General Medical Council

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	St Andrews School of Medicine (BSc programme)
Review period	December 2025 – November 2026 (Year 2 of cycle)

Overview of findings

Overall findings statement
From the SAQ submission, and the clarification of some points during the SAQ meeting, we consider that St Andrews School of Medicine is meeting the standards set out in the GMC's *Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training.* The QA activities that we have carried out in this annual cycle have provided opportunities to observe how St Andrews School of Medicine meets our standards in Theme 1 (Learning Environment and Culture) of *Promoting excellence.* In 2025 we decided that medical schools and postgraduate training organisations that had completed an initial cycle of four self-assessment questionnaires could move to a biennial submission, following an assessment of their previous submissions. As a result of this assessment, St Andrews School of Medicine has now moved to a biennial model so does not submit a self-assessment questionnaire (SAQ) in 2026. The next date of submission will be in 2027.

The GMC is a charity registered in England and Wales (1089278) and Scotland (SC037750)

Quality activity undertaken

	Activity	Date	Summary
1	SAQ submission	18/12/2025	The SAQ was submitted on time and covered all five themes of *Promoting excellence*. The submission included a list of planned activities that we could observe for quality assurance purposes. We are satisfied that where further information and/or clarification is still required that this can be provided in the next SAQ submission.
2	SAQ feedback meeting	17/02/2026	This meeting was held to provide feedback to St Andrews School of Medicine on its 2025/2026 SAQ submission, and to seek clarification and additional information on the submission where required. We also discussed potential QA activities we could undertake in this annual cycle. These activities were selected to improve our understanding of St Andrews School of Medicine's processes. We did not identify areas of risk during the SAQ meeting. Following this meeting, St Andrews School of Medicine was provided with written feedback on the SAQ submission.
3	In-person observation of a virtual reality (VR) placement session	21/04/2026	This activity was listed on the SAQ by St Andrews School of Medicine against Theme 1 (Learning Environment and Culture). Ahead of the session, we received an overview of VR placements and heard that these are relatively new and available to all students (on both the BSc and MBChB – ScotCOM – programmes). We were also shown a demonstration of the AI simulated patient via a laptop. This provides a safe environment for students to practise their remote consultation and communication skills, offering a diverse range of patients with different accents

			and from different backgrounds, with a wide range of clinical presentations. We then observed a VR placement teaching session. Following a thorough briefing on how to use the equipment the students, wearing VR headsets, participated in a scenario depicting a GP conducting a home visit. During the activity, students were asked to select the correct options from multiple-choice questions and pick up and review a chart by using hand movements. Following the scenario a tutorial took place discussing clinical reasoning in the community, building on the students' experience and observations from participating in the VR scenario. This experience helped the students discuss and consider how they would prepare for a home visit, how to take a history and examine a patient, communication and investigation. From our observation, it is clear that the school offers learners access to technology-enhanced and simulation-based learning opportunities. In recognising the advances in technology and the changing environment of healthcare, the school is equipping students with the skills required to be able to communicate with and assess patients both remotely and in person. As this teaching is still relatively new, we look forward to learning more about any future development and enhancements in this exciting and innovative area.

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. We also use the QRS to monitor requirements and recommendations set by the GMC.

Activity	Date	Summary
Quality Reporting System (QRS)	Ongoing	St Andrews School of Medicine has no open items on the QRS. The school is engaged with the QRS system and continues to provide frequent and detailed updates. We are assured that our thresholds for reporting via the QRS are embedded and adhered to.

Requirements

We set requirements where we have found that our standards are not being met. We are pleased to say that no requirements have been opened in the last 12-month cycle, and there are no existing requirements.

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. We are pleased to say that no recommendations have been opened in the last 12-month cycle, and there are no existing recommendations.

Next steps

The GMC's written feedback on the SAQ submitted in 2025 lists any areas that we require an update on in the next SAQ submission. These include:

Theme 1:

LEC1-05 - Update on any further developments and external collaboration regarding the AI-powered patient simulator.

Please also provide updates about:

- the continued development of the VR placements, including the roll-out of additional scenarios and any feedback received from educators and students.
- Any findings of the review of AI-generated feedback and how this compares to the feedback provided by educators.

Theme 2:

EGL3-01 - Update following the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee's review of the summary report (of the curriculum and assessment review of Year 1 of the BSc), setting out any recommendations or anticipated changes.

Theme 3:

SUL1-04 - Update on whether students are now able to see their SWA paper with their personal tutor, and whether any feedback has been received about this.

Theme 5:

DCA1-01 – Update on how the revised Year 1 placement went. This can include an update on whether any feedback was received by students and whether any changes will be made as a result.

DCA1-03 - Update on communication difficulty sessions

DCA2-01 - We note that performance data across themes/topics and ILOs will be provided to students from this academic year, and we would be interested in an update on how this was received by students/whether any feedback has been received.

Organisation's response

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

Organisation's response
Thank you to the GMC QA team for a stimulating and thorough process.