

## Annual Quality Assurance Summary

This summary forms part of our annual quality assurance to review how an organisation is meeting our standards for medical education and training as detailed in *Promoting excellence*. It provides an overview of the QA activities undertaken over the course of a year and an overview of findings including any areas of notable practice or requirements and recommendations we have set. The summary is published.

<b>Organisation</b>	Queens University Belfast (QUB) School of Medicine
<b>Review period</b>	May 2021 – May 2022

### Overview of findings

#### Overall findings statement

From the SAQ submission, and the clarification of some points during the SAQ meeting, we consider that QUB are meeting the standards set out in the GMC's *Promoting excellence*.

The QA activity that we have carried out in this annual cycle provided good opportunities to observe how QUB meet our standards in Themes 1, 2 and 4 (Learning environment and culture, Educational governance and leadership, and Supporting educators) of this guidance.

### Quality Activity undertaken

	Activity	Summary
1	SAQ submission 21 May 2021	The SAQ was submitted on time and covered all five themes of <i>Promoting excellence</i> . The submission included a list of available documents that we could review, and activities that we could observe, for quality assurance purposes.

2	<p>SAQ feedback meeting</p> <p>23 August 2021</p>	<p>This meeting was held to provide summarised feedback to QUB on its 2021/22 SAQ submission, and to seek clarity and additional information on certain responses - as identified by the GMC following an analysis. The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss potential QA activities to undertake in this annual cycle.</p> <p>The activities were not selected because of any specific risks identified through the SAQ, and we identified no areas of risk from the SAQ submission or during the SAQ meeting. We are satisfied that where further information and/or clarification is still required that this can be provided in the next SAQ submission.</p> <p>Following this meeting, QUB was provided with written feedback on the SAQ submission.</p>
3	<p>Clinical Education Day</p> <p>10 September 2021</p>	<p>The Clinical Education Day brings together educators and trainers who are involved in undergraduate and postgraduate education in NI. The event is jointly hosted by QUB and the NI Medical and Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA).</p> <p>The Clinical Education Day featured a number of keynote addresses, including on equality, diversity, and inclusion (ED&amp;I) and differential attainment (DA). There was also a session jointly facilitated by QUB and Ulster University (UU) on the expansion of medical school places in NI. This joint session was a good example of the ways in which the two universities are working together to ensure a consistent approach to education and training in NI.</p> <p>Attendees were also able to attend breakout sessions. The subject matter of these sessions was diverse, and so were able to cater to the diverse interests of the educators' present. The session we observed was well-organised and allowed attendees the opportunity to discuss issues relevant to them with people from across different specialities, professions, and organisations.</p> <p>Overall, the conference seemed to act as a useful forum for medical educators to liaise with one another, as well as with educators from other professions. The conference also allowed educators to learn from other professionals about developments and changes that may impact them.</p>

4	<p>Medical Students Voice Committee (MSVC) meeting</p> <p>1 December 2021</p>	<p>The MSVC offers students an opportunity to provide feedback to the school, as well as facilitating student input in decision making.</p> <p>The meeting we observed had good attendance from school and faculty staff, and student representatives. The meeting was well-chaired and followed a clear agenda, including an ED&amp;I item. From this update it was clear that the school is prioritising ED&amp;I issues, and that they are continuing to enhance the ways in which ED&amp;I is promoted. As part of this update, the MSVC was informed of some specific examples of how the school has responded to, and acted on, feedback from students relating to ED&amp;I issues.</p> <p>During the meeting, educators suggested potential enhancements to the MSVC meeting process. It was positive to hear the chairs welcome these suggestions and show a willingness implement changes. This demonstrated that the school takes account of the views of educators when designing and revising processes.</p> <p>The committee seemed to provide an open and supportive environment for students to offer their honest reflections and opinions, both on their own and their peers' experiences, and on the updates provided by staff. From our observation, it was evident that staff and the school not only seek out, but also actively listen to and take account of, students' views and feedback. In doing so, the school have been able to demonstrate that they consider the impact on learners of policies, systems and processes.</p>
5	<p>Annual quality assurance visit to an LEP</p> <p>1 March 2022</p>	<p>QUB completes annual quality visits to each local education provider (LEP) that their students are placed in and gathers feedback from students and educators. This feedback helps the school assess the implementation and effectiveness of the LEPs' educational governance structures, and compliance with the standards in Promoting Excellence.</p> <p>The visit we observed was held primarily in person at the Ulster Hospital, but some students and educators did attend virtually. It was positive to see that both in-person and virtual attendees were encouraged to participate actively in the meeting, and that all attendees had equal opportunities to provide feedback.</p> <p>QUB opened each session of the visit by clearly outlining the visit's purpose and explaining how they would use any</p>

		<p>feedback provided. This demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that the school's educational governance systems and processes to manage the quality of medical training are transparent and clearly understood by students and educators alike.</p> <p>At the two parallel Y3 and Y4 student sessions, QUB asked questions about students' experiences of induction, clinical supervision, practical experience, the culture at the LEP, and whether students had any patient safety concerns or if they had experienced bullying or undermining. It was positive to see students felt empowered to offer suggestions for improvement, as well as highlighting positive experiences. It was also clear that QUB took all feedback provided by students seriously, following up to get further detail where necessary in order to properly triangulate all information provided.</p> <p>At the trainer session, QUB fed back comments from students to educators, and then asked a number of questions about educators' own experiences. These questions covered time in job plans for teaching, support from QUB, and a question on whether education is discussed at Board level in the Trust. It was positive to hear QUB ask for feedback on educators' interactions with the school; this showed a dedication to continuous improvement within the school's own quality assurance processes.</p> <p>We understand that, following the visit, QUB will send a draft report to the Trust sub-Dean to check for factual inaccuracies, after which the report will be finalised. Although there were no major concerns arising from this meeting, we understand that if there were, QUB would expect the Trust to provide an action plan and would then monitor its implementation and progress.</p>
6	Quality reporting system	<p>QUB has engaged with the quality reporting system, and currently has one open item which was created just prior to the start of this cycle, in early 2021. QUB have also closed six QRS items during this cycle. Information updates from QUB have provided assurance that has enabled us to consider readily the threshold for reporting and manage concerns appropriately.</p> <p>We continue to work with and support QUB to gather information relating to concerns, and encourage QUB to</p>

		continually assess any concerns against the threshold for reporting to the GMC via the QRS.
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## Next steps

The GMC's responses to the information submitted in the SAQ gives feedback on each theme to help QUB complete the updates to the questionnaire in the next annual cycle. These include:

**Theme 1:** Additional information about student identification, and an update on the evaluation of the new simulation and clinical skills centre.

**Theme 2:** An update on implementation of the new C25 curriculum, further information on educational governance in LEPs, an update on work to increase patient involvement in educational governance, progress made with regards to differential attainment, and some further detail on clinical consolidation classes.

**Theme 4:** Further detail on training for educators, an update on the pilot of the workload allocation model for staff and more information on virtual OSCE software.

**Theme 5:** An update on work to diversify the curriculum, and feedback on the eALS course.

Finally, in the next cycle we may seek to complete an activity considering the new simulation and clinical skills centre.

## Organisation response

The organisation has the right to reply to the AQAS; if they have responded it will be included below.

### Organisation response

*We would like to thank the GMC team for the feedback about the medical programme at Queen's University Belfast and look forward to providing future updates about our curriculum.*