

International Medical Graduate Sponsorship Scheme

The arrangements for sponsorship of international medical graduates

AIMS OF COLLEGE SPONSORSHIP

1. To sponsor overseas doctors for registration with the United Kingdom General Medical Council (GMC);
2. To support and promote training for doctors from overseas whilst ensuring patient safety;
3. To support and foster links between postgraduate institutions in the UK and overseas.
4. Sponsorship exists to allow International Medical Graduates to come to the UK for a period of training in their speciality before returning to their own country.

SPONSORSHIP

5. Consultant Surgeons in the United Kingdom, who wish to sponsor an overseas doctor in a post they have identified, must ask one of the Royal Surgical Colleges to endorse the arrangements and to administer the appropriate documentation. For those who wish to use our College, the following conditions apply.

THE UK CONSULTANT SUPERVISOR

6. The UK consultant supervisor must be a Fellow in good standing of one of the Royal Surgical Colleges of Great Britain and in Ireland or a member of a Specialty Association recognised by the Joint Committee for Surgical Training. The UK consultant supervisor will act as tutor/mentor to the candidate throughout the period of sponsorship and will be required to submit interim and final reports on the candidate's progress. The College reserves the right to withdraw sponsorship should these reports be unsatisfactory.

7. The first contact to the International Medical Graduate Sponsorship Scheme (IMGSS) MUST be made by the UK Consultant who is prepared to be the UK sponsor and to offer the candidate a suitable post (Specialty Trainee (StR), Fellowship etc) in an approved practice setting as outlined by the General Medical Council, with the support of the relevant Postgraduate Dean. The post offered must be at the equivalent of ST3 level or above.

8. The post offered by the UK consultant supervisor must be for a minimum of six months, preferably one year, and be paid by the National Health Service or a University and have written approval from the appropriate Postgraduate Dean. A copy of such written approval confirming the educational value and funding of the post must be supplied by the UK consultant supervisor along with a copy of the confirmation of appointment letter provided to the doctor by the relevant Medical Personnel department. If the post is an honorary post the employing authority must verify that it carries the clinical responsibilities essential for training by agreeing to grant the candidate crown indemnity for the duration of the post.

9. Educational approval of Fellowships from the Postgraduate Dean is an essential requirement before the post is accepted as suitable by the College. This means that the post is recognised for training,

is funded in accordance with UK employment regulations and will not adversely affect UK trainees' training opportunities.

THE OVERSEAS SPONSORS

10. The candidate is required to provide details of two overseas Consultants (or equivalent overseas senior clinicians) to act as overseas sponsors. Each overseas sponsor should be a distinguished surgeon, preferably a Fellow in good standing of one of the Royal Surgical Colleges and, preferably, known personally by the UK consultant supervisor. The candidate must have worked with one of the overseas sponsors within the previous twelve months and have worked with the other overseas sponsor within the previous two years. Relatives of the candidate may not act as sponsors.

11. Each overseas sponsor will be contacted by the College and requested to provide a structured reference for the candidate. The sponsors will be required to comment on the candidate's competency in relation to the General Medical Council's guiding principles of Good Medical Practice and the candidate's clinical abilities.

THE INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATE

12. An international medical graduate who has qualified outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and who does not benefit from the provisions relating to EEA nationality may seek sponsorship by the College.

13. An international medical graduate who has attempted and failed the [Professional Linguistic Assessment Board \(PLAB\)](#) test will NOT be considered for sponsorship by the College.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

14. The following requirements must be met by the candidate for entry onto the scheme:

- a. Possession of a [primary medical qualification](#) recognised by the World Health Organisation or the United Kingdom General Medical Council. It must have been awarded after a [programme of study](#) comprising at least 5,500 hours over a minimum period of three years, depending on your circumstances.
- b. Possession of an acceptable postgraduate qualification from his/her own country, the examination for which must include a basic science exam and a clinical assessment, examples being:
 - Australasia – Step 4 and above toward obtaining Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
 - Canada – Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
 - Egypt – MS, MSc, MChOrth
 - India – Diplomate of National Board (DNB)
 - Malaysia – MS
 - Nigeria and Ghana – Fellowship of the West African College of Surgeons
 - Pakistan – Fellowship of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan
 - Sri Lanka – MS
 - USA – Specialty Certificate from American Boards of Surgery
- c. Completion of a minimum of three years' clinical practice overseas, which must include:
 - i. an acceptable internship of not less than twelve months followed by:
 - ii. two further years of clinical experience of which at least one year must have been spent in the specialty in which the candidate intends to work in the UK.

- iii. Under their recency of practise rule, the GMC requires sponsored candidates to have been engaged in clinical medical practice for three out of the last five years including the most recent twelve months immediately prior to registration. Please note that clinical attachments and observerships do not fulfil this requirement.

- d. Achievement of a pass in the Academic Modules of the International English Language Testing System ([IELTS](#)) to an overall score of 7.5, with a minimum score of 7.0 in all four modules. This is not required if the candidate's primary medical qualification was awarded from a university where the language of instruction and examination was in English. Candidates in this category will be required to provide documentary evidence of such to the GMC.

- e. Provision of the full names and contact details of two overseas Consultants with whom the candidate has worked within the last twelve months and the last two years.

- f. Provision of a full curriculum vitae including details of previous training and experience, research and publications, participation in departmental audits and appraisals.

- g. Payment of fee.

APPLYING FOR ENTRY TO THE SCHEME AND GMC REGISTRATION

15. The first point of contact with the College regarding entry to the scheme must be made in writing by the UK consultant supervisor willing to act as the UK sponsor. Application for sponsorship from the candidate must be received in the College with the appropriate supporting documentation and full fee payable.

16. When the candidate, UK consultant supervisor and overseas sponsors have satisfied the requirements set out in these regulations, the candidate will then be presented to the GMC for registration. The GMC will undertake its own process of establishing eligibility for registration. The candidate will be required to provide the necessary documentary evidence and the appropriate fee payable to the GMC. The candidate will not be granted registration until he/she appears in person for an identity check at the GMC. The whole process will take approximately three months to complete.

WITHDRAWAL AND INELIGIBILITY

17. Any candidate who wishes to withdraw from the application process must do so in writing and a refund of the fee will be made less a 20% administration charge. Any candidate who is found to be ineligible for the scheme or for subsequent GMC registration will receive a refund of the fee less a 20% administration charge.

These regulations are under continual review. It is recommended that candidates keep in regular contact with the College to ensure that they have the most up-to-date information.
Any changes will be announced on the College website: www.rcsed.ac.uk