GUIDANCE ON ACQUIRING FOUNDATION COMPETENCES OUTSIDE OF THE UK - PROSPECTIVE APPROVAL OF F1 AND F2 POSTS

BACKGROUND

1. On qualification, graduates from UK medical schools will provisionally register with the GMC. To become fully registered with the GMC they must then satisfactorily complete one year as an F1 in posts approved as meeting the requirements set by the GMC.

2. If a graduate completes their F1 experience successfully, the doctor is then able to become fully registered with the GMC.

3. The GMC devolves the responsibility for inspecting and approving F1 posts to local Universities. The Wessex Foundation School, on behalf of the University of Southampton has responsibility for inspecting and approving posts within the Wessex Deanery area.

4. According to the “Operational framework for foundation training” (2005), it is possible that clinical work/training undertaken outside the UK could meet the requirements of F1 or F2 training in the UK.

5. To do so, the following conditions have to be met:
   a. The trainee will need to arrange a placement outside the UK which will deliver training in the F1 or F2 competences required.
   b. The proposed training programme, demonstrating how training for the competences will be achieved, must be prospectively agreed by the Foundation School (acting on behalf of the university) for F1 and the Deanery (for F2 training) prior to the trainee taking up the placement.
   c. The unit outside the UK which has agreed to deliver the training will need to agree to use the competency-based assessment programme and to assess the trainee in accordance with the documentation required by that programme.
   d. The Foundation School and the Deanery (for F2 training) will need to agree the proposed arrangements prospectively.

6. Applications for approval to acquire foundation competences outside the UK will be considered on an individual basis. However, applications to complete F1 outside the UK will normally be limited to people who are non-UK/EA citizens who wish to go home to live and to undertake their post-graduate training in countries where there is an equivalent F1 year.

7. If doctors have not had prospective approval of their F1 posts from the Foundation School to undertake F1 outside the UK they are not eligible for full registration with the GMC. The GMC does not accept retrospective approval and does not allow UK graduates to undertake PLAB.
8. The Foundation School cannot approve posts outside the UK in the same way as approval is given to posts in the UK and the acquisition of information about the quality and appropriateness of posts outside the UK for Foundation Training presents a particular challenge.

9. UK graduates who do not have right of residency are allowed to undertake both F1 and F2 placements in the UK. For further postgraduate training such graduates will come under the same restrictions as International Medical Graduates.

**POLICY**

1. The Wessex Foundation School will consider applications to acquire foundation competences outside the UK from Southampton School of Medicine Graduates and Wessex Foundation School trainees.

2. Applications from Southampton Medical School graduates to undertake F1 outside the UK will only be considered if supported by the Undergraduate Dean.

3. Applications from Wessex Foundation School trainees to undertake F2 outside the UK will only be considered if supported by the Trust Foundation Programme Director.

4. In order to complete a programme outside the UK, both the individual and the proposed post require approval.

5. It will not be possible to complete both years of a foundation programme overseas.

**PROCESS FOR PROSPECTIVE APPROVAL**

1. The student must notify the Undergraduate Dean as soon as possible of his/her wish to undertake F1 outside the UK. This should be done by discussion and completion of the form “Application for Approval to undertake F1 outside the UK” available from the Foundation School.

2. The F1 doctor must notify the Foundation School Director as soon as possible of his/her wish to undertake F2 outside the UK. This should be done by discussion and completion of the form “Application for Prospective Approval of Overseas F2 placements” available from the Foundation School.

3. A formal application with full post information* must be submitted to the Foundation School at least 9 months before the start of the UK F1 Programme i.e. 30 September and at least 6 months before the start of the UK F2 Programme, i.e. by 31 January. The application must be supported by the Undergraduate Dean (for F1) and the Trust Foundation Programme Director (for F2).
* Documentation to include:
  - A job description, including weekly timetable
  - Details of Clinical and Educational Supervision
  - Draft Educational Objectives

4. An applicant wishing to undertake a Foundation placement outside the UK must find a suitable post, in an English speaking hospital, that meets the criteria set out by the Foundation School.

5. The student/foundation doctor must obtain the post.

6. Information about the placement must be obtained from an appropriate person at the hospital by completing the relevant form. This will include the name and contact details of an educational supervisor who will be responsible for assessments. The completed form will then be assessed by the Foundation Programme Director.

