

Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What stage are you at with the medical doctor apprenticeship?

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education has approved the Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship (GMC 2018) and end point assessment for delivery, and the funding band has gained ministerial approval.

This means bodies approved by the General Medical Council to award UK medical degrees, that wish to offer the apprenticeship can begin to consider how they will go about delivering it in practice.

2. Why is a medical doctor degree apprenticeship being considered?

An apprenticeship could make the profession more accessible, more diverse and more representative of local communities. At present there are many barriers that exist, and which hold back talented people. An apprenticeship could help to change that, while maintaining the exact same high standards of training. We want to spread opportunity out to local communities and help to address the challenge of recruiting and retaining doctors in areas where recruitment is proving difficult.

3. Would this apprenticeship include a medical degree?

Yes, a medical degree is a central part of this apprenticeship, in fact a Medical Doctor Degree Apprentice will complete all the same training as a medical student following the established route. There is no element, academic or practical, of a traditional medical education that will not be completed by the apprentice. This includes a medical degree and the Medical Licensing Assessment and meeting all the same requirements set out by the General Medical Council. Apprenticeships enable people who are both new to the NHS and existing members of staff to gain a qualification and apply their learning while continuing to earn a salary.

4. How would apprentice doctors actually help plug the medical workforce gap?

The Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship will offer a new route into the profession, still offering a medical degree but taking away some of the financial burden associated with the traditional route for individuals in training. That would help attract talented candidates from all across the country, who are currently locked out due to geographical or socio-economic reasons.

5. What evidence is there that there is a market for a medical doctor apprenticeship scheme?

We know that the majority of medical students come from a small section of society. We also know that for some who have the ability to train in the medical profession the costs associated with undertaking a medical degree means they do not consider it an option. The medical doctor degree apprenticeship would offer those people a route to a career as a doctor.

6. What are the academic entry requirements for doctor apprentices?

These will be the same as the traditional medical degree route.

7. How will the Medical Doctor Degree Apprentice help to attract those from currently underrepresented groups to the medical profession?

We know that a workforce that is representative of the community it serves can cater for its needs more effectively.

The number of people from deprived socio-economic backgrounds undertaking medical degrees remains low compared to all entrants to higher education. One of the reasons they do not traditionally choose these courses is the associated cost of study. The Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship provides an earn and learn opportunity taking away some of that burden, we know similar degree apprentice courses have attracted people from the social economic backgrounds we are trying to attract.

8. How will this be funded?

An upper limit of £27,000 government apprenticeship funding will be available to support delivery. Additional costs associated with the medical degree will be met by the organisation employing the Medical Doctor Degree Apprentice.