

NATIONAL TRANSFER OF INFORMATION

Process and guidance for medical
students, graduates, and Foundation
Programme applicants



Introduction

Medical education and training is a continuing process with a number of different phases, and is important that individuals are supported as they move from one phase to the next. The Transfer of Information (TOI) process is designed to help students make the transition from medical school to postgraduate training and employment. The TOI process is separate from employment processes and the GMC registration process. What you put in your TOI form has no bearing on which foundation school you are allocated to.

Quick guide to the TOI process

- The purpose of the TOI process is to support your transition to the Foundation Programme and employment.
- Every student or doctor applying for F1 must complete a TOI Form.
- The form covers three areas:
 - Health and Welfare
 - Educational Progress
 - Professional Performance
- The information you submit in the TOI form will be used by your foundation school to ensure that you get the right educational and pastoral support during your two-year programme and to see if you will require reasonable adjustments to complete the programme.
- If you are unsure what information to include in your TOI form, contact your medical school who will be able to help you.
- Information contained in the TOI form will be shared with your foundation school. Once the form is received, the foundation school director will consider if any reasonable adjustments should be made. Relevant information from the form may need to be shared with other colleagues (for example your educational supervisor and possibly the employing organisation¹) in order to ensure that the appropriate support is provided to you. Information contained in the form will only be shared with your employer and any relevant external organisations with your consent.
- If you declare any issues that relate directly to patient safety (for example if you have a blood borne virus) then it is likely that there will be direct contact between you and your receiving foundation school and employer before you start the Foundation Programme.

You are strongly advised to read the rest of this guidance to ensure that you understand the TOI process and are able to engage with it fully.

¹ Foundation doctors are both trainees and employees within the respective Trust, which has a right as an employer to access this information, if appropriate, but will have a legal obligation to protect the interests and welfare of its employees.

General Principles

Why is the process in place?

The TOI process has principally been developed to help you make a smooth transition from medical school to the Foundation Programme. Starting your first job in the NHS can be an overwhelming experience and your foundation school want to make the experience as easy as possible for you. In order to do this they need to know some important information about you to make sure you have the right support in place when you start.

Your medical school has the legal responsibility for your education and training until you are granted full registration by the General Medical Council (GMC). In practice medical schools delegate this responsibility to foundation schools but the TOI process enables them to ensure that foundation schools have the right information about you to enable them to provide you with appropriate support from day one.

Medical schools also have to work in line with the standards and outcomes set out by the GMC in *Tomorrow's Doctors*. Paragraph 121 of the document states that 'While it is essential that the outcomes are achieved by all graduates, medical schools should also make arrangements so that graduates' areas of relative weakness are fed into their Foundation Programme portfolios so they can be reviewed by the educational supervisor'. Therefore the TOI process is an essential way for medical schools to ensure that they meet the standards set by the GMC. This is also why your medical school has the final say as to the content of your form although if they wish to add additional information they should talk to you first.

Although taking part in the TOI process is important you should also be aware that you may need to provide information separately to other organisations. You will need to provide fitness to practise information to the GMC in order to gain provisional registration. If you have a health condition or disability that requires adjustments you may also have to provide information to your employer's HR or occupational health service.

Patient safety

The first consideration for all those that work in healthcare is the safety and well-being of the patients they care for. Therefore, if your form contains information that relates directly to patient safety, including serious professional performance concerns or health issues, then you should expect to have direct contact with your foundation school and employer before you start work.

Who has to undertake the TOI process?

Every student/doctor applying for the Foundation Programme must participate in the TOI process to ensure that appropriate support can be put in place, regardless of year and place of graduation.

For UK medical students the process will be managed by their graduating medical school.

For those applying to F1 who did not train at a UK medical school, and UK graduates who graduated prior to August 2012, the UKFPO Eligibility Office will supply you with a form which you should then complete. You will need to get your graduating medical school to endorse the content of the form.

The TOI process

UK medical schools will not wait until you have passed finals before they send your form to your foundation school. Foundation schools need time to make any adjustments you might require and therefore the information is shared as soon as is practical after F1 allocations take place.

The basic process for UK graduates is as follows:

1. February to March 2014 – your medical school will send you a TOI form to complete.
2. You complete the form and return it to your medical school.
3. Your medical school will then look at the information you have submitted and verify that it is correct.
 - Occasionally your medical school will want to add additional information to your TOI form to support you and meet their GMC standards Your school will meet with you to discuss what relevant information they wish to transfer and why.²
4. By 3 June 2014 – medical schools send your TOI form to your foundation school.
5. July/August 2014 – during your initial meeting with your educational supervisor and during the induction meeting with your clinical supervisor, you are expected to discuss the content of the TOI form.

