General Medical Council

Annual Quality Assurance Summary for new schools and programmes

This summary provides an overview of how an organisation is progressing towards meeting our standards as detailed in *Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training* and *Assuring readiness for practice: a framework for the MLA*. It outlines the quality assurance activities we undertook and a summary of our findings.

Organisation	Three Counties Medical School, University of Worcester
Review period	2025/2026

Overview of findings

Overall findings statement
Three Counties Medical School (TCMS; the School) has completed the third year of a graduate entry MBChB programme based in Worcester. Our overall judgement at this stage is that we are assured, from our visits and the clarification of some points during our meetings with the School, that TCMS is appropriately working towards meeting the standards set out in the GMC's *Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training* in most areas. Further assurance is still required in some areas, and recommendations have been set to support the School in meeting these standards. Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) The School submitted an SAQ on 30 October 2025. This submission covered updates on the School's development since the last cycle. A panel of GMC staff and associates scrutinised the SAQ and provided written line by line feedback, including detailed feedback following the in person and virtual visits. MLA submission The School provided their first submission of compliance documentation for both the AKT and CPSA alongside the submission of the main SAQ on 30 October 2025. A panel of GMC staff and two MLA associates scrutinised the documentation. Following a meeting with the School and a submission of further evidence from the School on 30 March 2026, written and verbal feedback was provided. A second submission was made on 28 July 2026 and is currently being scrutinised by GMC staff in conjunction with two MLA associates, and we will provide feedback to the School shortly.

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

Visits

An in person visit took place on 25 and 26 February 2026 which included an observation of the Year 3 OSCE. It was attended by a panel of three GMC staff and five associates. This was followed by a virtual visit on 27 April 2026 to speak with Year 3 students. Additional documents were submitted by the School and reviewed ahead of the February visit. The visits were used to triangulate the detail provided within the SAQ and focussed on areas where we needed further assurance of the School's progress towards meeting our standards. Following the visit, the School was provided with verbal and written feedback, and five new recommendations were set.

On the visits, the panel identified four areas that are working well, and some areas that require further focus. We closed two recommendations that were made in the previous cycle but which will now be monitored through the MLA compliance process as they relate to MLA requirements. The remaining two recommendations were kept open and an update on progress is requested in the next SAQ submission and visit.

We will continue to seek further assurance through SAQ submissions and discussions with stakeholders to further triangulate our standards.

Promoting Excellence

	Activity	Date	Summary
1	SAQ submission	30 October 2025	The SAQ was submitted on time and covered all five themes of *Promoting excellence*. It provided a good overview of how the school plans to meet our standards in line with its planned timelines. This was scrutinised by the GMC team including our education associates.
2	Document submission	17 February 2026	Documents submitted ahead of the in person visit to the School.
3	In person visit	25 February 2026 – 26 February 2026	The visit focused on areas of the SAQ and recommendations that required further clarification and exploration to provide assurance around the School's progress towards meeting our standards. We held sessions with: • Year one and two students • Student support services • Senior Management Team • Assessment team

			• Secondary care LIC event educators and LEP representatives • GP supervisors • Academic educators At the end of the visit day, we provided verbal feedback.
4	OSCE observation	25 February 2026	We observed a Year 3 real patient OSCE at Worcestershire Royal Hospital. The observation included: • Assessors' briefing • OSCE circuits At the end of the visit day, we provided verbal feedback.
5	Virtual visit	27 April 2026	As a continuation of the in person visit in February, we met virtually with Year 3 students and the senior leadership team. We provided verbal feedback after the two sessions.
6	Visit feedback proforma	4 June 2026	A document outlining the key areas verbally provided at the end of the visits that required an enhanced focus to ensure progression was documented and sent to the School.
7	OSCE observation feedback proforma	4 June 2026	A feedback proforma was sent to the School.
8	SAQ written feedback	24 August 2026	The GMC's line-by-line feedback in response to the School's SAQ submission. This details our review of progression against each of our standards and details additional information sought at the next submission inclusive of additional supporting documentary evidence required.

