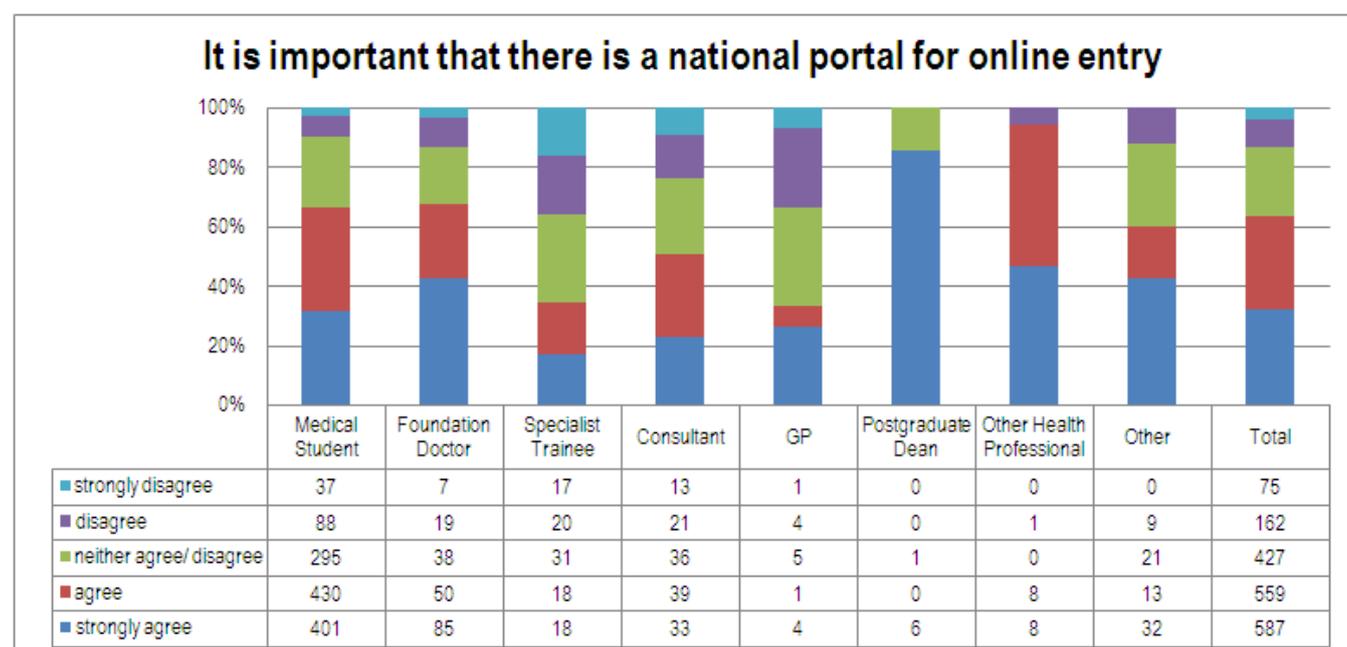
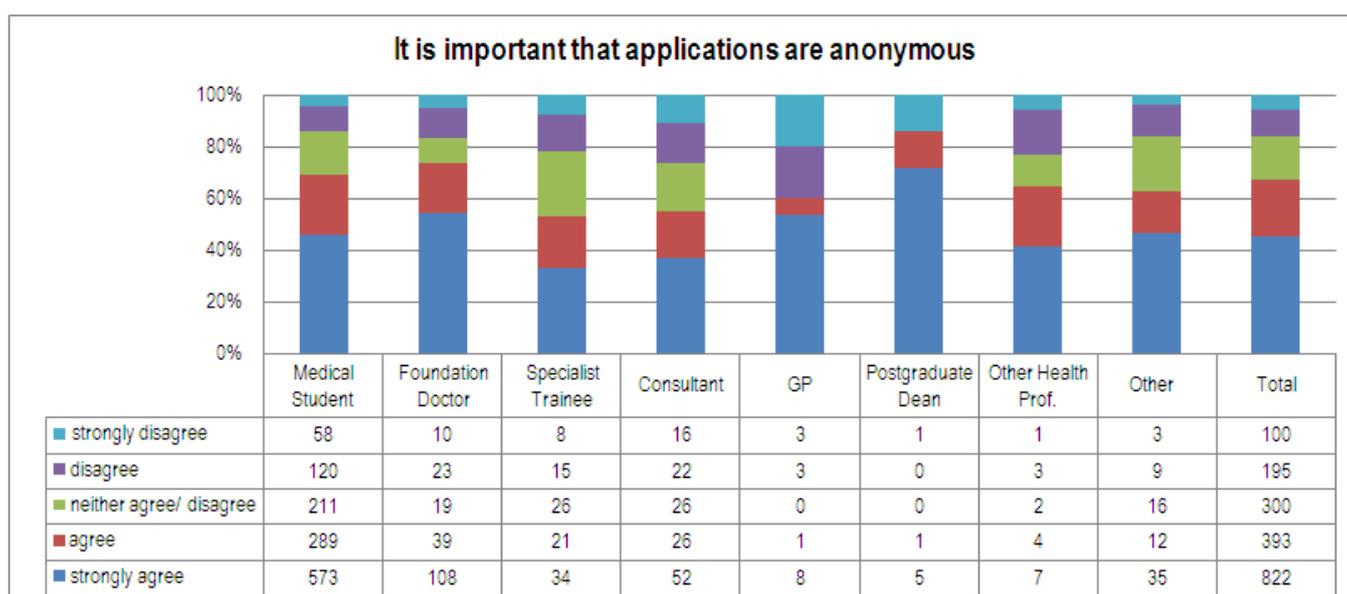


