

Foundation Programme 2017 Undersubscription

Summary

At the close of the national application period at 5pm GMT on Friday 14 October 2016, the UKFPO had received **98** applications more than the number of programme preferences available (appendix 1).

Using withdrawal trends from previous recruitment rounds the UKFPO is predicting the Foundation Programme 2016 will be undersubscribed at the point of allocation in March 2017.

Current Position

Country	Posts		Applicants From		Variance	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
England	6,178	6,189	5,948	5,803	-230	-386
Northern Ireland	251	267	256	241	4	-26
Scotland	848	849	922	880	74	31
Wales	338	339	325	366	-13	27
Non-UK	N / A	N/A	407	452	0	0
National Total	7,615	7,644	7,858	7,742	243	98

*FP 2016 posts number depict the number of posts advertised in October 2015 and not the number of posts reported as being available at the commencement of the 2016 Foundation Programme.

The overall percentage of UK medical students applying to the UK Foundation Programme has reduced slightly from 94.8% to 94.1% this year.

The number of students nominated by UK medical schools decreased by 45 this year. Compared to last year the number of UK medical students that applied has reduced by 161.

The UKFPO Eligibility Office nominated an additional 25 non-UK applicants this year in comparison to 2016. The number of eligible non-UK applicants has increased by 45.

Withdrawals

Over the last four recruitment cycles, there has been an overall withdrawal rate of approximately 7% (appendix 2). When applying the 7% reduction to the FP 2017 oversubscription figure, the data suggests there will be sufficient withdrawals to accommodate all applicants, with 444 vacancies. Caution is indicated in interpreting this data as there is a considerable increase in the number of vacancies compared to 2015. In addition, the trend in vacancy forecast has further increased from 2016 and 2017.

	FP 2015	FP 2016	FP 2017
Total number of applicants	8,125	7,858	7,742
Total number of posts	7,621	7,615	7,644
More applicants than posts	504	243	98
Minus predicted 7% withdrawal rate	568	550	542
Estimated Vacant Posts	64	307	444

Primary List / Reserve List – Number of applicants expected in March 2017

Based on previous pre-primary list allocation withdrawal rates, the UKFPO predicts that 30% of the total number expected to withdraw will do so prior to the primary list allocation. In previous years, the number of applicants that withdraw prior to the primary list allocation is such that there has been a need to place unallocated applicants onto a reserve list. Previous reserve list numbers have ranged from 81 – 352.

The combination of applicant and programme numbers for 2017 indicates that the number of programme places available will exceed the number of applicants allocated to the primary list. The UKFPO predicts that there will be 65 unfilled places following the initial primary list allocation run in March 2017. Figures suggest that it is unlikely there will be a reserve list this year.

	FP 2016	FP 2017
More applicants than posts	243	98
Minus 30% pre allocation withdrawals	165	163
Number of applicants on reserve list	78	-65

In light of this information, there will be no reserve list batch allocations scheduled in 2017. By way of contingency, the UKFPO plan to allocate reserve list applicants immediately after the match to programme date in April should the need arise.

Mitigating Actions

In previous years each nation has managed vacancies that have arisen by the start of the programme locally. For 2017, the UKFPO will be running a UK-wide process to recruit fully registered doctors to the anticipated F1 vacancies.

Every year there is a significant cohort of applicants who are not eligible for the foundation programme as they hold full registration but are too inexperienced in either the NHS and / or clinical experience to apply for specialty training in the UK.

With effect from 2017, the UK Foundation Programme Office are looking to recruit doctors who hold or are eligible to apply for full registration with GMC to work in recognised training posts as part of the UK Foundation Programme.

In addition, the option of removing a proportion of posts across England has been considered. The decision has been taken to reduce post numbers by 63 in line with the current projection that there are likely to be 65 vacancies at the time of the national allocation. This is with a view to ensuring all applicants are placed during the primary list allocation based on previous withdrawal trends. The identification of posts to be removed across England has been determined based on weighted capitation. The greatest proportion will be removed from London / South East.

The devolved nations have confirmed there are no plans to remove posts from Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

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January 2017, Version 4

Appendix 1 – Number of Programmes

Foundation School / Unit of Application (UoA)	AFP Programmes (at 5pm on 14/10/2016)	FP Programmes (at 5pm on 14/10/2016)	Total Programmes (at 5pm on 14/10/2016)
East Anglia	36	261	285
EBH	14	307	319
LNR	12	153	167
Trent	24	306	342
North Central Thames	127	164	1,492
North East Thames		180	
North West London		221	
London and the South East		800	
North West of England	57	813	870
Northern	21	385	406
Northern Ireland	9	258	267
Oxford	24	219	243
Peninsula	25	189	479
Severn		265	
Scotland	60	789	849
Wales	21	318	339
Wessex	13	295	308
West Midlands Central	42	180	647
West Midlands North		257	
West Midlands South		168	
Yorkshire and Humber - NYEC	66	151	631
Yorkshire and Humber – SY		148	
Yorkshire and Humber – WY		266	
Total Programme Preferences	551	7,093	7,644

Appendix 2 – Number of Withdrawals

The table below shows the number of withdrawals from the point of application up until the start of the Foundation Programme. Withdrawal percentages are derived based on the number of applicants.

Year	Number withdrawn	% of applicants who applied
FP 2013	609	7.42%
FP 2014	548	6.87%
FP 2015	596	7.07%
FP 2016	543	6.91%