RE: Update of changes to the Medical Training Initiative (MTI) scheme – Tier 5 visa requirements

The Medical Training Initiative (MTI) is a national scheme designed to allow a small number of doctors to enter the UK from overseas for a maximum of 24 months, so that they can benefit from training and development in NHS services before returning to their home countries.

The International Surgical Training Programme (ISTP) operates within the generic MTI scheme with the primary focus of advancing the standard of surgical care globally. Since its inception, the ISTP has allowed the RCS to facilitate sponsorship for GMC registration and the supporting Tier 5 visa for surgical trainees entering the UK to undertake short-term training in ISTP posts.

Due to recent changes set out by the Department of Health, Health Education England and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, priority for Tier 5 visa Certificates of Sponsorship is now given to doctors applying from countries listed as:

- Department for International Development (DfID) priority countries, and
- World Bank classified Low Income (LI) and Lower Middle Income (LMI) Countries

Please refer to the enclosed Appendix A for the current list of the priority countries. This list will be updated on a regular basis by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges.

Surgeons from the priority countries can apply for the International Surgical Training Programme (ISTP) as normal, providing they meet the RCS eligibility requirements.

**Surgeons applying from non-priority countries**

The RCS can still facilitate sponsorship for GMC registration for surgeons applying from the non-priority countries however, entry to the UK will need to be through an alternative route, such as the Tier 2 (General) visa.

The following websites can provide further information regarding the Tier 2 visa route and eligibility requirements:

- [Academy of Medical Royal Colleges – Tier 2 General visa](#)
- [UK Home Office – Tier 2 (General) visa](#)
Appendix A

A list of the current countries which comprise the DfID priorities and the World Bank Low Income and Lower Middle Income countries is set out below.

Afghanistan  India  Papua New Guinea
Armenia  Indonesia  Philippines
Bangladesh  Iraq  Rwanda
Benin  Jordan  Samoa
Bhutan  Kenya  Sao Tome and Principe
Bolivia  Kiribati  Senegal
Burkina Faso  Korea, Dem. People’s Rep.  Sierra Leone
Burma  Kosovo  Solomon Islands
Burundi  Kyrgyzstan  Somalia
Cambodia  Lao PDR  South Sudan
Cameroon  Lebanon  Sri Lanka
Cape Verde  Lesotho  Sudan
Central African Republic  Liberia  Swaziland
Chad  Madagascar  Syria
Comoros  Malawi  Tajikistan
Cote d’Ivoire  Mali  Tanzania
Democratic Republic of Congo  Mauritania  Timor-Leste
Congo  Micronesia, Fed. Sts.  Togo
Djibouti  Moldova  Tonga
Egypt, Arab Rep.  Mongolia  Tunisia
El Salvador  Morocco  Uganda
Eritrea  Mozambique  Ukraine
Ethiopia  Myanmar  Uzbekistan
Gambia, The  Nepal  Vanuatu
Ghana  Nicaragua  Vietnam
Guatemala  Niger  West Bank and Gaza
Guinea  Nigeria  Yemen
Guinea-Bissau  Occupied Palestinian Territories  Zambia
Haiti  Pakistan  Zimbabwe
Honduras  
