



UKFP 2024

National Appeal Process



England
Northern Ireland
Scotland
Wales



UK Foundation
Programme



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Introduction

This guidance is intended to provide information about the national (UK-wide) appeal process in relation to the national application process for the two-year Foundation Programme. Appeals against national elements of the application process will be managed by the UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO).

A timeline which provides each appeal submission window and outcome dates can be found on the [“Appeals”](#) page of the UKFPO website.

Appeals will only be considered where an application for the Foundation Programme has been received.

There is a separate national complaints procedure for F2 Stand-alone recruitment.

Timeline & Deadlines

Please refer to the [UKFPO website](#) for dates and deadlines of all appeal windows.

Key change: removal of Stage 1 appeal process

It is important to note that the appeal process no longer includes a Stage 1 appeal process.

The appeals process against national elements of the application process **previously** consisted of two stages:

- Stage 1: Applicants were given the opportunity to correct mistakes and/or provide additional information/evidence which they omitted as part of their original application.
- Stage 2: Applicants could appeal the outcome of their application on the basis that due process has not been followed. Applicants could appeal in relation to the how the process had been followed regardless of whether they amended or submitted new information during the stage 1 appeal process.

The following elements of the national application process **previously** used both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 appeal processes:

- Eligibility application outcomes
- Pre-allocation application outcomes

The following elements of the national application process used only the Stage 2 appeal process:

- Reasonable adjustment request outcomes for the Situational Judgement Test (no longer applicable due to removal of the SJT for 2024)
- Clinical Assessment outcomes
- Inter-Foundation School Transfer application outcomes

The Stage 1 appeal process has been completely removed for UKFP 2024 (and onwards) and it will no longer be possible for applicants to submit additional or missing evidence or correct any errors they may have made in their original application.

This change affects the eligibility application process and the pre-allocation application process. Guidance for the FP2024 application process has been updated accordingly.

The national appeal process will now consist of only the process formally known as the “Stage 2” process. This has been renamed and will now be known simply as the “national appeal” process.

National application processes

Applicants will be able to submit an appeal for the following elements of the national application process via the national appeal process. Further information about how and when an appeal can be submitted can be found further on in this guide.

Allocations to Foundation Schools and programmes are final and cannot be appealed. Swaps between Foundation Schools and programmes are not permitted outside of the national Inter-Foundation School Transfer process.

The UKFPO will consider appeals against outcomes in relation to the following aspects of the national application process:

Eligibility applications

Applicants who graduated from a non-UK medical school or from a UK medical school more than two years before the start of the programme to which they are applying are required to apply through the eligibility application process.

Eligibility applications are considered by the UKFPO in accordance with the eligibility criteria. A proportion of all eligibility applications are reviewed, and quality assured by an independent eligibility checking panel.

Applicants who are deemed ineligible by this process may submit an appeal provided that they have the grounds to do so.

Pre-allocation applications

All applicants have the option to apply for pre-allocation to a particular Foundation School based on personal circumstances (please refer to the [guidance](#) on the UKFPO website). Applications for pre-allocation based on personal circumstances are reviewed by a national panel comprising of representatives from foundation schools, Medical Schools Council (MSC), UK medical schools and the UKFPO.

Applicants must have submitted a pre-allocation application during the national FP application window to be eligible for the appeal process.

If an applicant's application for pre-allocation is unsuccessful, the applicant may submit an appeal provided that they have the grounds to do so.

Clinical Assessment

Applicants who qualified from medical school two years prior to the start of the programme must also undertake an assessment of their clinical skills in the UK prior to being granted full eligibility. The primary purpose of this assessment is to determine suitability to start the foundation programme. The assessments will be undertaken by Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust. Candidates will sit a set of 16-station Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) in approximately four hours.

Applicants who fail the assessment may submit an appeal provided that they have the grounds to do so. It is not possible to appeal against the clinical and academic judgement of an examiner. Applicants may only appeal if they feel that the correct processes and procedures were not followed during the assessment.

Inter-foundation school transfer (IFST) applications

The IFST application process exists to support transfers across the programme in cases where individual circumstances have changed since the point of initial application/allocation to a 2-year foundation programme.

The process allows F1 doctors who are working as part of a two-year programme to apply for a transfer to take effect from the start of their F2 year. And for current medical school graduates/applicants who are applying to the foundation programme to apply for a transfer to take effect from the start of their F1 year in August. It is recognised that situations will arise outside of this process, therefore the option to apply for a transfer due to exceptional circumstances throughout the course of the training programme is also available.

