graduates (military) should not be nominated.

Military

Military students are placed into selected civilian foundation programmes which are separately funded by the Defence Postgraduate Deanery (DPMD). The DPMD manages the placement of these students to foundation school level outside of the national application process. Military students will be notified of their placements before the national application process begins and are told by the DPMD not to apply to the national Foundation Programme. They should not be included on the student nomination data template provided by the Medical School. The DPMD will supply the UKFPO with a list of military students and where they have been placed. Military students will take the SJT at your medical school alongside applicants and their SJT score will be provided to them by the DPMD.

Applications

All applicants must apply to the national FP vacancy on Oriel through <https://www.oriel.nhs.uk>.

Applications for all programmes must be submitted during the national application window. This includes applications for Academic Foundation Programmes (AFP). Late applications will not be considered under any circumstances and medical schools should advise students of this. There will be no exceptions granted by the UKFPO.

Special Circumstances

Applicants can apply for pre-allocation to a particular foundation schools on the grounds of special circumstances. Applicants should refer to the guidance on the UKFPO website for details of specific criteria. Applicants are advised to consider local policies for allocation to groups / programmes.

Applications must be considered by a panel, rather than by an individual. Medical schools are responsible for convening a panel, in accordance with the national process and timeline, to consider the applications.

Each medical school will be required to convene a local panel to consider applications from its current undergraduate students. Medical schools are advised to refer to the separate guidance document for medical schools on the process of applying for pre-allocation to a particular foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances. This is available on the UKFPO website.

Educational Achievements (EA) Scores

Applicants have the option to provide evidence of additional education achievements as part of the 'evidence' section of their application form.

There are two categories from which applicants can be awarded a maximum of seven points: -

- Additional degrees (maximum 5 points)
- Publications (maximum 2 points; 1 point per publication)

National Verification

Volunteers from medical schools are requested to sit on national verifying panels and will be invited by MSC Assessment to volunteer panellists in July 2018. National verification day is scheduled for **Tuesday 16th October 2018** and will be held at Stewart House, Russell Square, London. Approximately 20 panels will convene to review the evidence in support of the information provided around additional educational achievements in the application forms. Each panel will comprise of a medical and a foundation school representative.

All applicants will be notified of their verified score on **Monday 22nd October 2018**. It is important for applicants to check their score in case any anomalies have occurred. Appeals will be considered during the specified window **only**.

Situational Judgement Tests (SJT)

The Situational Judgement Test (SJT) is a test for employment and not a medical school exam. It is used as part of the selection process for entry to the Foundation and Academic Foundation Programme to test the attributes needed to work as a foundation doctor. Military applicants are also required to sit the SJT; these applicants are advised to contact the Defence Postgraduate Deanery for further details.

The SJT is taken under invigilated conditions and consists of 70 questions in 2 hours 20 minutes. It contains two question formats: rank five possible responses in order and select the three most appropriate responses. A maximum of 50 points is available.

All applicants to the Foundation Programme commencing in August 2019, including the Academic Foundation Programme, are required to take the SJT in the UK on either: -

- Friday 7th December 2018, 10:00 -12:20 AM
- Monday 7th January 2019, 10:00 -12:20 AM

Medical schools organise SJT sittings for their students. The UKFPO will organise the SJT for any eligibility applications (overseas graduates and UK graduates who qualified more than 2 years before the start of the programme).

For further information, please contact admin@mscassessment.ac.uk.

Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are the practical arrangements made to the delivery of the SJT, to ensure that no applicant is at a disadvantage on the grounds of disability or health, without changing the demands of the assessment.

Applicants may apply for reasonable adjustments to the format of the SJT on the following grounds: -

- 1) A known and long-standing learning disability
- 2) A long term or permanent physical disability, health condition or impairment
- 3) A temporary health condition or impairment, or acute flare-up of a long-term health condition
- 4) Other, e.g. religious observance.

Applicants must apply for reasonable adjustments to their UK medical school by **27th September 2018**. It is important to note that the Reasonable Adjustments allowed for the SJT selection assessment may differ from those permitted for university exams.

Please refer to the UKFPO website for the SJT Reasonable Adjustments guidance.

Extenuating Circumstances

Extenuating circumstances include bereavement, serious short-term illness or accidents, and other such events that are considered: -

- severe and exceptional;
- unforeseen;
- unavoidable;
- occur close to the date of the SJT; and
- which seriously affect your ability to undertake the SJT on the date for which you are registered.

If an applicant believes that extenuating circumstances seriously affects their ability to take the SJT on the date they are registered for, they must submit an Extenuating Circumstances claim form to the medical school along with supporting medical evidence at the earliest opportunity, and no later than within one working day of the SJT sitting they were registered for. Applicants with approved extenuating circumstances will be able to take the SJT on the next date as a first-attempt. Applicants may only claim extenuating circumstances once.

Claims of extenuating circumstance cannot be made retrospectively i.e. after taking the SJT. For more information, please refer to the SJT Extenuating Circumstances guidance document and form available on the UKFPO website.

Exceptionally Low Scoring SJT Scores

As in previous years, applicants with exceptionally low SJT scores will have their applications reviewed, with the possibility that they may be withdrawn from the national application process. This will take effect prior to the national allocation date.

Applicants with an exceptionally low SJT score will be invited to attend a review of their SJT outcome. The Dean of the medical school and the pastoral support contact will be notified of any students who have been identified as having an exceptionally low SJT score prior to the release of results to all applicants on Oriol. Applicants are likely to contact the medical school for advice and support through this process. Full details of the review process for UKFP 2019 will be published by the UKFPO in December 2018.

