

UK Foundation Programme Office
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West Midlands
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Date: Monday 30th November 2020

Dear colleagues,

We are writing to confirm plans to revise mechanism for calculating the total application score for entry to foundation training.

The UKFP application score currently consists of two component parts of equal weighting (maximum of 100 points): Educational Performance Measure (EPM) (maximum of 50 points) and the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) (maximum of 50 points). The EPM consists of a maximum score of 43 for the academic decile and 7 points for additional Educational Achievements (EA): maximum of 5 points for an additional degree and 2 points for individual publications. All applicants are given a unique rank based on their total application score and allocated to foundation school places using a meritocratic algorithm.

As part of the annual review of the national application process, it was agreed by the Medical and Dental Recruitment and Selection (MDRS) Programme Board in February 2020 for the additional EA score to be excluded from the total application score for entry to foundation school with effect from UKFP 2023 (the application process scheduled for October 2022).

Over the years, the percentage of applicants seeking points for additional achievements has increased from 30% to 70% in the most recent application round, thereby resulting in less differentiation between application scores. There are also a number of universities where students now graduate with two degrees rather than a classic intercalated degree for which additional points are awarded to students for having completed the requirements of the university course, rather than going over and above to complete an entirely additional degree. It has been acknowledged that the opportunities for students to obtain additional degrees are inconsistent. As such, there are concerns around the implications of the EA score in terms of widening participation and for those applicants who experience financial hardship.

Furthermore, research exploring the validity of a number of different aspects of undergraduate medical education, suggests that the SJT is a significantly stronger predictor of post graduate performance than the EPM by all measures.

Recruitment to and progress within the Foundation Programme does not require additional degree qualifications. Therefore, the decision has been taken to remove the EA score from the process.

It is acknowledged that administrative systems have inertia and we very much appreciate that students are likely to have employed long-term strategies for optimising their application outcomes for foundation training. This is why we are intending to provide notice for the change to application process for entry to the 2023 Foundation Programme as early as possible.

The national Recruitment Delivery Group are currently reviewing the weighting of the academic decile score and the SJT score in light of this change. We will be sure to communicate the details of the new mechanism for scoring applications at the earliest opportunity.

We would very much appreciate your support in communicating this forthcoming change to future applicants to the Foundation Programme and across your networks of stakeholders.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'T. M. Lawson'.

Professor Tom Lawson
Postgraduate Dean/Co-Chair UKFPO
Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M. Masding'.

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