Training appointments and educational approval
Training appointments and educational approval

All training posts must have educational and dean's approval and this should be clearly stated in advertisements. Junior doctors should be aware that non-approved or non-standard posts will not count towards a CCT (certificate of completion of training). Junior doctors who have any concerns about a post should always seek advice from their postgraduate dean. All specialty training and fixed-term training appointments must adhere to national person specifications, which are available on the Health Education England website (http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/) and the Scottish Medical Training Website (www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk).

NHS training posts must be of an acceptable standard and accord with NHS workforce agreements. The following key features must apply to all training posts:

– a post or programme must have educational approval and approval by the postgraduate dean or it cannot be designated a training post or programme
– a post not in a recognised NHS training grade (eg ST level Trust post/clinical fellow) cannot be regarded as a recognised training placement or programme. Experience in such non-training posts cannot be assumed to count towards the completion of specialty or general practice training
– placements or programmes in NHS training grades for doctors and dentists can only be advertised if they have the valid educational and dean’s approval.
– all recruitment procedures should comply with equality and diversity policies.

Employers must seek permission from the postgraduate dean whenever it is proposed to advertise a training placement or programme. Before the advertisement can appear, the postgraduate dean must confirm that:

– there is valid educational approval
– there is current postgraduate dean’s approval
The following two elements must be met for a post to obtain the postgraduate dean’s approval:
– posts must meet agreed standards on training, supervision, contractual terms, compliance with the New Deal, accommodation and catering and local human resources strategy
– where there is a national or specialty-specific target for the number of doctors or dentists to be trained, the dean’s approval must not be granted to placements that may cause these targets to be breached.

**GMC (General Medical Council) approval of experience**
If a doctor has been in an educationally approved post in the UK (eg SHO, LAT or FTSTA¹) they can enter specialty training at an appropriate point above ST1 and proceed to a CCT (certificate of completion of training). The national person specifications outline the experience requirements for each level. If their posts have offered experience but have not been educationally approved, they can still enter beyond ST1, but will need to join the Specialist Register by the Article 14 (CESR (Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration)) route.

**Prospective approval of posts**
The GMC does not retrospectively approve non-training posts for doctors hoping to gain a CCT. As stated above, posts that have offered experience but have not been educationally approved can be used to further training, but will require the doctor to join the Specialist Register by the Article 14 (CESR) route. However, doctors may gain prospective approval of research or overseas posts, which will then count towards a CCT. This approval must be agreed by the GMC and the dean in advance. See [www.gmc-uk.org/education/seeking_approval.asp](http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/seeking_approval.asp)

For further information on OOP (Out of Programme Experience) see chapter 22. Educational and training approval from the GMC is also needed for those placements not funded by the postgraduate dean but by other bodies, eg universities, charitable institutions, or research bodies, non-NHS providers etc.

¹ Please note – at the time of printing, in England, LATs or FTSTAs are in the process of being phased out.
Honorary appointments
An honorary appointment gives a doctor formal status at an employer. It does not provide a salary or require formal work but can open opportunities to undertake paid work and access appropriate expenses. Employers offering honorary NHS appointments to doctors wishing to gain experience in order to pursue clinical specialist training must obtain the dean’s approval before the placement is advertised or the appointment confirmed.

LASs (Locum Appointments for Service)
Locum doctors and dentists should not be appointed to training grades where there is no substantive placement to be covered. Locum appointments (apart from Locum Appointments for Training – LATs\(^2\)) will not normally be recognised for training purposes. Applicants should be told before appointment that, although the substantive placement may attract the relevant approvals, a locum appointment should not be assumed to count towards a CCT. Advice about prospective approval of training for locum hospital placements should be sought from the GMC and the postgraduate dean.

Non-standard grades
Employers have been told by the BMA that non-standard titles can also be misleading and that they should not use them. The following substantive standard training grade titles are listed in the Terms and Conditions of Service for junior doctors and are open for appointment: StR (specialty registrar), StR(FT) (specialty registrar (fixed term)) or FTSTA (fixed term specialty training appointment), StR(CT) (specialty registrar (core training)), F1 (foundation doctor 1), F2 (foundation doctor 2).

If you are applying for a non-standard grade it is important that you read the terms of the recruitment advertisement carefully and check whether the post you are considering applying for has educational approval.

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2 Please note – at the time of printing, in England, LATs are in the process of being phased out.
Responsibility for educational approval

F1 grade
The learning objectives for this year are set by the GMC. In order to attain full registration with the GMC, doctors must achieve specific competences by the end of this year. The postgraduate dean normally undertakes responsibility for approving trainees’ competences.

