

Communication to final year medical students regarding extended shadowing

The Medical Schools Council (MSC) and UKFPO are pleased to confirm that there will be an extended period of shadowing for doctors starting F1 in August 2021. This extended shadowing period will be arranged by the hospital organisation you are joining in August and will start in late July.

To ensure that all new appointees to the Foundation Programme are equipped with the local knowledge and skills needed to provide safe, high quality patient care from their first day as a F1 doctor, they must undertake a shadowing period lasting at least four days. The extended shadowing adds a voluntary extra 5 days to this mandatory shadowing. The standard shadowing period includes timetabled ward-based shadowing of the F1 job that you will be taking up. This should include the opportunity to shadow a clinical handover. In addition, you should have the opportunity to shadow F1 doctors undertaking an out-of-hours shift, if this is part of the role you will be taking up. The extended period will allow doctors more opportunities to undertake this sort of activity.

You do not have to attend the extended part of the shadowing you have been offered but both UKFPO and MSC would encourage you to do so. If you do choose to attend you will be paid for taking part. Whilst medical schools are confident that the students they will graduate this year are competent to start F1 they do understand that their students have experienced significant disruption to their education and training in the last 12 months. This has had a knock on effect on the confidence of some students to start their first job as an F1.

This extended shadowing period is designed to further support your transition to F1. You will have a chance to spend more time with the clinical team you will be working with in your first placement before you officially start your role, in particular spending time with the F1 that you will take over from, which has been found to be beneficial to recent graduates. You will have the opportunity to meet your Foundation Programme Training Director (FPTD), Educational Supervisor and Named Clinical Supervisor, all of whom will help you to make the transition from medical student to doctor.

Both UKFPO and MSC are keen to support all trainees entering F1 and we recognise that the cohort starting out in the NHS this year have faced particular challenges in their journey to graduation. Extended shadowing is an important part of how we can support you through the transition and we will also be in touch with further information to help you prepare for your first job.