School of Medical Sciences
MB ChB Programme Policy on Allocation to a Clinical Education Campus (CEC)
Academic Year 2026/27

This policy applies to:

1) **Students entering Year 1 of the MB ChB programme in 2026**
2) **Students starting on the International Foundation Programme in 2026**
3) **Students entering the programme into Year 3 directly in 2026 via IMU or as a Dental Graduate, and via St Andrews**
4) **Students entering the first year of the MB ChB Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM) programme in 2026**

This supersedes any existing policy in place.

The latest policy will apply to all students at the time of the allocation to a Clinical Education Campus in their year of entry. The policy is reviewed and updated annually.

Section 1: Expectations in Relation to Attending Clinical Placements and Training on the MB ChB Programme

Life as a medical student and as a doctor is different to other academic programmes of study and careers. We expect you to have considered this before accepting to study on the programme and enter the field of medicine. By undertaking study and a career in medicine you (the student) are accepting this lifestyle that is different from other degrees and occupations. It is important to know that your life will be impacted both while you are at medical school, when you take on your foundation training post and in your medical career beyond. This entails being able to adapt and adjust. For example, you may have to move around the country to get the training and job you want, and you will work unusual hours such as nights, weekends or bank holidays "on call".

An important feature of the Manchester MB ChB programme is that you are educated and trained in the NHS in a variety of settings. In order to get the most out of your learning opportunities we expect you to demonstrate that you can work and study in the same sort of way as you will be working throughout your career. Medicine is a full-time programme and to get the best out of it students will need to travel to hospitals, GP surgeries and other primary care/community placements. By accepting a place on the MB ChB programme you are accepting our rules and regulations and the structure of our programme. This includes accepting that for the clinical campus-based years of the MB ChB Programme (years 3, 4 and 5, or GEM year 2 onwards), we will allocate you to one of our four Clinical Education Campuses (CECs) and their associated district general hospitals and community placements (see Section 2). This will have been made known to you during

the admissions process. All of our CECs offer a high quality, supportive learning environment. The School continually assesses and uses data about student performance as well as student satisfaction in order to ensure this is the case. At each CEC there is an Undergraduate Education department with a team of staff who have considerable experience to deliver and support your training in collaboration with the university.

The intense nature of training on a medical programme requires you to effectively manage commuting to the university campus in your pre-clinical years, and to your CEC and associated clinical placement destinations in the clinical campus-based years. This may require you to change your accommodation for your CEC allocation and the placements linked to that CEC. Therefore, before arranging long term or permanent accommodation, you should become familiar with your CEC and its placements.

In accepting an offer of a place to study on the MB ChB programme at Manchester, you are indicating that you are prepared to be allocated to any of the four CECs. Student capacities at each CEC vary slightly from year to year, but normally between ~20-27% of the cohort will be assigned to each of the 4 CECs.

Buying or renting accommodation before or after starting the programme:

Please note buying or renting accommodation before or after starting the programme, including the International Foundation Programme, is not sufficient mitigation to be allocated to a particular CEC and will not be taken into account. **We strongly advise you or any member of your family not to purchase property before your CEC allocation has been confirmed by the School.** The location of the property may not be convenient for commuting to the hospitals linked with your CEC and your allocation cannot be amended for this reason. Until allocations are confirmed (in December of Year 1 for Year 1 and GEM students, and normally by June prior to entry to the programme for direct entry students) you should be prepared to spend your clinical campus-based years at any of the locations across the four CECs. You agreed to do so when you accepted an offer from Manchester.

Important: You should not make any new permanent living arrangements until you know your allocated Clinical Education Campus and associated placement locations.

This rule applies equally to students who are undertaking a first degree and to graduate entry students – all students have to be prepared to attend any of the four CECs and the associated clinical placements and community settings. Please note if you or any family member chooses to make long-term/permanent arrangements prior to CEC allocation, this would be at your own risk and would be your responsibility to manage commuting if you have been allocated to a CEC that is less convenient for you.

