

## Training and development (allergy)

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.

Allergy was established as a unique medical specialty in 2001.

The approved postgraduate training programme for allergy <sup>[1]</sup> is available from the GMC. The allergy curriculum covers 14 topic areas: fundamental immunological knowledge, relevant laboratory experience, asthma, rhinitis, atopic dermatitis, food allergy, drug and vaccine allergy, insect venom allergy, [urticaria](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and [angioedema](#) <sup>[3]</sup>, anaphylaxis, latex allergy, allergen immunotherapy, paediatric allergy, unconventional therapies and immunodeficiency.

The full training programmes for allergy last a minimum of seven years (ST1-ST7). Selection takes place before entry to ST1 (after the foundation programme) and again before entry to ST3. A significant proportion of the trainees in allergy are training less than full time.

There are two main training pathways at ST1 for allergy:

- [core medical training](#) <sup>[4]</sup> (CMT), which is a two-year programme
- the acute care common stem in acute medicine (ACCS), which is a three-year programme

Programmes consist of four to six placements in medical specialties which must include direct involvement in acute medical 'take'. Trainees record their workplace based assessments (WPBAs) in an ePortfolio which they continue to use in specialty training.

Applicants for specialty training at ST3 should also hold the full [MRCP](#) <sup>[5]</sup> (UK). Not all applicants who meet the required standard to continue will necessarily be offered a post due to the level of competition.

Paediatric trainees need to complete ST1-ST5 in paediatrics before joining sub-specialty training in paediatric allergy at ST6.

Successful completion of specialty training (ST3-7) in allergy will enable you to gain a [Certificate of Completion of Training](#) <sup>[6]</sup> (CCT <sup>[7]</sup>) and to be registered on the Specialist Register in allergy medicine.

The JRCPTB has detailed information on the curriculum and assessment for allergy medicine <sup>[8]</sup>.

## Getting in tips

It is important to develop your practical skills and interest in allergy 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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- join your university medical society
- attend conferences for medical students – this will give you an opportunity to network and meet your future colleagues
- get involved with the GMC (General Medical Council), eg medical students can participate in visits to medical schools as part of the GMC's [quality assurance](#) <sup>[9]</sup> process
- consider joining the specialist society for your chosen specialty as a student member, eg the British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) <sup>[10]</sup>
- consider becoming a student member of the BMA (the British Medical Association <sup>[11]</sup> 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 thinking
- there is very little paediatric allergy training in undergraduate medicine but you should talk to as many people as you can who are working in allergy medicine

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### 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
- 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 popular and more glamorous 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
- you must provisionally register with the GMC in year one of the Foundation Programme and become fully registered after successfully completing the first year
- taking part in a [clinical audit](#) <sup>[12]</sup> 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 <sup>[13]</sup>.

## Core and specialty trainees

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- 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
  - study for the examinations for the membership of your chosen Royal College
  - 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
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**Source URL:** <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/roles-doctors/medicine/allergy/training-and-development>

### **Links**

- [1] <http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/allergy.asp>
- [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Urticaria>
- [3] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Angioedema>
- [4] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Core\\_medical\\_training](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Core_medical_training)
- [5] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#MRCP>
- [6] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Certificate\\_of\\_completion\\_of\\_training](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Certificate_of_completion_of_training)
- [7] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#CCT>
- [8] <https://www.jrcptb.org.uk/sites/default/files/2010%20Allergy.pdf>
- [9] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Quality\\_assurance](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Quality_assurance)
- [10] <http://www.bsaci.org/>
- [11] <http://bma.org.uk/>
- [12] [https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Clinical\\_audit](https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Clinical_audit)
- [13] <http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/medical-students/your-career-path/resources>