

Name: Andrew Bridgeman

University: Bristol

Placement Dates: July 2015 (3 weeks)

Organisation	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Teaching	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Surgical Exposure	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Hands on Experience	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Hospitality	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Accommodation	★ ★ ★ ★
Overall Experience	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

'My placement at James Cook University Hospital was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had during my time at medical school. The placement was organised exceptionally well from the moment I found out I had been awarded a place by the RCSEd to my last day in Middlesbrough. The undergraduate department arranged all the necessary documentation in advance so that following a brief induction on my first morning, I was straight to theatre with Mr Ferguson performing my first thoracotomy!

The entire cardiothoracic team at James Cook made me feel welcome from the moment I arrived. I had the opportunity to be involved in whatever aspects of the department I chose to. I decided to use most of my time at James Cook to further my surgical experience in both cardiac and thoracic surgery. I was able to scrub in regularly and participate in theatre; performing sternotomies, thoracotomies and saphenous vein harvests. I gained more hands-on surgical experience during my three weeks at James Cook than I have in 4 years at medical school! I was able to observe complex cases on a daily basis and everyone was enthusiastic to teach.

I feel I have gained a valuable insight into the career of a cardiothoracic surgeon whilst improving my surgical skills and knowledge of many of the procedures they perform. I would like to thank the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, Mr Ferguson and the entire team at James Cook for such a great experience. I would highly recommend this placement to anyone with an interest in cardiothoracic surgery.'