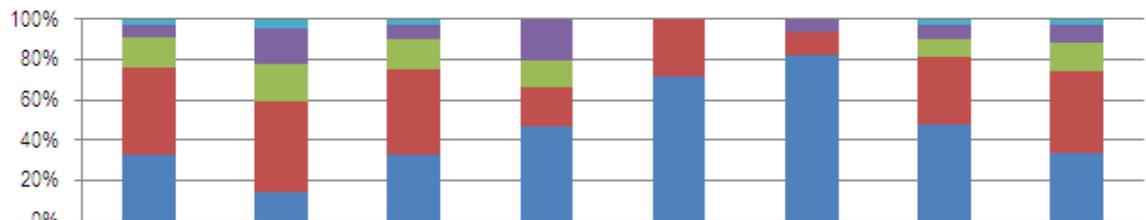
Summary of online questionnaire responses

The questions to the online questionnaire were agreed by the Steering Group. The online tool was open for responses from 6 April 2009 until 1 June 2009. The website was hosted by the Medical Schools Council website and the weblink circulated to stakeholder constituents. Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with statements with regards selection into the Foundation Programme.

	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
Male	493	80	62	95	8	6	4	32	780
Female	748	118	40	47	7	1	13	43	1017
Prefer not to disclose	10	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	13
Total	1251	199	104	142	15	7	17	75	1810

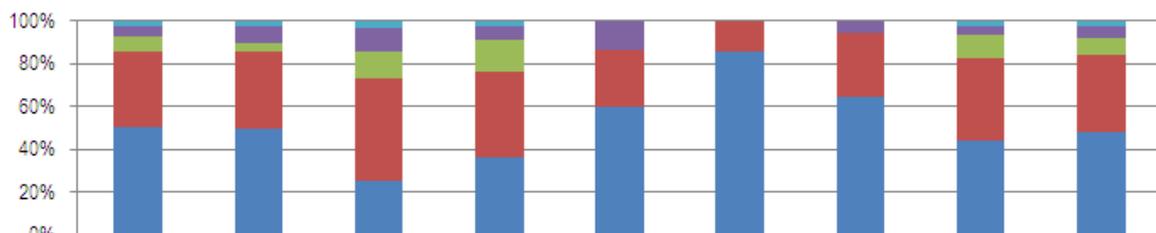


It is important that the application process reflects the attributes described in the national person specification for Foundation Doctors