Employment whilst on the programme: Due to the intense nature of studies and training, high-level commitment is required for the MB ChB programme, and even more so in the clinical campus-based years. Students are therefore advised against undertaking employment alongside their studies. Employment is at your own risk and will not be considered an extenuating factor in the CEC allocation process.

Section 2: MB ChB Programme: Undergraduate Clinical Placement Locations

During the clinical campus-based years of the programme, students learn primarily through clinical placements delivered in partnership with our clinical education providers in the NHS. For this period, each student will be based at one of our four CECs and attend placements at the CEC, the University and other linked clinical placement providers across the North West, including acute hospitals, general practice and community-based services. Our four CECs are:

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LTHTR) (known as Preston)

The LTHTR Undergraduate Department is located at the Royal Preston Hospital campus. This CEC currently includes the following hospitals for placements:

- LTHTR hospitals: Royal Preston Hospital and Chorley and South Ribble District General Hospital
- Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (Community Trust)

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT): Oxford Road Campus

The Undergraduate Department is located on the MFT-Oxford Road campus. This CEC currently includes the following hospitals for placements:

- Manchester Royal Infirmary
- Manchester Royal Eye Hospital
- Saint Mary's Hospital
- Royal Manchester Children's Hospital
- Trafford General Hospital
- North Manchester General Hospital
- NCA Oldham
- NCA Bury - (Fairfield General Hospital)
- Tameside and Glossop Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust (Tameside Hospital)
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – Wrexham Maelor Hospital and Glan Clwyd Hospital
- Nobles Hospital, Isle of Man

Placements are also undertaken in specialist Trusts including the Christie NHS Foundation Trust, Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust, Northern Care Alliance Foundation Trust, Withington Community Hospital, Altrincham Hospital and Wythenshawe Hospital.

Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT): Wythenshawe Hospital

The Undergraduate Department is located on the MFT-Wythenshawe campus. This CEC currently includes the following hospitals for placements:

- Wythenshawe Hospital
- Withington Community Hospital
- Trafford Hospital
- Altrincham Hospital
- Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust: Leighton – near Crewe
- Stockport NHS Foundation Trust: Stepping Hill Hospital
- East Cheshire NHS Trust: Macclesfield Hospital

- The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

Placements are also undertaken in specialist Trusts including Pennine Care (Tameside, Bury and Stepping Hill Hospitals), Northern Care Alliance Foundation Trust, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust, North Manchester General Hospital and Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Foundation Trusts.

Northern Care Alliance Foundation Trust (NCA) (Formerly known as Salford Royal)
The Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust (NCA) – consists of four hospitals:

- NCA Salford Royal
- NCA Oldham
- NCA Bury
- NCA Rochdale

The Undergraduate CEC is located at NCA Salford Royal, although student placements will take place at any of the NCA sites.

Students will also have placements during each clinical year at the following sites:

- Royal Bolton NHS Foundation Trust
- Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh Foundation Trusts

Placements are also undertaken in specialist Trusts including the Christie NHS Foundation Trust and Greater Manchester Mental Health Trust as well as North Manchester General Hospital. Students may also attend placements at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, Royal Manchester Eye Hospital, MFT Wythenshawe, and various clinics through the community.

Important Note for all Clinical Education Campus Locations

Please be aware you will also need to spend some time at hospitals outside the CEC and its linked clinical education providers – the locations listed above are provided to give a realistic impression of the range of locations associated with each CEC across the 3 years, but will not be exhaustive. It is particularly important to be aware that due to the changes in the NHS, Trusts may merge, change or increase. Also due to changes in NHS services there may be some changes in placement locations and in the usage of associated teaching hospitals listed above from year to year.

