

2019-2020

# Annual Report International Office

Medical Students' Association
College of Medicine, Alfaisal University
www.iocom-alfaisal.org

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# A Message from the Directors

As we formally sign and submit to you, our respected Deanship, this official annual report of the achievements and activities of the International Office, Medical Students' Association for the Academic Year 2019-2020, we feel a sense of genuine self-satisfaction, nostalgia, and gratitude.

This academic year (2019-2020) has been an inspiring yet exciting one with the establishment of the International Office itself. Together, hand-in-hand, as a team, we worked together to establish the IO and achieve all that this report talks about. Dozens of hours and sleepless nights were invested into every single activity, project, or program listed herein. Our passion was fueled by self-satisfaction, contentment, and humility that came with a sincere desire to contribute.

Despite the unprecedented SARS-CoV-2 crisis, and the consequent cancellation of all our international as well as some national programs and events, the Office maintained its commitment to strive for the benefit of the students and the alumni. Efforts were rationally diverted to several other old and new projects and ideas so as to continue to benefit the student and alumni bodies.

As we put every word and number of this report together, we continue to realize even more how fortunate we were to work with such a **motivated**, **skilled**, and **creative** group of individuals. To every head, co-head, and member of the International Office, CoM (2019-2020), we humbly deliver our sincere gratitude and appreciation for their every little effort, seen and unseen. If it were not for their belief in the vision of the Office, its goals and objectives, and most importantly their selfless attitude and never-ending passion, this report would have been exhausted in a few lines.

Lastly, none of this grand student effort would have been ever possible without the ever-present and lavish support of our university leadership, deanship and administration and so we would like to extend our special gratitude to the Dean of College of Medicine, **Prof. Khaled M. Al-Kattan** and Vice Dean for Quality Assurance and Accreditation and Faculty Advisor and the backbone of IO and student activities, **Dr. Akef Obeidat**.

We, the IO, shall continue to stay determined and focused on meeting all the expectations of our college leadership and deanship, students, as well as our faculty. We shall truly endeavor to cater to all - medical students, interns, and alumni. We are fully committed to supporting the growth of the college, strengthening our bond with our alumni, and most importantly facilitating the smooth transition of our students into pioneers of the healthcare system of the future!

Wishing everyone all the very best. Cheers,

#### Ismail Mohammed Shakir

Director, International Office

#### Randa Yasin

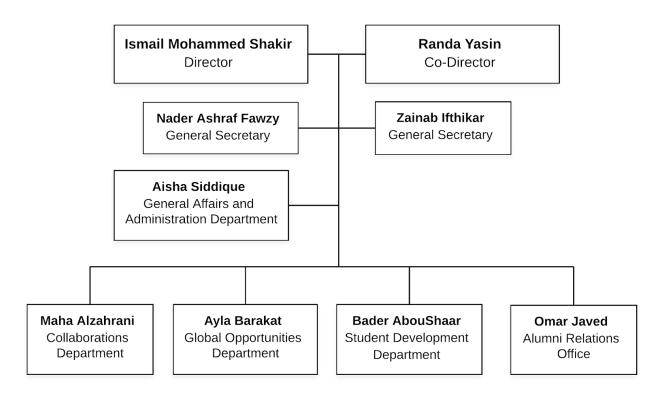
Co-Director, International Office

#### Who are we?

The International Office oversees and manages the international affairs of the Medical Students' Association under the College of Medicine, Alfaisal University. The International Office is viewed as an indispensable entity of the MSA and in turn, the College of Medicine. The Office administers and develops national and international programs - including research, clinical, and volunteering programs - within Saudi Arabia and abroad.

The Office also regularly conducts career development, mentorship, and academic success programs and activities through interactive workshops, courses, and seminars. Building a strong Alfaisal medical alumni network while keeping the alumni connected to their alma mater is also one of the key tasks the Office manages.

## **Organizational Structure**



#### **Our Strategy**

- 1. Adopt a targeted approach in increasing the number of active strategic international partnerships and collaborations steadily over the years.
- 2. Establish an internal institutional organization that aids in the smooth establishment and implementation of the partnerships and collaborations.
- 3. Evaluate our existing international outlook, partnerships, collaborations, and national as well as international programs and use the lessons learned to redirect our resources.
- 4. Build a strong Alfaisal medical alumni network by organizing alumni events, offering unparalleled discounted services, and maintaining alumni engagement with their alma mater.
- 5. Regularly conduct and administer courses, workshops, and webinars that contribute towards the professional and academic development of the students.
- 6. Provide students and alumni with unparalleled service discounts and benefits that are beneficial for their career, academic and travel related activities.