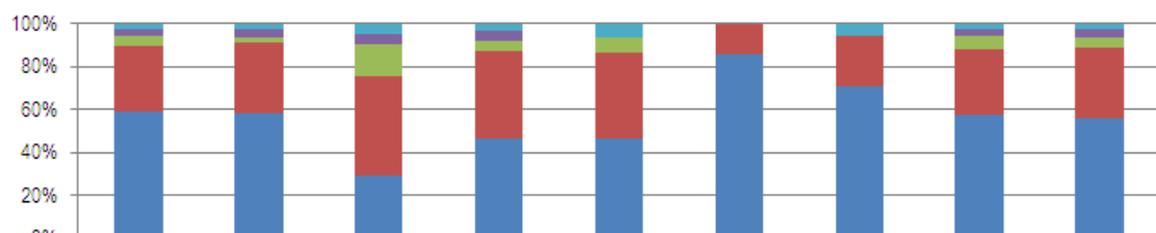
	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	6	5	4	0	0	0	2	17
disagree	11	18	10	3	0	1	5	48
neither agree/ disagree	31	19	21	2	0	0	7	80
agree	85	47	60	3	2	2	25	224
strongly agree	66	15	47	7	5	14	36	190

It is important that any elements used in the application process are standardised



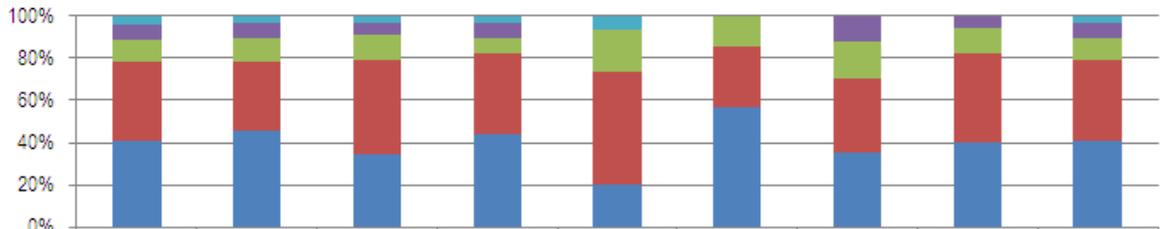
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	34	5	3	3	0	0	0	2	47
disagree	52	15	12	9	2	0	1	3	94
neither agree/ disagree	87	8	13	22	0	0	0	8	138
agree	444	72	50	57	4	1	5	29	662
strongly agree	634	99	26	51	9	6	11	33	869

It is important that the application process assesses knowledge, skills and attitudes/ behaviour



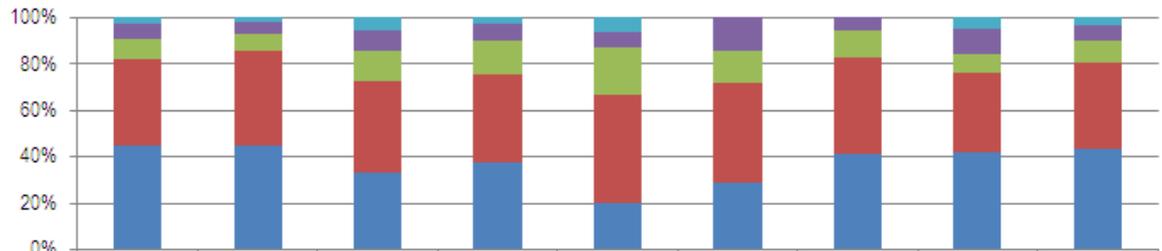
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	31	5	5	4	1	0	1	2	49
disagree	41	8	5	7	0	0	0	2	63
neither agree/ disagree	53	4	15	7	1	0	0	5	85
agree	389	66	49	58	6	1	4	23	596
strongly agree	737	116	30	66	7	6	12	43	1017

It is important that the application process assesses academic achievements



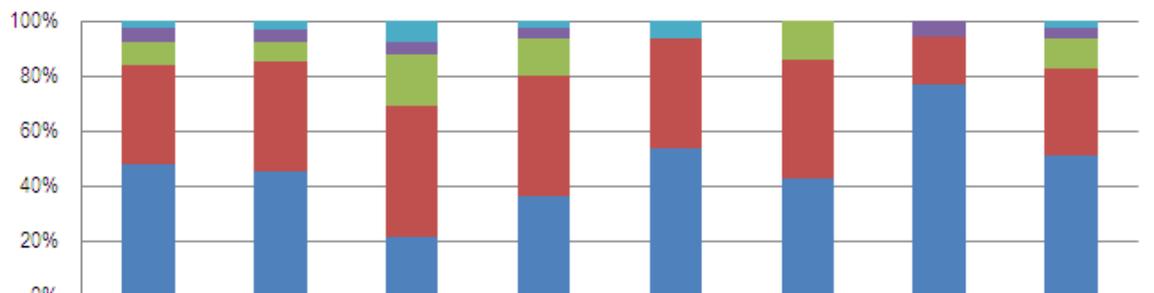
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	46	6	3	5	1	0	0	0	61
disagree	95	15	6	10	0	0	2	4	132
neither agree/ disagree	128	22	13	10	3	1	3	9	189
agree	470	65	46	54	8	2	6	32	683
strongly agree	512	91	36	63	3	4	6	30	745

