

Reading list: Specialty choice and applications for foundation doctors

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1 Description

- This tailored reading list includes signposted web links, links to e-Books held by the BMA library, and journal articles on the topic of **Specialty choice and applications for foundation doctors** as a supplement to the Learning and Development webinar you attended on 06 September 2023.
- The selected content is representative of the current literature on this topic, inclusion on this list does not imply endorsement from the BMA.
- If you would like to request a literature search on any aspect of this topic please fill out a [request form](#) (this service is available to BMA Members only).
- This reading list prioritises online content to ensure all attendees can benefit from this supporting resource. However most full text links will be accessible to BMA Members only. Find out more about [the benefits of BMA Membership](#) and [join here](#).
- The BMA Library prioritises an e-first approach, however if you are near BMA House in London, we have a modern, purpose-built library space where members are welcome to come and study. Find out more and see how we can help you [here](#).

2 Obtaining full text articles

2.1.1.1 Full text links

If available, the full text link has been included.

2.1.1.2 Search for Journals

The BMA Library provides access to thousands of e-journals for all BMA members. Use our [journal search](#) or [search by citation](#) options on the library website.

2.1.1.3 Article Requests

Members can use our article request service to request digital copies of articles that are not available in our library collections. We will try to obtain these copies from other libraries in the UK on your behalf for a fee: £5.10 (+VAT) for the first ten article requests; £13 (+VAT) for all subsequent requests. To request digital copies of articles, use the [order an article form](#) on the library website (you must be signed in).

2.1.1.4 E-Books

We provide free, direct access to thousands of e-books for BMA members.

2.1.1.5 Further help

For any further help with getting full text articles, please contact the BMA Library Team (bma-library@bma.org.uk)

3 Results

Results

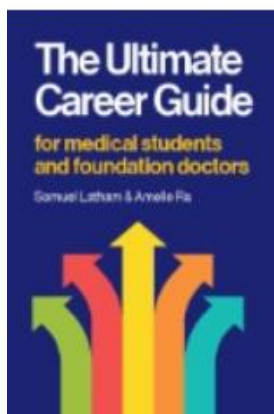
3.1 Books



Lim, Danny C.G. *How to get a Specialty Training Post: the insider's guide*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Available online [here](#)

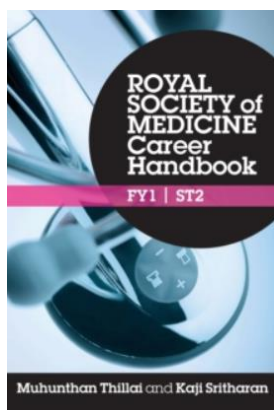
This book helps doctors to improve their chances of getting the highly sought-after specialty training post. It is a wide-ranging, accessible guide to the application process, covering every step, from online application to the selection panel. It includes essential tips on career development, interview technique, and specialty-specific advice.



Latham, S. & Ra, A. *The Ultimate Career Guide: For medical students and foundation doctors*. Banbury: Scion Publishing, 2021

Available online [here](#)

This guide is designed to enhance the employability of prospective and current doctors. Whether you are a sixth-form student who has just received an offer to study medicine, or whether you're a junior doctor looking to take the next step towards your chosen specialty, this guide can be used to help you achieve your career goals.

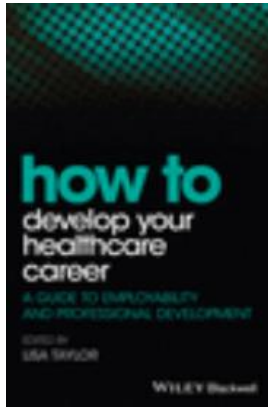


Thillai, M & Sritharan, K. *Royal Society of Medicine Career Handbook*. London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2011

Available online [here](#)

This book is for all newly qualified doctors. It systematically and logically examines the entire hospital doctor and GP career process from start to finish, dispelling common myths and advising doctors on how to break down their career into sections and tackle them one at a time. Each chapter is devoted to one aspect of the career pathway from how to choose the right job for you through to FY1, FY2 and ST jobs, and covering

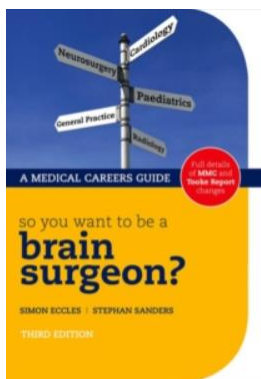
application forms, exams, the interview process, audit and finally publications.



