



The University of Manchester

The University of Manchester

International Foundation Programme

Student Handbook

*Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health
Division of Medical Education*

2023/24

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome to the School of Medical Sciences and the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health

Welcome to the International Foundation Programme (IFP) for Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy in the School of Medical Sciences within the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health at the University of Manchester. The University has a worldwide reputation based on high quality teaching and research, and I am sure that your programme will provide a solid foundation for your future career success.

Within the School and the wider Faculty, our goal is to create an environment that allows you to excel and reach your full potential. Offering access to first-class facilities our programmes are designed to meet the diverse needs of all our students. The curriculum of our programmes provides the knowledge and skills you will need in your subject area.

As a student of the School of Medical Sciences, you will be expected to take responsibility for your learning, within a supportive environment that fosters your development and helps prepare you for your future studies. This handbook will be a useful resource as you progress through your programme. It provides programme-specific information that I am sure you will find helpful throughout your study. If however, you have questions or would like some further advice, please do not hesitate to contact the people listed in this handbook for further information and assistance.

Dr Helen Jopling
Director of Education

The International Foundation Programme

It is a pleasure to welcome you onto the International Foundation Programme, where our aim is to prepare you for studying on the Manchester MB ChB, BDS and Pharmacy programmes. In this programme we use progressive educational methods to improve your application of basic scientific knowledge to clinical practice and encourage you to understand the need for continuous learning throughout your careers.

The IFP uses a mix of didactic teaching and enquiry-based learning (EBL). The programme is delivered with the help of Xaverian College, a long-standing partner of the University of Manchester and they provide most of the content in biomedical sciences and chemistry. Xaverian College has an enviable record of excellence in this field and we are very happy to be working with them. In the University we use EBL to enable you to apply the knowledge gained at Xaverian College to short clinical scenarios or cases. This combination of teaching methods is excellent preparation for your potential entry to the BDS, MB ChB and MPharm programmes.

The course is there to be enjoyed. If you work steadily towards your goal of entering a medical, dental or pharmacy degree programme, you will enjoy it and succeed.

Prof Elizabeth J Cartwright and Dr Hazel England
IFP Programme Director and Course Lead

Points of Contact

If you have any queries or concerns at any time during your period of study in Manchester, there is a range of people you can approach.

Course Lead

Dr Hazel England

hazel.england@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Administrators

sms.programmes-ugmedicine@manchester.ac.uk

Programme Director

Prof Elizabeth (Elly) Cartwright

Elizabeth.J.Cartwright@manchester.ac.uk

The Student Charter

Our [Student Charter](#), developed jointly by the University and the Student's Union, is an important part of how we establish and maintain clear mutual expectations for the experience of all students. It sets out what we can expect from each other as partners in a learning community.

Health and Safety

Before you visit the University campus, please take time to read the University's [Health and Safety Policy](#).

Communication

Please note that Blackboard, the University e-learning platform and your allocated student university email address will be used as official communication by University staff. It is your responsibility to ensure that you can access and read emails from this source. Please ensure that you check your University email address regularly.

Students are required to keep the University informed of any change to their personal circumstances such as change of name or address. Changes can be recorded by the student via their own personal online record. You must update your details by logging into MyManchester at: <http://www.mymanchester.ac.uk/>

2. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

Programme Specification and Course Unit Specifications

Programme specification and course unit specifications can be viewed in your Blackboard Programme Community Space via - <https://my.manchester.ac.uk/>

3. TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Assessment Information for your Programme

Please refer to your Blackboard unit spaces for more information regarding coursework and assessment, including submission deadlines: <https://my.manchester.ac.uk/>

Regulations Governing Examinations and Assessment for the International Foundation Programme

General

In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires,

- the term *Faculty* means the Committee in the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health which has been duly authorized by Senate from time to time to exercise such discretions as are ascribed to it by these Regulations.
- *approved*, *designated*, *permitted* and *prescribed* mean respectively approved, designated, permitted and prescribed by the Faculty.
- a requirement to attend satisfactorily any course includes a requirement of satisfactory performance in any practical work that may be prescribed.

