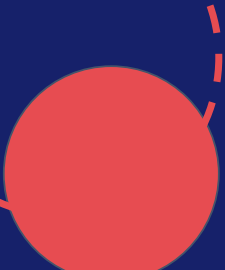


MSA
Medical Students' Association

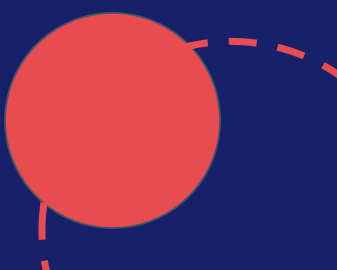
What I Wish I Knew for Year 4

Zalanda Shinwarie, Farah Elmi (final year)



CONTENT LIST



- Overview of Year 4
 - Overview of the 4 different blocks
 - QIP, GP and elective planning (as per your request)
 - Portfolio Prep
 - Assessments
 - General tips
- 

Year 4 Overview



- Introductory Week
- 4 eight-week clinical blocks:
 - Emergency Medicine and Critical Care
 - Women's Health
 - Child's Health
 - Mental Health
- Each block:
 - Week 1 – Induction week to the block/site
 - Weeks 2-7 – Clinical Placement
 - Week 8 – Themed Learning Week

- Quality Improvement Project (August until Feb/March)

Exams:

- PT1 in October/November (Formative)
- PT2 in January (Formative)
- PT3 in May/June (**Summative**)
- OSCE in June (Experience day/ formative)
- PT4 (resit) in August

A typical week in Year 4



	AM	PM
Monday	Placement	Placement
Tuesday	Placement	Placement
Wednesday	QIP	QIP/Self-Directed Study/Sports
Thursday	Placement	Placement
Friday	Placement	Placement

Returning from 3rd Year

- You will have come straight from OSCE practice (you probably haven't touched Passmed since January, which is FINE!)
- You will notice the language changing when you're spoken to by seniors - aim is no longer to just pass, but to be a good, **safe** resident doctor on wards
- Placement time will be more demanding, with ~4 days a week at hospital
- Use the first couple of weeks to familiarise yourself with the new block, site, accom, and build a support network that will get you through the upcoming block
- The responsibility will be higher but your knowledge and confidence will also grow!!
- Don't rush into getting sign offs done from the first week - take your time to ease yourself in

Returning from Intercalation

- It's going to feel overwhelming – that's normal
- But you **WILL** have to pick up the pace - and be doing more than your peers
- **Time Management** is key here
- Recall memory will be affected (esp OSCE) - so have strategies in place (e.g. Anki)
- Bonus - think about how you can utilise your knowledge from intercalation and integrate into medicine (publications, teaching etc.)

YOU WILL MOST DEFINITELY IMPROVE!

You do pick it up quicker than you expect



Emergency Medicine and Critical Care

- **Emergency medicine (A&E)**

- Great for clerking (histories, examinations)
- Clinical skills (Try to complete most here)

- **Anaesthetics**

- Great for clinical skills/ informal teaching - some of you may (under supervision + pt consent) get to help more with airway management
- Cannulas, ventilation
- Drawing up drugs
- Infusions

- **Critical Care**

- A-E assessments (bread and butter)
- Management of complex patients (not hands on, mostly talking through cases)
 - Revise Physiology prior to attending placement!!
 - ICU - great hands on opportunity if you feel comfortable



Child Health

- Ashford - freestyled ie. encouraged to go wherever things are happening :)
- Paeds A&E is great to practice Hx and Ex of child with parents + observe clinical signs
- NICU/SCBU/Neonatal or Baby Units – great for teaching
- Get familiar with the paed Hx taking model (bit different & likely to come up in OSCEs)
- Spotting the sick child E-learning on KEATS
- “Don't forget the bubbles” website
- Online patient scenarios on KEATS (KEATS page is good for paed)
- @brownskinmatters Instagram page
- Get familiar with describing rashes (osce) and how to prescribe fluids for children!
- Always ask about the **birth, immunisations and social workers!**
- **KEEP YOUR SAFEGUARDING HATS ON! – HEADSSS assessment**



