

UK Foundation Programme

Guidance for applicants on the process of applying for pre-allocation to Foundation School on the grounds of Special Circumstances

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General Principles

- 1.1 If you need to be in a geographical area for specific caring or health reasons to undertake your Foundation Programme training, **you can apply to the UKFPO to be considered for pre-allocation to a specific foundation school** on the grounds of special circumstances. The process and application forms can be found on the UKFPO website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>. You can only apply for special circumstances based purely on **your current situation**.
- 1.2 If you believe that you meet one or more of the criteria, you are strongly advised to discuss your circumstances with your medical school before completing the national special circumstances form. The purpose of this discussion would be to help you be realistic in your plans and clarify exactly what evidence you are required to provide to allow an informed decision to be made.
- 1.3 If you are applying for special circumstances at a particular foundation school, **you must rank this foundation school first in your preferences** during your application to the Foundation Programme. Failure to do so will result in your special circumstances application not being considered.
- 1.4 Approval of a special circumstances application does not guarantee you a specific rotational programme within your pre-allocated foundation school.
- 1.5 All applicants must adhere to the rules of the national application process. This means that if you apply or are approved for pre-allocation on the grounds of your special circumstances, you must still complete and submit an application form. You must also sit the Situational Judgement Test (SJT) and will be required to achieve an application score that is high enough to meet the national allocation criteria. This score may also be used for matching you to a specific programme.
- 1.6 If you are pre-allocated to a foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances you are not allowed to link your application to another individual in the application process.
- 1.7 If you are approved for pre-allocation to a specific school on the grounds of special circumstances, you can only apply for an Academic Foundation Programme (AFP) in an Academic Unit of Application (AUoA) that covers that specific foundation school. However, you will not be able to use special circumstances for pre-allocation to an AUoA.
- 1.8 If your special circumstances application is approved, you will be pre-allocated to a specific foundation school for your foundation programme training, provided that your applicant score is sufficient to meet the national allocation criteria.

If the Foundation Programme is oversubscribed, pre-allocation to a specific foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances is only guaranteed if you score highly enough to make the primary list. If you are placed on the reserve list, you can only be allocated to your specified foundation school if that school has vacancies available on the date that your batch is allocated.

Please note: if you graduated on or prior to 5th August 2018, or you are not a graduate from a UK medical school, the process will be the same. The UKFPO will undertake the role of medical school in these circumstances.

The Criteria

To be considered for pre-allocation to a foundation school on the grounds of special circumstances, you must meet one of the following criteria.

2.1 Criterion 1: You are a parent or legal guardian of a child or children under the age of 18, who reside primarily with you or form whom you have significant caring responsibilities.

- 2.1.1 If your sole criterion is that you (or your partner) are currently pregnant, you will not be regarded as eligible for pre-allocation on the grounds of special circumstances under this criterion. Please refer to our Inter-Foundation School Transfer (IFST) policy for further guidance via the UKFPO website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>.
- 2.1.2 It is expected that you and your child(ren) in this category will remain at your current address and application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address. This will be verified by your Medical School Administrator.
- 2.1.3 If you and the child(ren) do not normally reside together, this should be referred to on the application form, and information supplied as to why the caring responsibilities remain equally significant.
- 2.1.4 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
 - copy of birth certificate(s) of the child(ren).
 - for legal guardians, a copy of the legal document that confirms your status for the child named in the birth certificate.
 - statement confirming that you have significant caring responsibilities for the child(ren) from an appropriate professional who you would normally have known for at least six months.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.2 Criterion 2: You are the primary carer for someone who is disabled (as defined by the Equality Act 2010).

Definition of 'disability' under the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of the Act: -

- substantial means more than minor or trivial.
- long-term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months.
- normal day-to-day activities include things like eating, washing, walking and going shopping.

Some conditions, such as addictions to non-prescribed substances, are specifically excluded.

People who have had a disability in the past that meet this definition are also covered by the scope of the Act.

There are additional provisions relating to people with progressive conditions. People with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis. People with visual impairments are automatically deemed to be disabled.

- 2.2.1 For you to meet this criterion, you must be the primary carer for this person, who would normally be your partner, sibling or parent.
- 2.2.2 If the person you are caring for is not your partner, sibling or parent, you will have to explain clearly and present a strong case as to why and how you have the role of primary carer for this person.
- 2.2.3 If you provide care for a person as part of a group of carers, e.g. a family, you are not eligible to apply under this criterion.
- 2.2.4 It is expected that you and the person who you care for in this category will remain at your current address(es), and the application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address. If this is not the case, relevant evidence must be supplied as to why follow up arrangements could not continue as present.
- 2.2.5 You will be required to complete a care plan to demonstrate how you will combine the responsibilities of a foundation doctor and primary carer, and that you have fully considered local support and resources.

