

The Norwich Academic Foundation Programme

Foreword

We are delighted that you are considering applying for the Norwich Academic Foundation Programme (AFP). Our AFP has been running since 2007 and for many of our previous trainees has been a springboard for future success in their clinical academic careers. The Norwich AFP provides a range of exciting opportunities for early clinical academics with excellent links with researchers based across the Norwich Research Park (NRP).

An AFP post is a prestigious role and is the first stage in the Integrated Academic Training (IAT) pathway. The Norwich AFP will provide you with a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on research experience, develop research skills, collaborate and receive mentorship among a thriving community of researchers, as part of our mentorship programme. In addition to supporting your development as a clinical academic, we are very keen to see our AFP trainees secure significant outputs leading from their research, including peer-reviewed publications, and presentations at a national or international level. We strongly encourage our AFPs to make the very most of the two-year programme and consider how best to prepare for the next stage in their career, such as applications for Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) posts. We were both AFP post-holders in Norwich over a decade ago and we look forward to helping you develop your clinical academic career and explore what we believe is a very rewarding career path.



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Why should you apply here!

The Norwich Academic Foundation Programme (AFP) is part of Health Education East of England's East Anglian Foundation School. It is a well-established and successful programme which, between 2009 and 2018, has seen over a hundred doctors in training join the Programme. Please see website links for more information on the [East of England Foundation School](#), the [University of East Anglia](#) (UEA) and [Norfolk and](#)

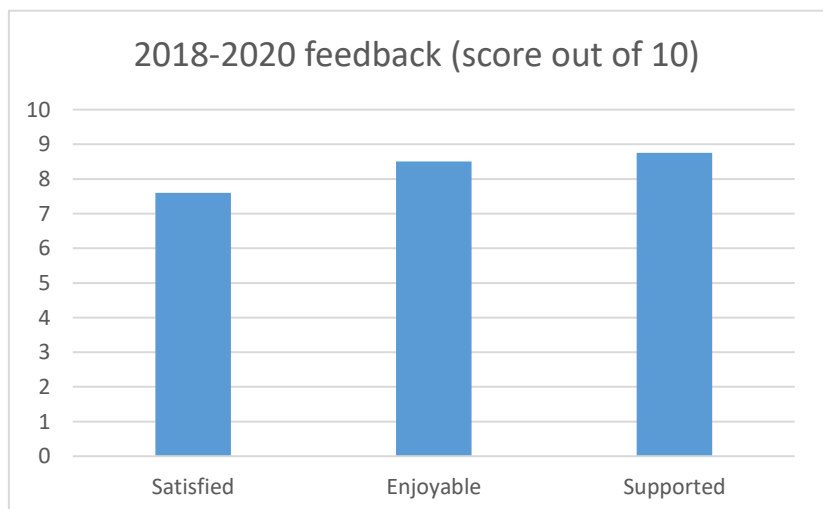
[Norwich University Hospital Foundation Trust](#) (NNUH). The Programme is well supported between the UEA and NNUH with Foundation Year 2 doctors based in either the Norwich Medical School or other schools across the UEA campus or the wider Norwich Research Park (NRP). This affords access to outstanding researchers and leading clinicians in their field.



In the exit questionnaire from the 2018-2020 cohort all trainees stated that they would recommend the Norwich programme to a colleague or friend. One trainee was appointed as an academic clinical fellow and six trainees were appointed to run through / specialty training posts.

The Norwich Research Park (NRP) provides an ideal location for the delivery of integrated academic training (IAT) given the extremely close links that exist between academic clinicians based at the Norfolk & Norwich University

Hospital, and researchers based at Norwich Medical School and UEA more widely. Additional partners on the NRP comprise the Quadram Institute (QI), the John Innes Centre for plant research (JIC), the Earlham Institute (EI) and the Sainsbury Centre. The different institutions provide a unique opportunity for health



related research. The NRP is one of the major areas of investment by the Biological and Basic Science Research Council and has in recent years received significant central government funding. This is best exemplified in the current creation of the Quadram Institute which has incorporated the previous Institute of Food Research together with the main NNUH endoscopy unit and the joint QI, NNUH and UEA Clinical Research Facility. BBSRC has invested more than £60m in this project which has a total value in excess of £85m and represents one of the biggest capital projects in British biomedical research of this decade.



Today we have over 200 postgraduate students registered across research degrees in health and some 140 competitively funded, live medical research projects providing a stimulating research environment that includes practitioners and academics right across health and biomedical professions; as a postgraduate, you will find that it's right at the forefront of biomedical and health research.



The Quadram Institute

A place on the Academic Foundation Programme offers the opportunity to spend protected time on academic research. At Norwich, this will be one four-month rotation during FY2. The remaining five rotations will be clinical attachments, during which clinical competencies must be met. Previous post holders have conducted basic research, epidemiology, clinical trials, and systematic reviews across a number of disciplines.