Aim for this block: be confident in your PAEDS history taking skills

Women's Health

- Typically split into
 - Sexual Health – a lot of **clinical skills** here especially **MiniCEX**
 - Gynae ward/clinics
 - Antenatal clinics
 - Labour Ward (nights)
 - Breast week
 - Main theatres and Day Surgery - **female catheterisation opportunity**
- Quite a hands-on placement : **surgical and medical wise**
 - Lots of teaching
- Opportunities to scrub in and assist during C-section and assist in deliveries.
 - Introduce yourself to the patient beforehand, don't just come in at the end!!
 - Spaces are shared with student midwives often



Women's Health

- Probably will get the best **examination teaching** during simulation sessions with midwives, antenatal clinics
 - Maternity Assessment Unit
 - Breast Clinic
- Sign offs:
 - speculum/bimanual vaginal examination/female catheter/swabs
 - best to do this during day surgery as patient will be under anaesthesia (**remember your consent form (ideally print)!**)
 - **Consent is not guaranteed - be aware**
- For the bimanual/speculum examination find the surgical team prior to attending surgery so they can help tell you which patient's they should you can ask for consent.
 - First day of placement, ask what days they actually have gynae surgeries

Mental Health

- 2 mental health placement locations in the block - usually one hospital and one community
- Teaching days
 - Forensic Psychiatry
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health
 - Old Age Psychiatry
- Placements vary in how much there is to do
- Ask for teaching sessions from clinical supervisor
- Optional placements - e.g. Place of safety & Liaison psych (can sign up on KEATS)
- Get used to asking about **risk** and how to perform assessment (as always will need to do this in OSCEs)
- Further understanding into Mental Health Act and Mental Capacity Act
- **This is the block you'll have the most free time in so make the most out of it!**
- Check out RCPsych opportunities + emails



E-Portfolio

- Engagement logs – no more 150 words...
- Reflections – usually 6 per block
- Mini-CEX – usually 1 per block
- CBD – usually 1 per block
- Supervisor sign offs (Clinical, Educational) - escalate appropriately if any issues (**not worth resitting the block/ year for**)!
 - ES – Start and end of year sign off, end of block sign off
 - CS – start, mid, end of block sign off
- 8 Mandatory sign offs
- Clinical skills - get the male cath done ASAP in EMCC. Bedside F1 teaching (if available = useful) ...

Make a list at the start of each block!

Try get them done early on in the block (esp EMCC)

General tips

- **Go to formal teaching + get the slides - make sure you are registered for any mandatory teaching**
- Get a subscription to PassMedicine and/or Quesmed depending on preference, flashcards or mindmaps to help consolidate and retain info. **Consistency is what you aim for!**
- **Make friends with F1/F2s** (esp. on peripherals) + other med students on your block rotations
- Try and push for prescribing teaching!
 - can be quite sporadic throughout the year – KCH, you're lucky to have Shivani...
- Share resources amongst your friendship groups!!! Teaching is different everywhere
- Study like you're **a final year med student** – pretty much everything you see could be examinable and STAY CURIOUS
- Teaching junior students (highly recommended)!
 - Join the **MSA PAL scheme** as a facilitator if you haven't in previous years.
- Do not neglect your OSCE skills just because you are not formally assessed this year - practice every opportunity you have especially in EMCC - stay hands on to make the most of all your rotations
- **Study little and often - this is a long year with finals in May, YOU HAVE TIME!!! Allocate time wisely**
- **STAY ON TOP OF YOUR PORTFOLIO**

Making the most of Teaching (in Hospital)

- Go to formal teaching- year 4 teaching is actually super useful!
 - Pester whoever's doing it for the slides after!
- Be curious and ask questions- try to think like a resident doctor and ask for practical advice and engage
- Make friends with the doctors (especially in peripherals) and establish aims from the beginning
- Always try to have a back up plan if teaching is cancelled or rescheduled
- Make anki flashcards there and then to save time
- If you're not confident on a clinical skill, keep practicing in clinical skills teaching
- If you want more teaching in a specific topic, ask the lead and they will most likely arrange it for you - especially in mental health as this is typically a slow-paced block
- Try to not miss/skip your sessions as you will likely have to come in another day to catch up which can be difficult
- If you have the time (and the energy), coming to the teaching prepared with some notes will make you get the most out of it

