

Joint staff update on the Kent and Medway Medical School for Christ Church and University of Kent staff

Title: **Update on the Kent and Medway Medical School**

Dear colleagues,

I am writing to update you on the progress of the Kent and Medway Medical School (KMMS), a collaboration between Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent.

KMMS will bring together the existing centres of excellence in health and medically-related education at both universities, with local healthcare organisations, to offer a new model of patient-focused medical education. The medical school will also catalyse exciting new education, research and innovation activities in a transdisciplinary way across other Faculties, Schools and Programmes.

The medical school will offer five-year undergraduate medicine programmes resulting in a joint Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (BMBS) degree, recognised as a Primary Medical Qualification (PMQ) by the General Medical Council (GMC), awarded by both the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University. KMMS teaching and research will happen across both universities' campuses.

GMC Accreditation

The GMC has a duty to ensure that the UK offers a high standard of medical education and training. Institutions wishing to establish a new medical school have to undergo an [extensive period of quality assurance](#) before they are accredited to award medical degrees.

In February, KMMS successfully completed stage three of the accreditation process and received very complimentary feedback in a number of areas. The feedback also suggested areas for development, which largely focused on providing more detail around the taught programme, student support and clinical placements and this is being developed.

KMMS is now working towards its stage four submission in April, which will be followed by a stage 5 visit from the GMC in the summer. KMMS is being supported through this process by Brighton and Sussex Medical School, which is acting as the 'parent institution' – a GMC requirement when a new medical school is established – until the KMMS receives full accreditation. This is expected in summer 2025, when our first cohort of students graduate.

Programme Approval

On the 28th February, at a specially convened joint event, both Universities gave their approval for us to open in September 2020. This was an important milestone, providing reassurance of the high-quality of our programme to potential applicants who might have concerns about the status of the programme awaiting GMC accreditation. The panel commended the following aspects of our degree:

1. Our commitment to the Widening Participation strategy, describing it as “detailed, clearly described and well thought out.”
2. The enthusiasm shown by our Stakeholders for the Kent and Medway Medical School.
3. The clear collaborative working between the four Universities and two Medical Schools.
4. Providing opportunity for intercalation at a Masters’ degree level.
5. Providing opportunities for students to be taught alongside peers in biological sciences, healthcare professions and pharmacy subjects both in University and in practice.
6. The integration of Elderly Care and Psychiatry as a parallel and integrated module alongside other modules.

This was a significant achievement which happened in less than a year from the 100 places being awarded by HEfCE. It was only possible to achieve this with an immense amount of collaborative working across both Universities under the leadership of Dr Sue Plummer.

Widening Participation

Our commitment to supporting widening participation students and the successful and collaborative track record of our two institutions made a significant contribution to the success of our bid to set up the KMMS.

KMMS is committed to opening up opportunities for talented students from all backgrounds to study medicine in our region. Building on the success of existing Kent and Medway Progression Federation activities, we are broadening the remit of our outreach and engagement programmes, working closely with schools and sixth-form colleges across Kent, Medway and other geographical areas to inspire young people to consider studying medicine.

For the next six months, we will be working with colleagues from the Brighton and Sussex Medical School to develop a comprehensive outreach programme for students from years 9 to 13, with delivery starting in September 2019.

Widening participation students who meet the minimum academic criteria, and are currently studying at a school or college that is partnered with Christ Church or Kent universities, will be guaranteed an invitation to interview. Qualifying students will also receive a lower contextual offer of BBB.

We will also provide additional financial support for students from lower-income families for each year of study. All students attending the KMMS will work within an inclusive environment where support is provided to help them overcome financial or other limitations that might otherwise affect their prospects of success.

Student recruitment

Applications for the medical school's programmes – Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery – will be considered between 1 September and 15 October this year.

The new KMMS website went live at the beginning of February and the KMMS prospectus is being distributed this week.

The first KMMS Open Day is planned for Saturday 6 April. This event will be held at the University of Kent with visitors being offered an optional tour of Christ Church's Canterbury Campus.

I will provide an introduction to the medical school and the courses, and Christ Church's Director of Marketing, Marco Keir, and Kent's Head of Recruitment and Admissions Office, Stephen Holdcroft, will give an overview of the two universities. With building work underway, we will be making use of technology including digital fly-throughs of both new buildings.

Student ambassadors and Students' Union officials from Kent and Christ Church will be present to answer any questions on student life. We also hope to have representation from current medical students from both Kings and Brighton and Sussex Medical Schools.

A second Open Day is planned for Saturday 29 June, which will be hosted at Christ Church, offering a similar and complementary opportunity for interested applicants and their families.

Both universities are also representing the medical school at education fairs, school events and at the Kent, Essex and London UCAS Fairs.

Staff Recruitment

KMMS is embarking on the recruitment process for our team including both academic and professional services colleagues. These posts are advertised widely and we welcome conversations and enquiries from colleagues at either university who are interested in joining our exciting project.

Academic collaborations

In addition to the many staff at both institutions who are already actively engaged with the development of the KMMS primary medical qualification, and the institutional designated leads for KMMS (Peter Nicholls and Debra Towse), there are a number of KMMS liaison academics representing the complementary academic interests of both Kent and Christ Church. These are:

- [Julie Anderson](#), School of History (medical humanities)
- [Kate Hamilton-West](#), Centre for Health Services Studies

- [Michelle Garrett](#), School of Biosciences
- [Sarah Cant](#), School of Psychology, Politics and Sociology
- [Simon Harvey](#), School of Human and Life Sciences
- [Margie Callanan](#), Salomons Institute for Applied Psychology,
- [Mark Gradwell](#), School of Allied and Public Health Professions

You are encouraged to make contact with any ideas, questions and opportunities that you would like to discuss in relation to the project.

We will continue to share KMMS updates with you over the coming months. In the meantime, if you would like to find out more, please [visit the KMMS website](#).

With best wishes

Chris Holland
Dean of the Kent and Medway Medical School