

Research study FAQs: Understanding how external users perceive, access and apply GMC professional standards

What is the purpose of the study?

We're responsible for setting the standards that all doctors in the UK should follow. Our guidance for doctors sets out the professional values, knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of all doctors working in the UK.

We're reviewing our core guidance, Good Medical Practice. We have stated our commitment to carrying out this review in our corporate strategy. As part of the review, we want to better understand the views of those that use our guidance, including what think about it, how they access it and how they apply it in their work. The findings will help to guide decision making throughout the review so we can make sure our future standards are clear, realistic and relevant.

Who will you approach as part of the study?

We'll speak to practising doctors and medical students. We'll also approach those who advise on or play a role in upholding our standards, such as educators, employers and stakeholders.

What themes will the study explore?

We would like to understand:

- What do those who use our guidance expect the GMC to provide guidance on, and what is better provided by others
- What other sources of ethical guidance and resources do people use
- Views on the relationship between our core guidance, explanatory guidance and supporting materials
- Views on how our guidance is disseminated
- Views on the accessibility and navigation of our guidance
- How do those who use our guidance apply it in their work

What will the research involve?

Phase 1 of the research will take place in April – May and includes:

- an online forum lasting two weeks with 50 doctors and final year medical students.
- 18 telephone interviews lasting 45 minutes with doctors and medical students who have recently sought guidance and / or who may have specific access needs for the guidance.
- an online survey and 12 telephone interviews lasting 45 minutes with Responsible Officers.

Phase 2 will take place in May – June and includes:

- 30 telephone interviews lasting 45 minutes with those who advise on or uphold our standards, including educators, employers and stakeholders.

Who will carry out the research?

We've commissioned Community Research to carry out this study. This means that the research is independent, and participation is anonymous. We won't know who has taken part. Acumen Fieldwork will recruit doctors and medical students to the study.

Will the research report be published?

The research report will be published on our website when the study has finished.

Who should I contact for further information?

Karen Roberts, Research Manager at the GMC on karen.roberts@gmc-uk.org or Rachel Lopata, Director at Community Research on rachel@communityresearch.co.uk