Quality Improvement Project

- **Site based on your second block (often topic too)**
- **Beginning of September:** groups (3-5) are allocated - cannot be changed
- **January:** critical appraisal presentation
- **Late February:** project write-up and reflective diaries are due

- **Every Wednesday:**
 - meetings - highly recommend to join them live and write your reflections straight after (**check specific individual kaizen deadline**)
 - self-directed learning (online e-learning on KEATS, attending a patient shadow)
 - working on project, preparing for the presentation, writing it all up)

Bonus: awards for group + individual report

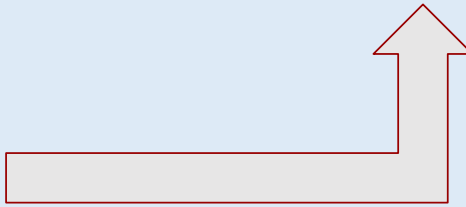
Quality Improvement Project advice

- **Start early**
 - Organise your patient shadowing ASAP
 - **project topic doesn't matter, it's how you analyse data, write/ present it**
 - Establish expectation early - looking to publish/ conferences/ deadlines?
- **Work consistently throughout the year**

Write your reflective log as you go along, means:

 - 1) can be thorough (won't need to rely on retrospective memory)
 - 2) create a shared document for the group to collaborate on
 - organise a timeline at start to establish feasible deadlines/ delegate tasks
- **Engage with your project and supervisor**
 - find out what they are expecting of you
 - if unsure, **ASK**
 - The Keats QIP resources/templates are very useful!

Grade	100.0 / 100.0
Graded on	Monday, 20 April 2026, 9:48 AM
Feedback comments	+ Really well done. An excellent project. Your report was well written and flowed well. You have done some excellent background reading, ...



GOOD QUALITY report = include required models / go above & beyond!

GP placement and elective planning

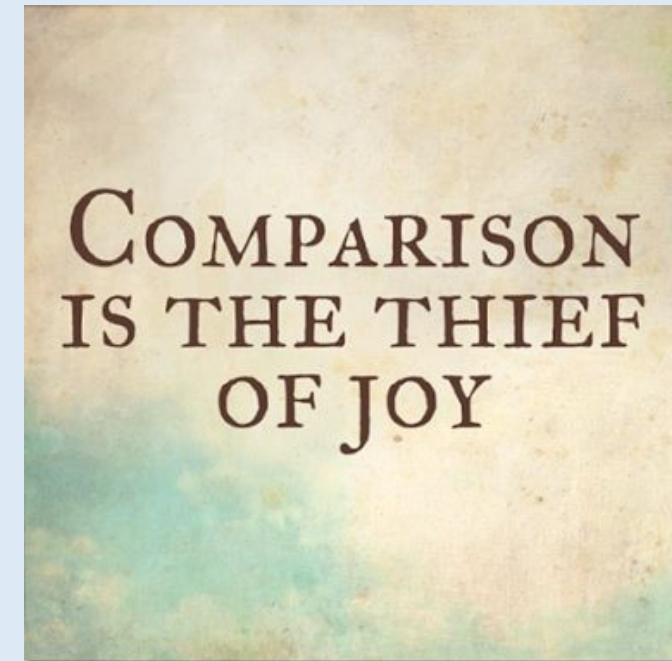
- Organise own or KCL (tries to be ~90 mins of home address)
- Simple ish process - start early / be organised
- Choosing => what's your aim? near home? dream GP? indifferent?

- **Twin links** (PLEASE don't apply JUST for the sake of applying)!!!
- Check which specialties host offers/ what period : **VERY IMPORTANT**
- **main benefit: placement Fees waived (if there is one) + competitive**
- You still need to do EVERYTHING yourself (application, immunisation etc), KCL simply recommends you!
- If you miss host application deadline, you're screwed, KCL can't save you :)

- Know your priorities, what do YOU want to get out of it (holiday, explore a particular specialty, dream hospital/ site etc)

General Portfolio Prep (don't simply treat as a tick box task)

