

Process for international accreditation of postgraduate physician education on behalf of the Federation of the UK medical royal colleges

Accreditation is the recognition granted to an institution that meets the standards or criteria established by a competent authority or association. Its general purpose is to promote and ensure educational programme quality.

In this case the association is the Federation of the three Physician Royal Colleges in the UK. The purpose is to promote and ensure high quality physicianly education and programme quality.

1. The standards

Standards which have general application for medical education internationally have been defined, however these will usually need to be modified or supplemented according to regional, national and institutional needs and priorities. For the purposes of Federation accreditation, these will be based on:

- Published and evaluated UK GMC generic standards of education. These will be adapted as appropriate for the relevant country.
- They will also be modified to reflect the curricula being followed whether this is
 - a. JRCPTB/GMC approved UK curricula (such as Internal Medicine Training) or
 - b. a locally determined curriculum.

The standards will always be agreed as long as possible in advance prior to starting the accreditation process.

2. The levels of accreditation

Federation preparatory International Accreditation. Level 1

The provision of an organised local training programme that allows candidates to prepare for all parts of the MRCP(UK) examination as part of that training programme. The programme will be assessed against relevant generic standards based on GMC UK standards and will have evidence of an active process of developing and implementing a modern competency based curriculum.

Federation International Accreditation. Level 2

This reflects the provision of a detailed local curriculum for the early years of physicianly training with a modern competency based curriculum. All parts of the MRCP(UK) form part of the programme of assessment of the locally determined curricula. The accreditation process will be undertaken using the local curricula as well as relevant generic standards of postgraduate education arrived in part from the UK GMC standards.

Federation UK IMT International Accreditation. Level 3

This approves training equivalent to the full UK IMT. Trainees successfully completing this training programme and passing all parts of MRCP(UK) will fulfil the “experience” criteria required to apply directly for higher specialty training in the United Kingdom, i.e. that their

clinical experience and competences would be considered the exact equivalence to someone completing Internal Medicine Training in the UK.

3. The actual accreditation process

3.1 At least twelve weeks prior to an accreditation visit, the proforma set of standards will be sent to the appropriate body and a pro-forma will require completion. This will need qualitative and quantitative information against each of the relative standards. (There will be a word limit of 100 words against each standard to ensure that the size of the response is kept to a manageable limit.)

3.2 The completed pro-forma must be returned to Federation International Medical Director at least 4 weeks prior to the accreditation visit. It will be reviewed internally by the International Medical Director and the team undertaking the visit. This process serves to identify areas of particular focus during the actual visit.

3.3 The Visiting Team

As a minimum there will normally be at least two senior physician educators from the UK and one experienced administrator in postgraduate medical education sourced from JRCPTB or a Deanery/LETB partner.

Other potential members of the visiting team are at the discretion of Federation. Including medical educators, doctors in training, regulators or lay members; these would all be from the local home country of the programme being visited.

3.4 Action Planning

The site being visited will be responsible for making all local arrangements including accommodation and transport. Federation will make arrangements for travel to and from the UK. On each site being visited it would be normal to see at least 12 doctors in training and up to a 12 educational supervisors as the norm. Numbers may be varied depending on the size of the programme by Federation in advance.

3.5 How the visit Runs

Visits overseas will normally occur at the same time as the ARCP process, if this is being undertaken. Thus as a single site it is likely to be two days, the first day providing externality to the ARCP process and the second day the visit to the main training site.

The normal programme for the second day is:

- Presentation or presentations on the current state of delivery of postgraduate physician education and the local activities for the accreditation process.
- Private meeting of the accreditation team with the doctors in training for at least an hour.
- Private meeting with Educational Supervisors lasting at least one hour.
- 30 minutes for the visiting team to consider their relevant findings.
- Feedback on the main points from the visit to the senior educators and relevant senior managers.
- A short visit to review the educational facilities locally.

3.6 Training of the visiting team

All visitors will have undergone UK equality and diversity training within the last three years. All visitors will be experienced in undertaking quality management/accreditation visits or will have undertaken a programme of JRCPTB training prior to the visit.

3.7 Follow up

The first draft of the report will be written within four weeks of the visit by the administrator in conjunction with the clinicians. It will then be returned to the lead educator at the site being considered for accreditation for any factual corrections with a two week turn-around time.

The report will then be formally considered at the Federation International Management & Policy Board when either of the Federation International Medical Directors are present. A final report with recommendations will then be approved at the Federation Executive Team Meeting or equivalent. This process should take at most six months after the accreditation visit.

4. Outcome

The outcome of accreditation may be:

- No accreditation
- Full accreditation for a set number of years (no more than 3 in the first instance)
- Accreditation for a shorter period of time than 3 years

4.1 The accreditation team will also recommend the appropriate level of accreditation.

4.2 The recommendation will contain mandatory requirements and recommendations for development.

4.3 The organisation being accredited will provide an annual follow up against all mandatory requirements and recommendations.

4.4 Federation reserves the right to remove accreditation at any time if it believes that the standards are no longer being met or satisfactory progress has not been made with mandatory requirements.

4.5 The outcome of the accreditation process including all requirements will be publicly published:

- a. On the JRCPTB/Federation website
- b. On the website of the accredited organisation

5. Conflicts of interest

Avoidance of conflicts of interest and the integrity of such a process is fundamental to its success. There must be no suggestion of real or even apparent conflicts of interest. Federation will charge a fee to cover the costs of the process and travel to and from the country where the accreditation takes place. While the local organisation will arrange local travel and local accommodation, under no circumstances must any fee, gift or any other inducement be offered to any member of the visiting or accreditation team. Such an action would lead to both termination of the process and withdrawal of any current accreditation.

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