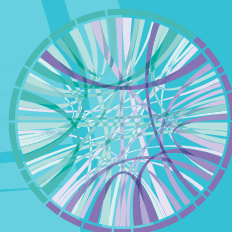




Lessons from an incoming elective programme

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"It took one year to complete negotiations and agree processes with partner NHS Trusts."

Starting out negotiations

Some of your trusts may already be offering 'unofficial' elective opportunities and have some experience in the process, but you should think about the below when beginning negotiations with trusts:

- Who will manage applications – is this the medical school or hospitals?
- What types of placement will you offer – will it be hands on or observational?
- Start times – are they fixed or flexible?
- SIFT funding – is this involved and how would it work?

Managing applications and agreement of process

"We decided to offer a maximum duration of 6 weeks for electives to allow more students the opportunity to undertake an elective."

- Which sites can offer electives?
- Staffing requirements – Senior Clinician on each Trust/site, responsible for UG clinical placements (Director of Clinical Studies) and Education administrator for each site to manage UG student placements (Teaching Coordinator)
- Application fee – one standard fee for all trusts or individual trusts set charges?
- Maximum duration for placements
- Year of study eligibility

Developing a common scheme

- Information access – usually based on faculty website for application processes and trust contacts
- Studentship offer – this will need to be negotiated with the University Registry. Students will require access to university resources and understand visa and entry/language requirements.

Applicant seeks elective opportunity



Supervising consultant identified by Trust



Supervising consultant agrees a plan for the placement, outcomes identified, with applicant



Timing of placement approved (ensures no detriment to expected teaching of home students)



Trust admin informs University Registry and Studentship offer proceeds

- Occupational Health – who provides screening?
- Welfare support – focus for both trust and medical school
- Documentation and checks - relevant police checks completed by trust, recommendation letter from home medical school dean and University Registry Studentship offer

Multiple applications and ERASMUS

Some students may request a prolonged attachment as permitted by their home medical school – in lieu of studying a specialty at their home medical school. This leads to multiple applications for back-to-back placements with variety of trusts. In addition, EU students request places under the ERASMUS programme, which stipulates a minimum of 8 weeks all with a single supervisor.

If incoming elective duration is set to be less than 8-weeks, a single Erasmus-compliant 8-week elective is therefore not possible, but a possible solution is to offer up to 6 weeks in a clinical setting (patient contact) and the remainder in research in an academic department (no patient contact) with the same supervisor as clinical placement.

Arrival, during and end of elective

Things to remember:

- Visa checks
- Induction
- Attendance monitoring and record keeping
- Evaluation report
- Feedback from student

Make sure you allow enough time for all processes before studentship offer is made. You also need to ensure local UG (and PG) teaching load in hospital can

accommodate an elective placement. You will need to factor in how quickly sites “fill up” and be prepared for the admin burden - large numbers of email requests, phone calls.

To consider

Sometimes things are missed in the processing, or do not go to plan, so it is important to prepare for these circumstances. Examples include:

- Placements agreed by consultants without reference to the agreed processes within the trust
- Applicant arrives without an offer
- Applicant arrives in UK with wrong entry requirement
- English language competency not as expected
- Home sickness

Q&A

How do you manage incoming electives from elsewhere in the UK?

The university manages applications through a central portal which allows for a fairer process, better control on numbers and identifying where students are arriving from. Most UK students will follow the same process as overseas applicants.

Should students be involved in setting up incoming electives? Would they want to?

Students should be consulted when considering impact on home students. Student involvement could lead to better links between universities and engagement in exchange schemes. It is good practice to pair students to enhance experiences but it can be difficult to determine availability. Impact of more students on “firms” needs to be considered by trust offering placement to avoid negative impact on home student training.

How many electives are set up that do not happen due to visa issues?

Visas can be approved late and may not arrive in time for the elective. We advise a time-line for applications to allow enough time for visas, though sometimes this is not long enough. Advising on visas and checking applications can be a large admin burden.

Why don't we increase the admin fee?

If we turn it into a tuition fee it becomes Pro-rata per number of weeks and the fee is paid to the university, not passed onto the trust.

Admin processes are in place but some trusts are receiving money which is not being allocated to the education office. Trusts have to work out how to allocate money.

In other countries, fees tend to be very high which is likely a way to control numbers of applicants. In the UK, it is more focused on covering costs than making a profit.