# **Achievements**

6 New Partnerships

New Clinical Elective Programs

6 New Research Internship Programs

Career Guidance Sessions

Research Courses and Workshops

**475** Total Activity Attendance

**Activities and Programs 2019-20** 

First day of work: 26th September 2019

All activities and programs have been arranged in a chronological fashion.

September 2019

**Meeting: IO Meet and Greet** 

Date: 26th September 2019

A grand meeting with the heads and members of the office and Dr. Akef where the members

were primed about team dynamics and their roles for the coming academic year.

October 2019

Career Guidance Course: Residency Preparatory Course - Saudi Arabia

Date: 05th October 2019

Course Tutor: Dr. Dana Kalagi | Panelists: Dr. Reem Maalem, Dr. Noor Aljefri

RPC-KSA was a one-day course that chronologically guided participants through each step of the KSA medical residency application, beginning from what they should do during medical school to improve their chances of matching in their desired specialty, to securing an interview

all the way to post-match steps. The course covered the following themes:

An Overview of the KSA Medical Residency Pathway

• Residency Preparations: When and How to Start?

Getting The Best Out of Your Internship Year

Maximizing Your Chances to Get into Your Desired Specialty

• How to Ace The SMLE Exam

SCFHS Application and Timeline

• How to Ace Residency Interviews

Panel Session

Attendance:

Alfaisal University: 12

Non-Alfaisal: 2

Total: 14

Symposium: Studying Disease Using Stem Cells and Organoids

Date: 06th-08th October 2019

Alfaisal University and Bristol University held a joint symposium at the premises of Alfaisal University on the 7th of October 2019. The University warmly welcomed the symposium guest speakers from the University of Bristol who enlightened the students and faculty on the topic of "Studying Disease Using Stem Cells and Organoids".

The IO alongside Dr. Junaid Kashir was heavily involved in organizing the research seminars, the one-day symposium, and social programs during the event. Some of the important tasks handled by the office were:

- Designing of Posters and Roll-Ups
- Social Program and Dinners
- Transportation for guest speakers
- On-site and on-campus logistical support
- Registration of attendees
- Issuing E-Certificates to attendees

Considering our involvement and participation in making the event a success, our guest speakers from Bristol University concluded about IO - "the most engaged student body that they had ever seen in any Medical School" - and we are humbled by their kind remark.

Career Guidance Course: Residency Preparatory Course - United Kingdom

Date: 12th October 2019

Course Tutors: Dr. Mohammad Sharique and Dr. Lin Tuleimat

RPC-UK was a one-day course that chronologically guided participants through each step of the

UK medical training pathway, beginning from what they should do during medical school to

improve their chances of matching in their desired specialty, to securing an interview all the

way to post-match steps. The course covered the following themes:

An overview of the UK Residency Pathway

• Things you need to know about the UK Pathway

UK Examinations

• The EPIC verification and GMC Registration

Applying for Jobs and the Job Application

• Interviews, Accepting a Job, and the Tier 2 Visa

• The Current Situation in the UK

Attendance:

Alfaisal University: 23

Non-Alfaisal: 6

Total: 29

**Conference: Edupathic4** 

Date: 17th-19th October 2019

The Office solely managed and conducted the following activities for and during the 3-day

conference:

Abstract Review and Selection

Oral and poster presentations judging

• Interactive Workshop on "Getting Started in Research" by Dr. Junaid Kashir

• Talk on "Road to United States Medical Residency" by Dr. Omar Javed

• Issuing of E-Certificates to research presenters, awardees, and workshop attendees

Sponsored Presentation: United States Clinical Experience Opportunities by

**AMOpportunities** 

Date: 21st October 2019

The Office arranged for a sponsored presentation by Mr. Daniel Rivers (Partnerships Director,

AMOpportunities) prior to signing an Activity Agreement with AMOpporunities. Students

received first-hand information and learned how to navigate through the several services

offered on the AMOpportunities website.

Attendance: 15+ students

Alfaisal Research Groups

Date: 29th October 2019

The International Office together worked with Dr. Akef Obeidat (Director, Medical Education

Research Group) to launch and manage the Alfaisal Research Groups. Several projects were

identified and interest among students was gauged for future implementation.