During their academic block, Foundation Year doctors have no clinical commitments but will be required to keep up with their training portfolios. This may include attendance at a clinic or a documented case discussion and will be outlined by your Department when you join it. As a Foundation Doctor you are still required to complete SLEs (15 over the year – 5 during your Academic Block).

There are 12 posts available to start in August. The following host specialities represent the core placements that support our programme.

- Public Health/ Primary Care
- Respiratory/ Medicine for the Elderly
- Endocrinology
- Gastroenterology.

However, we are keen to offer academic training that is tailored to individual's career aspirations and are very happy to support other academic specialties outside those identified above. Academic rotations have previously been made available in cardiology, dermatology, rheumatology, haematology, general surgery, obstetrics and gynaecology, orthopaedics and ENT in recent years. If you are keen to undertake a project in another speciality and have a supervisor in mind we would be delighted to help support and guide you with the aim of making this possible.

Our programme aims are:

- Becoming well-versed in different research techniques, from basic science to epidemiology to clinical trials, means you will be a better doctor with a better grasp of how evidence for best practice is derived and how to interpret different types of evidence.
- The skills required in designing, developing and carrying out a research project are transferable to any field of medicine and will allow you to demonstrate effective organisational, leadership and team working abilities.
- Applying for ethical approval, presenting at conferences and publishing your research allows you to develop the confidence to critically analyse your work and defend it during peer review, which is central to modern science and is a crucial skill for any NHS consultant.



Role of the Academic Supervisor

The academic supervisor is responsible for overseeing a specified foundation doctor's academic work and providing constructive feedback during an academic or related placement. You will agree the academic learning objectives and how they will be achieved at the beginning of the academic placement or programme, these being aligned to the Academic Compendium

(https://www.foundationprogramme.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2018-08/Academic%20Compendium_0.pdf).

The academic supervisor is responsible for the assessment of academic progress and confirming progress has been satisfactory and achievements identified within the academic component of the programme. There will be an Academic Report that we expect you to upload to your ePortfolio.

The Norwich Academic Training Office


The Norwich Academic Training Office (NATO) provides support for academic training across the range of health professions.

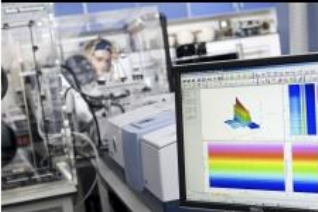


The Office is located within the Research and Innovation Services support team of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. Contact can be made by emailing Norwich.ato@uea.ac.uk The current head of NATO is Dr Vassilios Vassiliou, Senior Clinical Lecturer in Cardiology.

The office facilitates the liaison between the NHS Trusts, Deanery, NIHR and UEA on the allocation and award of Academic Clinical Fellows and Clinical Lectureships.

The NATO Board meets 4 times a year to discuss ways to improve and expand the IAT programme delivered across the Norwich Research Park. Academic trainees are represented by a Trainees Representative on this board. This is currently Charlotte Hellmich, Wellcome Trust Doctoral Research Fellow in Haematology, who also Chairs the Norwich Clinical Academic Trainees (NCAT) group.

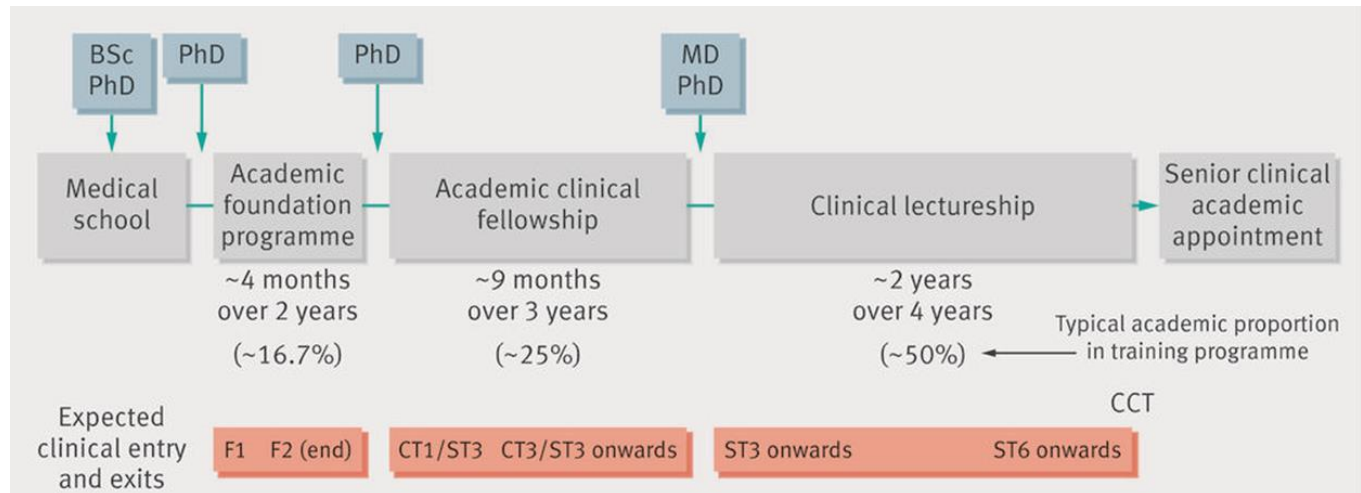
NATO web site can be found at <https://www.uea.ac.uk/medicine/academic-clinical-training>