Candidates are required to enter upon a period of study part in the University of Manchester and part in Xaverian College, Manchester, that

- shall normally extend over one academic year
- shall be uninterrupted, except with the special permission of the Faculty but shall not normally exceed one year from the date of entry
- may be extended, by special permission of the Faculty.

Notes

- The approved courses of study leading to the examination for the International Foundation Programme under these regulations in any academic session will be determined annually by the School of Medical Sciences.
- The form of each examination under these regulations, including the grouping together of subjects in the papers and the scope, number and duration of the papers to be set, in any academic session will be determined annually the School of Medical Sciences.
- In the examination for the International Foundation Programme the examiners shall have regard to the record of the work of candidates during the whole of the programme so far completed.
- Candidates whose attendance of the compulsory elements of the programme is less than 80% may be refused permission to sit the prescribed examinations.
- A candidate who has not satisfied the examiners in any prescribed International Foundation Programme examination, or in any part thereof at their second

opportunity shall not thereafter be admitted to courses and examinations in the International Foundation Programme except by permission of the Senate. **NB:** An *opportunity* shall be interpreted as *an occasion on which the examination is held*.

- Candidates who are permitted either by these regulations or by special permission of the Faculty to present themselves again for a prescribed examination or any part thereof may be required before doing so to satisfy the examiners that they have satisfactorily attended such revision courses of study as may be prescribed.

International Foundation Programme Examinations

Before potential admitted to the International Foundation Programme examinations candidates must have demonstrated satisfactory attendance on the IFP modules at the University of Manchester and at Xaverian College.

The subjects examined will be:

- Chemistry
- Biomedical Sciences
- Skills report
- Literature review

The examinations shall normally be held at the end of the first and second semesters (January and May respectively) with a single resit examination opportunity in July at the end of the International Foundation Programme year.

Please contact the foundation programme team if you do not receive the details of the dates, times and details of examinations.

Turnitin and Plagiarism

Plagiarism and Other Forms of Academic Malpractice

Academic malpractice is any activity - intentional or otherwise - that is likely to undermine the integrity essential to scholarship and research. It includes plagiarism, collusion, fabrication or falsification of results, and anything else that could result in unearned or undeserved credit for those committing it. Academic malpractice can result from a deliberate act of cheating or may be committed unintentionally. Whether intended or not, all incidents of academic malpractice will be treated seriously by the University.

The Faculty of Biology Medicine and Health have designed a learning module to raise your awareness of academic malpractice and how it can occur in general writing during your studies. This resource can be accessed via Blackboard - SMS Introductory Course and must be completed before you submit your first piece of academic writing for assessment.

The University provides workshops and online training via [My Learning Essentials](#)
Please refer to the University of Manchester [guidance to students on plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice](#)

The full guidance document can be viewed here

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=2870>

Academic Malpractice: Procedure for the Handling of Cases can be found at:

<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=639>

Turnitin

The University uses electronic systems for the purposes of detecting plagiarism and other forms of academic malpractice and for marking. Such systems include TurnitinUK, the plagiarism detection service used by the University.

As part of the formative and/or summative assessment process, you may be asked to submit electronic versions of your work to TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems used by the University (this requirement may be in addition to a requirement to submit a paper copy of your work). If you are asked to do this, you must do so within the required timescales.

The School also reserves the right to submit work handed in by you for formative or summative assessment to TurnitinUK and/or other electronic systems used by the University.

Please note that when work is submitted to the relevant electronic systems, it may be copied and then stored in a database to allow appropriate checks to be made.

Mitigating Circumstances and Short Extensions to coursework

Short Extensions to Coursework

If personal circumstances affect a student's ability to submit an assessment (not including exams or presentations), they are eligible to request a short extension (up to 2 weeks) to their submission date (on top of any DASS automatic extension they may be entitled to).

Reasons may include (but not limited to)

- Short term illness or injury
- Acute stress from personal or financial issues

All requests for a short extension to a submission date must be approved by the Programme Director (PD) and while the request is being processed, the submission due date remains unchanged.

