



**Barts and The London  
Student Staff Liaison Committee  
2019-20**

**SSLC#9 Meeting Summary & Action Plan**

**DATE:** Wednesday 03.06.2020, 1.30pm-2.30pm

**VENUE:** Microsoft Teams online meeting

**PRESENT:**

Staff Chair: Siobhan Cooke (SC)

Student Co-Chairs – Artemis Mantzavinou (AM) & Andreas Andreou (AA)

Secretariat: Andreas Andreou (AA)

Staff: Shahrar Ali (SA), Robert Sprott (RS), Olumide Popoola (OP), Benita Morrissey (BM), CA Molyneux (CM), Casey Shortall (CA), Catherine Santucci (CS), Dason Evans (DE), Graham Easton (GE), Jane Deayton (JD), Nimesh Patel (NP), Tom Schindler (TS), Will Spiring (WS), Dan Burke (DB), GJ Michael (GM)

3<sup>rd</sup> Year Reps: Andreas Andreou (AA), Charalambos Hadjicharalambous (CH),

4<sup>th</sup> Year Reps: Tom Longbottom (TL), Jack Juckes (JJ), Janani Ragaven (JR), Mahima Bhatt (MB)

5th year Reps:

BLSA: Megan Annetts (MA)

PA reps: -

ID rep: -

Malta: Angie,

<u>Item</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
Apologies	Paula Funnel (PF)		

Students chair minutes	<p><b>MEC update on timeline of next academic year and end of year exams format</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AM updates from MEC meeting: Dr Patel is looking at the options of the September exams. Ideally, he would like them to be face-to-face and count towards our EPM calculations as previously communicated to us. If face-to-face exams are not feasible in September, then the exams will have to be online – the school is still exploring different platforms and formats. If the school manages to find a way to carry invigilated online exams, then they will count towards the EPM calculations, otherwise they won't (to ensure fairness for all students).</li> </ul> <p><b>Updates on how placements might look like next year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SC: currently in the process of making changes in year 5 and become 10-week blocks</li> <li>- AM: placements will change for all years trying to reduce patient contact to protect students but at the same time have placement experience</li> </ul>		
Year 3 working groups	-	-	
Year 4 working groups	<p><b>Plans for final year and dates of SSC and elective submissions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>The most updated proposed program for year 5 is displayed on the meeting screen by RS</i></li> <li>- TL: 4<sup>th</sup> year reps were sent the proposal for the revised year 5 timetable starting from September, however there is great confusion and uncertainty around that. Firstly, they believe this is a massive change that is introduced on a very short notice for next year, although the document is titled as 'graduate 2025' and someone would expect these changes to happen in a few years' time. The first main concerns of the</li> </ul>		

