

Training and development (immunology)

This page provides useful information on the training and development for this specialty and also has tips for people at all stages of their training including medical school.

You will need to complete core training after your two-year foundation programme. Core training has a choice of two pathways:

- internal medicine stage 1, which is a two to three-year programme. Trainees may join immunology after year 2 if they have full [MRCP](#) ^[1] Diploma
- acute care common stem – ACCS (acute medicine), which is a four-year programme. Trainees may join immunology after year 3 if they have full [MRCP](#) ^[1] Diploma

Applicants for specialty training at ST3 should also hold the full [MRCP](#) ^[1] (UK). Not all applicants who meet the required standard to continue will necessarily be offered a post due to the level of competition.

Trainees can enter specialty training in immunology at ST3 level. ST3 training takes a minimum of four years; but the Specialty Advisory Committee (SAC) advises applicants that it needs five years to achieve all the competencies set out in the curriculum.

- The JRCPTB has detailed information on the curriculum and assessment for immunology ^[2]
- The approved postgraduate training programme for immunology is available from the GMC. ^[3]

Getting in tips

It is important to develop your practical skills and interest in immunology as early as you can. This will also give you valuable experience to add to your CV.

Whether you're a medical student, foundation trainee or doing your core specialty training, there's information below to help you.

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Medical students

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- opportunities in medical training to visit immunology departments is limited so make an effort to find out about this specialty
- join your university medical society
- attend conferences for medical students – many are free – this will give you an opportunity to network and meet your future colleagues
- get involved with the GMC (General Medical Council) [4], eg medical students can participate in visits to different medical schools as part of their [quality assurance](#) [5] process
- consider joining the specialist society for your chosen specialty as a student member, eg British Society for Immunology [6]
- consider becoming a student member of the BMA (the British Medical Association [7] is the trade union and professional association for doctors and provides careers advice)
- make your specialty decisions in good time so that you can test it out before committing yourself, eg by using hospital visits and clinical placements arranged as part of your course to ask questions and observe people at work
- choose the topic of your supervised research project carefully to test out your career thinking

Foundation trainees

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- remember your first priority is to demonstrate that you have developed the personal, learning, clinical, practical and management skills needed by all doctors
- think laterally when applying for rotations – vacancies may not be available in immunology so apply for a rotation in a related field
- talk to your clinical and educational supervisors about particular areas of interest to explore
- use full placements to experience specialties that you might be interested in or apply for taster experiences if you can't get a placement
- don't just look at the bigger specialties when considering your career choice
- talk with your peers about their career ideas and experiences – you may be able to help each other
- listen to information and advice from more experienced doctors but make your own decisions
- taking part in a [clinical audit](#) [8] is important for your development as a doctor but you may be able to choose an audit project related to a specialty that interests you
- ensure your Foundation e-portfolio has plenty of medical evidence and that this is kept properly up-to-date
- try to gain teaching and management experience
- look at competition ratios (ie the number of applicants to places) critically. Find out

- what is happening this year and spot any regional differences in competition ratios
- view the careers resources on the Foundation Programme website [9]
- write case reports or make presentations with an immunology focus
- enter essay prizes and competitions

Core and specialty trainees

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- ensure a good grounding in acute general medicine
- join the British Society for Immunology [6] and get help with navigating your way through specialty training
- speak to consultants about what the role is like
- read as much information as you can on the websites of relevant professional bodies
- question your own perceptions and possible negative stereotypes of the specialty
- impress interviewers by showing that your interest in the specialty is intrinsically motivated, ie you are drawn to the work and not just attracted by admiration of someone you have shadowed (You will also be happier in your career in that specialty many years later!)
- be prepared to move to where the vacancies are
- continue to develop your practical and academic expertise
- undertake a research project
- try to get some of your work published and present at national and international meetings
- join or start a Journal Club (a group who meet to critically evaluate academic research)
- teach junior colleagues
- take on any management opportunities you are offered

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/immunology/training-and-development>

Links

- [1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#MRCP>
- [2] <http://www.st3recruitment.org.uk/specialties/immunology>
- [3] <http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/immunology.asp>
- [4] <http://www.gmc-uk.org/>
- [5] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Quality_assurance
- [6] <https://www.immunology.org/>
- [7] <http://bma.org.uk/>
- [8] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Clinical_audit
- [9] <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/medical-students/your-career-path/resources>