

UK Foundation Programme

Guidance for applicants on the process for applying for pre-allocation to Foundation School on the grounds of Special Circumstances



April 2018

Contents

SECTION	CONTENT	PAGE
1	General Principles	3
2	The Criteria	4
3	Process for Submission and Consideration of Applications	6
4	Appeals Process	7
5	General Information	7
APPENDICES		
A	National Timeline: Special Circumstances – August 2019 Entry	8

Please note: -

All non-UK medical school students/graduates, and UK medical school graduates that have a date of qualification prior to 7th August 2017 will make their application via the UKFPO. For these applicants, all references to “panels” should be read as “the UKFPO panel”.



General Principles

- 1.1 If you need to be in a geographical area for specific caring or health reasons to undertake your Foundation Programme training, you can apply to your medical school to be considered for pre-allocation to a specific foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances. The process and application forms can be found on the UKFPO website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/fp-afp/applicant-guidance>. You can only apply for special circumstances based purely on **your current situation**.
- 1.2 If you believe that you meet one or more of the criteria, you are strongly advised to discuss your circumstances with your medical school before completing the national special circumstances form. The purpose of this discussion would be to help you be realistic in your plans and clarify exactly what evidence you are required to provide to allow an informed decision to be made.
- 1.3 If you are applying for special circumstances at a particular Foundation School **you must rank this Foundation School first in your preferences** during your application to the Foundation Programme. Failure to do so will result in your special circumstances application not being considered.
- 1.4 Approval of a special circumstances application does not guarantee you a specific rotational programme within your pre-allocated foundation school.
- 1.5 All applicants must adhere to the rules of the national application process. This means that if you apply or are approved for pre-allocation on the grounds of your special circumstances, you must still complete and submit an application form. You must also sit the Situational Judgement Test and will be required to achieve an application score that is high enough to meet the national allocation criteria. This score may also be used for matching you to a specific programme.
- 1.6 If you are pre-allocated to a foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances you are not allowed to link your application to another individual in the application process.
- 1.7 If you are approved for pre-allocation to a specific school on the grounds of special circumstances, you can only apply for an Academic Foundation Programme in an Academic Unit of Application that covers that specific Foundation school. However, you will not be able to use special circumstances for pre-allocation to a AUoA.
- 1.8 If your special circumstances application is approved, you will be pre-allocated to a specific foundation school for your foundation programme training, provided that your applicant score is sufficient to meet the national allocation criteria.

If the Foundation Programme is oversubscribed, pre-allocation to a specific foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances is only guaranteed if you score highly enough to make the primary list. If you are placed on the reserve list, you can only be allocated to your specified foundation school if that school has vacancies available on the date that your batch is allocated.

Please note: if you graduated on or prior to 7th August 2017, or you are not a graduate from a UK medical school, the process will be the same. The UKFPO will undertake the role of medical school in these circumstances.

The Criteria

To be considered for pre-allocation to a foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances, you must meet one of the following criteria.

2.1 **Criterion 1: You are a parent or legal guardian of a child or children under the age of 18, who reside primarily with you or form whom you have significant caring responsibilities.**

- 2.1.1 If your sole criterion is that you (or your partner) are currently pregnant, you will not be regarded as eligible for pre-allocation on the grounds of special circumstances under this criterion. Please refer to our Inter-Foundation School Transfer policy for further guidance via the UKFPO website www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk
- 2.1.2 It is expected that you and your child(ren) in this category will remain at your current address and application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address. This will be verified by your Medical School Administrator.
- 2.1.3 If you and the child(ren) do not normally reside together, this should be referred to on the application form, and information supplied as to why the caring responsibilities remain equally significant.
- 2.1.4 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
- copy of birth certificate(s) of the child(ren).
 - for legal guardians, a copy of the legal document that confirms your status for the child named in the birth certificate.
 - statement confirming that you have significant caring responsibilities for the child(ren) from an appropriate professional who you would normally have known for at least six months.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.2 **Criterion 2: You are the primary carer for someone who is disabled (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).**

Definition of 'disability' under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of the Act: -

- substantial means more than minor or trivial.
- long-term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months.
- normal day-to-day activities include things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

Some conditions, such as addictions to non-prescribed substances, are specifically excluded.

People who have had a disability in the past that meet this definition are also covered by the scope of the Act.

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with visual impairments are automatically deemed to be disabled.