- **Start early**
 - Projects take time: 2 years fly by....
 - Search conferences, note down deadlines
- **Personalisation is key**
 - don't compare yourself to your peers - flesh out your own path
 - find what your future career may require you to do - e.g. some specialties emphasise teaching, vs research, vs surgical logbook
 - always check the latest guidance from whichever college/specialty you're interested in
- **COLLABORATE - don't gatekeep**
 - Shared work = easier work
- **Attend conferences: to learn + network + present**
 - Find UK/London conferences that have low cost of entry
 - Student Conferences are good for practical tips from peers



Year 4 Assessments

- PT1 and PT2 (Formative); PT3 (**Summative**) and OSCE experience day (Formative)
- Question banks (do a mix)
 - Passmed
 - Quesmed
 - Pastest - similar question style to PTs?
- Mock exams, question banks and any past papers you can find (e.g. Medical School Council ones on KEATS), website has more
- Revise everything – UKMLA and beyond
- **Little but consistent**
- **Pick up things from placement and read up on those to form links!**

General exam and revision tips - PT

- Progress Tests
 - Go through topics with friends; teach each other
 - Start early enough - year 4 is not the one to cram
 - Build a strong routine from the beginning and stick to it
- Textbook recommendations:
 - Basic pathology by robbins cotran and kumar
 - Kumar and Clark textbook for UK medicine
- Quantity AND Quality
 - E.g. Pathophys + 100 question bank questions + Anki review
 - Always think WHY

General exam and revision tips - OSCE

- Not formally assessed in fourth year - you have an OSCE experience day after PTs
- Revise for the experience day if you can to make the most of this
- Practice on patients (esp EMCC)
- Do not forget your history taking
- Find friends to practice with throughout the year - you'll retain the OSCE content really well
- Throughout your placement you should be comfortable at that point to:
 - do ABCDE's
 - cardiac, respiratory, abdominal and neurological exams
 - psychiatry history taking
 - paediatric history taking
 - all you clinical skills sign off at the bare minimum if you have engaged well with your placements.
- Start of final year you will have a mock OSCE - you should aim to perform as that is your last chance before the real thing!!!

Mental Health & Wellbeing

- It's not going to be as full on as you think it will be at the start!
- Taking days off for your mental health (just as you would do for physical health) is fine! Just communicate this to your site administrator
- Try to pace yourself in terms of revision to avoid burnout - **LITTLE AND OFTEN**
- August - May is 9 months until your summative period, you start block 5 after and get 2 weeks off before official start to final year
- Anyone not on continuity will move around every block - change to your routine, give yourself time to adjust
- Can feel slightly isolating but everyone is in the same boat - make it fun especially when you move out
- Give time to your passions/hobbies and your life outside of med!!

**Remember to
take care of yourself.
You can't pour from
an empty cup.**



Clinical Block 4	22 March 2027		30
	29 March 2027	MBBS Project Day	31
	05 April 2027		32
	12 April 2027		33
	19 April 2027		34
	26 April 2027		35
	03 May 2027		36
	10 May 2027		37
Campus Based Revision Week	17 May 2027		38
Consolidation Week	24 May 2027		39
Assessment Period	31 May 2027	Progress Test 8	40
Campus Block	07 June 2027		41
Clinical Block 5	14 June 2027		42
	21 June 2027		43
	28 June 2027		44
	05 July 2027		45
	12 July 2027		46
	19 July 2027		47
	26 July 2027		48
	02 August 2027		49
	09 August 2027		50
Assessment Period	16 August 2027	Progress Test (Resit)	51

Useful Resources

1. Psychiatry PRN
2. Oxford Handbook of Clinical Medicine (10 Edition)
3. Oxford Handbook of Clinical Specialties (11 Edition)
4. Clinical methods textbook - hutchisons/chamberlain/macleod
5. Basic pathology by Robbins cotran and kumar
6. Passmedicine questions and textbook
7. OSCE Stop Textbook
8. OSCE Stop Website (free)
9. OSCE Stations Blogspot: <http://osce-stations.blogspot.com> (free)
10. Osmosis videos - for pathophys
11. Geeky Medics
12. Essential Examination Textbook
13. Child Health Mock Progress Test on Keats CH Page
14. Child Health Patient Scenarios on Keats CH Page
15. Quesmed YouTube Videos (free)

Any questions? Feedback form

