



Guidance for INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES working in ICM



The Faculty of
**Intensive
Care Medicine**

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Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Pre-arrival to the UK, having received a job offer.....	3
2.1.	Accommodation.....	4
2.2.	Shadowing period.....	4
3.	On arrival to the UK.....	4
3.1.	General Medical Council Registration.....	4
3.2.	Medical Indemnity Cover.....	4
3.3.	Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).....	4
3.4.	Biometric Residence Permit Collection.....	5
3.5.	Opening a Bank Account.....	5
3.6.	National Insurance Number.....	5
3.7.	Schools.....	5
3.8.	GP registration.....	5
3.9.	Driving.....	6
3.10.	Public Transport.....	6
3.11.	Blue Light Card.....	6
4.	Starting Your Job.....	6
4.1.	Occupational Health Clearance.....	6
4.2.	Taxation Code – Revenue.....	6
4.3.	Welcome to UK Medical Practice Workshops.....	6
5.	Settling in the Job.....	7
5.1.	Educational Meeting.....	7
5.2.	Portfolio.....	7
5.3.	Basic & Advanced Life Support.....	7
5.4.	FICM Associate Membership.....	7
5.5.	Learning Resources.....	8
5.6.	Appraisal.....	8

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1. Introduction

FICM recognises the challenges faced by International Medical Graduates (IMGs) in embedding into UK practice. This information has been produced to support them within the ICU environment. It aims to supplement the knowledge gained from the [GMC's 'Welcome to UK Practice' online workshops](#) and [e-Learning for Health's 'NHS induction for International Medical Graduates'](#)

This guidance is intended for use by International Medical Graduates who are new to, or are in their first 12 months, of working in the NHS.

We are committed to supporting a positive experience for our International Medical Graduates. We hope this will provide useful information to help you:

- Feel valued as an International Medical Graduate
- Become familiar with UK Intensive Care Medicine practice
- Guide your self-directed learning and portfolio progression
- Support supervisors to ensure adequate preparation is in place for placements.

To this end we have also produced some general guidance to support not only IMG doctors, but the [supervisors and hospitals that facilitate these placements](#). This is not an exhaustive list but looks to provide examples that can be adapted to suit local requirements. It aims to guide the knowledge, skills and experience required for successful integration into the NHS workforce.

For ease of use we have also produced an [IMG Induction Pack](#), that aims to provide helpful guidance and resources for IMGs to use for their initial placements working in Intensive Care Medicine in the UK. It is intended for IMG doctors new to the NHS working in ICM outside of the ICM CCT Programme (i.e. for those doctors in non-training posts). It should be adapted for local use and targeted to the individual doctors' requirements based on their prior experience.

For International Medical Graduates (IMGs) starting their first job in the NHS can be challenging. It is a new system and a new culture. The information provided in this guidance aims to support you in settling into your first Intensive Care Medicine (ICM) job in the NHS. This guidance is not an exhaustive list of activities. Some things will need to be considered prior to your arrival in the UK, and some on arrival.

2. Pre-arrival to the UK, having received a job offer

You have received a letter with offer of employment and a point of contact within the Human Resources department of the Hospital you will work in.

Useful documents to bring:

- Passport
- Medicine/Vaccination history
- Good standing certificate from ALL prior employers
- Police clearance from countries resided in in the last 10 years
- Letter from employing body confirming offer of employment
- Medical Qualification Certificates
- Driving license (if you have one)
- Birth Certificate
- Marriage certificate (if applicable)
- Visa
- Evidence of where you will be staying.

2.1 Accommodation

Most hospitals provide temporary accommodation for individuals or families. Please email the accommodation officer early on to enquire. There may be a waiting list.

If considering renting, search for areas that are safe and easy to commute to and from your base hospital. There are websites like Rightmove, Zoopla and SpareRoom (and many others) that advertise properties. It is advisable to view the property physically and not rely on virtual tours.

2.2 Shadowing period

We strongly recommend you approach the employing Intensive Care Unit to arrange/discuss a period of shadowing. This means you will spend time observing your colleagues, and getting time to sign off basic procedures before you are officially on the rota. Not all trusts/health boards provide this, but it is worth negotiating before you start.