7. The Foundation School Manager will contact the named Educational Supervisor and arrange for the assessments and progress reports to be sent to the Foundation School Director.

**PROCESS ON COMPLETION OF PLACEMENT**

1. At the end of the year the trainee must:
   a. Obtain a certificate of satisfactory completion of the programme and competencies from the Educational Supervisor or Director of Medical Education in the overseas hospital.
   b. Send copies of assessments, portfolio and certificate of satisfactory completion to the Foundation School Director/Administrator. Alternatively, the e-portfolio will record assessments and reviews throughout the foundation training.

2. On receipt of information of satisfactory completion of the F1 year, the Foundation School will undertake the usual process informing the GMC.

3. Although a placement outside the UK may have prospective approval, neither the Medical School, Deanery or the Foundation School can be responsible if any aspect of the programme is deficient in such a way that the trainee is unable to complete the necessary experience to allow them to be fully registered with the GMC or to complete F1/F2.

**N.B** There is no process for managing trainees undertaking foundation programmes outside the UK who do not complete the year satisfactorily. Any trainee not being ‘signed up’ by the Foundation School will have to undertake an F2 placement on return to the UK and apply in open competition for such a post.
THE PLACEMENT ITSELF

1. Prospective approval of a placement outside the UK for foundation training will require the hospital to provide evidence that:
   a. it delivers high quality training programmes for doctors at a similar stage of experience
   b. if appropriate, it is in a position to enable UK F1 doctors to develop the appropriate skills and achieve the F1 competencies for full registration
   c. it can deliver the Foundation curriculum at the appropriate level (www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk)
   d. it will provide appropriate clinical and educational supervision
   e. it will provide a named educational supervisor/trainer who will provide supervision/mentorship for the doctor and ensure that the doctor is able will complete the necessary assessments
   f. it will provide the doctor with access to career advice and support

2. Programmes that will be considered for approval must be for one year. For F1, they must meet the requirements set out in the GMC’s booklet “The New Doctor”. These programmes should include:
   a. substantive posts in ideally three but no more than four specialties AND
   b. opportunities to achieve and demonstrate the outcomes necessary for satisfactory completion

3. Whilst in the placement, the doctor must participate in a formal teaching programme that covers the topics outlined in the Foundation curriculum

4. The doctor must undertake a supervised audit project (F2).

5. A record must be kept of all annual, sickness and study leave. This should be forwarded to the Foundation School Director.

6. A report on the Doctor’s progress should be agreed with the doctor and sent back to the Foundation School Director at agreed intervals (e.g. 4 monthly if the placements are for 4 months).

7. The Foundation School Director must be notified if there are any significant educational or training concerns.
FOUNDATION DOCTOR’S COMMITMENT WHILST IN A PLACEMENT OUTSIDE THE UK

1. The doctor seeking approval for a foundation placement outside the UK must agree
   a. to complete their learning portfolio or e-portfolio for Foundation trainees
   b. to undertake all assessments
   c. to follow the Foundation curriculum
   d. to keep in contact with their Foundation School Director

2. The doctor must obtain written evidence or by use of the e-portfolio that:
   a. the competencies have been achieved;
   b. they have attended regular educational meetings with the Clinical and Educational supervisors,
   c. they have completed 360º appraisal and other assessments,
   d. they have attended teaching sessions and/or any other educational activities. The trainee should also be assessed in accordance with documentation required by the overseas programme.
   e. the curriculum has been delivered

3. The educational portfolio must be kept during the year and this must be submitted at appropriate and agreed times to the trainee’s Foundation School Director. Alternatively, trainees should use the e-portfolio.

4. The doctor must also undertake the assessments that are required by the local (overseas) programme.

5. The student/doctor needs to be aware that sometimes between appointment to a placement overseas and taking up the post (as well as during the placement itself) fundamental changes – such as to the clinical content of the post, the consultants and educational supervisors, the rota worked, the educational component, even the hospital involved – can occur. It is the responsibility of the trainee to notify any such changes as soon as possible to the Foundation School Director. Failure to do so may threaten the successful completion of the placement.

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