November 2019

Talk: Artificial Intelligence and the Path to Innovation in Healthcare

Date: 03rd November 2019

The talk was delivered by Dr. Sam Hanna from American University. Our students were

enlightened by how medicine is becoming more digital. Dr. Hanna enlightened the students on

how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is being infused with medicine and how it is becoming important

in improving patient care. He was accompanied by US Embassy officials in Saudi Arabia.

Attendance: 75+ students

Talk: Journey of Indus Health Network

Date: 13th November 2019

Dr. Abdul Bari Khan from Pakistan was invited to deliver a talk on how Indus Health Network, a non-profit organization, started its journey with a purpose to provide indiscriminate, quality healthcare to all. It was a unique and heartwarming opportunity for our students to view the humanitarian aspect of medicine. The students greatly acknowledged the efforts that were being made by Dr. Abdul Bari Khan and his organization in Pakistan to improve healthcare

access for the less fortunate people.

Attendance: 70+ students

Participation: 14th KFMC Annual Research Symposium

Date: 20th and 21st November 2019

As usual, the Office encouraged and supported students to apply and participate in the annual research symposium at KFMC. The Office helped students with poster designing and presentation. Like every year, an increasing number of students presented their research projects especially from SPIRIT and LRTIP programs. This year, however, due to the change in the awarding criteria only one award category was announced for undergraduate students which was bagged, yet again, by an Alfaisal student - Aroub Almaghrabi - who presented her research from her SPIRIT 2019 research internship.

Talk: US Graduate Medical Education: Update on its Status and Tips on

**Navigating its Complexities** 

Date: 20th November 2019

A talk by the Medical Director of the International Medical Programs (IMP) at George Washington University, USA, Dr. Stanley M. Knoll (M.D, FCAS). Dr. Knoll's talk was well received by the students as they engaged enthusiastically with the speaker.

Attendance: 15+ students

**Discussion: Interactive Session on US Medical Residency** 

Date: 21st November 2019

An interactive discussion held by Dr. Stanley Knoll and moderated by Dr. Ismail Shakir on US

Medical Residency. The students guided the discussion with their burning questions.

Attendance: 30+ students

Interactive Discussion: Master's and PhD

Date: 23rd November 2019

Speakers: Dr. Ahmed Yaqinuddin (MD, Ph.D.), Dr. Junaid Kashir (Alfaisal CoM), Dr. Hamdan

Hamdan (Alfaisal CoM), Dr. Raed Abu-Dawud (KFSHRC, CMD), and Dr. Bhavesh V Mistry

(KFSHRC, CMD)

Our speakers spoke to students about the different Master's programs one can pursue after

graduating from medical school while they prepare for their medical residency applications as

well as the Ph.D. pathways that medical graduates can take as an alternative to the clinical

pathway. The series of presentation, accompanied by a panel discussion at the end and

covered the following topics in distinct sessions:

• Master's at Alfaisal University

• What is a Ph.D. and how to find or apply for one

• What to expect during a Ph.D.

• To Research or not to Research – Life after a Ph.D.

Panel Discussion

Attendance: 5 students

**Career Guidance Course: Residency Preparatory Course - Germany** 

Date: 30th November 2019

Course Tutor: Dr. Mohammad Chaballout

RPC-Germany was a one-day course that chronologically guided participants through each step

of the German medical residency pathway.

Attendance:

Alfaisal University: 10

Non-Alfaisal: 1

Total: 11

December 2019

**Research Workshop Series: W1 Getting Started in Research** 

Date: 09th December 2019

An interactive introductory workshop into the field of medical research was delivered by Dr. Junaid Kashir. The students always find Dr. Kashir's teaching extremely engaging and easy to

understand. His workshop was well received and appreciated by the students.

Attendance: 45+ students

Research Workshop Series: W2 Developing a Research Question and Hypothesis

Date: 11th December 2019

An interactive workshop was delivered by Dr. Ismail Shakir. He spoke about the importance of coming up with a good research question and the derivation of a hypothesis. Dr. Shakir also

presented to the students a snapshot of the general research process. His workshop was also

well received and appreciated by the students.

Attendance: 25+ students

January 2020

Participation: 5th Annual Health Professions Conference

Date: 29th January 2020

As usual, the Office encouraged and supported students to apply and participate in the 5th

Annual Health Professions Conference. The Office helped students with poster designing and

presentation.