Your form will be signed by a member of your medical school's staff who is able to verify that information contained in the form is correct. This may be your medical school dean or head of school but it may also be a member of the administrative or teaching staff.

Eligibility Office Applicants

If you are applying through the UKFPO Eligibility Office then you will be sent a TOI form which you must complete and get endorsed by your graduating medical school. Once you know which Foundation School you have been allocated to it is your responsibility to ensure that they receive your completed TOI form before 30th May 2014.

² Any information disclosed by the medical school should be relevant, lawful, non-discriminatory and in keeping with the TOI principles of identifying and supporting those students who may require additional support, monitoring or adjustments made to their foundation training. Transferring relevant information may help reduce the risk of encountering difficulties throughout the F1 year.

What to declare

The form is split into three sections:

1. Health and Welfare
2. Educational Progress
3. Professional Performance

You may not have anything to add in a particular section, but you should take care when completing the form to ensure that you don't miss anything that would be useful for your receiving foundation school to know.

Patient safety is the overriding principle that healthcare professionals must consider whenever they undertake any processes linked to their employment or the care of patients. Therefore, it is very important that you declare any issue that may impact on the safety of the patients that you will come into contact with once you are in the Foundation Programme.

Health and Welfare

In this section you should declare any health or welfare concerns that may have an impact on your ability to work as a foundation doctor. As an employee of the Trust (or equivalent) that you work in you have rights under the Equality Act 2010. In particular, employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees to ensure that they can continue to work. The question of what is reasonable is a legal one that ultimately is decided by tribunals and courts, but your receiving foundation school will want to work with your employer to ensure that any reasonable adjustments you require can be made.

In order to do this they will need to know what types of adjustments you will require so they can prepare a suitable placement for you. Remember, this will not impact upon which foundation school you have been allocated to. The adjustments you require may impact on the type of placements you are assigned to as there will be some working environments where it is easier to provide adjustments than others. For example, if you have a disability that impacts on your mobility your foundation school will take this into account by ensuring that your placement has lifts you can use or is not one where doctors have to walk long distances between wards.

The GMC and MSC have recently published guidance on supporting students with mental health concerns. This guidance provides helpful advice on handling the transition to the foundation programme. It should be noted that although the guidance focuses on mental health, it equally applies to those with a physical disability. The relevant extract from the guidance [Supporting medical students with mental health conditions](#) is available at Annex A of this guidance.

The TOI form asks for information about:

- Physical health conditions (including blood-borne viruses: hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV)
- Mental health conditions³
- Specific Learning difficulties (such as dyslexia)
- Any other personal circumstance that has affected your training

Some of examples of the type of information you should declare in this section include:

- If you have dyslexia and will require additional time to complete the written components of the e-portfolio or require coloured films for computer screens to enable you to use your employer's IT systems.
- If you are a wheelchair user or have a condition that impacts on your mobility you should declare this so that your foundation school can work with your employer to ensure you are placed in an accessible site.
- If you have a mental health condition and require additional support, or you have a history of a mental health condition but are currently well, you should declare this so that this support can be made available to you if needed.
- If you have a mental health condition and require time off to attend regular therapeutic appointments such as counselling you should declare this so your foundation school can ensure that you are placed in a position where this can be facilitated.

Educational Progress

In this section you need to add information regarding any additional educational support (if any) that your medical school provided during your training. You should reflect on what parts of the undergraduate course you found more difficult – this might be a practical procedure such as cannulation or an assessment method such as OSCEs. Your foundation school needs to know this so they can make sure your personal development plan reflects your educational needs and that you are supported to carry out any identified procedures until you feel more confident.

When you graduate from medical school your school has determined that you are competent to start F1. This section does not question this competence; it merely reflects that students will have areas which they have not had as much practice in as others. For example, you will have been assessed on a range of practical procedures and passed, but you may not have had a chance to undertake many of them on patients. If after an honest appraisal of your skills and confidence you feel that when you start work as a doctor you may need additional support from your employer in carrying out certain practical procedures, you should include this in the form and identify type of procedure and why

³ For a definition of the types of mental health conditions you may wish to declare, please refer to 18 to 20 of the MSC and GMC guidance [Supporting medical students with mental health conditions](#).

you feel you need additional support.

Some examples of the types of things you may want to declare include:

- If you have struggled with a particular form of assessment method such as OSCEs.
- If you have undertaken a practical procedure many times on a manikin, but have not carried it out on a patient.
- If you do not feel confident carrying out a procedure such as cannulation as you found it a difficult skill to learn and you have not been able to practice carrying it out on your last clinical placement before graduation.