Oversubscription / Undersubscription

The final number of applications will not be known until the close of the application period. If, at that time, there are more fully eligible applicants than vacancies, then applications from individuals who are not able to provide proof of their right to work in the UK will not be considered (applicants who applied via the UKFPO's Eligibility Office).

The UKFPO will circulate the guide to managing oversubscription in January 2019 (if applicable), which will explain the steps to take in more detail. If it is predicted that there will be a high number of vacancies (undersubscription) in August 2019 based on withdrawal trends from the last two years, the F1 standalone process will be initiated.

Stand-alone Programmes

The stand-alone recruitment process has been devised in attempt to fill any vacancies at the end of the UKFP application process. The UKFPO manages the recruitment process to stand-alone programmes centrally.

Stand-alone foundation programmes are fixed-term posts for one year.

Applicants must hold or expect to hold full registration with the General Medical Council (GMC) at the start of the programme.

The application process for stand-alone programmes is considerably different to the application process for the two-year programme. The application window is typically scheduled for the February after the main application process in October. Applicants are invited to attend a panel interview. Applicants are not required to sit the SJT.

Applicant Withdrawals / Failed Finals

It is the responsibility of the medical school to notify the foundation school / UKFPO of any students that fail their final medical school exams so that their application can be withdrawn on Oriel. Applicants in this position unfortunately fail to meet the requirements of the person specification and would need to qualify from medical school and re-apply to foundation training the following year.

Medical schools should inform the foundation school / UKFPO of any failed finals results at the earliest opportunity to enable the UKFPO to offer the foundation posts to reserve list applicants at the earliest convenience.

Reserve List Applicants

The national application process is complete once all applicants have been allocated to a UoA. If, at the end of the AFP offers period, there are more eligible FP applicants than places, the 'n' top scoring applicants will be allocated first (where 'n' equals the total number of FP places available across the UK). Any applicants who have not been allocated at this stage will be placed on a reserve list and allocated to UoAs on pre-determined dates when vacancies arise due to other applicants withdrawing from the process. The highest scoring applicants remaining on the reserve list will be allocated in each batch.

Foundation schools / UKFPO will notify the medical school of any applicants placed on the reserve list at least one day before allocation results are released to applicants to enable staff to prepare to provide pastoral support. Medical schools are encouraged to contact applicants in this position once allocation results have been released to check on their wellbeing and ensure they understand the next steps in the process.

Applicants will be notified by email if they have been placed on the reserve list on **Thursday 7th March 2019**. The UKFPO will endeavour to allocate reserve list applicants as soon as vacancies arise. Notification of reserve list batch allocation dates and subsequent allocation results will be sent by email.

UK graduates will be provided with the details of the pastoral support contact(s) at their medical school to contact for advice and support. Applicants will also receive details of the number of applicants placed on the reserve list and the range of scores.

Transfer of Information (TOI)

The Transfer of Information (TOI) processes are a means of supporting medical students during the transition from medical school to foundation school, and during the F1 year.

Under the Medical Act 1983, universities have formal responsibility for confirming that doctors at the end of F1 are eligible for full registration. It is therefore essential that there is a two-way transfer of information between the university/ medical school and the foundation school until the point of full registration with the GMC.

The TOI process has been in place for some time and has been subject to constant review and improvement. In 2012 and 2013 the process has been formally reviewed and modified by the Medical Schools Council considering feedback from stakeholders including medical schools, F1 doctors, medical students and foundation schools.

The TOI process aims to highlight doctors who may require additional support during the Foundation Programme. In particular, it is essential that information regarding any potential patient safety issues, significant educational, health and welfare concerns, as well as areas of the student's relative weakness are passed to those responsible for foundation training.

The TOI process is facilitated by completion of a TOI form. Every Foundation Programme applicant is required to comply with the TOI process and complete a TOI form. The TOI form is completed by the student. Information on the TOI form is endorsed by the medical school. Medical schools may provide further information where necessary to protect patient safety. TOI forms should be shared only with relevant individuals responsible for education and training or pastoral support at the applicant's allocated foundation school.

There are three key components to the form:

- Information concerning health and welfare (Section 1)
- Information concerning educational progress (Section 2)
- Information concerning professional performance (Section 3)

Completion of the TOI form does not replace the need to report any fitness to practise issues to the GMC or to inform the Local Education Providers (LEPs) HR / Occupational Health departments of any health issues.

Every UK medical school should have a named contact who will co-ordinate and confidentially manage the TOI process for their final-year graduates. The list of TOI contacts is available on the UKFPO website. The named TOI contact at the medical school should be pro-active in and responsible for issuing TOI forms and guidance to their final year students/FP applicants. Once the student has returned the TOI form, medical schools should review and verify the information provided.

It is recommended that a school-level 'early review' meeting between the medical school and local foundation school is held to review relevant information of all final year students/ FP applicants. For further information, please refer to the TOI Guidance available on the UKFPO website.

Appeals

Medical schools will manage, in accordance with local policies, appeals relating to the approval of SJT reasonable adjustments, awarding of EPM decile points and approval of extenuating circumstances for the SJT.

Applicants are not permitted to appeal against their SJT score.

Applicant Presentation

Colleagues at the linked foundation school will typically deliver a presentation provided by the UKFPO to students at the medical school. The presentation is designed to provide an overview of the application process to foundation training and to provide an opportunity for questions about the process.

For new medical schools, if there is no arrangement with the local foundation school, the medical school is encouraged to provide this information to students.

Useful Contact Information

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