MLA Framework

	Activity	Date	Summary
1	MLA compliance submission	30 October 2025	The compliance submission was submitted on time and covered AKT and CPSA requirements. It provided an overview of how the school plans to meet our standards in line with its planned timelines. This was scrutinised by the GMC team including our education associates.
2	Document submission	30 October 2025	Documents submitted alongside the MLA compliance form.
3	Assessment team meeting	16 March 2026	Meeting to discuss the MLA submission. Additional documentation was requested to provide assurance over the plans for the delivery of MLA.
4	Document submission	30 March 2026	Additional documents submitted following the meeting with the Assessment Team.
5	Written feedback on MLA submission	26 May 2026	Feedback in response to the MLA submission grouped by theme, raising questions for areas we require further information.
6	Verbal feedback on MLA submission	25 June 2026	Discussion with the Assessment Team about the written MLA feedback and an update on progress since the last submission.
7	MLA second compliance submission	28 July 2026	Scrutiny in progress.

Areas progressing well

Number	Theme	Areas progressing well
1	N/A	The positive culture across the programme, including a highly committed and enthusiastic community of learners and educators.
2	R1.19	Ongoing access to, and expansion of, resources to support the medical school's continued growth, supported effectively by the university.
3	R2.1	There are strong and well established partnerships between the medical school and its NHS partners, with clear lines of communication.

4	R3.2	The students we met with spoke positively about the student support available to them.

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.

Number	Theme	Recommendations
1	Developing and implementing curricula and assessments (R5.5)	The school should consider ways to enhance Year 3 clinical examination and clinical reasoning skills to ensure students are able to meet the required standards (QA14270).
2	Developing and implementing curricula and assessments (R5.6)	The school should redesign the marksheets so they are more closely aligned with the station tasks (QA14271).
3	Developing and implementing curricula and assessments (R5.6)	The school should clarify and standardise the intended purpose of each station and introduce structured calibration sessions for examiners and patients to ensure consistent marking and questioning (QA14273).
4	Developing and implementing curricula and assessments (R5.6)	The school should enhance station authenticity by providing clearer clinical context and standardising rules around patient interaction (QA14274).
5	Developing and implementing curricula and assessments (R5.8)	The school should enhance examiner training to include: • Use of anchor statements • Avoidance of prompting • Reinforcement of adherence to station scripts (QA14272)

Updates on open requirements and recommendations across all standards

Number	Open requirement	Update
No open requirements		

Number	Open recommendation	Update
1	As the school moves towards the use of LICs as clinical placements in phase 2 of the programme, it is important that GP supervisors and clinical educators who provide the LIC Events are well prepared and have access to support from the school (QA14268).	As the school's planned audit is not yet available, we agree that this recommendation remains open and request an update on the audit in the next SAQ.
2	The school should continue to consider how the LICs and LIC Events provide students with experience in a range of specialties and in different settings. In particular, how placements enable students to become members of multidisciplinary teams in secondary care, with educators able to provide reliable judgements about their abilities, performance and progress (QA14269).	We will keep this recommendation open as further work is required on ensuring appropriate breadth of access to LIC events across the year and student development towards membership of multidisciplinary teams in secondary care. We request an update on progress in this area in the next SAQ and we will revisit progress at the next visit.

Next steps
The School has been provided with areas within the line-by-line SAQ feedback and MLA compliance feedback that require additional information or focus for the School to continue to progress. In addition, key areas for enhanced focus to ensure progression have been highlighted in this document. We also expect any relevant updates across all SAQ items or MLA requirements to be provided. The School should review the feedback provided, and submit the next SAQ no later than 31 October 2026, alongside any supporting documentation. Once we have received this information, we will work to review this and organise our next quality assurance activity which will be a visit in the first quarter of 2027, ahead of a decision on taking the school to council for consideration for addition to our list of approved awarding bodies in the Spring of 2027 based on assurance the school is meeting both the standards set out in PE and the MLA requirements.

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
No response provided