	<p>course reps are: <b>(1) finals being moved back by 2 months (from March to May); (2) not enough time to catch up with the missed year 4 placements because of COVID-19.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ In terms of the course reps <b>first (1) main concern</b>, they believe that moving finals back by 2 months will negatively affect students' mental health and well-being. This is because students will be already studying during the summer holidays for their end-of-year exams in September, then they will immediately start year 5 in September and will shortly have to start studying for their SJT, PSA and finals in May. This extended period of studying will consequently negatively affect the mental health of students and poses the risk of burnout, given the extended period of time students are asked to be studying.</li><li>○ In terms of the course reps <b>second (2) main concern</b>, they cannot understand how expanding year 5 placements so significantly will enable them to complete the missed year 4 placements, since it was their understanding that 'missed placements' would be completed in the SSC5a 5-week block, which has been changed in the new proposed timetable. This raises the question whether these changes are due to COVID-19 or just part of the curriculum review of the 'graduate 2025'.</li><li>- RS: Emphasized the importance of clinical placements in both hospitals and GP, and that medical students cannot become doctors without adequate clinical exposure. However, there is still uncertainty around the COVID-19 situation and the school cannot predict whether there will be a 2<sup>nd</sup> wave of infections, its</li></ul>		
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	<p>impact, and consequently if students will be able to come back in placements in September. If the situation is still unsafe for medical students, there is still the possibility of starting clinical placements in January 2021 instead of September as planned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>In terms of the generic prolonged placements concerns:</b> Because of that uncertainty, and the possibility of clinical placements starting late, the university wants to give students as much clinical exposure as possible. Consequently, this might mean extending year 5 placements to accommodate for any time lost because of potential placement disruptions in the future. Initially, the 'graduate 2025' changes were driven by a variety of factors, including the GMC's outcomes for graduates and the new MLA exam format; however, the driver of bringing forward these changes for the next academic year is not about implementing 'graduate 2025' earlier, but to maximize students' clinical experience and exposure given the disruption during this academic year. One of the ways to maximize placement opportunities is by having placements that are more generic – this way the school will get more capacity. Hospitals have not been able to confirm their plans on when they are going back to normality (e.g. starting surgeries etc.), so starting clinical placements on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September might have to move because of these other factors (still a lot of uncertainty). The vast majority of the GP placements that are self-organized will be able to go ahead. The placement blocks might have to be more 'generic' because</li></ul>		
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	<p>hospitals are re-organizing their care right now; thus, medical students will need to go where the work is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>In terms of the burnout concerns:</b> He understands that everyone has been through an unprecedented experience through lockdown and that a lot of students haven't been able to go back home. However, he believes that the earlier they put finals, the higher the chances are for students to fail, since they won't have enough clinical exposure if placements are too short.</li><li>○ <b>In terms of being unable to complete the 'missed logbooks':</b> They are in the process of creating a supplementary logbook and it's being decided when will be the best time during year 5 placements to complete this logbook.</li><li>○ <b>In terms of missing out specialty experience that students might be interested in but will be unable to complete it during year 5:</b> Students will be able to complete placements of their interest during the career development block., which is in place to give students the opportunity to organize placements in an environment that is important to them.</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- TL: Suggests that all these changes might be far too much of a change to be implemented all together in such short notice. He understands that some changes need to happen because of COVID-19 but cannot understand how the new plan is making up for that lost time.</li><li>- RS: Everything has changed dramatically, thus it is unrealistic to expect that the program that we had in place this year will work for next year.</li></ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- JJ: His biggest concern is the <b>lack of structure in terms of making up what the students have missed</b>, especially if it's up to the trusts to distribute students according to their needs. This could introduce a lot of disparities if trusts have the freedom to place 5<sup>th</sup> year students wherever they have space – how will the school ensure that the students are getting the same exposure and clinical experience?</li><li>- RS: From the feedback the school receives from students, a good placement is a trust that integrates students in the clinical team and allows them to carry numerous supervised activities. Hence, the emphasis of the 10-week assistantship is having the students integrated in the team and undertaking roles under supervision, which is what students have commented positively on previously.</li><li>- SC: Appreciates JJ's point on disparity and unequal experiences between trusts. in terms of GP placements, the school is working on developing a support network for GP tutors as well as students to support them throughout the 10-week block.</li><li>- GE: Additionally, the school will try and work with clinical skills tutors of all the different trusts to develop a clinical skills teaching program that will be implemented across all trusts, in an attempt to even out any disparities.</li><li>- RS: Asked course reps opinion if finals were to be moved closer towards the Easter block (pushed 2-3 weeks later than the original March dates), have slightly shorter rotations (7-8 weeks each), and have a longer SSC period. Also emphasized that the school is trying to get students back to clinical placement at the earliest possibility, and the only way the school can</li></ul>		
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	<p>achieve that is by redefining the role of clinical placements and medical students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- TL: Ideally, the students would like finals to stay on the same dates but pushing them 2-3 weeks closer to the Easter holidays is a better alternative than having them in May.</li><li>- AM: Agrees with TL, students shouldn't have extra pressure by having finals so late in May</li><li>- MB: Agrees with TL, students will work very hard throughout summer for their September exams, and if the start placements in September they won't have time to rest.</li><li>- TL: Still unclear why things are stretched out so much</li><li>- RS: Volume of students each trust can take on placement might change, thus this change in curriculum is necessary to maximize learning and quality of the experience. If trusts can take the volume of students the school requires on 7/9/2020 then having finals right after Easter on the week beginning 5/4/2021 can be feasible – otherwise, if trusts cannot take students until November/December then that will be difficult. Therefore, the prolonged placement suggestions are because the school yet does not know the capacity of trusts and opportunities of patient contact the students will get. For example, at the moment the trusts are locked down and consultants are not allowed to do their clinics across multiple sites to reduce cross-contamination (i.e. consultants at the Royal London are not allowed to travel to Barts Hospital to carry out their clinics as some of them would normally do). Therefore, these structural changes are mostly about what is available at the time for medical students. Having said that, <b>the proposal of</b></li></ul>		
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	<p><b>having finals after Easter is something that can be considered</b>, meaning that there will be three 9-week clinical blocks if placements start on the 7<sup>th</sup> of September 2020. He is meeting with Hospital Trusts on 10/6/2020 and one of the topics of discussion will be about the capacity of students the hospitals can take in September, if any, so that the planning of year 5 timetable will be more feasible. Consequently, this will allow them to plan years 4 and 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- TL: Asked the possibility of arranging a meeting with RS after the meeting on 10/6/2020 before the next year 5 meeting, to discuss what was communicated by the hospitals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o RS: Yes, this can be arranged.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- JR: What is the plan regarding electives, are they cancelled? They don't seem to be in the timetable.</li> <li>- NP: The Careers Development Block is where the elective will most probably take place. However, all oversees electives are likely to be cancelled for the next academic year for student safety.</li> </ul>		
Year 5 working groups	-		
MAC	-		
MEC	-		
Student support meeting	-		
Student office items	-		



General academic items	-	-	
Malta items	<p><b>Date of board of examiners meeting on progression and time allowed for remediation work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Malta reps sked when the examiners' meeting on progression is taking place, and if there will be any remediation required for students who fail SSC3b.</li> <li>- CM: The dates for these meetings have not changed, they are taking place as planned and if students need to remediate, they will be given the same time they would otherwise have.</li> </ul> <p><b>SSC3a designated supervisors and feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In SSC3a, students in the London campus are designated a tutor who helps them chose a patient and gives them feedback etc. In Malta students are not designated a tutor – is there anything that can be done for that?</li> <li>- CM: not aware of that – should be taken to the SSC meeting</li> </ul>		
PA items	-		
Library items	-		
Intercalated items	-	-	
Other items	-		

**End of meeting**