Please note that if you do not pass the Prescribing Safety Assessment, this will not affect your offer of employment.

Professional Performance

This section is about your performance as a professional whilst you have been at medical school. Medical students are expected to behave professionally in preparation for future practice as a doctor.

Medical schools monitor professionalism and must not graduate students they believe are not fit to practise. However, in most cases unprofessional behaviour resulting in a warning or sanction is not serious enough to prevent the student from graduating. In these instances it is important that the receiving foundation school knows about issues related to a graduate's professionalism which have been considered by the graduating medical school. This is important to ensure that:

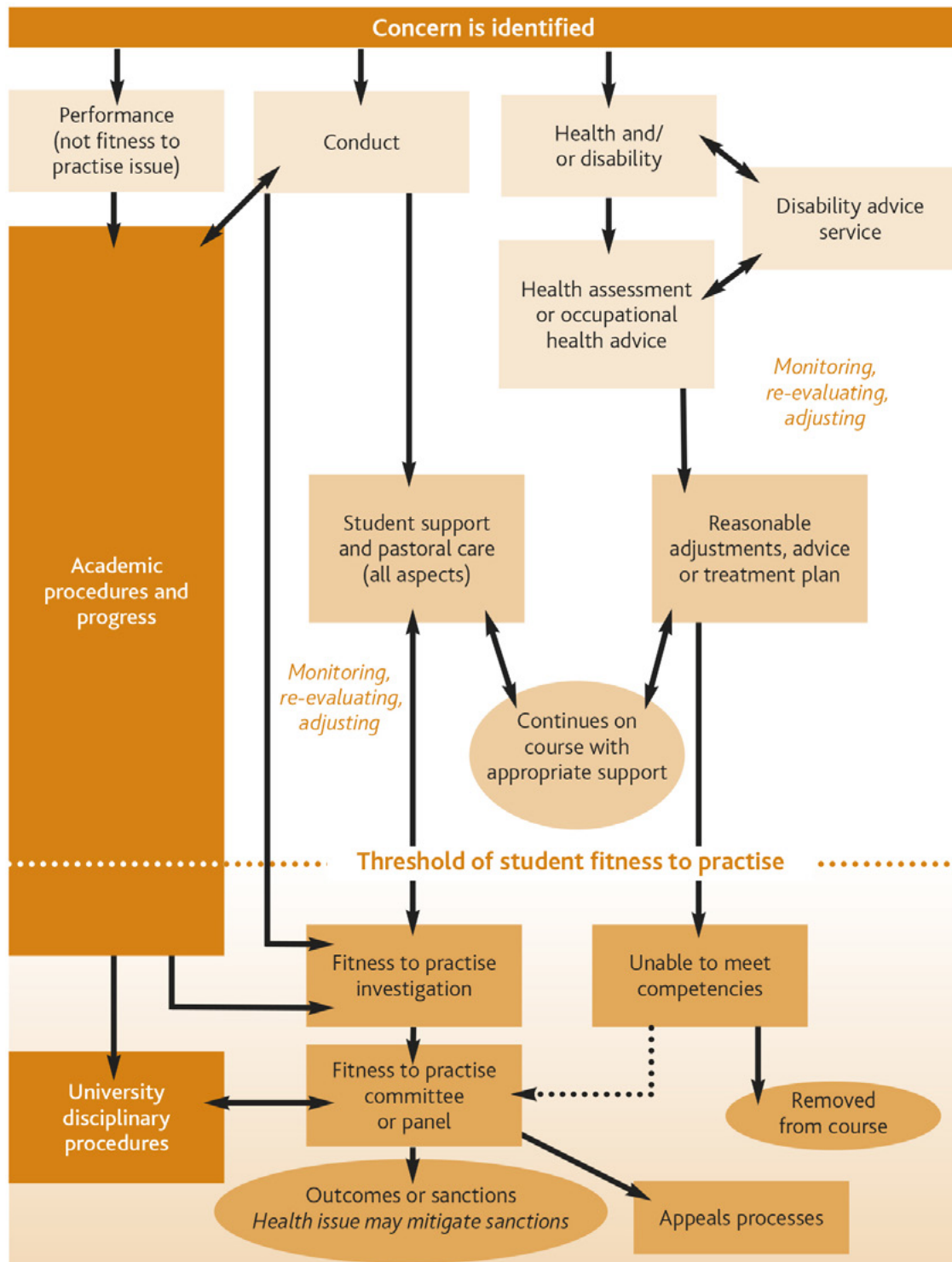
- Your foundation school can place you in an environment which provides additional support in relation to professionalism if necessary.
- You can be provided with additional educational opportunities to support your learning about (and your acquisition of) professional values during F1.
- Behaviours observed in F1 can be considered in the context of your professionalism history. This may reveal behaviours to be part of a pattern which would not otherwise be apparent, or may allay concerns about observed behaviours which may have been investigated and explained during your time at medical school.
- Patient safety is not affected; it is important that you are monitored during your F1 year to ensure that you understand the impact unprofessional behaviour can have on patients and colleagues, including other F1 trainees, with whom you work.