Section 3: MB ChB Programme Allocation Process & Approved Extenuating Circumstances for Clinical Education Campus (CEC)

1. Students' opportunity to notify the programme about approved extenuating circumstances

If you have particular extenuating circumstances that you would like the programme to consider in relation to your CEC allocation, there will be an opportunity before allocation to submit an application. Only extenuating circumstances that match this policy with appropriate supporting evidence are considered and only where there is capacity will this be applied (see Section 5).

Until allocations to CECs are confirmed, you should be prepared to spend your clinical campus-based years of the programme at any of the four CECs. You are strongly advised against making any permanent living arrangements until this point. This cannot be used as extenuating circumstances and applies to all students, whether undertaking Medicine as a first degree or as a graduate entry student.

A deadline for submission of applications regarding extenuating circumstances will be applied. **Applications after this deadline will not be considered** unless new approved extenuating circumstances in accordance with this policy have arisen after the deadline.

If you apply for extenuating circumstances, your situation will be carefully considered when allocations are carried out, according to the approved extenuating circumstances criteria. It cannot be guaranteed that your request will be granted. Please note once a CEC has been allocated, changes to your CEC allocation can only be made in exceptional new circumstances with supporting evidence (as above).

Students who are rejoining Year 1 or the GEM year of the programme further to exam failure or an interruption, will automatically retain the original allocation they received when they first went through this process. If a student in this situation has new exceptional circumstances, this would be treated as a request to transfer and would be subject to the same rules as that of a student in Years 2-5 (i.e., only new Category 1 circumstances are considered) See Section 4.

2. Students' opportunity to notify the programme about preference to attend Preston

Students who have applied via the official Preston Widening Access Programme (PWAP) as part of their application to the University will be automatically assigned to Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (LTHTR) (Preston) as their CEC in keeping with the regulations under that scheme.

However, all other students will be invited to express a preference to be placed in Preston (Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust). We have the capacity to offer this option as it has been more common for students with specific extenuating circumstances to require a Manchester-based CEC.

Advantages of being based at the Preston CEC is that nearly all specialities are undertaken at the 2 sites of the Royal Preston Hospital (RPH) and Chorley District General Hospital. The only specialities that are not on site are cardiothoracics and community-based services such as GP and psychiatry

(which are locally sourced). There is also a free minibus service between the 2 sites. Advantages outside of education are cheaper living expenses with lower accommodation costs and travel costs. If you would like to know more about Preston please contact the educational department in RPH.

The process of declaring a preference for Preston will be included with the collection of extenuating circumstances (point 1 above).

3. Consideration of approved extenuating circumstances

To ensure consistency and fairness a panel comprised of experienced clinical and university staff will meet to consider these applications. Further evidence from the student may be requested before a decision is made.

4. Allocation of students with accepted approved extenuating circumstances

After consideration of submitted applications with extenuating circumstances, we will allocate students, whose cases were accepted, and where places are available, to a particular CEC as required.

5. Allocation of students who stated Preston preference

We will endeavour to place you in Preston if that has been selected as your preferred clinical education campus. Please note that the number of students selecting Preston as their preference normally accounts for the minority of students eventually allocated there.

In the scenario that Preston were to be over-subscribed, students would be allocated via a random allocation process to one of the other CECs.

This option is also offered to direct entry students – in this case the placement numbers available are much smaller and therefore this is not always guaranteed but we will always try to place you in Preston if you have requested this.

6. Allocation of students across CECs

For students with no approved extenuating circumstances and no preference, **an automated, anonymised random allocation process** is used to allocate students to the four CECs.

This is an entirely random and anonymous process and no student data other than student ID number is available or visible as part of the process.

Direct Entry students should be aware that at the point of allocation the number of places available at each CEC may not be even. Therefore these students will be randomly allocated across places available. Some CECs may have more capacity than others and this will vary from year to year depending on natural fluctuations of student numbers within cohorts.