Taylor, L.E. ***How to Develop Your Healthcare Career: A Guide to Employability and Professional Development.*** Chichester: Wiley, 2016

Available online [here](#)

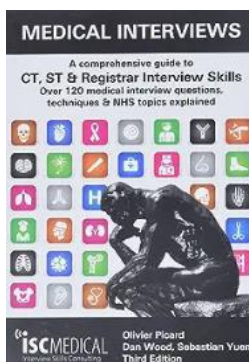
An informative guide to all key aspects of employability for graduating students, educators, managers, and qualified healthcare professionals. Written specifically for health professionals, focusing on their needs and the challenges they face, maximising employability potential, and managing career progression. Packed full of potential interview questions, reflection opportunities, and case studies throughout.



Eccles, S. & Sanders, S. ***So you want to be a brain surgeon? the medical careers guide.*** New York: Oxford University Press, c2009

Available online [here](#)

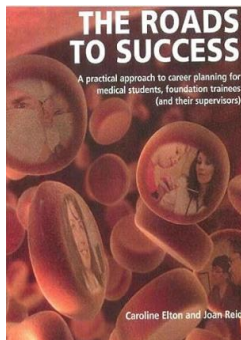
Which doctors make the most money? Which doctors work the hardest? How do you become an expedition doctor? What is it like to be a brain surgeon? Will it affect your career if you take a break? If any of these questions are relevant to you then this could be the most important book you ever read. Whether you are wondering what career to choose or want to know how to follow a particular medical career, you'll find the answers inside.



Picard, O. et al. ***Medical interviews: a comprehensive guide to CT, ST and registrar interview skills: over 120 medical interview questions, techniques and NHS topics explained.*** ISC Medical, 2019

Print copy available [via the BMA Library](#)

Written and edited by experts in medical interview skills, this book takes you through all the important aspects of CT, ST and Registrar interviews and will give you a unique insight into the marking schemes. Through the detailed analysis of 120 medical interview questions, techniques and NHS hot topics, you will gain an invaluable insight into a wide range of common medical interview topics.



Elton, C. & Reid, J. *The ROADS to Success: A practical approach to career planning for medical students, foundation trainees (and their supervisors)*. Postgraduate Deanery for Kent, Surrey and Sussex, 2008

Available to buy via [Amazon](#)

Choosing the right specialty is a critical decision that all junior doctors face. This is a carefully structured handbook to support both trainees and their supervisors throughout the career planning process. This is a practical handbook packed with essential information, self-assessment including psychometric tests and insightful tips.

3.2 DVDs



Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS)
Selection Centres for Specialty Training

The Selection Centres for Specialty Training is a resource designed to support trainees preparing to apply for specialty training. It consists of a series of videos of mock interviews, each about 10 minutes long.

Available via your local Postgraduate Education Centre or NHS Trust library

3.3 Web links



British Medical Association

Specialty Explorer

Get help with making an informed choice about what kind of doctor you would like to be. Specialty explorer is a tool for BMA members that matches you with medical specialties that suit your preferences.

Available online [here](#)



British Medical Association

Working Abroad

Our guidance covers a list of things you should consider before working abroad as a doctor as well as country profiles for

Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand.

Available online [here](#)



Health Education England
Medical Education Hub

NHS Health Education England

Medical Speciality Recruitment

Speciality recruitment applicant guide.

Available online [here](#)



NHS

Roles as a doctor

Careers resource for foundation doctors involved in the process of choosing a speciality. Includes sections on understanding yourself, exploring your options and details about each speciality.

Available online [here](#)



NHS

Career Planning

Many people need help to manage their career at some point in their life. In this section you'll find advice and tips on how you can help yourself in your career progression or supporting others take the next step.