Requests for short extensions must be received at least 5 days before the submission due date. If your request is being made less than 5 days before the published submission date, you should complete a Mitigating Circumstances request – see below.

Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are personal or medical circumstances which are unforeseeable and unpreventable that could have a significant adverse effect on your academic performance. You should only submit a mitigating circumstances application if you consider it serious enough, and the timing critical, to have affected your performance in your assessed work and examinations.

Request for mitigation must be submitted using the form: <https://www.onemedforms.manchester.ac.uk/ui/forms/8333> in advance of your assessment submission deadline or exam. Requests for mitigation submitted after the assessment or exam (except those requests made as a result of circumstances that have arisen during the course of that assessment period) will not be considered without a credible and compelling explanation as to why the circumstances were not known before the beginning of the assessment period or why you were unable to complete or submit an application prior to the assessment or exam. Please note that not informing the University of circumstances due to

personal feelings of embarrassment and pride, or having concerns over the confidential treatment of requests for mitigation, are not considered to be credible and compelling explanations

All mitigating circumstances applications must be supported by independent third party evidence. The type of evidence required will vary according to the nature of the circumstances. Examples of evidence include a doctor or other health professional's letter, counsellor's letter, self-certification form signed by your GP or GP's Medical Practice (for illnesses of 7 days and under only). Please note that it is a University policy that the self-certification form must be signed by a GP; we cannot accept forms which have not been signed by a GP. Please note that if evidence has not been received within 2 weeks of the submission of your form, and you have not contacted them to inform them of any delay, your application will be refused and no further action will be taken.

Any requests for mitigation will be considered confidentially by a mitigating circumstances panel or sub-panel. Where a request for mitigation is supported, a recommendation will be made to the exam board for them to decide on the best course of action for the student.

You are advised to consult the following guidance, which directs you to seek advice and support before and whilst submitting a request for mitigation. [A Basic Guide to Mitigating Circumstances](#)

For further information about the process and acceptable grounds for mitigation see: Mitigating Circumstances Policy & Procedures
<http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/DocuInfo.aspx?DocID=4271>

Work and Attendance Regulations

If you have not fulfilled the work and attendance regulations prescribed for your programme of study (see details below) you may not be allowed to sit University Examinations.

- **Failing to arrive for an examination or other time-tabled assessment:** If you fail to present yourself at the right time and place for any assessment or examination for reasons other than illness or other justifiable cause you will be deemed to have failed that assessment or examination. Misreading of the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation for absence.
- **Failing to submit coursework by the required date:** If you fail to submit coursework by the required date you will be given zero marks. If you have been ill or have not been able to give full attention to your studies because of justifiable cause you may ask for an extension – see section *Mitigating Circumstances and Short Extensions to coursework*

These rules will be rigorously enforced and you will very quickly lose marks if you do not hand in work on time or do not attend in-class tests.

Work and Attendance for International Foundation Programme

You are required to attend the Programme during the semester dates published. You are expected to take full advantage of all available teaching and learning opportunities; you must be prepared for changes to your published timetable. **We expect you to attend all timetabled sessions (and stay for the entire session).** You should also be prepared to attend meetings

with members of staff, when required, sometimes at short notice. As such, **it is important to keep the University up to date with your contact details, and to check your University timetable and email account daily.**

Whilst full attendance at all teaching and learning opportunities (100%) is expected, the Programme recognises that 100% attendance is not always possible and has placed an **absolute minimum attendance of 80%** for each component of the programme. Therefore, your attendance on the Programme is carefully monitored. Poor attendance (less than 80% per semester) may affect your progress through the programme. This includes absences due to Religious festivals and illness.

Attendance is compulsory in all timetabled events. A record of attendance will be kept for all of the following timetabled sessions:

- EBL sessions
- Face to face and online lectures
- Lab skills sessions
- Academic language skills sessions
- Xaverian College classes
- Meetings with tutors and academic advisors

If you are prevented from attending any of these sessions you **must immediately report your absence to the course administrators** (sms.programmes-ugmedicine@manchester.ac.uk), and your EBL tutor.