As part of agreed arrangements between the University and the Education Providers at the Hospital Trusts, international students who are on a private sponsorship agreement which funds their clinical training years on the programme, will be distributed equally across the CECs. The process of allocation remains random and anonymous.

7. Announcement of allocations

Students will be notified once the full cohort has been allocated a clinical education campus.

Students have no right of appeal against the decision as to the allocation of CEC placements. Students may submit a complaint via the Student Complaints Procedure if they consider a procedural irregularity has arisen in the placement allocation process. However, students should be aware that, unless they are otherwise informed, the School's decision as to the placement location will remain in place. Failure to attend the allocated placement may impact on a student's progression and may result in disciplinary action or have fitness to practice implications.

Section 4: Principles of the Allocation Policy

1. We recognise that during their studies students may experience a change of circumstance. We will reconsider the allocated CEC of students whose circumstances have changed since allocation, and who meet the criteria listed under extenuating circumstances category 1.

2. We will not consider circumstances which were known by the student at the time of/prior to the allocation process, but that the student failed to declare when given the opportunity to do so.

3. Please note that cases under the category 2 criteria will only be taken into account for the initial allocation, and are not applicable for change of circumstances requests. See Section 5 for approved criteria.

4. Changing CECs after a student has already started attending their CEC can have a negative effect on educational experience and student progression and therefore requests to transfer from students in the clinical campus-based years of the programme will be considered very carefully in this regard.

5. Please note that all requests to transfer CEC are subject not only to the student meeting the approved criteria, but to there being space at the appropriate CEC; this is not always guaranteed.

6. Changes to a student's CEC for reasons outside the policy's category 1 criteria would only occur in very rare and extreme scenarios; this is at the discretion of the Director of UG Medical Studies and MB ChB Programme Lead but could include for instance, immediate and serious issues relating to the safety of the student. In this case, we would assess the request on an individual basis.

7. Students whose personal circumstances change during the programme, whether they meet the policy's approved extenuating circumstances criteria or not, are strongly advised to initially seek advice and support from the School's Student Support and Wellbeing Team to discuss their situation in full. A change in CEC allocation is not always the only/best option and other ways in which the School can support students should always be explored via the University and School support services first.

8. If a student, having discussed their circumstances in full with the SSW Team or local SPS team, is advised to put in a formal request to transfer CEC, they should contact the School's Clinical Delivery Team for information on the process that should be followed: sms.clinicaldelivery@manchester.ac.uk

9. Students must declare all relevant circumstances when applying for extenuating circumstances.

10. Direct entry students on the Manchester/St Andrews pathway follow the allocation process as agreed with St Andrews who have their own allocation process, and an extenuating circumstance process that aligns with ours.

11. Students who enter directly into year 3 of the programme as dentistry graduates, and students transferring from IMU (International Medical University, Malaysia) will be allocated to a CEC where there are clinical placement numbers available. Approved extenuating circumstances will be considered where this is applicable and where places are available. Students will be contacted with information relating to this before starting the programme.

12. Students entering via the MB ChB Graduate Entry Programme (GEM) will be allocated during their first semester of the programme and, further to mitigation being considered, will be allocated randomly and evenly across the 4 clinical education campuses.

13. Although self-evident, it is important for any student claiming extenuating circumstances to recognise that evidence submitted in support of an allocation should come from those as stated in the policy. Please note evidence will not be accepted if it comes from a family member or friend of the family.

14. Students who submit multiple requests sequentially, based on a variety of different reasons, should be aware that this may undermine the credibility of their application. Students could be subject to referral to the School Fitness to Practise Committee as a matter of professionalism.

15. Students applying under category 2.1 are expected to live at their parental/own home for the full duration of the programme. If it is brought to the attention of the School that this is not the case, students could be subject to referral to the School Fitness to Practise Committee as a matter of professionalism.