3. On Arrival to the UK

The following checklist is suggestive of things you will need to consider. Some are mandatory for UK practise:

- GMC registration /ID check
- Medical indemnity
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Collect Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
- Bank account
- National Insurance number
- Driving requirements
- GP registration
- Dentist
- Online resources
- Contact Employing department
- Schools

3.1 General Medical Council registration

The GMC is responsible for ensuring that doctors have the knowledge skills and experience expected by patients. A licence to practice is required, which allows doctors to fulfil certain duties. There are a variety of routes to GMC registration, and these vary depending on your prior experience. These can be found at the GMC website. Anyone holding a license to practice will need to go through the process of revalidation.

3.2 Medical Indemnity cover

As you are dealing with acutely unwell patients, it is strongly recommended to apply for medical indemnity with organisations such as the [Medical Defence Union](#), [Medical Protection Society](#) or [Medical and Dental Indemnity UK \(MDDUS\)](#). Membership with any of these organisations will provide you with continuous medico-legal advice and assistance with claims, complaints, disciplinary procedures etc. The membership cost will depend on your grade and role. Many hospitals will not allow you to start working without having medical indemnity.

3.3 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is a criminal record clearance. You should apply for it online through a link that the lead employer or employing trust/health board send to you. You will need a record of your living addresses for the past three years and your current address in the UK.

Once you have your DBS certificate, consider registering with the DBS online update service, which will keep your DBS record active in case any other employer needs to access your criminal record status.

[For more information, please visit the government website here.](#)

3.4 Biometric Residence Permit collection

Your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is your visa permit to stay in the country. You should have a letter given to you when you receive your Tier 2 or Health Worker visa to state which post office your BRP will get sent to. BRP is likely to be ready within approximately 10 days of your arrival in the UK.

- [Your visa status could also be confirmed through an online share code from the Home Office website here.](#)
- [To report a delay in BRP, use the government website here.](#)

3.5 Opening a bank account

Most high street banks require proof of address and 2 forms of identification to open an account, your employer should provide you with a letter confirming your employment, salary, and current address. Some new online banks do not require proof of address and can be used to have your salary paid into it.

You can do a web search to find out about the various banks in the UK. You will need to check the different banks' websites to determine the documentation they need in order for you to open an account.

3.6 National Insurance Number

You can apply for a National Insurance (NI) number; if you have the right to work in the UK, are working, looking for work or have an offer to start work. It is your unique identifier for ensuring that the tax and NI you pay is recorded against your name. It also acts as a unique identifier if communicating with the [Department of Work and Pensions of HM Revenues and Customs](#) (HMRC).

3.7 Schools

Depending on your location (variation between devolved nations - England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) you can access information on the standard of the schools in the areas. Feedback from the students' families can be found on websites such as: www.schoolguide.co.uk

Your [local council website](#) will also provide reports.

You can only apply to a certain school if you live in the catchment area (geographical area around the school). Catchment areas can be found on the council website. You would apply for your child to attend a particular school via the council's website. You need proof of address to start the application. It is advisable to speak to the school managers/ headteachers if you are coming from abroad, as your children may require additional support in the transitional phase of the new education system in a new country.

3.8 GP registration

Find your nearest GP surgery to register. [Search by postcode on the NHS website here.](#)

3.9 Driving

You can use an International Driving License to drive in the UK for up to one year. If you have a driving license issued in the UAE, Ukraine, Taiwan or Republic of North Macedonia, you may exchange it with a British Driving License without taking a driving test. Otherwise, [you should apply for a provisional driving license through the Driving & Vehicle Licensing Agency \(DVLA\) website](#), take a theory test, and assign yourself to an instructor to help you pass the practical test.

[For more information, please visit the government website here.](#)

3.10 Public transport

This depends on your arrival destination. There are bus networks with services starting at 7am – midnight in most cities. There are National Railway service links in cities and some towns. In more rural areas public transport can be more sporadic. Some hospitals have lift share options.

There are many taxi/cab companies, and most of them accept cash and/or card payments. You can search on Google for the most popular taxi companies in your area. In addition, the Uber taxi app provides competitive prices compared to taxicabs. You are required to have an account to start booking journeys.

3.11 Blue Light Card

The [Blue Light Card](#) is a discount card for NHS workers. This is a great way to save on your expenses for a small subscription fee. It comes with thousands of discounts online and on the high street.

