

## 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>	University of Exeter Medical School
<b>Review period</b>	April 2021 – March 2022 (Year 1)

### Overview of findings

#### Overall findings statement

From the SAQ submission, and the clarification of some points during the SAQ meeting, we consider that University of Exeter Medical School is meeting the standards set out in the GMC's *Promoting excellence*.

The QA activities that we have carried out in this annual cycle have provided good opportunities to observe how University of Exeter Medical School meets our standards in Theme 1 (learning environment and culture), Theme 2 (educational governance and leadership), Theme 3 (supporting learners), and Theme 5 (developing and implementing curricula and assessments) of this guidance.

## Quality Activity undertaken

	Activity	Date	Summary
1	Annual quality engagement meeting	15/10/2020	<p>The annual quality engagement meeting was attended by members of the GMC's education QA team and the University of Exeter Medical School team. Prior to the meeting the agenda and relevant documents were circulated for review.</p> <p>At this meeting, we discussed the proactive QA process rollout and the QRS. The next steps were agreed upon and a summary of the meeting and related actions were circulated for agreement in the weeks following.</p>
2	SAQ submission	27/04/2021	<p>The SAQ was submitted on time and covered all five themes of <i>Promoting excellence</i>. The submission included a list of planned University of Exeter Medical School activities that we could observe for quality assurance purposes.</p>
3	SAQ feedback meeting	07/06/2021	<p>This meeting was held to provide summarised feedback to University of Exeter Medical School 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, University of Exeter Medical School was provided with written feedback on the SAQ submission.</p>
4	<p>Departmental Quality Monitoring (DQM) Meeting for the ENT department</p>	13/10/2021	<p>This activity was listed on the SAQ by University of Exeter Medical School against Theme 2: Educational governance and leadership.</p> <p>This activity was selected to improve our understanding of the relationship between the school and providers at clinical learning environments regarding information sharing and the monitoring of progress and patient safety concerns. We also wanted to better understand the school's monitoring process for the development of trainers and provision of appropriate time and support for educators in their job plans to meet their educational responsibilities.</p> <p>The Sub Dean hosts an annual DQM meeting for each of the 32 departments in which they meet with the Trust Speciality Leads to discuss topics like feedback, quality management, SLAs, resources, training, and opportunities. Prior to our observation, we were provided with a template Quality Monitoring form which are submitted by each department ahead of the DQM, along with departmental SLA reports and questions to be discussed in the meeting.</p> <p>Overall, we were very impressed by the collaboration, links, and relationship between the school and Trust. All parties appeared to be confident in sharing their concerns, opinions, and ideas which suggested positive working relationships between the school and trust. The meeting appeared to be well chaired and inclusive with encouraged open discussion from all attendees which appeared to promote inclusivity and demonstrate efficient lines of communication between the school and Trust, particularly in the coordination of operational tasks.</p>

5	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery Clinical Practice Integrative Learning Group (BMBS CPILG)	24/11/2021	<p>This activity was listed on the SAQ by University of Exeter Medical School against Theme 2: Educational governance and leadership and Theme 5: Developing and implementing curricula and assessments.</p> <p>This activity was selected to improve our understanding of how colleagues with input into the clinical programme raise and address issues or concerns regarding academic and clinical assessment and teaching.</p> <p>Monthly CPILG meetings are a forum for all faculty members with an input into the clinical programme to work collaboratively to raise and resolve issues. The CPILG is responsible for mapping all clinical and academic assessments to the curriculum to ensure they are aligned to the clinical and academic teaching programmes. The CPILG is overseen by the Assessment Committee. Prior to the meeting an agenda, action log, minutes from the last meeting, and a variety of papers linking to agenda items are shared with attendees including the Sub Dean.</p> <p>Overall, we found the CPILG meeting to be well organised and chaired efficiently. The sharing of action logs and a detailed agenda, with clear links to supporting documentation, enabled structured and focused discussion around a number of topics including programme delivery, placements, community, and hospital updates. The CPILG meeting appeared to be a good information sharing forum with evidence of collaboration through the raising and resolution of issues and celebration of success. We observed strong links between the school, wider university, and external representatives, with consistent consideration for the student experience throughout.</p> <p>During the Community update in the CPILG meeting, a need to find more community providers for the next academic year was highlighted. In triangulation with our observation of the SSLC, we have set</p>
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			<p>Recommendation 1 which encourages the school to ensure it has sufficient Community/GP placement capacity for the increased cohorts. Further information regarding this recommendation can be found later in this document.</p>
6	Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC)	30/03/2022	<p>This activity was listed on the SAQ by University of Exeter Medical School against Theme 1: Learning environment and culture and Theme 2: Educational governance and leadership.</p> <p>This activity was selected to improve our understanding of how the school communicates changes, responds to student feedback, and includes learner and public representation in educational governance structures when implementing change.</p> <p>The SSLC meets once a term for student representatives to meet with faculty to raise issues, share feedback, and discuss significant changes to the curriculum. There is protected time in the agenda for a review of the action log and updates from Years 3 - 5 student representatives, the student Equality Representative, the Director of Education and other key faculty updates. Faculty from the Clinical and Academic programme are in attendance along with the representatives from the Professional Services Team and Public Involvement in Medical Education Steering Group.</p> <p>Overall, from our observation it appears the SSLC is a good faculty student network with evidence of beneficial collaboration. We observed the school considering the experience of students, patients, and educators with candid reflections on realistic solutions they could deliver. The school were receptive to issues raised by the students and their proposed solutions, and offered multiple opportunities for students to work closely with faculty to deliver an appropriate</p>

