

# Press release

6 July 2011

## **Pilots for New Foundation Programme Application Process a Success**

Over 1,000 final year students took part in pilots of the Situational Judgement Test (SJT), which is anticipated to replace the “white-space” application questions currently used to recruit to Foundation Programme jobs. The pilots, which have been heralded as a success, ran in 17 UK medical schools, plus two European medical schools.

The pilot data has been analysed and the results show that the SJT is a reliable, valid and appropriate method for selection in this context. These findings support the considerable published research on Situational Judgement Tests.

Student reaction to the test has also been positive, with the majority of students indicating that the content of the test seemed fair and relevant to the Foundation Programme and the scenarios outlined in the questions seemed appropriate for their level.

There is already extensive evidence behind SJTs which shows they are robust and valid selection methods. Research evidence suggests that SJTs are able to predict performance in the role, as well as showing higher validity over other methods. They have also been shown to be reliable. They are currently used for selection into GP training and are increasingly being piloted and used in other specialty selection processes. Evidence suggests that within medical selection, SJTs are a reliable and valid method of selection.

Further research will take place on the F1 and F2 outcomes once the new selection methods are in place to understand their predictive validity (whether applicants who do well on the SJTs do well in their foundation jobs).

Professor Paul O’Neill, Chair of the Improving Selection to the Foundation Programme project said:

“We are delighted that the outcome of these pilots was so positive and would like to thank all the students who participated. The next step will be a full-scale pilot of both the SJT and EPM which will run in parallel with this year’s recruitment round and final year students are encouraged to take part. More information about the Parallel Recruitment Exercise will be published shortly.”

For more information on the research published about SJTs, example questions and the rationale behind using SJTs, go to [www.isfp.org.uk](http://www.isfp.org.uk)

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## Notes to editors

1. In January 2009, the Medical Schools Council was commissioned by the Department of Health to lead the Improving Selection to the Foundation Programme Project Group to look at the best way of selecting medical students to the Foundation Programme.
2. After extensive research, Situational Judgement Tests (SJT) and Educational Performance Measures (EPM) were chosen as the best selection methods to pilot. These selection tools aim to replace the current 'white space' application questions and academic quartile rankings for recruitment to the Foundation Programme which begins in August 2013.
3. SJT pilots have taken place over the last 18 months and the results along with the Project Group's final recommendations will be submitted to the four UK health departments in August 2011.
4. There is a vast amount of research evidence available showing that SJTs are a valid selection method which allows for differentiation between candidates. For a list of references of published research, contact Amy Stringer at [amy.stringer@medschools.ac.uk](mailto:amy.stringer@medschools.ac.uk).
5. Student reaction was gauged from the responses provided by the students who undertook the pilot through a structured feedback form.
6. More information, including some example SJT questions and the EPM Framework, can be found on the ISFP website: [www.isfp.org.uk](http://www.isfp.org.uk)
7. For more information, or to schedule an interview with Professor Paul O'Neill, please contact Amy Stringer on [amy.stringer@medschools.ac.uk](mailto:amy.stringer@medschools.ac.uk) or tel: 020 7419 5427.