You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -

- statement from GP/Social Services professional that you have known for normally at least six months confirming your role as primary carer for this person.
- care plan.
- proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.3 **Criterion 3: The applicant has a medical condition or disability for which ongoing follow up for the condition in the specified location is an absolute requirement.**

- 2.3.1 As you already have this medical condition, it is expected that you will remain at your current address, and application for pre-allocation will be to the foundation school local to that address.
- 2.3.2 If the request for pre-allocation is not for the foundation school local to your current address, relevant evidence must be supplied as to why follow up arrangements could not continue as present.
- 2.3.3 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -

A report, by the current medical specialist treating your condition or Occupational Health physician, in which they will be required to: -

- describe the current medical condition or disability.
- describe the nature of the ongoing treatment and frequency.
- explain why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than by other treatment centres in the UK.
- proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

2.4 Criterion 4: Unique Circumstances

- 2.4.1 If you consider that there are particular unique circumstances that require you to be in a particular environment whilst you undertake your Foundation Programme, you can apply for special circumstances under this criterion.
- 2.4.2 You must provide evidence with regard to these circumstances including the reasons for placement in a particular location from a professional individual who has recognised standing to support the application.
- 2.4.3 You will be required to supply the following supporting evidence: -
- Statement by a professional that: -
- describes the current unique situation.
 - explains why the follow up must be delivered in a specific location rather than another location in the UK.
 - proof of current address, e.g. driving licence, utility bill dated within the last three months or council tax bill dated within the last twelve months.

Process for Submission and Consideration of Applications

- 3.1 You must send your completed application by post, rather than email, because of the requirement for signed, supporting documentation. All applications must be sent to the following address by midday on Friday 11th October 2019:

UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO)
1st Floor, East Wing
St. Chad's Court
213 Hagley Road
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B16 9RG

- 3.2 If you are on elective at the time when applications must be submitted, you may make arrangements with the UKFPO to send your application form by email, and your supporting documents separately.
- 3.3 If you qualified on or before 5th August 2018, or if you are not a graduate from a UK medical school, the UKFPO will act as your medical school and you will be able to access similar support and information from the website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>.
- 3.4 You cannot submit further documentation at a later date unless there are exceptional circumstances and you have arranged with your medical school to do so.
- 3.5 All applications for pre-allocation on the grounds of special circumstances will be considered by a panel that consists of medical and foundation school representatives.
- 3.6 After considering your application, the panel will notify you of the outcome, in line with the national timeline.
- 3.7 If your application is approved, a copy of your application form and supporting documentation will be forwarded to the foundation school where you will be provisionally pre-allocated.

- 3.8 If the panel does not approve your application, you will be notified of the reason(s) why. The panel will advise you of the appeals process and the date by which an appeal must be submitted.
- 3.9 Please be advised that the considerations panel may contact you or the professionals in support of your application for further information.
- 3.10 You are advised to check your application thoroughly before sending it in for submission and consideration by the panel. All the information provided on your application must be correct with all the relevant boxes ticked (please refer to the application completion checklist). Incomplete and/or incorrect applications will be rejected from the process.

Appeals Process

- 4.1 There are two stages to the appeals process.
 - I. Applicants will be given the opportunity to correct any mistakes and / or provide any additional information which they omitted to include as part of their original application. There will be a 72-hour window for applicants to correct or submit additional information following the notification of application outcomes.
 - II. Appeals will be considered by the national appeals panel on the grounds that the process was not applied with appropriate diligence or due care, or that the decision was made in a prejudicial way. Applicants may appeal in relation to the how the process has been followed regardless of whether they amended or submitted new information during the first stage of this appeals process.
- 4.2 If you wish to appeal, you must lodge your appeal form directly with the UKFPO by the date indicated in the national timeline depending on the nature of your appeal, i.e. stage one and / or stage two of the appeals process, which can be found via the website <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>
- 4.3 The national appeals panel will consider your appeal and inform you of its decision. The decision of the national appeals panel is final, and no further correspondence will be entered into.

General Information

If your circumstances change after the closing date for submission of applications for pre-allocation on the grounds of special circumstances, you cannot apply for special circumstances. You are advised to contact the Foundation School Director (FSD) of the school you have been allocated to when you allocation results are released to discuss your options. An application to change your allocated foundation school at this stage will now be treated as an inter-foundation school transfer (IFST), for which there is a separate process. Details are available on the UKFPO website: -

<http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/>

APPENDIX A

National Timeline: Special Circumstances – August 2020 Entry

11 th October 2019 (12:00 BST)	Deadline for submission of special circumstances applications to the UKFPO.
14 th October – 7 th November 2019	National review panel will meet to consider applications.
By 4 th November 2019	Panels notify applicants and the receiving foundation school of panel decision and forward relevant documents.
4 th – 7 th November 2019	First stage of the appeals process: 72-hour window for applicants to correct any errors or provide additional information that was omitted from their initial special circumstances application.
7 th November 2019	Deadline for appeals submission.
14 th November 2019	Outcomes from the first stage of appeals released to applicants.
14 th – 25 th November 2019	Second stage special circumstances national appeals submission period.
28 th November 2019	Appeals panel meet to consider special circumstances appeals.
2 nd December 2019	National appeals panel notifies applicants of its decisions on appeals.
5 th March 2020	All applicants on the primary list will be notified of their allocation.