February 2020

**SPIRIT: Open Discussion and Talk** 

Date: 06th February 2020

During the discussion, the Office answered students' most frequently asked questions about

SPIRIT and took questions from the audience on the available SPIRIT 2020 programs, criteria,

application, etc. In addition, a talk was also hosted titled, "A Day in the Life of a SPIRIT Student",

by three of our previous SPIRIT students - Dr. Aisha Siddique, Dr. Zainab Ifthikar, and Dr.

**Fatimah Alhammad** - to share their SPIRIT experience with the students.

Attendance: 20+ students

Course: Alfaisal Medical Research Course

Date: February 2020

AMRC (Alfaisal's Medical Research Course) is a course that is designed to teach medical

students the basic principles of conducting medical research through a series of presentations

and small group work. AMRC was a 4-day course with 10 workshops. Each workshop was about

2-3 hours long. Groups of participants actively worked and applied the concepts they learned

on an actual research project as they traverse through the ten workshops.

Attendance: 27 students

Talk: Acquiring United States Clinical Experience

Date: 17th February 2020

Speaker: Eiad Habib

The talk was delivered by Dr. Eiad Habib and consisted of a comprehensive guide for obtaining

US clinical electives including detailed steps of requirements needed to apply for electives as

well as an updated source containing all the hospitals that accept International Medical

Graduates (IMGs) for rotations, current and up-to-date as of February 2020. All other elective

options, including VSAS and third-party companies, were also discussed.

Dr. Habib also gave a quick overview of his USMLE Step 2 CK exam experience that included

sources of studying, practice exams, etc. The students heavily engaged with the speaker.

Attendance: 75+ students

**Crash Course: USMLE Step 2 CS Course** 

Date: 22nd February 2020

Course Tutor: Dr. Fareeha Abdulwali and Dr. Omar Khdeir.

The USMLE Clinical Skills (CS) Exam Crash Course was conducted to systemically guide

participants through each step of the USMLE Step 2 CS exam. The tutors shared their test

strategies and tips on acing the exam. The course received overwhelmingly positive feedback

and covered the following areas:

• Introduction to the Step 2 CS Exam

• Communication and Interpersonal Skills

• History Taking and Differential Diagnosis

Physical Examination

Practice Cases

Attendance: 6 students

Research Workshop Series: W3 How to Deliver a Killer Poster Presentation

Date: 29th February 2020

Tutor: Dr. Bader AbouShaar

Dr. Bader AbouShaar delivered a workshop on "How to Deliver a Killer Poster Presentation" where he covered the nitty-gritty details of how to nail a good poster presentation. This workshop was especially conducted for the students presenting their posters in the Alfaisal

Annual Research Day on 5th March 2020.

Attendance: 15+ students

#### **International Programs**

#### **International Clinical Experience Program (ICEP)**

The International Clinical Experience Program (ICEP) is one of the most important programs organized by the International Office. ICEP offers senior medical students the opportunity to gain valuable clinical experience through hands-on clinical rotations, observerships in some of the prominent hospitals in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

The hands-on rotations and observerships typically last for about 4 weeks during which students learn more about the healthcare system while actively participating in patient care.

#### New Hands-On Clinical Elective Programs

- 1. AMOpportunities Agreement, USA (A discount of \$250/rotation/month on all available US clinical experience programs)
- 2. Spectrum Health, USA
- 3. Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospital, UK
- 4. Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, NY, USA
- 5. CommonSpirit Health, USA

University of Cincinnati Cancer Institute (UCCI) Clinical Observership Program

Date: January 2020

The Office also announced applications for the University of Cincinnati Cancer Institute (UCCI) Clinical Observership Program. The observership program is a favorite one for our younger medical students. Every year 3-4 students travel to Cincinnati, Ohio, USA to participate in the 4-week observership program that offers students placements in their desired oncology subspecialty. This year, however, taking into account the SARS-CoV-2 crisis, the Office took the difficult decision to cancel the UCCI clinical observership program.

### **Funding Support Program**

The Office provided 4 students with travel assistance funds for their clinical elective rotations during the academic year 2019-2020.

#### Summer Program for International Research Internship and Training (SPIRIT)

SPIRIT is also one of the International Office's signature programs. Every year the SPIRIT program provides more than 60 students with the opportunity to engage in a 12-week research internship. Unfortunately, after strenuous efforts to secure excellent research internship spots for our students, due to the unexpected SARS-CoV-2 crisis, the SPIRIT 2020 program was canceled on 10th March 2020. However, in this report we discuss some of the key achievements of the SPIRIT 2020 program.

