

Annual Quality Assurance Summary

This summary provides an overview of how an organisation is meeting our standards for medical education and training as detailed in [Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training](#) and [Assuring readiness for practice: a framework for the MLA](#). 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.

Organisation	Queen’s University Belfast (QUB)
Review period	June 2025 – May 2026 (Year one of cycle two)

Overview of findings

Overall findings statement
<p>From the SAQ submission, and the clarification of some points during the SAQ meeting we consider that QUB is meeting the standards set out in the GMC’s <i>Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training</i>.</p> <p>The QA activities that we have carried out in this annual cycle have provided opportunities to observe how QUB meets our standards in themes one (Learning Environment and Culture), two (Education Governance and Leadership) and five (Developing and Implementing Curricula and Assessment) of <i>Promoting Excellence</i> and demonstrates continued compliance with <i>Assuring readiness for practice: a framework for the MLA</i> (the ‘MLA Framework’).</p> <p>We set requirements and recommendations where our standards are not being met, however we have not set any requirements or recommendations for QUB in this QA cycle.</p>

Quality Activity undertaken

	Activity	Date	Summary
1	SAQ submission	23/06/2025	<p>The SAQ was submitted on time and covered all five themes of <i>Promoting excellence</i>. The submission included a list of planned activities that we could observe for quality assurance purposes.</p> <p>We are satisfied that where further information and/or clarification is still required that this can be provided in the next SAQ submission.</p>
2	SAQ feedback meeting	12/08/2025	<p>This meeting was held to provide feedback to QUB on its 2025/26 SAQ submission, and to seek clarification and additional information on the submission where required.</p> <p>We also discussed potential QA activities we could undertake in this annual cycle. These activities were selected to improve our understanding of QUB's processes.</p> <p>We did not identify areas of risk during the SAQ meeting.</p> <p>Following this meeting, QUB was provided with written feedback on the SAQ submission.</p>
3	Observation of a Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) meeting.	26/11/2025	<p>This activity was listed on the SAQ by QUB against themes one and two.</p> <p>The remit of the committee is to provide strategic oversight of Undergraduate Medical Programme, ensure compliance with university regulations and with GMC curriculum, assessment and quality assurance requirements, consider recommendations from Year Teaching Committees and Student Voice Committees and ensure compliance with accepted recommendations.</p> <p>At the meeting we observed covered a variety of topics related to undergraduate medicine, including discussions on regulation changes, curriculum reports,</p>

			<p>student feedback and challenging exclusions, among others.</p> <p>Overall, we felt the LTC is a valuable forum for information sharing among key staff members. Furthermore, it presents a good opportunity for discussion and collaboration around matters impacting the undergraduate medical programme.</p>
4	Observation of the CPSA	03/03/2026	<p>All medical students graduating from UK universities need to pass the MLA as part of their degree before they can join the medical register. All medical schools undertook compliance activities in preparedness for the MLA against our requirements. QUB's CPSA was signed off as being compliant in February 2024.</p> <p>We undertook this observation check that QUB continues to comply with the CPSA requirements annexed to the GMC's MLA framework: Assuring readiness for practice: a framework for the MLA.</p> <p>The CPSA takes place across three days, with two days at the QUB Medical Biology Centre, and one day across various hospital sites in Northern Ireland. We observed day one of the CPSA during which there were six sessions, each with seven circuits.</p> <p>On the day we had the opportunity to meet with members of the senior management team to discuss the school's Fit to Sit Policy, CPSA planning and logistics, examiners, simulated patients and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations. This was followed by a tour of the CPSA facilities with the opportunity to meet key staff involved in the organisation and coordination of the exam. We also met with the school's statistician to discuss results processing. We observed the exams briefings for simulated patients, examiners and students. We also observed station specific briefings before observing live CPSA stations throughout the afternoon.</p> <p>The organisation of the CPSA was excellent with well-constructed stations. The exam was well delivered, and we observed a good level of consistency across stations. From our observation of this activity, we have assurance our standards are being met.</p>

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 an education and training environment. Concerns are managed locally by the responsible organisation until resolution.

Activity	Date	Summary
Quality Reporting System (QRS)	Ongoing	QUB has two open items on the QRS. QUB is engaged with the QRS system and continue to provide frequent and detailed updates. We are assured that our thresholds for reporting via the QRS are embedded and adhered to.

Next steps

In 2025 we decided that organisations that had completed an initial cycle of four self-assessment questionnaires (SAQs) could move to a biennial submission, following an assessment of their previous submissions. As a result of this assessment QUB has now moved to a biennial model so does not submit a SAQ in 2026. The next date of submission is June 2027.

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 for their next submission. These include:

Theme one

LEC1-01 – How the school encourages students to learn from mistakes

LEC1-05 – An update on the review of simulation facilities at LEPs

LEC1-06 – How the school feeds back on concerns raised

LEC1-07 – An update on dissection opportunities

Theme two

EGL2-04 – An update on patient and public involvement in the curriculum

EGL2-05 – Examples of student involvement in decision making

EGL2-06 – The school involvement in LEP committees

EGL3-01 – Information about implementing fairness into the curriculum

EGL3-02 – Update on work on differential attainment

Theme three

SUL1-04 – Information on peer-to-peer feedback

Theme four

SUE1-04 – Update on the workload allocation model

Theme five

DCA1-03 – An update on the use of the simulated patient pool

DCA2-01 – An update on the project regarding student's views on progress testing

DCA2-02 – Information on the selection process and support for assessors

Organisation's response

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

Organisation's response

We would like to thank the GMC for their feedback on our submission and associated processes. We will be able to respond to the points raised above in next year's SAQ and we look forward to working collaboratively over the next academic year.