

Name	SARA CATERINA MARIA O'ROURKE
Medical School	UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
Email (optional)	

Country visited	FRANCE
City or town	PARIS
Hospital/unit/clinic	NECKER HOPITAL ENFANTS MALADES – SERVICE DE CHIRURGIE PLASTIQUE ET MAXILLOFACIALE <i>(Paediatric plastic and maxilla-facial surgery)</i>
Dates visited	19/03/2018 – 18/05/2018

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What were the best things about the visit? (120 words max)	Many of the most positive aspects of my experience relate to the wider practice of medicine and surgery in France. In particular, there is certainly a different environment that exists between doctor and patient. Perhaps somewhat archaic, there is a resounding element of respect for medical staff from patients and the public. It felt nice to be treated this way. Moreover, I was very excited and privileged to be part of a surgical team that works on children that travel not only from France but from a multitude of countries to seek expert surgical help. This exposed me to numerous rare and severe conditions, and, by extension, to some amazing patients and families whose stories and strengths I attribute a lot of the passion for the speciality to.
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	speciality straight after medical school (unlike our two compulsory years of Foundation Training), they are exposed to the key skills of their speciality much earlier. This means that those who want to do surgery, in particular, get to assist in theatre a lot more and a lot sooner than in the UK. This part was particularly great – I learnt so many surgical skills and actually got to see whether or not the speciality suited me (and I suited the speciality!) It can be very hard to know before trying things out on the practical level, and for that in particular, I am hugely grateful and relieved.
Are you more likely to choose a career in plastic surgery as a result of this experience?	Definitely. As aforementioned, surgery is such an entity of its own that it can be difficult to fully appreciate the realities of the vocation as a junior doctor or least as a medical student. Now that I have been included in the team, taught surgical skills and had the opportunity to test my manual dexterity, hand-eye coordination and general knowledge of anatomy – I feel much more excited about becoming a plastic surgeon. Furthermore, I feel more confidence going into my Foundation Training rotations in surgery.