University of Manchester MBChB Programme
Clinical Training/ Base Teaching Hospital Allocation
& Mitigating Circumstances Policy
Academic Year 2017/18

Please note this is a new Policy for students entering their first year on the MBChB Programme in 2017. This supersedes any existing policy in place. This policy has been drawn up in consultation with student representatives.

Expectations in Relation to Clinical Training on the MBChB Programme

By undertaking study and a career in medicine you (the student) are accepting a lifestyle that is very different from other degrees and occupations and it is important to know that your life will be impacted both while you are at medical school, when you take on your Foundation training post and in your medical career beyond. For example, you may have to move around the country to get the job you want or if you want to move up the ladder, and you will work unusual hours such as nights, weekends or bank holidays “on call”. Life as a medical student and as a doctor is different to other academic programmes of study and careers and we expect you to have considered this before accepting to study on the Programme and enter the field of medicine.

An important feature of the Manchester MBChB Programme is that you are educated and trained in the NHS. In order to get the most out of your learning opportunities we expect you to work and study in the same sort of way as you will be working throughout your career. Medicine is a full-time course and to get the best out of the programme students will need to travel to hospitals, GP surgeries and other primary care/community placements. By accepting a place on the MBChB Programme you are accepting our rules and regulations and the structure of our programme. This includes accepting that for Years 3 to 5 we will allocate you to one of our four base teaching hospitals and their associated district general hospitals and placements (see below). We are confident that all of our teaching hospitals sectors offer a high quality, supportive learning environment. The Programme assesses data each year on student performance as well as student satisfaction in order to ensure this is the case.

Due to the nature of training on a medical programme you will be expected to live in the vicinity (within 10 miles) of your teaching hospital in Years 3 to 5.

Accommodation: Buying or renting accommodation before or after commencing the course is not sufficient mitigation to be allocated to a particular base teaching hospital and will not be taken into account. We strongly advise you not to purchase property before your base teaching hospital allocation is confirmed, as the location of the property may not be convenient for commuting to the teaching hospital and your base teaching hospital allocation will not be altered. Until allocations are confirmed in December of Year 1, you
should be prepared to spend Years 3 to 5 at any of the teaching hospital bases and you are therefore strongly advised against making any permanent living arrangements until this point.

**Employment:** We also advise that, due to the nature and high level commitment required for the Programme, especially in the clinical years (3-5), students may struggle to undertake employment alongside their studies. Therefore, any arrangements for employment should be flexible in accordance with the needs of the programme. Employment in a particular location cannot be considered as mitigation in the hospital allocations process.

**MBChB Programme Undergraduate Base Teaching Hospital Locations**

The MBChB Programme allocates all new students to one of the following four base teaching hospitals for Years 3 to 5 of their clinical training:

**Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (known as MRI)**
Includes: Manchester Royal Infirmary, Trafford General Hospital, Royal Oldham Hospital, Fairfield General Hospital, Rochdale Infirmary, North Manchester General Hospital, Tameside Hospital, Wrexham Maelor Hospital, Glan Clwyd Hospital, Nobles Hospital (Isle of Man).

**Salford Royal NHS Foundation University Teaching Trust (known as Salford)**
Includes: Salford Royal Hospital, Royal Bolton Hospital, Trafford General, Royal Albert Edward Infirmary (Wigan), East Lancashire Trust (Blackburn/Burnley), Pennine Acute Trust.

**Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (known as Preston)**
Includes: Royal Preston Hospital, Chorley and South Ribble District General Hospital, East Lancashire Trust (Blackburn/Burnley).

**University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust (known as South)**
Includes: Wythenshawe Hospital, Leighton Hospital, nr Crewe (Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust), Stepping Hill Hospital (Stockport NHS Foundation Trust), Macclesfield (East Cheshire NHS Trust), Tameside Hospital.

*NB please be aware that due to changes in NHS services there may, over time, be some changes in associated teaching hospitals; you may also need to spend some time at hospitals outside your sector.*

You will be placed in one of the above base teaching hospitals for Years 3 to 5 of the MBChB Programme, although you will attend other hospitals across the North West as well as GP/community placements across the region. You will have the opportunity to visit your base hospital during Years 1 and 2 to familiarise yourself.

V1.0 – updated 5 August 2016
MBChB Programme Base Teaching Hospital Allocation & Mitigating Circumstances Procedure

1. Pre-Admission: Preston preference

As part of your UCAS application you indicated either N = No preference, i.e. will be prepared to be placed at any of the four above base teaching hospitals or P = Preston (a preference to be placed in Preston (Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust). We have the capacity to offer this option as it has been more common for students with mitigating circumstances to require a Manchester base.

Students who are based at Preston list some of the advantages as cheaper accommodation and travel, the smaller size of the student cohort, and less travel to placements than students in the Manchester sectors because Preston has most clinical specialties available locally.

Please note we are unable to change this preference once submitted to UCAS but if you do have a circumstance which relates to the approved Mitigating Circumstances Policy we will take this into account as part of the allocation process.

2. Students’ opportunity to notify the Programme about approved Mitigating Circumstances

You will be sent instructions during the first Semester of Year 1 about how to notify the Programme of approved mitigation. A deadline for submission of mitigating circumstances will be applied. Applications after this time will not be considered unless new approved mitigating circumstances have arisen after the deadline.

If you apply for mitigation and it is accepted, your situation will be taken into account when allocations are carried out. This is judged according to approved mitigating circumstances (see below) and it is not guaranteed that your request will be granted. Once a base teaching hospital has been allocated, changes can only be made in exceptional new circumstances with supporting evidence.

3. Consideration of mitigation

To ensure consistency and fairness a panel of University staff including the MBChB Programme Manager, a clinical and an academic member of staff from the programme, will meet to consider these submissions. Further evidence from the student may be requested if necessary before a decision is made.

4. Allocation of students with accepted mitigation

After consideration of mitigating circumstances we will allocate any students, whose cases were accepted, to particular base hospital locations as required.
5. Allocation of students who stated Preston preference

We will endeavour to place you in Preston if that has been selected as your preferred base teaching hospital. However, there is no guarantee of this due to a balance of student numbers required across the base teaching hospitals. In the case of an oversubscription of students stating a preference for Preston a random allocation process will allocate you to one of the other base teaching hospitals.

6. Allocation of students across teaching hospital sectors

For any students with no mitigation and no preference, an automated, anonymised random allocation process will be run in order to allocate students to the available clinical places across the four sectors.

7. Announcement of allocations

Students will be informed of their allocation in December of Year 1.

Students have no right of appeal against the decision as to the allocation of hospital placements. Students may submit a complaint under Regulation XVIII (Student Complaints Procedure) e.g. if they consider a procedural irregularity to have arisen in the placement allocation process. However, students should be aware that, unless they are otherwise informed, the Programme’s decision as to the placement location will remain in place; failure to attend may impact on a student’s progression and may result in disciplinary action or have fitness to practice implications.
Principles of the Allocation Policy

1. There are no guarantees regarding allocation of base teaching hospital placement for students as the Programme has to balance numbers across four teaching hospital sites. However, we will endeavour to take students’ mitigating circumstances and preference for Preston into account where possible when allocating students to a base hospital.

2. We recognise that during their studies students as an exception may experience a change of circumstance. Before the start of Year 3 we will reconsider base hospital allocation of students whose circumstances have changed and meet the criteria listed under mitigating circumstances Category 1 (Category 2 will only be taken into account for the initial allocation). We will not retrospectively consider circumstances which were in place prior to the base hospital allocation process being carried out.

3. Once a student commences Year 3, they will not be able to transfer their base teaching hospital unless there is an extreme change to their circumstances, i.e. their situation now falls under one of the approved mitigation criteria. In this case we will need to assess the request on an individual basis. Educational experience and student progression can be negatively affected if students change base hospitals after the start of Year 3.

4. We encourage students whose personal circumstances change during the Programme, whether they meet the policy’s approved mitigating circumstances criteria or not, to initially seek advice and support from the Student Welfare and Professionalism Support Team (SWAPS) and discuss their situation in full. A change in teaching hospital allocation is not always the only/best option and there may be other ways in which the Programme can support the student with their circumstances. These should always be explored first.

5. Students must declare all relevant circumstances when applying for mitigation to be considered.

6. Direct entry to Year 3 Students on the Manchester/St Andrews pathway follow the allocation process as agreed with St Andrews who have their own allocation and mitigating circumstance process.

7. Direct entry dental students and students transferring from IMU will be allocated to a base teaching hospital where there are student numbers available. Approved mitigation will be considered where this is applicable and students will be emailed with information relating to this prior to starting the Programme.

8. Although self-evident, it is important for any student claiming mitigating circumstances to recognise that evidence submitted in support of an allocation should come from those as stated in the Policy. Please note evidence will not be accepted if it comes from a family member or close friend of the family.

9. Students who submit multiple requests sequentially, based on a variety of different reasons, should be aware that this may undermine the credibility of their application. Students could be subject to referral to the MBChB Programme Health and Conduct Committee as a matter of professionalism.

10. Students applying under criteria 2.1 are expected to live at their parental/own home for the full duration of the programme. If it is brought to the attention of the
Programme that this is not the case, students could be subject to referral to the MBChB Programme’s Health and Conduct Committee as a matter of professionalism.

**Approved Mitigating Circumstances Criteria**

Mitigating Circumstances are grouped into 2 categories:

**Category 1 – UK Foundation Programme Criteria (endorsed by Medical Schools Council)**

*Students whose circumstances fall under these criteria will have their mitigation considered both as part of the initial allocation process, and at any point during their studies, should new circumstances arise that mean they now fall under this category.*

These criteria are used by the UK Foundation Programme Office which manages student Foundation Training placements once students qualify as a doctor, and are therefore consistent with the expectations for doctors throughout their medical career.

1.1 **Student is a parent or legal guardian of a child or children under the age of 18 who resides primarily with them and for whom they have significant caring responsibilities.**  
*Evidence required: A copy/copies of Full Birth Certificate(s), in addition to a statement confirming that the student has significant caring responsibilities for the child/children.*

1.2 **Student is an official, recognised primary carer for someone who is disabled.**  
*Evidence required: An official Care Assessment Plan with the local authority would be required as evidence.*

1.3 **Student has a disability for which local follow up is an absolute requirement.**  
*Evidence required: Confirmation by the Disability Advisory Support Service (DASS) that this is a required adjustment, with evidence from a medical specialist.*

*Please note: in the case of disabilities, in order to make a decision DASS and the Panel will be looking at the student’s condition in terms of frequency of required medical care/contact, expected duration of the condition, severity and detail of treatment required, therefore these need to be addressed in the letters of support from the Medical specialist in order to determine if the base hospital allocation will be relevant for the student being able to receive ongoing care that is required. The medical evidence provided must explain why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than by other treatment centres.*
Category 2 – MB ChB Programme specific criteria

This set of criteria is considered as part of the initial allocation process only. Once allocations are confirmed, students may not apply for mitigation based on these reasons.

2.1 Student is living at parental or own home.
If students plan to continue living at their parental or own home for the full duration of the Programme from Year 1 (identified via the address provided on the UCAS form/pre-admission) they can indicate that they wish to be placed at a teaching hospital within either the Greater Manchester or Preston area, and we will take this into account during the allocation process to allocate them to a suitable teaching hospital sector.

2.2 Student has particular exceptional circumstances/requirements relating to religious observance.
In exceptional circumstances, the Programme will consider requests from students to be based at a particular base teaching hospital due to religious requirements. Cases will be considered independently by the University Chaplaincy, who will provide advice to the Programme. The final decision will be made by the Programme and will be considered on the grounds of religious requirement only, not for cultural preference. Students considering applying under this category should be aware that all teaching hospitals and associated teaching hospitals have prayer rooms, that are available to students of all faiths and denominations.

2.3 Student is enrolled on the European Studies programme.
Students who successfully enrol onto the MB ChB with European Studies programme will be placed at one of the three base hospitals in Manchester to support and facilitate their attendance at the mandatory evening language classes that take place on the University Oxford Road Campus. Successful enrolment will be confirmed by the European Studies Coordinator prior to allocations taking place.

2.4 Student is elite Sportsman/woman
Students who are elite sportsmen/women will be identified to the Division of Medical Education by the University Sport Department, SPORT Manchester. Elite sportsmen/women are those who are competing at a Junior National Level being supported on a University Sport Scholarship or in a BUCS Premiership team representing an Athletic Union sports club. If these students intend to continue with their top level sports during clinical years, they may be allocated to a Manchester teaching hospital sector in order to facilitate attendance at sporting events. However such students must be aware that they are still obliged to meet the usual attendance requirements at teaching, therefore we advise them to consider carefully whether or not they will be able to continue their sporting career alongside medical training. Names of students in this category will be automatically provided to the Division by SPORT Manchester, students are therefore not required to declare this as mitigation as part of the allocation process.