Training and development (anaesthetics)

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.

The approved postgraduate training programme for anaesthetics is available from the GMC [1]. The GMC provides information for trainees who decide to change career direction and apply for anaesthesia. It also provides information for applicants from other European Union states and elsewhere.

![Training and development (anaesthetics)](image)

Download full image of the anaesthetics training pathway [2]

The full training programme for anaesthetics lasts a minimum of seven years. Selection takes place before entry to CT1 (after the foundation programme) and again before entry to ST3. In order to progress from one training year to the next, a trainee must achieve set milestones and pass the essential units of training (the core competencies required for a CCT).

Before applying for ST3 specialty training the trainee must also have completed the primary part of the Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists (FRCA) examination or an equivalent.

It is possible to undertake dual training in anaesthesia and intensive care medicine. The training lasts for eight and a half years. If you want to undertake dual training, guidance is available from the Faculty of Intensive Care Medicine.
Less than full time (LTFT) training is possible for those who meet the requirements. Anaesthesia is second only to paediatrics for numbers of part-time trainees.

There are two main training pathways at CT1 for anaesthetics:

- core anaesthetics training, generally lasting two years (CT1 - CT2)
- the acute care common stem (ACCS) in anaesthetics, generally lasting three years (CT1 - CT3) It is made up of two years of generic ACCS training followed by one year of specialty specific training in anaesthetics

Successful completion of intermediate, higher and advanced specialty training (ST3-7), as well as completion of the final part of the FRCA examination, will enable you to gain a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) and to be registered on the Specialist Register in anaesthetics.

Workplace assessments take place and anaesthetists are required to achieve well defined standards set by the Royal College of Anaesthetists.

Anaesthesia has multiple recognised sub specialties, such as pre-hospital emergency medicine but in the later years of training, anaesthetists can develop their interest and expertise in areas of anaesthesia including:

- cardiac
- obstetric
- neurosurgical or paediatric
- pain medicine

**Tips for medical students**

Expand / collapse

- 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) [5], eg medical students can participate in visits to medical schools as part of the GMC’s quality assurance process
- consider joining the specialist society for your chosen specialty as a student member, eg The Royal College of Anaesthetists [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
- select anaesthetics, if available, as a special study module
- select anaesthetics for your elective

**Tips for foundation trainees**

Expand / collapse

- 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 anaesthetics so apply for a rotation in a related field such as intensive care medicine
- 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 and more visible 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 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 [8] 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. Though be aware they vary every year
○ view the careers resources on the Foundation Programme [9] website
○ write case reports or make presentations (in acute medicine, for instance) with an anaesthetics focus
○ enter essay prizes and competitions
○ be a first author on a peer reviewed publication
○ become a member of the Royal College of Anaesthetists
○ complete the MCQ section of the FRCA examination

• Tips for core and specialty trainees

Expand / collapse

○ ensure a good grounding in acute general medicine
○ speak to consultants about what the role is like
○ read as much information as you can on the websites of relevant professional bodies
○ 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/anaesthesia/training-and-development

Links
[8] https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/career-planning-0/developing-your-career/learning-and-development-opportunities/developing-your/e