Both full attendance and punctuality are core professional skills. Late arrival to teaching is recorded as non-attendance. You may be prevented from entering the session, usually due to health and safety reasons. Persistent lateness can reflect an underlying unprofessional attitude and can impede your progress on the MB ChB, BDS or MPharm Programmes or may result in disciplinary action.

If your attendance is of concern, the Programme has a duty to discuss this with you. **If you fail to attend 12 sessions of any component of the course, you will receive an email reminder of the Programme's expectations.** If there is no improvement in attendance you will be asked to attend a formal meeting with the Course Director to explore the reason for your absence and discuss and agree any support the School can offer to enable you to improve your attendance.

If your attendance falls below the requirements for any given component then you will be given formal notice that you must discontinue your studies and are not permitted to sit the examinations. As a result of this, you may then be required to return to repeat a component or the entirety of the year or be excluded from the Programme.

If you have to discontinue your studies as a result of this, you have the right to submit an academic appeal against that decision within ten working days of notification of the decision. Should you be successful in your appeal, you will be permitted to re-start the component and/or take the examination at the next available opportunity.

You must keep a record of your own attendance – if your absences all occur within a short space of time, there may not be the opportunity to receive a warning; it is your responsibility to ensure your attendance remains above the minimum requirement for each component, including all timetabled teaching sessions.

Notes: 1) *If your studies are discontinued because of a failure to comply with specified attendance requirements, the Progression Committee will consider the reasons given for non-attendance when deciding whether assessments should be taken at first or second attempt in the repeat year.*

2) *If you are repeating a year because of failure to comply with specified attendance requirements, then failure to meet the attendance requirements in your repeat year (in the absence of accepted mitigating circumstances) will result in your exclusion from the Programme.*

Religious Observance and Festivals

Please refer to the [University Policy](#) on Religious Observance.

Places of worship for religious observance for the major world religions are located around the campus and Oxford Road corridor. The independent Chaplaincy Service offers pastoral and spiritual support for all students and staff, regardless of faith, and has links with all the world religions. Please see: <http://multifaithchaplaincy.org> where you can get in touch with the Chaplains and see where the prayer rooms are. Please note that there is a prayer room in the Stopford Building (see: [Quick Guide to Stopford Building](#))

Regular Daily or Weekly Religious Observance. The School of Medical Sciences expects students to attend all components of the course and cannot normally accommodate changes to individual timetables to account for regular daily or weekly religious observance. This parallels your responsibilities when you become a doctor. If you would like to discuss specific issues relating to regular daily or weekly religious observance, please contact your Course Lead as early as possible and before the start of the academic year. Please note that we cannot in any way guarantee that modifications can be made to your timetable.

Major Religious Festivals. We recognise that there may be occasions when some students feel unable to attend due to the need to observe particular religious festivals. In this case you are asked, **at the latest by the start of the academic year**, to inform the Programme in writing of any date(s) when you intend to be absent from the University due to requirement to observe mandatory religious holy day(s). We are aware that precise dates may not be available at the beginning of each academic year, but it is vital that you provide as much information as soon as possible and then confirm the exact date with the School at the earliest opportunity. These dates will be noted and kept as part of your student record. All absences will be recorded in the normal manner.

Academic Appeals, Complaints, Conduct and Discipline

Academic Appeals

- Students have a right of appeal against a final decision of an Examination Board, or a progress committee, or a graduate committee or equivalent body which affects their academic status or progress in the University.