4. Starting Your Job

4.1 Occupational Health clearance

You need to notify the Occupational Health department of your employer of your arrival so that they can arrange an appointment to check your vaccination history and arrange blood tests to check for specific antibody titres for vaccinations you have had in the past.

4.2 Taxation Code – Revenue

Upon receipt of the work schedule your employer's payroll department will send the Full Payment Submission (FPS) to tell HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) the payment the employee receives. After this, HMRC will issue the tax code. Please expect that you may be on emergency tax in the first month's salary (taxation around 40% of your pay), any overpaid tax should be refunded to you in the following months.

You will see a taxation code on your pay slip, indicating a tax-free allowance. (component of your salary that is tax free) This may vary annually. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure their tax code is correct so if you spot any mistakes/discrepancies you should contact the HMRC.

[For more information, visit the government website here.](#)

4.3 Welcome to UK medical practice workshops

These are free online workshops organised by the GMC to support international Medical Graduates starting their first job in the UK. It is essential to know what the GMC expects from you before starting your job. [Please book your slot via the website here.](#)

5. Settling in the Job

5.1 Educational meeting

Each doctor has a Clinical Supervisor (CS) responsible for their academic progression. Please know who your supervisor is, meet them early, to arrange a Personal Development Plan (PDP) for you, a Shadowing period, a plan to get you signed off on basic procedures, and a plan to apply to ICM training or portfolio (CESR) pathway.

This person can also signpost to enhanced inductions run by the trust/hospital and support networks within their hospitals. The faculty has produced some suggested topics to cover over the initial meetings. These are not exhaustive.

5.2 Portfolio

Some trusts do offer online portfolios to keep track of your competencies. If not available, you could use a paper forms portfolio from the FICM website to document any Supervising Learning Events (SLEs) you have done or a Logbook to record your competencies.

For more information, please visit the following pages on our website:

- [FICM Assessment Forms](#)
- [ICM Logbook Resources](#)

You will be required to participate in an annual appraisal, so some sort of portfolio will be required for this process (see below).

5.3 Basic & Advanced Life Support

Basic Life Support is a great starting point to familiarise yourself with the structure of medical emergencies in the UK and what you will be expected to do. You may be able to organise this with your educational supervisor or trust/health board at the start of your job. The simulation department within the hospital may also support this.

Speak to the resuscitation department at your trust/health board to book an Advanced Life Support (ALS) provider course, this is a very useful structured course that supports your management of the acutely unwell or deteriorating patient. [For more information on the ALS Course, please visit the Resuscitation Council's website.](#)

5.4 FICM Associate Membership

Any IMG working in Intensive Care Medicine in the UK (who has not received a National Training Number) may be eligible for [FICM's Associate Membership](#). This membership gives you the privileges of:

- accessing [FICM's Lifelong Learning Platform \(LLP\)](#)
- attending [Faculty events](#)
- participating in Continuing Professional Development
- sitting the [Final FFICM examination](#) as long as you also fulfil the [eligibility requirements in the FFICM Examination regulations](#).
- and voting in Faculty elections.

5.5 Learning resources

- **FICMLearning:** [FICMLearning](#) has extensive educational resources for doctors including Blogs, Podcasts, Case of the Month, and Simulation scenarios.
- **e-ICM:** [e-ICM](#) has an online module covering most of the FICM ICM curriculum, you will get an autogenerated certificate with CPD points once you complete each set of modules. It also has modules specific for introductions into ICM. To access e-ICM for the first time as an NHS employees you will need to: [Register for e-Learning for Healthcare](#), then add e-ICM to your programmes by selecting e-ICM in the 'My Programmes' section (please note, it can take 24 hours for the programme to become available to you).
- **Difficult Airway Society Guidelines:** [To access the guidelines on intubation see their website here.](#)

5.6 Appraisal

Non-training' doctors receive an annual review of overall performance with a trust appraiser; this is to demonstrate that you are meeting the principles and values as set out by [GMC's Good Medical Practice](#). It is required for GMC revalidation, and it is a 5-year cycle. Doctors with a National Training Number (i.e. an ICM CCT training post) receive an Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP) at the end of each medical year for which a portfolio is required. There are more resources available regarding this on the faculty and GMC websites and from your hospitals.

We hope this information helps to support and guide the start of your career in Intensive Care Medicine in the UK, ensuring your experience is a positive and welcoming one.



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