- 2.2.1 For you to meet this criterion, you must be the primary carer for this person, who would normally be your partner, sibling or parent.
- 2.2.2 If the person you are caring for is not your partner, sibling or parent, you will have to explain clearly and present a strong case as to why and how you have the role of primary carer for this person.
- 2.2.3 If you provide care for a person as part of a group of carers, e.g. a family, you are not eligible to apply under this criterion.
- 2.2.4 It is expected that you and the person who you care for in this category will remain at your current address(es), and the application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address. If this is not the case, relevant evidence must be supplied as to why follow up arrangements could not continue as present.
- 2.2.5 You will be required to complete a care plan to demonstrate how you will combine the responsibilities of a foundation doctor and primary carer, and that you have fully considered local support and resources.
- 2.2.6 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
- statement from GP/Social Services professional that you have known for normally at least six months confirming your role as primary carer for this person.
 - care plan.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.3 Criterion 3: The applicant has a medical condition or disability for which ongoing follow up for the condition in the specified location is an absolute requirement.

- 2.3.1 As you already have this medical condition, it is expected that you will remain at your current address, and application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address.
- 2.3.2 If the request for pre-allocation is not for the foundation school local to your current address, relevant evidence must be supplied as to why follow up arrangements could not continue as present.
- 2.3.3 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
- A report, by the current medical specialist treating your condition or Occupational Health physician, in which they will be required to: -
- describe the current medical condition or disability.
 - describe the nature of the ongoing treatment and frequency.
 - explain why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than by other treatment centres in the UK.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.4 Criterion 4: Unique circumstances

- 2.4.1 If you consider that there are particular unique circumstances that require you to be in a particular environment whilst you undertake your Foundation Programme, you can apply for Special Circumstances under this criterion.
- 2.4.2 You must provide evidence with regard to these circumstances including the reasons for placement in a particular location from a professional individual who has recognised standing to support the application.
- 2.4.3 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
- Statement by a professional that: -
- describes the current unique situation.
 - explains why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than another location in the UK.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

Process for Submission and Consideration of Applications

- 3.1 You must send your completed application by post, rather than email, because of the requirement for signed, supporting documentation. Each medical school will advise its applicants of the address details for applications, and the closing date for receipt of applications.
- 3.2 If you are on elective at the time when applications must be submitted, you may make arrangements with your medical school to send your application form by email, and your supporting documents separately.
- 3.3 If you qualified on or before 07 August 2017, or if you are not a graduate from a UK medical school, the UKFPO will act as your medical school and you will be able to access similar support and information from the website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>.
- 3.4 You cannot submit further documentation at a later date unless there are exceptional circumstances and you have arranged with your medical school to do so.
- 3.5 All applications for pre-allocation on the grounds of Special Circumstances will be considered by a panel that consists of Medical and Foundation School representatives.
- 3.6 After considering your application, the panel will notify you of the outcome, in line with the national timeline.
- 3.7 If your application is approved, a copy of your application form and supporting documentation will be forwarded to the foundation school where you will be provisionally pre-allocated.

- 3.8 If the panel does not approve your application, you will be notified of the reason(s) why. The panel will advise you of the appeals process and the date by which an appeal must be submitted.
- 3.9 Please be advised that the considerations panel may contact you or the professionals in support of your application for further information.
- 3.10 You are advised to check your application thoroughly before sending it in for submission and consideration by the panel. All the information provided on your application must be correct with all the relevant boxes ticked (please refer to the application completion checklist). Incomplete and/or incorrect applications will be rejected from the process.

Appeals Process

- 4.1 Appeals will be considered by the national appeals panel on the grounds that the process was not applied with appropriate diligence or due care, or that the decision was made in a prejudicial way.
- 4.2 If you wish to appeal, you must lodge your appeal form directly with the UKFPO by the date indicated in the national timeline, which can be found via the website www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk
- 4.3 The national appeals panel will consider your appeal and inform both you and the original panel of its decision. The decision of the national appeals panel is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

General Information

If your circumstances change after the closing date for submission of applications for pre-allocation on the grounds of special circumstances, you cannot apply for special circumstances. You are advised to contact the foundation school director when you have been allocated. An application to change your allocated foundation school at this stage will now be treated as an inter-foundation school transfer (IFST), for which there is a separate process. Details are available on the UKFPO website: -

<http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/content/time-out-transfers>

APPENDIX A**National Timeline: Special Circumstances – August 2019 Entry**

12 th October 2018 (12:00 BST)	Deadline for submission of special circumstances applications to the home medical school or Eligibility Office for those who qualified prior to 7 th August 2017 or those who qualify outside the UK.
15 th October – 9 th November 2018	Panels meet to consider applications.
By 12 th November 2018	Panels notify applicants and the receiving foundation school of panel decision and forward relevant documents.
13 th – 22 nd November 2018	National appeal submission period open.
22 nd November 2018 (12:00 BST)	Deadline for appeals submission.
29 th November 2018	National appeals panel meets to consider appeals.
3 rd December 2018	National appeals panel notifies applicants of its decisions on appeals.
7 th March 2019	All applicants on the primary list will be notified of their allocation.