NHS
Barts Health
NHS Trust

Visiting Students' Elective Handbook

2027



Contents

Barts Visiting Student Elective Programme 2
Eligibility Criteria 3
Application Form Requirements 3
Application Process and Expected Timelines 4
Honorary Contracts Process 5
Fees 7
Specialties 8
VISA Information 8
Placement/Enrolment Information 9
End of Placement Feedback & Certificate 9
FAQ's 10

Barts Visiting Student Elective Programme

The Visiting Student Elective Programme offers short-term, observational placements, for UK and International medical students, in their penultimate or final year of study. Based at one of the Barts Health NHS Trust hospital sites, students gain first-hand insight into their chosen specialty by shadowing clinicians and observing day-to-day clinical practice. Please refer to the following guidance notes before proceeding with an application to undertake an Elective Placement with us.

2027	Placement Dates	Applications Open
Block 1	11th January 2027 – 5th February 2027	16th - 27th November 2026
Block 2	8th February 2027 – 5th March 2027	30th November - 11th December 2026
Block 3	5th April 2027– 30th April 2027	25th January - 5th February 2027
Block 4	10th May 2027 – 4th June 2027	1st - 12th March 2027
Block 5	7th June 2027 – 2nd July 2027	29th March - 9th April 2027

(Please be advised that we reserve the right to close vacancies ahead of the advertised closing date should capacity be reached.)

Eligibility Criteria

Elective Placements must start on the first date of each block listed above.

The Trust are not in the position to accommodate split Electives, date overlaps or students whose Elective Placement falls outside the block periods.

- Applicant must be a student in their penultimate or final year of medical school.
- Students must be studying at a Medical School that is listed on the World Directory of Medical Schools.
- Students must be in good standing with their Medical School and be able to provide a letter of recommendation.
- Students must meet Occupational Health checks before undertaking their placement & provide adequate Enhanced DBS/Local Police Check requirements.
- Students must have a valid passport and be able to provide 3 valid forms of proof of ID.
- Students must have the appropriate visa permission (if applicable) to undertake an Elective Placement.
- English Language Proficiency

Any applications submitted which do not meet these requirements will not be considered and rejected.

Application Form Requirements

Due to the volume of applications we receive, please ensure that you include the following documents with your application upon submission. Documents provided must be in English or translated by a notarised authority prior to submission. Failure to do so, will result in your application being immediately rejected.

Applicants must provide the following as part of their application:

- Personal Details and Requested Placement Dates
  - Requested dates must commence on the first day of one of the designated application blocks.
  - Placements must be a minimum of one week and a maximum of four weeks.
  - Split Elective Placements, overlapping dates and placements falling outside the designated application periods cannot be accommodated by the Trust.
- Valid Passport Copy (identification page of the passport)
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Covering Letter

- Applicants must submit a covering letter of no more than 400 words, briefly explaining their reasons for wishing to undertake an Elective Placement with the Trust.

➢ Academic Transcript

➢ Letter of reference(s) - Applicants must provide reference(s) covering the full three-year period immediately preceding the application date, with no gaps in coverage. This may be provided through letter of good standing and references provided the full three-year period is covered. The letter MUST include:
- The University/Institution's official stamp (or letterhead), with contact details (email and postal address)
- The status of the person providing the reference (e.g. Academic, Professor, Administrator)
- Confirmation that you are currently studying Medicine and your current year of study.
- Confirmation that your University/Institution agrees for you to undertake an Elective Placement

➢ English Language Requirement- Where English is not your first language, you must provide evidence of an acceptable English Language qualification. This must be within the required validity period before undertaking your Elective Placement.
- Students are exempt from providing evidence of English Language if they fall under the following categories:
- You are from a majority English-speaking country (MESC as defined by UKVI)
- You are currently studying for a degree in a majority English-speaking country
- You have recently been awarded a degree or postgraduate diploma taught in English in a majority English-speaking country
- If you are an international student currently studying at a UK Medical School, we will accept a certified letter from your university confirming that you achieved the required English Language criteria for entry into their institution, as well as confirmation of what those requirements were met.

