

Emily Saldana  
Education Quality Assurance Manager  
General Medical Council  
Regents Place,  
350 Euston Road,  
London NW1 3JN

*J Robert Sneyd  
Dean of Plymouth University  
Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry  
Professor of Anaesthesia  
The John Bull Building  
Research Way  
Plymouth Science Park  
PLYMOUTH PL6 8BU*

*Tel: + 44 (0) 1752 437355  
Fax: + 44 (0) 1752 517842  
Email: robert.sneyd@plymouth.ac.uk  
GMC registration No: 2721273*

14<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Dear Emily

**Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry (PU PSMD)  
South West Regional Review Report 2016**

Thank you for this very positive and supportive report, which once again recognises our commitment to the careful development and enhancement of our BMBS programme. We were particularly pleased to note that our 'Raising Concerns' policy and culture has been commended as good practice since we have worked hard to develop and enhance this area, originally identified as a requirement in one of our early GMC reports.

Requirement

We would like to thank the visiting team for taking the time to discuss On-the-Spot (OTS) judgements at the wrap-up meeting. It is reassuring that they recognise the School is taking a thoughtful approach to the assessment of professionalism, and their support is appreciated. A group has been set up to look into the GMC requirement in relation to the OTS judgements. The group has undertaken a literature review and consulted with other stakeholders, and the process for review of the on-the-spot judgements involves lay persons and student representatives. We aim to have a proposal in place by early 2017 to address both GMC and student concerns and which we hope will bring additional benefits to students and patients.

Recommendations

1. We are very confident that we have more than adequate placement capacity for both BMBS and Physician Associate students, and have mechanisms in place to ensure that, as far as possible, overlap of placements between student groups does not occur. We have a robust strategy to deliver long and short term additional capacity for particular components, including delivering learning outcomes in a different environment. Our quality assurance visits to placements explicitly examine educational capacity in the context of all learners attending the placement, including those from other healthcare

professions and at different stages of medical education. Primary care visits are often made jointly with the foundation school and/or deanery which further facilitates discussions on capacity, and information concerning educational commitments for each placement is shared to ensure capacity issues are considered.

In response to the GMC recommendation, PU PSMD has set up a clinical placement capacity group. The work of this group is near completion, and has demonstrated capacity for more medical students in addition to the physician associate students. The BMBS programme team is working with the Physician Associate programme team to ensure that there are adequate opportunities for interaction and inter-professional learning between medical and physician associate students.

2. We recognise that there are student concerns in the early years about the progress test. The concept of the validity of a test which is set at the level required for graduation can be difficult to grasp in the early years, and students do not always remember that the test is designed to measure progress throughout their journey to graduation. We are now providing enhanced introductory sessions, which include the involvement of more senior student representatives. We are also providing update training to academic tutors to ensure that they can confidently show students how to use the ATLAS system to review their progress and feedback to drive their learning and improve their scores.

Once again we would like to extend our sincere thanks to the visit team for their very constructive support, and look forward to the 2017 cycle of visits.

With very best wishes

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Sneyd". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

**Professor J Robert Sneyd**  
**Dean**