It is important that the application process assesses clinical skills



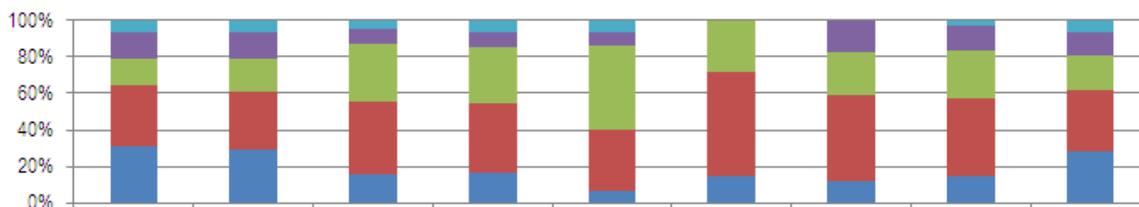
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	40	5	6	4	1	0	0	4	60
disagree	83	10	9	11	1	1	1	8	124
neither agree/ disagree	109	14	14	20	3	1	2	6	169
agree	458	82	41	54	7	3	7	26	678
strongly agree	561	88	34	53	3	2	7	31	779

It is important that communication skills are assessed



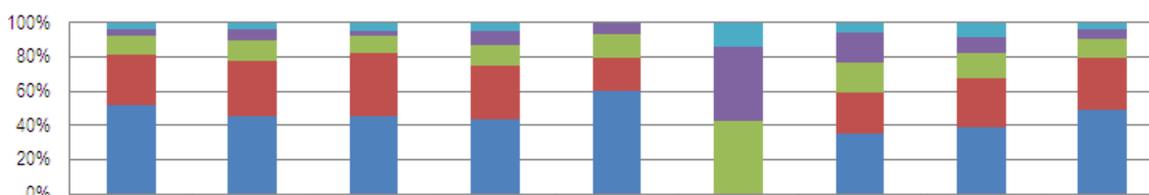
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other
strongly disagree	35	6	8	4	1	0	0	2
disagree	65	9	5	5	0	0	1	3
neither agree/ disagree	100	15	19	19	0	1	0	8
agree	452	79	50	63	6	3	3	24
strongly agree	599	90	22	51	8	3	13	38

It is important that the application process captures candidates' contributions to extra-curricular activities



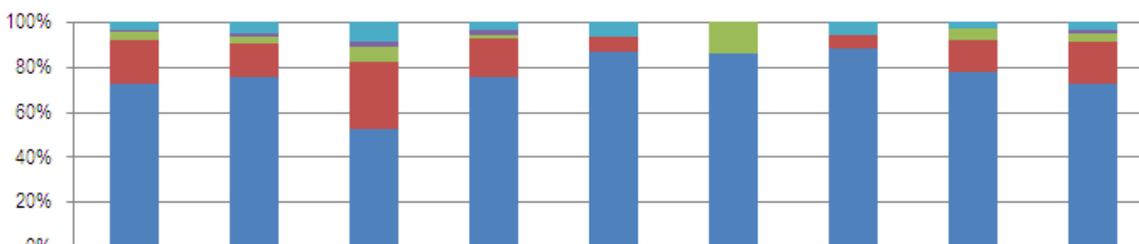
	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	81	13	5	9	1	0	0	2	111
disagree	178	28	8	12	1	0	3	10	240
neither agree/ disagree	188	37	33	44	7	2	4	20	335
agree	414	63	42	54	5	4	8	32	622
strongly agree	390	58	16	23	1	1	2	11	502