F2 grade, specialty training grades and fixed term specialty training appointments
The GMC is required to recognise and approve placements and programmes for the foundation programme and for all specialty training leading to the award of a CCT. The GMC will take advice from the relevant medical royal college or faculty, which approves placements on its behalf. However, not all placements/programmes confirmed by the dean as having educational and postgraduate dean’s approval automatically lead to the award of a CCT, eg Locum Appointments for Training and StR(CT). For detailed information on specialty training please read A guide to postgraduate training in the UK also known as the Gold Guide—this is available for all years at http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/the-gold-guide/

SpR grade
Even though this grade is closed to new entrants, many trainees continue on SpR contracts. These are educationally approved in the same way as the specialty training grades. For detailed information on SpR training please read A guide to specialist registrar training: NHS Executive 1998, also known as the Orange Guide—http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/publicationsandstatistics/publications/publicationspolicyandguidance/DH_4006614
Further information

– *A guide to specialist registrar training: NHS Executive 1998*, known as the *Orange Guide*
  

– *A guide to postgraduate training in the UK*, also known as the *Gold Guide* [http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/the-gold-guide/](http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/the-gold-guide/)

– *Rough guide to the foundation programme*

– [www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home/keydocs](http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home/keydocs)

– *Foundation programme reference guide*

– [www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home/keydocs](http://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home/keydocs)
Learning and development
Learning and development

The BMA is committed to supporting doctors throughout their careers and provides a wide range of specialist non-clinical learning and development services. We recognise the importance of continued non-clinical training in helping doctors to advance their careers and to help with demonstrating further valuable learning for appraisal and revalidation.

As a BMA member, your access to these services currently range from free medical careers information and online guidance available 24/7, through to discounted career development workshops, webinars and one-to-one careers coaching. This includes in person and online training, medical careers information, top tips and guides on how to choose a specialty, training recruitment processes and timelines, job vacancies and links to other careers sites.

Our team of qualified trainers and medical careers consultants deliver open workshops and group training at medical workplaces around the UK. We also deliver live webinars and online videos on a variety of professional development topics.

Open career development workshops
These interactive workshops focus on issues specific to you as a junior doctor and are designed to give you the support and guidance you need to develop your true career potential. Topics include:

- interview skills and CV review
- presenting skills for clinicians
- negotiating and influencing
- time management
- management essentials and many more.

Workshops are delivered by highly-qualified medical careers advisers and provide you with the extra skills you need to prepare you for a successful career in medicine. Visit the BMA website to view information about each programme.
Career development webinars
We deliver a suite of webinars that provide real-time teaching delivered live to your computer from a careers expert on topics which are aligned to your training, such as:
– Assertiveness in the workplace
– Making the most of your appraisal
– Options for taking a year out
– Networking for professional development
– Preparing for your specialty application.

We recognise that while in person teaching is ideal, not always do work and other commitments allow for this. Webinars provide a flexible learning approach to careers development, no matter where you are or when you decide to watch.

Free Sci59 online psychometric test
The BMA works with CenMEDIC to provide members with free access to the Sci59 online psychometric test which is designed to provide a list of medical career choices that are impartial and based only on your personal characteristics. The output of Sci59 provides a rational view of the specialties that match your needs.

The questionnaire takes around 25 minutes to complete and feedback is almost instantaneous. Remember, the result acts as a guide for your consideration—it is not a replacement of formal career guidance.

To access the site or for further information please visit bma.org.uk/psychometric

One-to-one careers coaching
Individual career advice is available through a confidential one-to-one coaching service. Designed to meet your specific needs and provide practical solutions to complex career issues and challenges, impartial, independent advisers will provide expert, in-depth analysis at significantly discounted rates to BMA members. For further information please visit bma.org.uk/careercoaching
e-learning module resources for junior doctors
The e-learning modules from BMA Careers offer insightful, practical guidance that puts you in control of your career. Unlike some other career resources, these e-learning modules see things from your perspective. Modules in the series include:

- Maximising your portfolio
- Time Management for foundation doctors
- Effective handover for foundation doctors
- Building professional relationships
- Getting and giving useful feedback
- How to be successful with your application for specialty training
- How to take a career break and have a successful return to work.