- Students thinking of appealing should first discuss the matter informally with an appropriate member of staff, in order to better understand the reason for the result or decision and to determine whether the matter can be resolved informally by the School prior to making a formal appeal.
- Should you wish to proceed to a formal appeal, this must be submitted within the timeframe outlined in the Academic Appeals Procedure to the Faculty Appeals and Complaints Team, Room 3.21, Simon Building, University of Manchester, M13 9PL (e-mail: FBMHappealsandcomplaints@manchester.ac.uk).
- The Academic Appeals Procedure (Regulation XIX) and associated documents, including the form on which formal appeals should be submitted, can be found at <http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/academic/basic-guide-academic-appeals/>

Student Complaints

- The University's Student Complaints Procedure (Regulation XVIII) and associated documents, including a complaints form, can be found at www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/academic
- The University has separate procedures to address complaints of bullying, harassment, discrimination and/or victimisation - see <https://www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk/>
- Students thinking of submitting a formal complaint should, in most instances, attempt informal resolution first (see the procedure). Formal complaints should be submitted on the relevant form to Faculty Appeals and Complaints Team, Room 3.21, Simon Building, University of Manchester, M13 9PL (e-mail: FBMHappealsandcomplaints@manchester.ac.uk).

Conduct and Discipline of Students

- General University information on the conduct and discipline of students can be found at <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/tlso/academic-appeals-complaints-and-misconduct/>
- Faculty policies for students on communication and dress code, social networking, and drugs and alcohol can be found at:
 - <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=29038> (Communication and Dress Code)
 - <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=29039> (Drugs and Alcohol)
 - <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=29040> (Social Networking)

4. STUDENT PROGRESSION

Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students

The programme director and teaching staff will monitor the work and attendance of students on the programme. This is for your benefit and helps to ensure you are coping with the work. Regular or a pattern of non-attendance and/or engagement will result in you being contacted by the School to meet with your course lead or programme director. Following this, further action will be taken if there isn't a significant improvement in attendance.

For further information see: [Regulation XX Monitoring Attendance and Wellbeing of Students](#)

The University offers a range of advice and support to students experiencing problems with attendance. The A-Z of Services can be found on the [MyManchester website](#). Here you can find information on a wide range of topics such as library services, disability support and careers advice. You can also speak to your course lead and/or tutor.

What to do if you are absent

In case of illness you should supply a doctor's certificate or, if the illness is brief, a self-certification. If you are absent for other reasons then you should write a letter to the Programme Director explaining the circumstances. Whatever your reason for being away, tell your tutor about it and make any necessary arrangements to catch up with work you have missed.

Tier 4 Visa Attendance Monitoring Census

The University operates attendance monitoring census points within the academic year in order to confirm the attendance of students holding a Tier 4 Student Visa. This is to ensure the University meets the UKVI statutory requirements as a sponsor of Tier 4 students and its responsibilities in accordance with its Highly Trusted Sponsor status.

If you are a Tier 4 visa holder, you must attend these attendance monitoring census points, in addition to complying with your programme's attendance requirements.

When are the census points?

There are usually 4 census points each academic year:

- September/October (to coincide with Registration)
- January
- May
- July

Please note:

- If you are a new student, registration is your first point to confirm your attendance at the University and you will not be required to attend a separate census point in the Autumn.
- You will receive an e-mail from your Programme Administrator to confirm when and where you should go to have your attendance confirmed. You must check your University e-mail account regularly. Failure to check your e-mail account is not a valid reason to be absent from a census point.

What if a Tier 4 student cannot attend a census point?

If you cannot attend in person due to a valid reason such as illness, you must email your programme administrator to inform us of your absence and your inability to attend in person. You must provide a copy of a medical certificate. If you are in this position you should report in person to the School as soon as possible after you return to campus.

Students who are recorded as interrupting their studies are not expected to attend during their period of interruption.

What happens if a student does not attend a census point?

The School must be able to confirm your presence to the UKVI by the end of each census point in the academic year. If you do not attend a census point when required by your School and

you do not provide a valid explanation for your absence you will be deemed to be “not in attendance”.

Those students identified as “not in attendance” will be reported to the UKVI and the University will cease to sponsor the student’s Tier 4 visa. The Tier 4 visa will then be curtailed and the student must leave the UK within 60 days.

