



Academic Foundation Year 2 - Certificate of Academic Medicine

Brief description of department:

The Clinical Academic Training Programme (CATP) was developed by the School of Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Sciences, in partnership with the Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) and the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, as a pathway to provide academic clinical training opportunities. This programme was created as part of Modernising Medical Careers/National Co-ordinating Centre for Research Capacity Programme of Integrated Academic Training to address the need to attract and train clinical academics. There is an increasing need to equip medical graduates with the skills required to undertake basic and clinical discovery research and to translate the benefits of such research to improvements in treatment for patients.

Queens University Belfast (QUB) has an international reputation in academic medicine and the strategic vision of the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences is to develop and promote a world-class, research-led medical community. Recognising the need for the development of a cohort of appropriately qualified medical graduates, we are offering a research intensive, student oriented **Academic Foundation Year 2 Programme**, with the option of completing a **Certificate in Academic Medicine**, that will provide high quality candidates with the research skills required to further develop their careers.

Following graduation from medical school the first step on the Clinical Academic Training pathway is the Academic Foundation Programme, which is recruited to by the Northern Ireland Foundation School (NIFS) based at NIMDTA. In the Northern Ireland programme nine AF2 posts are offered and they incorporate a four month attachment to an academic unit where the clinician will gain experience of working on a research project (which may include a medical education project) and begin to develop the practical and analytical skills necessary to carry out research.

The combined research elements of the programme will be delivered within four Centres of the School on the Medical Biological Centre and Royal Victoria Hospital sites: the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology (CCRCB), the Wellcome-Wolfson Institute for Experimental Medicine), the Centre for Public Health (CPH), and the Centre for Medical Education (CME). Thus, the student will be immersed in a scientific community that promotes enquiry and innovation, in a research culture that emphasises rigour and encourages excellence and in a programme that provides a student focused approach to postgraduate education.

Duties of Trainee Posts:

The placement will comprise of an appraisal meeting to review the trainee's learning portfolio and agree the educational objectives for the AF2 placement. In the initial period of the attachment the trainee will be expected to present the background and rationale for the research project to the supervisor and research group. Following a period of data collection and analysis they will carry out a further oral presentation of their research results. Upon completion of the attachment a 1000 word extended abstract summarising the research hypothesis, methodology, results and conclusions is to be submitted within three weeks.

A research project can be chosen in one of a number of relevant topics and the project will be supervised by an experienced clinical academic. If possible, the research project will form the basis of an abstract to be submitted to a national meeting.

The overall Educational Objectives are to:

1. To equip students with the knowledge and skills to understand the principles of academic medicine.
2. To provide students with the opportunity to participate in original and high quality research.
3. To develop student's skills in critical analysis of the scientific literature and scientific writing of research articles.
4. To mentor students in the skills required to produce high quality research proposals.
5. To expand students capacity for self-directed and life-long learning.



Educational Opportunities:

The Academic Foundation Year 2 programme provides a wealth of opportunities to develop a wide range of research skills such as the ability to:

- 1) Analyse and interpret data.
- 2) Adopt various research approaches and combine information from different sources to develop a research plan.
- 3) Evaluate ethical issues in research
- 4) Critically evaluate scientific literature
- 5) Apply analytical, numerical and creative thinking skills
- 6) Work independently and take responsibility for own learning
- 7) Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills including the presentation of scientific information
- 8) Manage time effectively and prioritize tasks
- 9) Develop knowledge and skills which contribute to the development of others, through active participation in teamwork and group learning opportunities
- 10) Use information technology in particular the recording of information and data retrieval
- 11) Discuss research approaches, techniques and design in academic medicine.
- 12) Discuss research ethics in relation to studies in humans and animals and correctly apply established principles and legislation to these areas of research
- 13) Critically analyse research approaches in their chosen discipline
- 14) Explain techniques that will underpin the research design of their research project
- 15) Develop and present a research proposal for their research project
- 16) Write an extended abstract based on established guidelines for a chosen journal

Particular strengths of this placement:

The QUB/NIMDTA Clinical Academic Training Programme seeks to provide research opportunities, develop the critical and analytical skills and advance the careers of doctors in training. Our aim is to encourage doctors to think of research as an essential part of improving their clinical practice, rather than an optional pursuit for the interested few. Only by developing new ideas and approaches to the challenges of modern medicine can we seek to improve the lives of our patients.

The opportunities offered by the Academic Foundation programme provide the skills necessary to become an enquiring and thoughtful doctor. As Academic Foundation doctors you will be taking the first steps along the path of integrating research ideas into your clinical practice. By developing a research project, collecting data, analysing and interpreting results and presenting your findings you will gain a range of essential research skills. This programme will provide you with the skills necessary to become a thoughtful and innovative clinician whether you chose to pursue an academic or clinical career path.

Illustrative Timetable (clinical duties and regular educational sessions):

	9am-12pm	12pm-5pm
Monday	Research	Research
Tuesday	Research	Clinical Education
Wednesday	Research	Research
Thursday	Research	Research
Friday	Research	Research
Saturday		
Sunday		

Meetings: Specify Weekly / Monthly

Weekly Research Group meetings
Regular Seminars

Fees & Funding:

Trainees undertaking the Certificate will be liable for the University's standard tuition fees which can be found [here](#). We would like to emphasise that the Certificate of Academic Medicine/Dentistry is not compulsory for all AF2s.

How to Apply:

Details on how to apply for the **Academic Foundation Year 2 Programme**, are available on NIMDTA webpages (<http://www.nimdt.gov.uk/recruitment/foundation-recruitment/>). On acceptance to this scheme you will be eligible to apply for the Certificate in Academic Medicine.

Academic Foundation Year 2 Programme Team at QUB:

Title	SURNAME	First Name	Subspecialty Special Interest	Educational Roles
Prof	MAXWELL	Peter	Nephrology	Director of Clinical Academic Training
Dr	TURKINGTON	Richard		AF2 Programme Co-Ordinator

Get in Touch: Please do not hesitate to contact a member of the programme team at QUB or NIMDTA if you have any questions.

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