FACULTIES AND SCHOOLS	FURTHER INFORMATION
Medicine and Health Sciences	<p>The principle of closely integrating academic training into existing clinical training pathways is at the heart of the various opportunities for academic training here in Norwich. Click on the menu to the left to find out more.</p>
Norwich Medical School	
Academic Clinical Training	
Integrated Academic Training (Research - F2, ACF, CL)	<div data-bbox="488 1411 803 1661">WHAT IS IAT? </div> <div data-bbox="820 1411 1136 1661">WHAT IS NATO? </div> <div data-bbox="1153 1411 1489 1661">WHY DO IAT IN NORWICH? </div>
What is IAT?	
What is the NIHR?	

A Thriving Academic Community

The integrated academic training pathway is well established in Norwich, from AFP positions, Academic Clinical Fellowships, Doctoral Fellowships through to Clinical Lectureships. We are very keen to see the community of IAT trainees grow, ensuring a pipeline of future clinical research leaders.



The integrated academic training pathway. Source: BMJ 2015;350:h786

It is important for our AFPs to feel connected to their peers and our more senior IAT trainees. Some of the most fruitful collaborations for our AFPs have arisen from these interactions. It is also an excellent opportunity for informal and formal mentorship. We feel it is important to support this sense of community and we highly recommend you get involved in the social activities organized by our NCAT chair, Dr Charlotte Hellmich. We also strongly encourage you to get involved in journal club, which is held weekly, and involves colleagues (both trainees, academic clinicians and NHS consultants alike) from both NNUH and Norwich Medical School. It is an excellent opportunity to stay abreast of the latest high-impact clinical research, develop critical appraisal skills and meet peers across disciplines. NATO host an excellent annual research awards event to showcase the work of our doctors on IAT pathways.

A successful AFP

Joe Beecham: Gastroenterology and Gut Biology

Why did you want to do the academic programme in the first place?

I wanted the opportunity to get exposure to research, teaching and academia but without the additional pressure of trying to shoehorn it into a full-time clinical job. This rotation allowed me to test the waters and get a better understanding of the research process and the career structures of clinical academics.

What academic achievements did you complete in your academic programme?

I prepared a protocol for a systematic review, which was registered on PROSPERO, and subsequently completed this review and meta-analysis. I was able to submit this whilst still on my academic rotation, and this was published a couple of months later. (Beecham, J., Hart, A., Alexandre, L. et al. J Gastrointest Surg (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11605-019-04300-2>). I also completed an audit and started a quality improvement project in a different department.

What are your top tips for the AFP?

Be realistic – planning, executing and completing a brand-new research project in 4 months is not feasible for certain types of study, particularly if ethical approval is required. Get in touch with your supervisor and the research team before your block so you can settle in quickly. Make sure you meet or communicate with your supervisors on a regular basis – I met with my research team about once a week to discuss progress and any questions. Make sure you socialise with the other AFPs – your cohort and the year above are a great source of support.

Before you start

Checklist:

1. Contact your supervisor and set up a meeting
2. Fill out the form for the contract and send to the medical school and Colin Bryant (see below)
3. Check your IT access works before starting
4. Pick up your campus card from the IT helpdesk
5. Find out what your supervisor expects from you on the first day of the rotation – do they want you to come in for a meeting on day 1?

IT access

You will still be employed by the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (so all your pay etc. will come from them), and you will still have access to all the hospital IT facilities, library etc. However, as most AFPs in Norwich will do teaching at Norwich medical school, it is worth getting IT access at the University of East Anglia too. This will give you a campus card, access to computers, access to Blackboard (the “learning portal” where students access their lectures etc.), UEA email and to the library, which is handy for doing literature searches etc.

To get IT access, you need to fill out a form to get a temporary contract. Here is the link:

<https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/10157/27006463/V1+Application+PDF+Form+-+2019-2020.pdf/489f8c5a-887d-c381-6354-61ab88ce1c62>

*****This is usually a one-year contract, so if you organise it in FY1, you may have to do the same thing again for FY2*****

When you have filled it in, send it to Colin Bryant (c.bryant@uea.ac.uk) and to the medical school reception (med.reception@uea.ac.uk). They will arrange access for you – but you may need to chase this a bit.

Go to the IT help desk in the UEA library, floor 0 (*Monday – Friday 08:00-19:00. Saturday 12:00-19:00*) to pick up your campus card. The phone number is 01603 592345.