Further information

For more information on Tier 4 visas: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa>

If you have any concerns about the attendance monitoring census points, or your Tier 4 visa status, please contact or visit <https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/> or email visa@manchester.ac.uk

Withdrawal from the Programme

Students who are considering withdrawing from the programme should discuss this in the first instance with the course lead or Programme Director.

If arrangements for withdrawal need to be made, this will be handled by the Programme Administrator, who will manage communication with the Fees and Records Departments and other University bodies as appropriate OR Students may liaise directly with the Programme Administrator who will communicate this information directly to the University Student Services Centre.

5. STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Student support and guidance within the programme

Support and advice is available to all students both formally and informally from the course lead, Programme Director, tutors and the Programme Administrator.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss any issues at all – academic, administrative, technical or personal – please do not hesitate to get in touch. All personal issues will be dealt with confidentially.

If we are unable to help you directly, we can put you in touch with many of the support services that are available to students of the University through our Student Services Centre.

You can approach these services independently, without the involvement of programme staff. Please refer to the Blackboard Space on Student Support and Guidance which is available via <https://my.manchester.ac.uk>

Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS)

The University of Manchester welcomes students with a disability or specific learning difficulties. The University has a Disability Advisory and Support Service, who can supply further information and DASS advisors will be pleased to meet you to discuss your needs. DASS will liaise with your School through the Disability Coordinator to make the necessary arrangements for your support during your time in Manchester.

The DASS office can also provide a copy of the University's Disability Statement, 'Opportunities for Students with Additional Support Needs at the University of Manchester' which sets out the policy and provision for students with a disability.

DASS Contact Details:-

- Location: 2nd Floor, University Place
- Tel (Disability Service): +44 (0)161 275 7512
- Tel (Assessment Centre): +44 (0)161 275 0990
- Mobile Number (Text only for d/Deaf students): 07899 658 790
- Email (Disability Service): dass@manchester.ac.uk
- Email (Assessment Centre): assessments@manchester.ac.uk
- School Disability Coordinator Contact Details: dc.sms@manchester.ac.uk

6. STUDENT PRIVACY NOTICE

Student Privacy Notice

The University of Manchester needs to collect, maintain and use personal data relating to you to allow us to process your application for study, register you as a student, to administer your course and to provide facilities during your time as a student. We will also use your data to keep in touch with you after you have graduated, and contact you to complete a graduate outcomes survey.

We share this data within the University in order to deliver a high standard of service to you, so it is important that you regularly check to see that we have up to date information about you in the Student System. We are occasionally required to share your information with external agencies who have need for it, such as the Higher Education Statistics Agency, or Student Loans Company. We may also ask other agencies for the information they have about you, in order to verify the personal details you provide.

Please read the full [Privacy Notice - Registered Students](#)

7. LEARNING RESOURCES

Libraries

All registered students may become members of the University of Manchester Library on the main campus. Up-to-date news about the library is available [here](#).

IT Services Support Centre online

- Details of what IT support is available and how to access it can be found on the [FBMH eLearning Support](#) page.
- Login to the Support Centre online to log a request, book an appointment for an IT visit, or search the Knowledge Base.
- Telephone: +44 (0)161 306 5544 (or extension 65544). Telephone support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- In person: Walk-up help and support is available at the Joule Library, Main Library or Alan Gilbert Learning Commons:
- Use Support Centre online for support with eLearning, from where you may make a request, or search the Knowledge Base.

- For IT and eLearning support visit:
<https://elearning.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/student/technical-support/>

Blackboard

Blackboard, the University's 'virtual learning environment', will be used for online teaching.

What is Blackboard?

Blackboard is a web-based system that complements and builds upon traditional learning methods used at The University of Manchester. By using Blackboard you can

- view course materials and learning resources,
- communicate with lectures and other students,
- collaborate in groups,
- get feedback
- submit assignments
- monitoring your own progress at a time and place of your own convenience.

Training in the use of software

The Faculty eLearning team have produced a short introduction to Blackboard for new students. The recording is hosted in two places: the Video Portal and on YouTube:

[Video Portal](#)

<https://youtu.be/47pA877MKJg>