IFST applications for the 2024 programme (and onwards) will be reviewed by a national panel comprising of representatives from foundation schools, UK medical schools and the UKFPO.

If an applicant's application for pre-allocation is unsuccessful, the applicant may submit an appeal provided that they have the grounds to do so.

Local application/selection processes

The following element of the foundation programme application process will be managed by local Foundation School teams (and not nationally by the UKFPO).

Specialised Foundation Programme (SFP) applications

Appeals against the outcomes of Specialised Foundation Programme selection processes will be managed locally by Foundation Schools and Specialised Units of Application (SUoAs) and will

follow a national timeline. This includes appeals against shortlisting and interview outcomes.

The timeline for the appeal window and the appeal form can be found on the [UKFPO website](#).

Applicants should direct their SFP appeal process queries directly to the Foundation School/ Specialised Unit of Application that they applied to. A separate SFP 2024 Appeal Applicant Guide will be available on the [UKFPO website](#) by December 2023.

Underlying principles of appeals

Following the release of application outcomes, applicants **cannot** correct any errors made as part of their initial application and **cannot** provide any additional information/evidence they might have omitted.

Appeal/Review of Process Implementation

The principles underlying the appeal policy are:

- a. Applicants cannot submit an appeal simply because they disagree with the principle of the process or the judgements or outcomes that have been made by the UK Foundation Programme Office or its contractors.

Applicants may request a review where **processes or procedures** have not been followed, or there is evidence of unfairness in how the process has been implemented, and the objectivity of decisions is called into question. No additional supporting documents will be accepted.

- b. Applicants can submit an appeal against the outcome of specific elements of the national application process on the following grounds:
 - that the process was not applied with appropriate diligence or due care, or that the panel did not follow due process, and this resulted in an error.
 - that any decision regarding the application/assessment was made in a prejudicial way, that is, where there is evidence of prejudice, bias or conflict of interest during the process.
 - a service interruption through the UKFPO's application website (Oriel) disadvantaged the applicant (applies to all processes except the Clinical Assessment and the IFST process).
- c. The procedure will be fair and transparent, and the final decisions will be made in accordance with relevant employment legislation and statutory procedures.
- d. Applicant privacy and confidentiality will be respected, subject to the need for an open and fair investigation and for the outcome of the investigation to be reported appropriately. The intention is both to protect the applicant's privacy and to protect those involved with the appeal process.

- e. The UKFPO will appoint an independent panel who will consider all appeals. The panel will consist of a minimum of three people (but will usually consist of more than three) and will include an appropriate representative from a medical school and from a foundation school. At least one member of the panel will be a clinician.

Appeals Panel Configuration

National appeal panels consist of representatives from the following organisations/stakeholder groups: -

- Foundation School Directors (FSDs)
- Foundation School Managers (FSMs)
- Foundation doctors
- Medical Schools / Medical Schools Council
- UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO)

Appeal Process

1. Applicants who wish to register an appeal must complete the correct appeals form and submit it by email to helpdesk@foundationprogramme.nhs.uk within the appeal submission window and by the deadline specified in the timeline. Appeals will **not** be accepted at any other time. The appeal forms can be found on the [UKFPO website](#).
2. Applicants should include in the appeal form a full statement of the grounds for the appeal. The information must be **limited to 500 words**. The panel will only consider the first 500 words.

Applicants should set out the reasons why they believe that (either/or):

- the national review panel did not follow due process, and this resulted in an error in the assessment of the application/submission
 - any decision regarding the application was made in a prejudicial way
 - a service interruption through the UKFPO's application website (Oriel) disadvantaged the applicant
3. Once an applicant has submitted their appeal form to helpdesk@foundationprogramme.nhs.uk they will receive an email to acknowledge that the appeal has been received and logged.
 4. The UKFPO will review the completed appeal form to check whether any basic clerical errors have occurred. If any such errors are found, the applicant will be contacted to clarify the information. No further information will be accepted after the appeal submission deadline under any circumstances.
 5. The UKFPO will appoint an independent appeals panel. The panel will review the appeal and make their decision based on any investigations they consider reasonable, taking account of the statement within the appeal form. The UKFPO will provide applicants with the panel's decision on the published deadline.

6. If an appeal is successful, the UKFPO will agree a satisfactory resolution and provide the applicant with further information.
7. If the appeal is unsuccessful, applicants are not able to further appeal. The independent appeals panel's decision is final. Applicants will receive information about why the appeal was unsuccessful.
8. Applicants who wish to withdraw their appeal must inform the UKFPO at the email address above.
9. There is no further opportunity to challenge the outcomes of the respective elements of the national application process.