

2021 UK Foundation Programme (FP)

UKFP Application Statement

Summary

At the close of the national application period at 12:00 on Wednesday 4th November 2020, the UK Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) had received **594** applications more than the number places available (please see appendices 1 – 3 for details of programme places and applications by foundation schools).

The withdrawal trend from previous application cycles has been consistent at a rate of approximately 7% since 2012-13 (for the allocation to FP 2013). This paper provides an anticipated vacancy forecast based on this historical trend. From the number of indicative programme places and the numbers of applications received this year, it is predicted that the 2021 UK Foundation Programme will be oversubscribed.

Current Position

Country	Indicative Posts				Number of Applicants from Each Nation and Eligibility Office*				Variance (number of applications minus the number of posts)			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021	2018	2019	2020	2021
England	6,111	6,122	6,143	6,099	5,865	5,955	5,925	5,922	-246	167	-218	-177
Northern Ireland	252	253	253	251	255	260	252	269	3	-7	-1	18
Scotland	849	849	849	903	818	853	839	880	-31	-4	-10	-23
Wales	339	339	368	377	339	353	378	363	0	-14	10	-14
Eligibility Office	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	582	695	568	790	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Total	7,551	7,563	7,613	7,630	7,859	8,116	7,962	8,224	308	553	349	594

*Eligibility Office includes overseas graduates and UK medical school graduates who qualified more than two years prior to the start of the programme.

UK Medical School Nominations and Applications

At the time of the close of the application window, a total of 7,580 students/graduates had been nominated by UK medical schools, 7,434 (98.07%) of whom submitted an FP application.

The overall percentage of UK medical students applying to the UK Foundation Programme decreased from 94.8% for 2015, to 94.1% for 2016, and then to 92.58% for 2017. However, the percentage of UK nominees who submitted applications increased in 2018 to 97.26% and 97.54% in 2019. The percentage of nominees who applied for 2020 decreased slightly for 2020, with 97.37% of students choosing to submit an application for FP. The percentage has increased again this year to the highest rate of UK nominees choosing to apply.

Eligibility Office Applications

The overall number of applicants who applied through eligibility increased considerably for 2021, with a total of 1,510 applicants applying this year compared to 909 in 2020. It is thought that the increase in applications might be due to the recent changes in immigration law in October 2019. All medical specialties are now included on the shortage occupation list. A total of 934 applicants who applied through the eligibility process were eligible to apply this year, 790 (84.58%) of whom have subsequently applied for FP.

Withdrawals

Over previous recruitment cycles, there has been an overall withdrawal rate of approximately 7%. When applying the 7% reduction to the UKFP 2020 oversubscription figure, the data suggests there will be an insufficient number of withdrawals to accommodate all applicants, with **19** applicants still to be allocated at the start of the programme.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total number of applicants	8,125	7,858	7,742	7,860	8,116	7,962	8,224
Total number of posts	7,621	7,615	7,644	7,551	7,563	7,613	7,630
More applicants than posts	504	243	98	308	553	349	594
Minus predicted 7% withdrawal rate	568	550	542	550	568	557	575
Estimated Vacant Posts	64	307	444	242	15	208	+19*

**Estimated position of oversubscription*

It is possible that due to circumstances pertaining to the pandemic, that the rate of withdrawals may vary considerably. There will also be a small cohort of applicants who will have deferred an entire year from 2020.

Primary List / Reserve List – Number of applicants expected in March 2021

Based on previous pre-primary list allocation withdrawal rates, it is predicted 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 has resulted in unallocated applicants being placed onto a reserve list. Previous reserve list numbers have ranged from 25 – 425. The combination of applicant and programme numbers for 2020 indicates that the number of applicants will exceed the number of places available at the time of the primary list allocation. The figures suggest that 422 applicants will be placed on the reserve list following the allocation to foundation schools in March 2020.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
More applicants than posts	243	98	308	553	349	594
Minus 30% pre-allocation withdrawals	165	163	165	170	167	172
Number of applicants on reserve list	78	-65	143	383	182	422

The UKFPO will allocate reserve list applicants as soon as vacancies arise due to applicant withdrawals.