

Academic foundation programme

About 5% of the foundation training [1] posts (around 450) are academic foundation posts and there is intense competition for places.

You'll need excellent clinical skills, a strong record of academic achievement and ideally some published research/teaching experience. If you've been awarded any prizes or other awards at medical school this will also improve your chances.

It is not essential to have completed an intercalated degree during your medical training. However, with this you'll need to demonstrate your ability and enthusiasm in other ways – for example by undertaking a summer research project.

The academic foundation programme includes the same curriculum and outcomes as the standard foundation programme. However, it also includes a period of research during the second year (F2), which can either be a four-month block or day-release. Programmes vary in this way and therefore ensure you choose something that suits you. The four-month block may be good for laboratory-based research, whereas day-release can be better for other types of clinical and education projects.

The salary of the academic foundation programme [2] is generally the same as for the standard foundation programme.

Tips for medical students applying for academic foundation posts:

- consider taking an intercalated BSc or Master's degree whilst at medical school – certain courses such as a Bachelor of Medical Science (B Med Sci/BMSc) or Master's in Health Sciences Research (M Res) are particularly relevant
- always check the fees and funding for intercalated degrees as they can vary
- participate in research projects alongside your medical studies, perhaps in the summer breaks
- choose research-based student selected modules
- attend lectures and conferences where research findings are presented
- if you are interested in a particular medical specialty find out if the relevant Royal College offers conferences open to medical students that include research topics
- make contacts with academics and offer to help with their research in an area that interests you
- try to get some teaching experience as this is a very important part of research work
- aim to get some publications to your name – if not a published research paper then a letter to an editor, or a narrative/descriptive account for a medical student journal can demonstrate your interest
- take every opportunity to develop your communication, numeracy and IT skills – all three are essential to the effective researcher
- read widely on research topics and develop your critical and analytical skills

In 2013 the average competition ratio [3] for the academic foundation programme was 1:3, and the range

was between 1:9 and 1:1. 54% of successful applicants were men, and 46% were women. (UKFPO Foundation Programme 2013 Recruitment).

Find out more about applying to the academic foundation programme. [4]

Source URL: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/clinical-academic-medicine/academic-foundation-programme>

Links

[1] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Foundation_training

[2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/about/careers-medicine/pay-doctors>

[3] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Competition_ratio

[4] <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/content/academic-foundation-programme>