Access these exclusive and valuable modules at: learning.bmj.com/BMA

More career progression benefits from the BMA in partnership with the BMJ
BMA members are entitled to a wide range of benefits from the BMJ. Make sure you support your continued non-clinical learning and career progression needs with:

- free access to BMJ Learning an extensive range of CPD and postgraduate training modules
- discounted BMJ Masterclasses specialist one-day courses to keep you up to date with the latest evidence, new guidelines and best practice
- BMJ Portfolio to evidence your CPD
- discount on BMJ Quality an online platform that will guide you step by step through your quality improvement project
- free access to BMJ Careers, the UK’s leading resource of medical jobs
- free weekly print editions of The BMJ
- free online access at thebmj.com, and
- discounted subscriptions to Journals from BMJ (Excluding: BMJ Case Reports, Drug and Therapeutics Bulletin, Veterinary Record and In Practice).
Recruitment to specialty training – advice for applicants
Recruitment to specialty training – advice for applicants

All applications to specialty training programmes are managed through the online application portal ‘Oriel’: www.oriel.nhs.uk

Recruitment is either organised locally by the deanery for a specific region (for Scotland it is coordinated by NHS Education for Scotland and as of 2014 Scotland is a single deanery) or for some specialties recruitment is coordinated on a UK-wide basis and led by a specific deanery or royal college.

You should first check the relevant Royal College, LETB or deanery website for information about training programmes and application processes. You should also ensure that you meet the criteria listed in the person specification for the training programme to which you will be applying.

You can apply to training programmes during the vacancy window by searching for vacancies on the relevant college, LETB or deanery website, NHS jobs online or on the Oriel website. You will be shortlisted for interview against the criteria listed in the person specification.

HEE (Health Education England) has produced guidance for applicants that includes dates of vacancy windows and its website also links to specific programme descriptors and competition ratios for each specialty.

Applications to the Foundation Programme are managed by the UK Foundation Programme Office using the FPAS system.

If you are in doubt, please check the oriel website or the specialty training website (http://specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk/) for up to date information on applying to specialty training programmes.
Further information
- Frequently asked questions on the BMA website bma.org.uk/developing-your-career/specialty-training/applying-for-a-specialty-training-post
- Oriel www.oriel.nhs.uk
- HEE specialty training www.specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk
- Specialty training in Wales www.walesdeanery.org
- Specialty training in Northern Ireland www.nimdta.gov.uk
- Specialty training in Scotland www.scotmt.scot.nhs.uk
- NHS Jobs www.jobs.nhs.uk
- UKFPO for Foundation Training www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/pages/home

Recruitment to general practice
The National Recruitment Office coordinates the recruitment to general practice for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. More information is available on the National Recruitment Office website at www.gprecruitment.org.uk/

Code of Practice: Provision of information for postgraduate medical training
The Code of Practice has been adopted across the UK. The Code lays out the agreed set of information that recruiting organisations and employers should provide to doctors in training at each stage of the recruitment process, including the first post and subsequent rotations. Under the Code, employers should share the following information at least eight, and preferably 12 weeks in advance:
- Contact details
- Location of work
- Hours and out-of-hours rota
- Basic pay and any supplementary pay
- Pension arrangements
- Leave rules and entitlement

Some junior doctors are still not receiving sufficient notice and in these cases you should first contact your prospective employer or recruiting organisation to address the problem. If this does not resolve the issue then contact the BMA.
More information about the Code is available on the BMA website: bma.org.uk/practical-support-at-work/contracts/juniors-contracts/accepting-jobs/code-of-practice

Links to the Code of practice can be found here:

Recruitment to an Academic Clinical Fellowship/Clinical Lectureships
For more information please visit the relevant page for your region:

Academic Clinical Fellowship/Clinical Lectureships

England and Wales
National Institute for Health Research website: www.nihr.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx

Northern Ireland
Training programme from Queen’s University, Belfast: www.qub.ac.uk/schools/ mdbspgd/CAT/

Scotland
NES (NHS Education for Scotland) website: www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/

Wales
Foundation Academic Programme information can be accessed via the Wales deanery website at: www.walesdeanery.org/index.php/en/foundation-training-key-documents/1154-academic-foundation-programmes-afps.html
An overview of the academic training programmes across the UK is available on the BMA website bma.org.uk/developing-your-career/specialty-training/academic-training

**Top tips on applying for a specialty training post**

– Read the programme descriptors carefully.
– Read the person specifications to ensure your skill set matches with the role you are applying for.
– Check you know which level you should apply for.
– Check the competition ratios for each specialty.
– Check you can back up your experience with sufficient evidence.
– Find out if your specialty is recruiting through either:
  – locally led by your deanery/NHS Education for Scotland
  – coordinated on a UK-wide basis led by a deanery or royal college.
– Check the application deadlines (late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances).
– Find out if you have to submit an application online and how long this will take you.
– Start planning your applications early and download the application form and ensure you have all the information you need.
– Read the Specialty Recruitment Applicant Handbook on the specialty training website (www.specialtytraining.hee.nhs.uk) for help and advice on how to best present your skill set and experience in your application. For other nations, please check the relevant websites for further information.
27% of the employment contracts we check are not correct

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