Application Process and Expected Timelines

- Applications are to be submitted within the timeframe the application window is open for (application windows may close early due to capacity). Application attempts made outside this period would not be considered.
- Arrangements with a consultant **without** making an application will not be considered. Where a consultant has agreed to support the proposed placement, this may be indicated on the application form.
- All questions on the application form must be answered and supporting documentation must be provided at the time of application. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Elective Placements will be offered at one of the sites within Barts NHS Health Trust. You will not be able to choose your site as this will be subject to departmental capacity across sites.

❖ The Royal London Hospital

- ❖ Whipps Cross University Hospital
- ❖ Newham Hospital
- ❖ St Bartholomew's Hospital

- Upon submission of a completed application, your application will be reviewed within 10 working days. If you have been successful in securing a placement, you will receive an invitational letter which will include the payment link. You must complete the full payment within 5 working days or your placement offer will be withdrawn.
- Once payment has been confirmed you will need to complete the honorary contracts process (please see below for honorary contract requirements) before beginning your placement. The honorary contract process takes between 6-8 weeks to complete.
    - You must also complete an in-person ID check and OH check before your placement begins to complete the honorary contract process. You will not be able to commence your placement until you have completed the honorary contract process and signed your honorary contract.
- Once you have successfully completed your honorary contract process and relevant checks your contract will be issued.

Honorary Contracts Process

In accordance with the Honorary Policy and NHS Employment Check Standards, all honorary applicants are required to complete the relevant pre-employment checks before an honorary contract can be issued and the placement can commence.

The honorary contract process will commence once the elective placement fee has been paid in full. Please allow 6–8 weeks for the process to be completed.

Please be advised that, should you fail to meet the requirements of the honorary contract checks, the £500 administration fee is non-refundable.

The required pre-employment checks may include identity verification, right-to-work checks, criminal record checks (DBS), occupational health clearance, verification of professional registration and qualifications, and employment history checks.

Please refer to the information below for further details regarding the required documentation.

Identity Documentation

To meet NHS identity checking requirements, applicants should normally provide one of the following combinations:

- **Two forms of photographic ID (Passport) and one proof of address; or**
- **One form of photographic ID and two proofs of address.**

Acceptable documentation may include a valid passport, driving licence, national identity card, bank statement or utility bill, subject to the relevant NHS Employment Check Standard requirements.

Criminal Records Checks

UK applicants are required to provide an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate registered with the DBS Update Service. If the applicant's existing certificate is not dated within one year of the elective placement start date, a new Enhanced DBS certificate will be required.

International applicants may provide a Police Check or Certificate of Good Conduct from their country of residence, dated within one year of the elective placement start date.

Applicants who are required to submit a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction (CNCC) should initiate the process in good time, as processing may take a considerable period.

Where Barts Health NHS Trust is required to request a CNCC on an applicant's behalf, applicants should email bartshealth.visitingelective@nhs.net as soon as they receive their invitation letter, confirming that a CNCC is required. This will allow the request to be initiated as early as possible.

Occupational Health Requirements

Applicants are required to provide their vaccination records for review by Occupational Health and must meet the minimum health and immunisation requirements set by Barts Health NHS Trust before their placement can commence.

Immigration Documentation

Where an applicant requires a visitor visa or Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), evidence of the appropriate immigration permission will be requested as part of the relevant pre-employment checks.

References

Applicants are not required to resubmit their references, provided these were deemed satisfactory during the initial application stage.

In-Person Identity and Occupational Health Checks

All applicants are required to complete an in-person identity check and Occupational Health (OH) check before their placement commences. These checks must be satisfactorily completed before an honorary contract can be issued and the placement can begin.

Applicants should allow at least **five working days before their placement start date** to arrange their identity check.

Applicants currently overseas must arrange their Occupational Health and identity check appointments before arriving in the UK. Mandatory face-to-face identity and document verification must then be completed in person upon arrival in the UK and before the honorary placement commences. Applicants must present their original documentation for verification at this stage.

Please note that **all required pre-employment checks including in-person checks must be satisfactorily completed or evidenced before an honorary contract can be issued and the individual can commence their placement.**

Fees

The total fee for an elective placement is **£950**, comprising the following:

- **Administration fee: £500** – non-refundable.
- **Placement fee: £450** – refundable only in exceptional circumstances, in accordance with the Refund Policy.

Payment Requirements

Successful applicants will receive formal confirmation of their elective placement and must pay the full £950 fee within **five working days** of receiving their offer.

