

# UK's General Medical Council urged to revise terminology for international medical graduates

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The General Medical Council (GMC) should revise its terminology regarding international medical graduates (IMGs) in the UK, argues a

new commentary published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine (JRSM)*.

The existing terminology used by the GMC fails to encompass the full spectrum of [doctors](#) facing [challenges](#) in the UK medical workforce, according to the paper's author, Professor Mo Al-Haddad of Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow.

Notably, he says, the GMC's definition of IMGs overlooks doctors from the European Economic Area (EEA), potentially excluding them from vital support and interventions aimed at reducing the attainment gap between various groups of medical graduates.

Currently, the GMC's definition of IMGs refers only to doctors with primary medical qualifications (PMQs) from countries outside the UK and the EEA. This is because, when the UK was a member of the EEA, doctors from other EEA countries could freely practice medicine in the UK without needing to pass an equivalence exam. Other than for GMC registration purposes, there is little benefit to categorizing IMGs in this way.

Professor Al-Haddad says, "I call on the GMC to change the terminology as a matter of urgency so that the term international medical graduate includes all doctors practicing in the UK and who have a PMQ from outside the UK. We need to accurately report the proportion of IMGs in the medical workforce in the UK, and fully recognize and count the contribution of IMGs who [graduate](#) from the EEA. Most importantly, we need to eliminate the risk of excluding EEA IMGs from the interventions and support that non-EEA IMGs receive (or should receive) in the UK."

**More information:** European international medical graduates (IMGs): are we ignoring their needs and under-representing the scale of IMG

issues in the UK?, *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* (2024). [DOI: 10.1177/01410768241230804](https://doi.org/10.1177/01410768241230804)

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