The SPIRIT program this year showcased top research programs in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Malaysia. A list of the **67 secured research internship spots** in **15 institutions** can be found below. A total of **56 research projects** were available for students to choose from. The SPIRIT 2020 program saw its best student-mentor ratio in 10 years (**Mentor-Student Ratio of 1.2**, *favorable 1*). Moreover, **32 (47.8%)** spots did not have a program fee.

SPIRIT 2020 - List of Participating Institutions and Number of Seats Secured

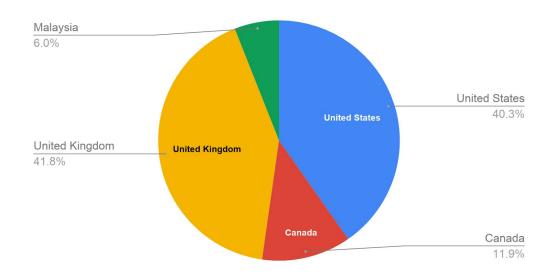
Name of the Institution	Number of Seats	<u>Country</u>
Columbia University Medical Center	1 seat	United States
Mayo Clinic	12 seats	United States
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center	1 seat	United States
Midwestern University	2 seats	United States
Tufts Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences	3 seats	United States
University of Louisville	4 seats	United States
University of Pittsburgh	1 seat	United States

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Name of the Institution	Number of Seats	<u>Country</u>
Yale University	3 seat	United States
Dalhousie University	2 seats	Canada
University of Calgary	6 seats	Canada
Barts Cancer Institute	6 seats	United Kingdom
University of Birmingham	12 seats	United Kingdom
University of Sheffield	6 seats	United Kingdom
University of Bristol	4 seats	United Kingdom
International Islamic University of Malaysia	4 seats	Malaysia

# SPIRIT 2020 - Country-Wise Distribution of Seats



The Office believes in the importance of ensuring the health and safety of its students, as well as the faculty and students at its valued partner institutions. It was unfortunate that the difficult decision to cancel the SPIRIT 2020 program was made, however, we believe this was in the best interests of our students.

#### New Research Internship Programs

- 1. Mayo Clinic (new departments)
- 2. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
- 3. Midwestern University
- 4. University of Sheffield
- 5. University of Birmingham
- 6. University of Calgary

#### Service Discounts for Students and Alumni

#### Partnership with UWorld, LLC

In March, the Office was successful in working with UWorld, LLC to offer 69 students with discounts on USMLE QBanks. Discounts were offered for USMLE Step 1 QBank (\$40 discount) and USMLE Step 3 QBank (\$60 discount).

The students appreciated the discounts very much. We hope to have another round of discounts in the coming months.

#### **Partnership with AlBorg Medical Laboratories**

In March, we signed a contract with AlBorg Medical Laboratories to provide students and alumni with a competitive, affordable, and uniquely designed Alfaisal Immunization Panel Package. The Alfaisal Immunization Panel Package is especially helpful for 3rd-year students going into their 4th year as well as for those applying to clinical elective and observership programs abroad. The package includes:

- Hepatitis B surface (HBs) Ag
- Hepatitis B surface (HBs) Ab
- Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Ab
- Varicella-Zoster IgG
- Measles Antibody IgG
- Mumps Virus Antibody IgG
- Rubella IgG
- QuantiFERON TB Gold Plus Test

The original price for these tests without the Alfaisal discount is **SAR 2940** but our contract offers Alfaisal students the same tests for just **SAR 715** (exclusive of VAT).

We also made sure that our Alfaisal Immunization Panel Package satisfies all the requirements of the AAMC and is universally acceptable in all hospitals/universities requiring proof of immunization.

#### Partnership with International Student Travel & Health Insurance

The Office signed a contract with ISI to provide the College of Medicine students, alumni, faculty, and their families with discounted travel and health insurance. The discount is especially beneficial for students traveling abroad for research or clinical programs.

Through a dedicated portal designed for the College of Medicine, the desired insurance policy can be issued in no time and sent to the beneficiary. Beneficiaries also have access to several special features such as cancellation, extensions, corrections, etc. at no added cost. They also receive access to their own Student Zone where they can learn more about their plan, including seeking treatment, finding providers, and filing claims.

#### Partnership with Academic Group, USA

In February 2020, the Office also signed a contract with Academic Group, NY, USA that offers Alfaisal students and alumni Malpractice Insurance with a discount of \$50/month. Students receive their malpractice insurance within 1-2 days. The contract also allows students flexibility with payments as well as several other special features such as cancellations, extensions, etc. of their policies at no added cost. So far 4 students have benefitted from the discount.