Failure to make payment within this timeframe will result in the offer of placement being withdrawn. Once full payment has been received, the honorary contract process will commence.

Please note that the £500 administration fee is non-refundable. The £450 placement fee may be refunded in exceptional circumstances, subject to the conditions set out in the Refund Policy*.

Payments will only be accepted during the designated application rounds and must be made through the approved payment channels. Payments submitted outside the application rounds or through unauthorised channels will not be accepted.

Specialties

Please note that placements may be allocated across any of the Barts Health NHS Trust sites.

Anaesthetics
Breast Surgery
Cardiothoracic Surgery
Cardiovascular / Cardiology
Child Health
Emergency Medicine
Endocrinology
Gastroenterology
General Surgery
Geriatric Medicine
Neurology
Neurosurgery
Obs & Gynae
Ophthalmology
Orthopaedics (Trauma & Orthopaedics)
Radiology
Renal Medicine
Respiratory
Trauma Surgery
Upper GI Surgery
Urology

VISA Information

Before making travel arrangements, all international elective students must check the UK immigration requirements that apply to their nationality.

Students must have the appropriate permission to enter the UK as a Standard Visitor for the purpose of undertaking their elective. Depending on nationality, this may be a Standard Visitor visa, an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), or, in some circumstances, neither.

Please check the latest requirements on the official UK Government website before travelling, as immigration requirements can change.

Electives cannot be rearranged if visas or relevant travel requirements are not obtained in time to start on the agreed date, nor can the administration fee be refunded.

Placement/Enrolment Information

You must have successfully completed the honorary contract process and been issued with an honorary contract before commencing your placement.

Approximately 1–2 weeks prior to your placement start date, the relevant site Undergraduate Coordinator will contact you with your reporting instructions and details of your designated supervisor.

Attendance at the Trust induction on the first day of your placement is mandatory. You will also be provided with a Trust IT account, as required, to support you throughout your placement.

For any placement-related administrative support or enquiries, please contact the relevant team using the email address provided below.

Role	Name	Email
NUH Undergraduate Administrator	Ms Saira Sanam	saira.sanam@nhs.net
RLH Undergraduate Coordinator	Ms Rumina Akter	r.akter@nhs.net
SBH Undergraduate Administrator	Mr Moqbul Hussain	moqbul.hussain@nhs.net
WXH Undergraduate Coordinator	Ms Rebecca Fynn	rebecca.fynn@nhs.net

End of Placement Feedback & Certificate

Upon completion of your placement, you will be sent a feedback survey, which must be completed before your certificate of completion can be issued.

Please note that the certificate of completion confirms attendance only. As this is an observational placement, you will not undertake activities required to assess or demonstrate clinical competencies, and therefore formal competency assessment and sign-off will not be provided.

FAQ's

What am I allowed to do whilst on placement?

The visiting elective programme is strictly an observational placement. There are clear limitations on the duties and opportunities for visiting elective observers and the supervising consultant may use their discretion to allow the following interaction with patients:

- attendance at ward rounds.
- observation of consultations in clinics.
- undertaking of patient histories under direct clinical supervision in a clinical observer capacity only.
- undertaking routine physical examinations with the patients' consent under direct clinical supervision by registered medical member of staff.
- directly observing surgery (i.e. not assisting in surgery)

Under no circumstances may a visiting elective observer:

- perform invasive procedures.
- advise on patient treatment.
- initiate, alter, or stop the treatment of a patient.
- document or make changes to the patient care record.
- take part in any procedure involving patients, including ordering tests, taking specimens, obtaining, or witnessing signatures for consent
- visit other departments except for appropriate attachments where agreed in advance with the supervising consultant and other consultant staff

Can I be signed off for competencies?

As the placement is observational in nature, it **does not** involve the activities required for formal clinical competency assessment and sign-off.

What if I have already obtained approval from a consultant for my placement?

Arrangements with a consultant **without** making an application will not be considered. Where a consultant has agreed to support the proposed placement, this may be indicated on the application form, however please note that the requested dates must be within the block dates and begin on Day 1of the relevant block.

How long can my placement last?

Placements can span from a minimum of 1 week to a maximum of 4 weeks, beginning on a Monday and ending on a Friday.