It is important that candidates can represent themselves/their case in person



	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	44	8	5	7	0	1	1	6	72
disagree	54	12	3	12	1	3	3	7	95
neither agree/ disagree	138	25	10	17	2	3	3	11	209
agree	370	63	39	44	3	0	4	22	545
strongly agree	645	91	47	62	9	0	6	29	889

It is important that it is difficult to cheat/ plagiarise



	Medical Student	Foundation Doctor	Specialist Trainee	Consultant	GP	Postgraduate Dean	Other Health Professional	Other	Total
strongly disagree	46	10	9	5	1	0	1	2	74
disagree	13	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	23
neither agree/ disagree	47	6	7	3	0	1	0	4	68
agree	241	29	31	24	1	0	1	11	338
strongly agree	904	150	54	107	13	6	15	58	1307

Summary of online questionnaire responses provided by 'Further comments'

483 of the 1810 respondents to the online survey made additional comments: eleven respondents commented on the structure of the questionnaire, and 475 respondents made comments about the current system and prospective changes.

Several respondents emphasised the strengths of the current system, including the importance of consideration of special circumstances. There were however a high number of comments about the current system of white space questions and quartiles, deeming the white space questions to be 'waffly' and an exercise in creative writing, the word limit restrictive and the balance between academic and non-academic achievements unsatisfying. Respondents commented that

'The current system does not adequately assess individuals knowledge, clinical skills or communication skills and it really only assesses how good you are at buzz-words.'

-Glasgow Medical Student

'There is no incentive for excellence in your medical school exams and little incentive to do anything of note or value in extra-curricular activities as you can make a suitable answer for the form from next to nothing. A candidate who has spent medical school in the pub, bed and never visited the wards or library could in theory end up with his first choice job as he's ticked the boxes for a few of the application's questions.'

-HYMS Medical Student

more emphasis should be on evidence of performance, than on reflection. Concerns were also raised about plagiarism in answers to white space questions, and transparency in the marking of white space questions. The weighting of academic performance continues to be debated, with the six point difference between the top and bottom quartiles a clear source of contention. There were arguments for and against the recognition of extra-curricular activities at Medical School, with difficulties in standardising points awarded and added value to the application.

Several respondents commented that as all Medical School graduates have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement, it is the other attributes of being a 'good' doctor which should be assessed in selection. However, the vast majority of respondents did favour a higher weighting towards academic performance and performance at Medical School to encourage consistent hard-work and high attendance at Medical School and to support the aspiration to excellence, above the current academic quartile ranking. It was posited that re-

assessing knowledge within a selection tool would undermine the purpose of – and confidence in – Medical School finals, and that greater use of existing information on academic performance, communication and clinical skills should be used.

Whilst 67% of respondents agreed with the statement 'It is important that applications are anonymous', the overwhelming majority of additional comments from medical students emphasised a desire for interviews with their prospective employer, usually in combination with an application form. Others recognised the limitations of a national interview scheme, citing difficulties in standardisation, the possibility of a 'white space questions' interview and poor cost-effectiveness. Just one respondent was in favour of Assessment Centres, and two in favour of a nationalised exit examination.

One respondent questioned whether the goals of selection option should be mapped against the Foundation Programme person specification, and that it should instead take account of the GMC requirements for new doctors, and the 'Role of the Doctor' statement. However, the GMC requirements and the key characteristics outlined in the 'Role of the Doctor' statement do underlie the person specification for the Foundation Programme.

All Foundation Programme posts are of equal quality; all Medical Students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are certified to be competent doctors. For the fixed-term training post, applicant preferences dominate. It is important to recognise that the purpose of selection into the Foundation Programme is to create a fair means of ranking students so that the top ranked applicant is allocated to his/her first choice Foundation School.

'You hide behind this fantastic figure of 90 per cent (who) got their first choice but what about the rest of us?'

-SGUL Medical Student

Some respondents highlighted dissatisfaction with the matching rules, noting examples where an applicant had narrowly missed out on his/her first place, and subsequently placed hundreds of miles away. The algorithm will be consulted on further in autumn 2009.

'Assessment at Medical (School) is not purely academic or knowledge based. Communication skills and clinical skills routinely form a significant part of assessment and as such the quartile position from the medical schools represents far more than an academic ranking. This should be recognised.'

-Newcastle Medical Student