In this section you are asked to include formal outcomes received from your medical school in relation to any investigation into your professionalism or fitness to practise.

It might help you to consider the threshold for fitness to practise which is shown on page 51 of the GMC and MSC joint publication [Medical students: professional values and fitness to practise](#) and included below for your reference. You should declare if you were subject

to investigation that goes beyond the threshold below:
 In this section you are asked to declare the results of any investigation you have been

Decision making chart for medical students



subject to that resulted in you being given a written warning or a sanction. Examples of the type of outcome you should include in the form are:

- Written warnings
- Being given set conditions that you must comply with in order to stay on the course.
- Temporary suspension from the course

You are not expected to declare verbal warnings.

In this section you should not declare anything that relates solely to your health. This should be reported in the relevant Health and Welfare section of the form.

As a guide, here are some examples of the types of things that you should declare in this section of the form:

- You received a caution for public disorder and you declared this to your medical school who held a fitness to practise investigation. You were warned by your medical school not to behave in a way that might lead to a caution from the police. Your foundation school would pass this information on to your educational supervisor who would provide you with support and guidance to help make sure you continued to understand the importance of not having criminal action taken against you.
- During your time at medical school you handed in a number of assignments after the deadline for their completion. You were given a formal, written warning about handing work in late. Your educational supervisor would receive this information and as well as monitoring that you complete F1 assignments on time, they will also provide you with time management support.
- You received a suspension for turning up late to and missing completely several clinical placements. When you returned to the course your attendance was closely monitored by your medical school. You should declare this in your TOI form as this monitoring will need to continue in F1 – being late for work or being absent without a good reason can have a negative impact on both patients and colleagues. Your educational supervisor will also provide you with support to make sure that you understand how your actions impact on others.

Who receives a copy of the TOI form?

Your TOI form is sent to your Foundation School Director (FSD). They will consider who in their view needs to receive the information contained in the form, bearing in mind the principle that it should be shared only with those who have a real need to be informed to protect the welfare of staff, trainees and patients and should be stored and handled in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

The FSD will pass the form on to your Foundation Programme Director (FPD) who

looks after foundation training in your allocated Trust. They in turn may feel that your educational supervisor, who is responsible for educational development and progress, needs to see the contents of the form.

In some cases, the information may need to be shared with the Medical Staffing or Occupational Health department at your allocated Trust as they have legal duties that the information will help them to fulfil. For example, they have a legal duty to consider making reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. This will only be done with your consent.

What happens to the TOI form once you start F1?

Medical schools, foundation schools and employers are bound by the Data Protection Act and therefore they must store personal information about you in a secure way. They must also take steps to ensure that your information is not used for any other purpose other than the one which it was intended for.

There are also rules about how long information can be stored by organisations. Therefore, all copies of your TOI form will be destroyed once you complete the Foundation programme.

Annex A

GMC and MSC guidance: Supporting students with mental health conditions, 2013

Paragraphs 111 to 115

111: The transition from medical school to foundation training is crucial for all new doctors. For those who have had mental health conditions, it can be particularly important. Medical schools can provide a supportive environment for students that they might not get in postgraduate training. However, any potential risk to the student can be reduced if the transition is properly planned.

112: Medical schools should encourage students to be very open with their foundation school in their transfer of information (TOI) form. The student does not have to declare specific details about their condition on the form, but they should give the foundation school a realistic view of the support they will need. If a student does declare a mental health condition as part of the TOI process, then they should be made aware that only authorised foundation school staff members and the HR department of their employer will be able to access this information.

113: Medical schools should meet with students who have a mental health condition that could affect the location or delivery of the Foundation Programme. In this meeting, the medical school should:

- discuss the student's needs
- support the student to complete their TOI form.

114: If a student's needs could affect a decision about the location of their Foundation Programme, the medical school should also give advice on applying through the special circumstances process. Forms and guidance for the TOI and the special circumstances processes are reviewed every year and are available at: www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk.

115: Completing the TOI form will help make sure doctors get the support they need – for example, foundation doctors with a disability will be given placements where the adjustments they need can be made. It is very important that you provide notice of any adjustments you may require so your trust and foundation school can work together to ensure that your transition to the work place is as smooth as possible.