Section 5: Approved Extenuating Circumstances Criteria

Approved extenuating circumstances for this policy are grouped into two categories:

Category 1

Students whose circumstances fall within category 1 will fulfil criteria in relation to significant ongoing/long-term circumstances. They will have their mitigation considered both as part of the initial allocation process, and at any point during their studies, should new circumstances arise that mean they now fall under this category.

These criteria have been identified as significant circumstances that would impact on a student's ability to attend a particular CEC.

1.1 Student is a parent or legal guardian of a child or children under the age of 18 who resides primarily with them, and for whom they have significant caring responsibilities.

Evidence required:

- *A copy/copies of birth certificate(s)*
- *For legal guardians, a copy of the legal document that confirms your status for the child(ren) named in the birth certificate(s)*

1.2 Student is an official, recognised primary carer for someone who is disabled.

Evidence required:

- *Letter confirming your primary carer status and a care plan which confirms details of the regular support you provide to the person*

Notes:

- *For you to meet this criterion, you must be the primary carer for this person, who would normally be your partner, sibling or parent.*
- *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.*
- *The care plan should demonstrate how you will combine both the responsibilities simultaneously: that of a medical student on a full-time programme as well as a primary carer, and that you have fully considered local support and resources for the person.*
- *It is expected that you and the person who you care for in this category will remain at your current address.*

Important Note for students applying under category 1.2, carer:
It is the School's intention to support our students as far as possible in order that they can succeed in their studies whilst being able to carry out their carer commitments.

However, in the case of a student who has the role of a full time carer, students should be mindful that this is unlikely to be fully sustainable in the longer term, particularly when entering the clinical years. Therefore students should consider realistically how they plan to manage this when they are based on full time clinical placements, which will often not be located at their 'base' hospital at their CEC. We encourage students to discuss and prepare for this change during their pre-clinical years and make plans to put in place additional support for the person being cared for. Students should arrange to speak with their Programme Year Lead and/or Student Support and Wellbeing Team at regular intervals to assess this and to discuss how they are coping with their studies alongside this significant responsibility.

1.3 Student has a disability confirmed by the University Disability Advisory and Support Service (DASS) for which ongoing follow up for the condition in the specified location is an absolute requirement.

Evidence required: Letter(s) from a medical specialist which includes the details mentioned below.

Cases will be referred by the School to DASS who will provide advice as to whether the request is considered to be a required adjustment.

<u>Please note:</u> in the case of disabilities, DASS and the Panel will be looking at the student's condition, its management, the professionals involved in their management and where they are based.
To determine if the CEC allocation will enable the student to receive the ongoing care that is required, supporting evidence and letters from the Medical/Health care professional should explain:

- *severity and anticipated natural course/duration of the condition*
- *likely frequency of follow up/assessments/treatment plans; whether these can be virtual or must be face-to-face; reason if these must be face-to-face in a specific location*

Generally, students whose diagnosed health condition means they are experiencing particular anxiety around the prospect of a possible move away from Manchester, are encouraged to work with DASS and their health professionals to develop coping strategies to deal with the change of locations and circumstances that will inevitably come with studying on a clinical degree and later being a doctor. The undergraduate Medicine programme allows students the opportunity to develop these strategies whilst still in a closely supportive environment, with access to all the University's services (DASS, Occupational Health, Student's Union Advice Service) as well as the central School of Medical Sciences Support Teams and the Student Pastoral Support Team at their clinical education campus, no matter where they are based. In the vast majority of cases, students would be expected to manage their condition from any location and will be offered appropriate support in order to do so.

Category 2

Category 2 criteria encompasses students living at home, religious observance, Elite Sports and PWAP students. This set of criteria is used as part of the initial CEC allocation process only. Once CEC allocations have taken place, students may not apply for extenuating circumstances based on these reasons as their opportunity has passed.