		<p>resolution. The voice of learners, patients, and the public were included via student and PIME representatives whilst consideration for the impact to educators was made via academic and clinical faculty present at the meeting.</p> <p>In our observation of the SSLC, we heard students raise issues relating to their current Community and GP placements in which they do not feel their educational needs are being met. It was reported some placement providers do not appear aware of the role or responsibility of medical students whilst on placement and efforts to raise concerns have not been appropriately addressed by the placement providers or the medical school. In triangulation with our findings from the SSLC regarding the need to find additional Community/GP placements, we have set Recommendation 1 which encourages the school to review current Community/GP placements to ensure that the educational needs of students, their role, and responsibility are understood. Further information regarding this recommendation can be found later in this document.</p> <p>From our findings it appears the school demonstrates a culture that seeks and responds to feedback from learners and educators on compliance with standards of patient safety and care, and on education and training. The school also appears to consider the impact on learners of policies, systems, and processes and take in to account the views of learners when services are being redesigned. The SSLC is also a method in which learners, patients, and the public are represented in different educational governance levels within the medical school.</p>
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## Quality Reporting System (QRS)

We use the QRS to monitor concerns raised by organisation when they identify that our standards are not being met in a training environment. Concerns are managed locally by the responsible organisation until resolution.

Activity	Date	Summary
Quality Reporting System (QRS)	Ongoing	University of Exeter Medical School continues to provide frequent and detailed updates for the three existing items on the Quality Reporting System.

## Areas that are working well

We note areas where we have found that not only our standards are met, but they are well embedded in the organisation.

Number	Theme	Areas working well
1	Theme 2: R2.1	<p>Following our quality assurance activities, we commend the school on its approach to managing and controlling the quality of medical education and training.</p> <p>The activities observed were well planned and executed. A good range of representation and opportunities to contribute were evidenced in the quality activities. We are encouraged by the crossovers in the information shared and collected during the activities we observed. We saw evidence of the action logs being monitored and reviewed regularly.</p>
2	Theme 1: R1.5	<p>Following our quality assurance activities, we commend the school for continuously encouraging and creating opportunities for student involvement across the medical school. The school appears to facilitate and encourage an honest and open environment for students and faculty to raise concerns and provide feedback.</p>
3	Theme 2: R2.3	<p>Following our quality assurance activities, we commend the strong links between the school and the wider community via the presence of Patient Public Involvement (PPI) and Public Involvement in Medical Education (PIME) representatives in key educational governance meetings. This incorporates the views of patients and the public when implementing changes to the academic and clinical programme, and enhances the collective commitment to patient and student safety.</p>

## Recommendations

We set recommendations where we have found areas for improvement related to our standards. They highlight areas an organisation should address to improve, in line with best practice.

No.	Theme	Recommendation	Date set
1	Theme 2: R2.4, R2.6	The University of Exeter Medical School should consider reviewing its current Community/GP placements to ensure that the educational needs of students are being fulfilled and that the placement providers are aware of the roles and responsibilities of students when on placement there. The school should also ensure it has sufficient Community/GP placement capacity for the increased cohorts.	March 2022

## Next steps

### Overall findings statement

The GMC's responses to the information submitted in the SAQ gives feedback on each Theme to help University of Exeter Medical School complete the updates to the questionnaire in the next annual cycle. From the review of the SAQ, we identified that we would like to improve our understanding in the next submission of the following:

Theme 1: how the new cross college approach to looking into concerns is working and the introduction of name badges and pins to identify students on placement

Theme 2: whether medical education is a standing agenda item at board level meetings

Theme 4: what training for educators, if any, has returned to face-to-face

Theme 5: how the school is developing a more diverse range of teaching materials

Further to this and based on our findings from the quality activities we have undertaken, in the next cycle we would like to learn more about:

- How action points arising from the Departmental Quality Monitoring meetings are formally recorded, assigned, monitored, and progress fed back to attendees
- How the school has planned to monitor and review the number of community providers for the next academic year
- The investigation into the student raised issue of inconsistent OSCE marking, with confirmation of mechanisms in place to capture any inconsistency in assessment scoring



- Mechanisms in place for the school to be assured Community/GP placements meet the expectations of medical students, and that the Community/GP placement providers are aware of the student's level of study and competence, and appropriately utilise their experience
- Whether the agenda or length of the SSLC meetings has been revised
- An update from the Equality Representative and how their work feeds into the SSLC

Finally, based on the findings of our Covid-19 survey, we would like an update in the next SAQ submission regarding:

- Whether the duration of the Student Assistantship will remain at 4 weeks or return to 6 weeks.
- The proposed idea to base progression decisions over performance in two years instead of one year.
- How the Exceptional Circumstances Policy is promoted to students and how the policy is fit for purpose.

## Organisation response

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

### Organisation response