

## Student Elective Report

<b>Name</b>	Anoopama Ramjeeawon
<b>Medical School</b>	Cardiff University School of Medicine
<b>Email (optional)</b>	

<b>Country visited</b>	Vietnam
<b>City or town</b>	Hanoi
<b>Hospital/unit/clinic</b>	Viet Duc University Hospital, Department of Maxillofacial – Plastic – Aesthetic Surgery
<b>Dates visited</b>	9/4/18-20/4/18; 3/5/18-16/5/18
<b>Supervising doctor</b>	Dr Hang Nguyen
<b>Contact details of your host:</b>	(Dr Ha, Head of Department)

<b>Please give an overview of what you saw / did (200 words max)</b>	<p>During my elective in Hanoi my placement was at Viet Duc University Hospital in the Aesthetic, Plastic and Maxillofacial Surgery Department, the major referral centre in northern Vietnam for this specialty and the largest surgical centre in Vietnam. The department had two elective theatres, one emergency theatre, one ward and around thirteen consultants.</p> <p>On Monday mornings I attended consultant-led ward rounds, on Thursday afternoons I attended the big department consultation session, and during the rest of the week I was given the freedom to choose whether to observe and assist doctors in the department in theatres, consultations or emergencies. I also did a night shift while following one of the doctors on emergencies on-call.</p> <p>During this placement I had the opportunity to observe a British-based team from the charity Facing the World visit the department to operate on complex and unusual cases and teach the staff in the department.</p> <p>There were a lot of cases of craniofacial trauma, from motorcycle accidents, as well as a variety of other cases, such as Neurofibromatosis type 1, Arterio-Venous Malformations and Apert's Syndrome.</p>
<b>What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)</b>	<p>As the major referral centre for northern Vietnam, many complex cases were referred to the department - it was fascinating to see and learn about the variety of conditions treated there, particularly those I had not seen before.</p> <p>The opportunity to scrub in and assist in theatre allowed me to practice and develop surgical skills. This centre does a lot of microsurgery, and</p>

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	<p>the staff were happy to teach microsurgery skills using animal tissue models.</p> <p>The team in the department were friendly and keen to teach and include us in day-to-day activities, including introducing us to a variety of local food.</p> <p>It was interesting to observe the team from Facing the World operate on complex and unusual cases and attend their teaching.</p> <p>Vietnam is an interesting and beautiful country to explore, also Vietnamese food is really good.</p>
<p><b>What problems did you encounter? (120 words max)</b></p>	<p>There were some difficulties with the language barrier – very few people in the general Vietnamese population speak English, therefore it was impossible to communicate with patients without a translator – fortunately many doctors, nurses and medical and nursing students spoke English. Whilst most doctors in the department spoke English, not all did, and some had difficulty with communicating in English, however I found speaking in French was also an option as many are fluent in French.</p> <p>While it was possible to scrub in and assist for a lot of cases, it was not possible to practise surgical skills in theatre for the majority of cases, however there were opportunities to practice using animal tissue, including microsurgical skills.</p>
<p><b>What accommodation was provided?</b></p>	<p>Accommodation was not provided, however Viet Duc University Hospital is located very centrally in Hanoi, in Old Town, where it is possible to stay at hostels for very reasonable prices. I stayed in a hostel which was a two-minute walk to the hospital, which had dorms from \$5 per night and private rooms from \$21 per night. In general, the costs of living in Hanoi are very low.</p>
<p><b>Would you recommend this to someone else? (explain if necessary)</b></p>	<p>Yes, I would recommend this placement as it was an excellent opportunity to experience Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery in another country and see a variety of cases that may not be commonly seen in the UK, for example AV malformations and Apert's Syndrome. I had the opportunity to see some fascinating cases – for example, treatment of microtia using a rib cartilage graft and temporalis muscle flap.</p> <p>Fortunately, in this department, most doctors speak a good level of English, so it was easy to understand what was happening and their explanations of the cases seen. Additionally, all members of staff we were placed with in the department were keen and enthusiastic to teach us about various cases, and were very friendly and inclusive, as such I had a very enjoyable experience.</p> <p>There were lots of beautiful and interesting places to visit in Hanoi and the surrounding areas, so there's always something to do in the evenings and weekends. The culture and history of Vietnam was also interesting to learn about, for example, I found it interesting to learn about the effect of the country's history on the population's health (namely, the Vietnam War – agent orange and its links to congenital malformations etc)</p>
<p><b>Are you more likely</b></p>	<p>I chose to do this placement as I was already interested in pursuing a</p>

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<b>to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?</b>	career in this speciality. I had a fantastic experience in Hanoi with the Aesthetic, Plastic and Maxillofacial Surgery department and enjoyed seeing this specialty in Vietnam; I had a lot of encouragement and advice from the team here, all of which has furthered my interest and motivation to pursue a career in this field.
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