Available online [here](#)



BMJ Careers

Tips for Choosing Your Medical Speciality

As a doctor, you have a large variety of options when it comes to your career. All medical careers have their own pros and cons, and it is often difficult to choose which speciality is for you. However, throughout the course of your studies and training there will be many opportunities to experience different specialties and to learn what you enjoy doing and what career suits you the most.

Available online [here](#)



BMJ Careers

Speciality Guides

The Complete Guide to Becoming a..... - A series of publications looking at different specialities.

Available online [here](#)



Health Education England North West

Career Planning

This website is intended to provide you with a range of information and resources to help you in your career planning and also for those who are supporting others in their career planning.

Available online [here](#)



NHS Medical Careers

NHS medical careers

NHS Medical Careers is the dedicated UK website for those interested or currently in the medical profession. Their YouTube channel contains videos on specialty recruitment.

Available online [here](#)

3.4 Google Scholar



[intitle:\("specialty choice" OR "medical specialities" OR "speciality training"\) \("foundation doctor" OR FY1 OR FY2\) \(application OR career OR decision OR choice OR shortlist OR interview OR plan\)](#)

Click link to see Google Scholar results

BMA members can follow the instructions set out in [this library blog post](#) to directly access the full text of any of the Google Scholar articles that the BMA library has a subscription to (you only need to follow these instructions once).

**Please note that as Google Scholar results are ordered by relevance, the first few pages of results will be the most useful.*

3.5 Journal articles

1. McKenna J. et al. (2021)

“Performance of Queen's University Belfast graduates at core and speciality application”

The Ulster medical journal, 90 (2), p. 101-106

[Click to view reference](#)

The general medical council (GMC) conducts the National Training Survey (NTS) annually. Part of the survey illustrates the statistics of United Kingdom medical school graduates in core and speciality application. We aimed to review the speciality training application and performance of graduates of Queen's University Belfast (QUB), and compared with graduates of medical schools in England, Scotland, and Wales. The progression reports from the GMC NTS 2016-2019 were

accessed on the GMC website. All data available were extracted in April 2020. The mean results for all graduates of 33 UK medical schools in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales were collated from the NTS. Applications to the seven specialities with the greatest number of posts available across the UK were analysed. No differences were noted in the majority of the application stages when comparing graduates from QUB with other UK medical school graduates. However, QUB graduates were less likely to be invited for an interview when applying for core surgical training AND receive an offer for Core Anaesthetic and ACCS Training. QUB graduates were less likely to apply for General Practice training. Our study evaluates the performance of QUB graduates compared to other UK medical graduates in core/speciality application. Based on our findings, QUB and postgraduate deaneries may consider focussing on strengthening applications for aspiring surgeons, improving interview performance for anaesthetics and ACCS applicants, and attracting trainees to pursue a career in General Practice.

2. Salice, C. (2020)

“Building a portfolio for speciality applications”

BMJ (Online), Vol 370, p. m2481

[Click to view reference](#)

Clara Salice shares her experience of building a portfolio for speciality applications

3. Kiron, K. et al (2017)

“How to succeed at medical interviews”

International Journal of Surgery Oncology, 2(6):e21

[Click to view reference](#)

Few people truly relish being interviewed. But as a professional, you will go through a number of interviews in your life that will affect your career progression. In this article, we provide some tips on how best to prepare for a medical interview, both in terms of your portfolio and interview practice. Advice is also given on how to maximize performance during the interview and gain the most from reflection afterwards.

4. Farrow, S. (2012)

“Speciality Training Applications – is there a Recipe that Works for All?”

Journal of the Intensive Care Society, Vol.13 (1), p.28-30

[Click to view reference](#)

Susan Farrow has five years' experience of working in the private sector with Oxbridge Applications, assisting prospective medical students in their application forms. She has a background in personal tutoring, writing personal statements and providing interview practice. Please note that the assistance provided is guidance and recommendation and that ultimately a student's application form must always be their own work. Nevertheless, there are strategies available which may ease the application process and alleviate anxieties associated with this experience for applicants.