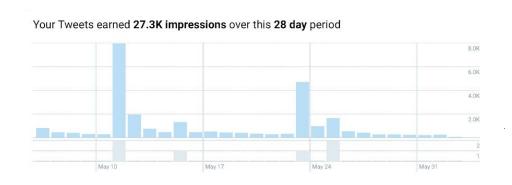
#### **Media and Publications**

#### **Launching of IO Twitter Account**

Main tweet activity includes:

- Health and Community Awareness
- Research Bites
- Alfaisal Publications
- Announcements for events, workshops, conferences/symposiums
- Event coverage for IO events and activities

#### Stats as of 03 June 2020 @ 1:51 AM for the past 28 days

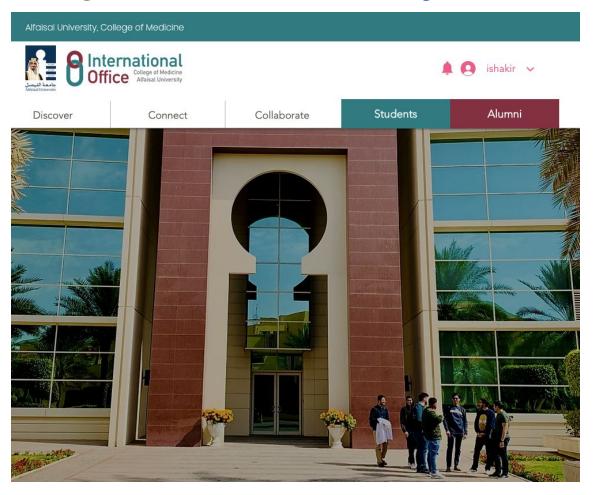




#### **Medtimes Winter Issue 2019 Articles**

- Global Collaborations and Partnerships Map
- Road to US Residency Article by Dr. Omar Javed
- Alumni Interviews by Dr. Khaled Jazieh and Dr. Leen Raddaoui

# Launching of the IO Website (www.iocom-alfaisal.org)

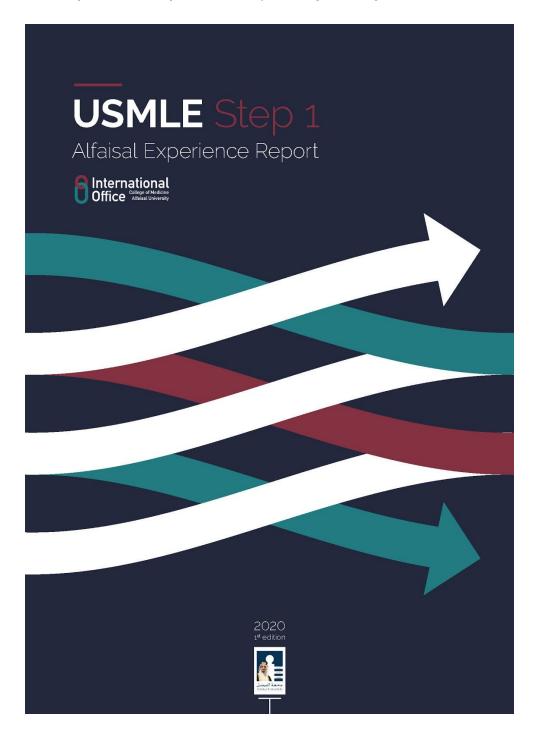


# Stats as of 03 June 2020 @ 1:51 AM for the past 28 days



# **Launching of the Alfaisal USMLE Step 1 Experience Report**

The USMLE Experience Report aimed to gather the experience of Alfaisal students taking the USMLE and synthesizing the data into a comprehensive report that would provide evidence-based guidance and recommendations to all students preparing for or planning to take the USMLE Step 1 Exam. (Report here: <a href="https://bit.ly/2OR3ZyU">https://bit.ly/2OR3ZyU</a>)



# Thank you to the best team ever!

These lovely, hard-working individuals made all what's on this report happen <3



Ola Belal Zana Hiba R Jude Ifrah Sarah G Dalia Zainab Fareeha Safwan

Ayla Hassan Abdalla Eman I Faez

Norah Eman C Ayesha A Hareem Nader Tala Heba 7 Aisha S Radwan Maha Afrah Ghadeer <mark>Bader</mark> Saima <sub>Sarah</sub> N Sadia amr Saleha Nida