2.1.a First degree student is living at parental or own home in Manchester/Preston prior to applying

2.1.b Graduate student who lives in Manchester/Preston prior to applying

The above students who were living in Manchester/Preston prior to applying and plan to continue living at their parental or own home due to financial reasons for the full duration of the Programme from year 1, can indicate that they wish to be placed at a CEC within either one of the three CECs in Greater Manchester or the campus in Preston. We will take this into account during the initial allocation process (Note: the address will be identified from the address provided on the UCAS form/pre-admission). This extenuating circumstance is in place primarily to support those local applicants who, often for financial reasons, are unable to move out of their original family/own home in order to attend University.

Please note that the following scenarios do **not** count under this category:

- Overseas students who have moved to Manchester for the programme but may consider their new residence their home
- International Foundation Programme students who have made living arrangements in Manchester during their foundation year (or before course starting but after application to the International Foundation Programme)
- Students who are currently living in halls (even if the intention is to move back to parental home later in the programme – the criteria states this must be for the full Programme only so that this can be evidenced)
- Students living with other relatives for reasons of convenience (i.e. not residing at original home address where based at the time of application)
- Students who have bought, or whose family members have bought, property since the time of application under ANY circumstances, as this policy, which is provided in advance to applicants, makes it clear to students that they would be doing so at their own risk
- Employment of partner with whom the student is living meaning that student wishes to live in a certain location/at partner's permanent address (if not resident there prior to application)

2.2 Student has particular exceptional circumstances/requirements relating to mandatory religious observance.

In exceptional circumstances, the Panel will consider requests from students to be placed at a particular CEC due to strict religious requirements that cannot be fulfilled at another location. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Representatives from the University, in consultation with relevant Faith Chaplains, will consider such cases independently and provide advice to the Panel. The final decision will be taken by the Panel and will be considered on the grounds of religious requirement

only, not for cultural preference nor for reasons of optional involvement with the activities of a particular place of worship e.g. volunteering. Students considering applying under this category should be aware that all CECs and associated teaching hospitals have prayer rooms that are available to students of all faiths and denominations.

Evidence required: an official statement confirming that the student has mandatory religious requirements. This should be provided by the faith leader at the student's regular place of worship.

Please note in relation to this criterion: the School recognises that religious beliefs and practices are central to the lives of medical students. Students are required to explore how to pursue these without compromising their preparation towards Good medical practice - which entails adhering to formal requirements (such as placement allocations), learning in a range of different placements (which may not be their choice of placements) and adapting to unfamiliar situations/challenges.

2.3 Student is an elite sportsperson

Students who are an elite sportsperson will be identified to the School by UoM Sport. An elite sportsperson is someone who is competing at a minimum of Junior National Level and has been awarded a University Sport Scholarship If this student intends to continue with their top level sport during the clinical campus-based years, they may be allocated to a Manchester clinical education campus in order to facilitate attendance at sporting events. However, such students must be aware that they are still obliged to meet the usual attendance requirements on their clinical placements to meet the Outcomes for Graduates mandated by the GMC to be able to graduate as a doctor. Therefore, we advise students to consider carefully whether they will be able to continue their sporting career alongside medical training and this needs to be continually assessed as they progress through the clinical programme. It has been agreed that the names of students in this particular category will be provided to the School by UoM Sport directly. The School Team which is responsible for administering allocations, will be notified by the agreed deadline each year. Students are therefore not required to declare this themselves as part of the allocation process.

2.4 Preston Widening Access Programme (PWAP)

PWAP is aimed at supporting students who aspire to enter the medical profession and who live or study in the Preston area to attain a place on the Medical MB ChB undergraduate programme with The University of Manchester. The PWAP scheme is coordinated and delivered by Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust at Preston:
http://www.access.manchester.ac.uk/preston-widening-access-programme/
Eligible students will already be aware of their PWAP status when applying to the MB ChB programme and the University's MB ChB School staff involved in allocations to a CEC will have a record of this information. Students are not required to declare this as part of the extenuating circumstances process as it will be applied automatically.