Can I apply early/get an early decision?

Out of fairness to other applicants who apply in the same application round, we cannot allow for applications to be received outside of the timeframes advertised on our website. Early decisions are also not guaranteed. It is best advised to apply as soon as the application round is open, as applications are reviewed in the order received, on a first come, first served basis.

One of my required documents is delayed – Can I still submit my application and have it placed on hold until I can submit the missing documents?

To ensure a fair and consistent application process, all documents required at the application stage, including your CV, covering letter and references, must be submitted alongside your application. These requirements are outlined in the handbook, and applicants are responsible for ensuring they have all the necessary documents ready before submitting their application. Unfortunately, we are unable to hold incomplete applications pending receipt of outstanding documents.

Once you have secured a placement, you will have approximately 6–8 weeks to gather and submit any additional documentation required for the honorary contract process. These requirements are also outlined in the handbook, and it is the applicant's responsibility to review these in advance and ensure the necessary documents can be provided within the required timeframe.

Do I need a VISA to travel?

Students must have the appropriate permission to enter the UK as a Standard Visitor for the purpose of undertaking their elective. Depending on nationality, this may be a Standard Visitor visa, an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), or, in some circumstances, neither. Please check the GOV.UK guidance for travelling to the UK.If your government requires a confirmation of placement letter, this can be requested from

What are the fees?

There is a fixed fee of £950 (£500 administration fee, 450 placement fee).

How do I pay my fees?
If your application is successful and you are offered a placement, you will receive an invitation letter via email confirming your placement offer, which will also include the link to complete your payment.

You will have five working days from the date the invitation email is sent to pay the full fee. Please note that failure to make payment within this timeframe will result in your placement offer being withdrawn.

By completing the payment, you are formally accepting your placement offer.

Am I entitled to a refund of the placement fee as my placement falls within a Bank Holiday?

Refunds of the Elective Placement Fee are not considered if your placement falls within a Bank Holiday.

If my Elective Placement is for less than 4 weeks, will the fee be reduced?

The standard fee of £950 (£500 administration fee, 450 placement fee) is fixed and the same for all Electives between 1-4 weeks.

Can I split my placement between different departments?

Unfortunately, split placements are not permitted. Your entire Elective Placement will take place within a single department.

Can my requested placement dates fall outside the designated block dates or overlap between two blocks?

Your requested placement dates must begin on Day 1 of one of the designated blocks and fall entirely within that block's specified dates. Placements cannot overlap between two blocks or extend beyond the dates listed. Applications that do not meet these requirements will be rejected.

Can I change my requested department or dates once I've been allocated a place?

No, once an offer of an Elective Placement has been given, it is non-negotiable.

How do I obtain an enhanced DBS?

Please contact your university, who will be able to arrange an Enhanced DBS check on your behalf. If your existing DBS certificate is more than 12 months old, you will need to request a new Enhanced DBS check through your university.

Where Barts Health NHS Trust is required to request a Certificate of No Criminal Conviction (CNCC) on your behalf, please email the relevant team as soon as you receive your invitation letter to confirm that a CNCC is required.

Will I be covered by insurance for any liability arising from my activities during the placement?

All Elective Placement student must hold an Honorary Contract with Barts Health, which:

- Provides NHS indemnity cover
- Is subject to the same pre-employment checks as substantive staff, in line with Trust policy and NHS Employers Checking Standards

Honorary contracts are unpaid and do not include salary, sick pay, paid leave, travel expenses or pension contributions.

Do you provide accommodation?

Barts Health is unable to provide accommodation throughout your placement.

What is the dress code?

Students attending their Elective Placement must adhere to the Barts Health Trust dress code policies. If you require scrubs on your placement, these will be provided within the designated department, however must be returned at the end of each day.

When will I receive my Certificate of Completion.

The Medical Education Team will provide you with a Certificate of Completion once you have completed your Elective Placement, submitted your feedback form and returned your student ID badge and lanyard.

Any clinical documentation required by your home institution can be signed by your supervising clinician before your departure.

Can I still apply if I am not in my final year of study?

Applicants must be in their penultimate or final year of study at the time of application. Applications from students who do not meet this requirement will be rejected.

Can I apply through the Erasmus + programme?

We are currently unable to facilitate placements through the Erasmus+ programme.