



BAPRAS

British Association of Plastic
Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgeons

Student Elective Report

Student Elective Report

Please return to: secretariat@bapras.org.uk

Please complete this report form as honestly as possible so that others considering an elective may benefit from your experience. If you visited more than one place, please complete separate forms for each. Please bear in mind that we will be posting this report on our website for others to read.

Student Elective Report

Name	Matt Wedlich
Medical School	University of Oxford
Email (optional)	

Country visited	United Kingdom
City or town	Cambridge
Hospital/unit/clinic	Plastic Surgery Department, Addenbrooke's Hospital
Dates visited	28/03/2022 – 6/05/2022
Supervising doctor	Professor Charles Malata
Contact details of your host:	

Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)	<p>I spent 6 weeks in the Plastic Surgery Department at Addenbrooke's Hospital as part of the University of Cambridge elective programme. I was given a suggested weekly timetable; however this was very flexible and I was free to attend theatre lists or clinics provided I let the team know in advance.</p> <p>I shadowed trainees during on-call shifts and patient assessments in the plastic surgery unit, and was able to get a great deal of experience in theatre as well as in the minor operations clinic. I scrubbed in and assisted with numerous surgeries during the placement and saw a wide variety of procedures—ranging from skin cancer excisions to hand surgery through to major trauma and free-flap reconstructions.</p> <p>The department is very friendly and several of the registrars were quite happy for me to get hands-on during surgical cases. I was able to practice my suturing skills, and even excised a couple of skin lesions and performed a tendon repair under supervision.</p> <p>I've also had the opportunity to get started on a couple of research projects stemming from the elective—one focused on evaluating a breast reconstruction technique, and another on developing simulation models for surgical skills education.</p>
What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	<p>As above—the team at Addenbrooke's were very welcoming and supportive of my interest in the specialty and were keen to teach and get me involved wherever possible.</p> <p>I really enjoyed getting to know the trainees who provided valuable</p>

Student Elective Report

	<p>insight into the day-to-day life during training as well as great advice on surgical training applications.</p> <p>Cambridge is also beautiful in the spring, which is a plus!</p>
What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)	On some weeks there were Cambridge medical students on placement in the department but there were more than enough opportunities to go around. There are often three theatre lists running simultaneously and I was always able to find something interesting going on to get involved with.
What accommodation was provided?	Accommodation is provided on hospital grounds as part of the elective programme, but I lived in private accommodation as I will be starting my foundation training in the deanery in August.
Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)	Absolutely—this elective was a fantastic opportunity that gave me a great deal of exposure to plastic surgery as a specialty as well as several opportunities to start developing my portfolio for future applications.
Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?	Yes, definitely. I hadn't had much exposure to plastic surgery prior to this as I unfortunately missed a plastics placement at medical school due to COVID-19, and this elective was an overall brilliant experience which has very much motivated me to pursue plastic surgery training in the future.