

UK Foundation Programme Office
First Floor, East Wing
St. Chad's Court
213 Hagley Road
Edgbaston
West Midlands
B16 9RG

Date: Friday 18th December 2020

Dear colleagues,

Re: Removal of Educational Achievements (EA) Score from Foundation Programme Allocation Process

The UKFPO has received extensive correspondence following the announcement of our intention to remove the educational achievement (EA) score from the Foundation Programme allocation process from 2023. We are grateful for all feedback received. We acknowledge the position of the Medical Schools Council (MSC), the British Medical Association (BMA) and those individuals opposed to this decision. We have also received positive feedback in support of the decision, including from medical students expressing their relief that this issue is being addressed. They have shared personal stories, highlighting their frustrations and ongoing challenges to succeed in what they still see as a very uneven playing field. We are grateful to them for their courage in coming forward and sharing their powerful stories with us.

In their statement, the MSC have referred to the work that UK medical schools are undertaking to support widening access to medicine and enabling students from less fortunate backgrounds to undertake additional qualifications. This is to be commended and we recognise the excellent progress being made in this area. The UKFPO does not however believe that removing the EA score from the foundation allocation process in 2023 adversely impacts on these individuals or this programme of work.

The UKFPO recognises the value of additional educational achievements to individuals whatever their background and whenever in their career they achieve them. We do not, however, believe that the primary motive for seeking out such educational opportunities during undergraduate studies should be the acquisition of points for the foundation allocation process.

Despite considerable progress, there are still many students who cannot afford to consider an additional qualification during their undergraduate years even when additional support is made available - we have heard from a number of such students since announcing this change. The complexity is further increased by the variation between Universities in providing additional degrees that are integrated into the medical school course, and also by the fact that graduate entry students begin their medical course with a previous degree which has led to points being awarded for EAs.

The UKFPO has considered all feedback during the extended period of discussion with stakeholders, including the MSC and BMA, leading up to this decision and subsequent to its announcement.

We cannot support the continuation of a process where there is ongoing inequity even if that is for a minority of individuals and the decision to remove the EA score from the allocation process in 2023 will therefore remain.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T. M. Lawson".

Dr Tom Lawson
Postgraduate Dean/Co-Chair UKFPO
Health Education Improvement Wales

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Masding".

Dr Mike Masding
Lead Foundation School Director/Co-Chair UKFPO
Health Education England

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare McKenzie".

Professor Clare McKenzie
Postgraduate Dean
NHS Education for Scotland

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Steele".

Dr Ian Steele
Acting Postgraduate Dean
Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency