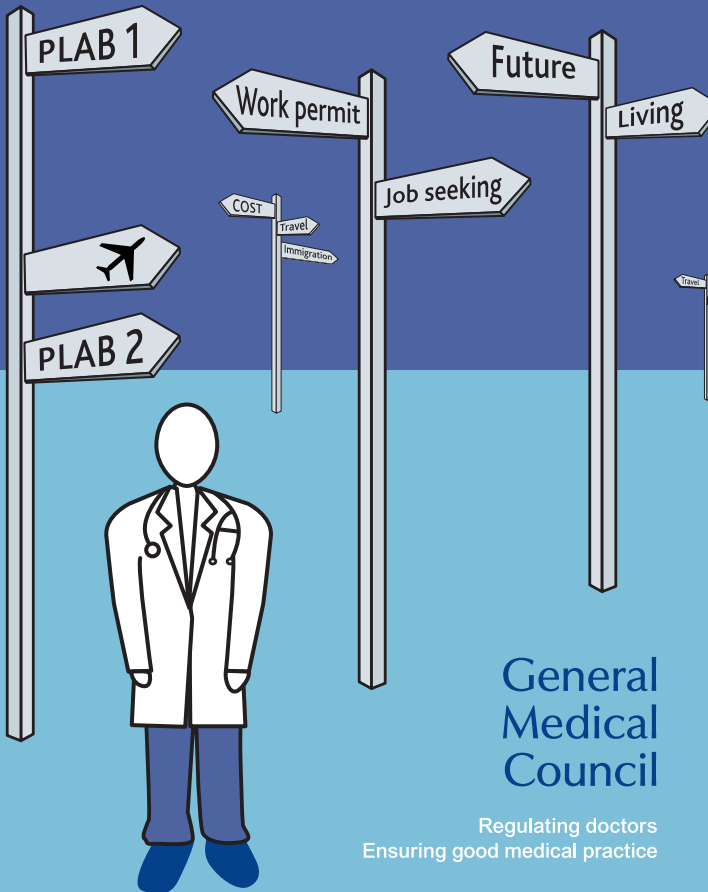


# Working as a junior doctor in the UK

A step-by-step guide for International Medical Graduates following the PLAB route to registration



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## About the GMC

The purpose of the General Medical Council (GMC) is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public by ensuring proper standards in the practice of medicine. We maintain a register of medical practitioners. Doctors must be registered with the GMC to practise medicine in the UK.

This brief guidance outlines the basic steps for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) who wish to seek employment in the UK, and become registered with the GMC.

Passing the required examinations, becoming registered with the GMC and gaining a UK work permit does NOT guarantee employment as a doctor in the UK. It is advised that you consider your future steps very carefully before continuing.

**The GMC does not offer job seeking support.**

The GMC website provides further information for doctors seeking employment and registration in the UK.

[www.gmc-uk.org/doctors](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors)

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## Useful Links

[www.gmc-uk.org](http://www.gmc-uk.org)

### PLAB

[www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/plab](http://www.gmc-uk.org/doctors/plab)

### Immigration and work permits

[www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk)  
[www.workingintheuk.gov.uk](http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk)

### Seeking jobs/Medical organisations

[www.bma.org.uk](http://www.bma.org.uk)  
[www.bmjcareers.com](http://www.bmjcareers.com)  
[www.pmetb.org.uk](http://www.pmetb.org.uk)

## Who does this guidance not apply to?

The information in the publication is not applicable for all International Medical Graduates. Specifically those:

- seeking specialist registration
- seeking registration through the sponsorship programme
- who are visiting as eminent specialists.

### GMC Contacts

London

Regent's Place, 350 Euston Road, London, NW1 3JN

Telephone enquiries via the contact centre on:

0161 923 6602 (from within the UK)

+44 161 923 6602 (from outside the UK)

or visit reception at the above address

**STOP**

Investigate the available job opportunities in the UK before taking the PLAB test.

Only 54% of doctors who passed the Part 2 exam in May 2006 undertook research into the UK job market before taking the PLAB test.

Of those doctors who passed the Part 2 exam in May 2006 more than 50% have **NOT found their first post after 12 months**<sup>1</sup>.

## PLAB 1

The Professional and Linguistic Assessments Board Test. The Part 1 exam is the first step to proving your ability to work as a medical practitioner in the UK.

- The Part 1 exam costs £145 to take
- The number of people taking Part 1 in the first six months of 2007 was almost 50% less than in the same period of 2006
- 3979 candidates sat Part 1 2006
- 46% of candidates passed Part 1 in 2006



**You must travel to the UK to take PLAB Part 2**

You pay for the costs of travel, accommodation and general living.

**These are all at your expense.**

## PLAB 2

The Part 2 exam is an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE). The Part 2 exam is designed to test your ability to practise safely as a senior house officer (SHO) in a first appointment in a UK hospital. It is set at the level expected at the end of Foundation Year One.

- The Part 2 exam costs £430 to take
- 90% of doctors<sup>1</sup> undertook a pre-PLAB course at approx £350 (attendance of these courses is not endorsed by the GMC)
- 74% of candidates passed the Part 2 exam in 2006

**STOP**

**You MUST pass the PLAB test before seeking employment in the UK.**

**Passing the PLAB test does NOT guarantee a work permit or employment.**

## Work permit

The Department of Health announced that from 3 April 2006 international medical graduates - who are not UK or EEA nationals - wishing to work or train in the UK will need a work permit. To obtain a work permit an employer must show that a genuine vacancy exists, which cannot be filled by a doctor who is a UK or EEA national.

We understand that the NHS will continue to need small numbers of specialist doctors who can bring their skills and experience to the NHS. However, increasingly the NHS will be less reliant on international medical recruitment. This will obviously affect the number of posts available to you.



## Living and working in the UK

The cost of living in the UK is very high when compared to many of the countries where our international medical graduates come from. This has a greater impact when you consider that over 50% of doctors who have passed the Part 2 exam are still to find their first position after 12 months<sup>1</sup>.

## Living

- The average house price in the South East is £236,915<sup>2</sup>
- The average single room rental price in the South East is £600 per month<sup>3</sup>
- The average UK council tax is £1,000 per year<sup>4</sup>

## Working – job prospects

Our recent survey has shown that:

- 30% of first posts were for less than 3 months
- Only 13% were for greater than 12 months
- Average number of applicants for each advertisement was 295. Some received over 1,000 applicants<sup>5</sup>
- 17% of posts were in London (the greatest being 22% in the North West of England)

## Jobs information

Information about the number of applicants for posts categorised by specialty and location can be found at [www.bmjcareers.com](http://www.bmjcareers.com)

<sup>1</sup>GMC PLAB survey July 2007

<sup>2</sup>BBC.co.uk

<sup>3</sup>london.gov.uk

<sup>4</sup>esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk

<sup>5</sup>BMJ careers

## The Future

### Do you feel prepared to work in the UK?

- Have you found out what the job opportunities are before taking the PLAB test?
- Can you afford to travel to the UK?
- Can you afford to take the PLAB test?
- Can you afford accommodation and will you have enough money left to pay for your bills and food?