

GETTING AHEAD IN YOUR MEDICAL CAREER

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INTRODUCTION

- All areas of medicine are becoming competitive
- There are things that you can be doing to help bolster your CV and make yourself more competitive.
- The best advice is to start thinking about these early...
- The areas discussed here form the basis of most specialty application forms. There are ‘points’ available for all categories. The more you have achieved, the more points you will get.

As an example, the details for core medical training shortlisting, detailing how many points you get, and for what, are available online:

<http://www.ct1recruitment.org.uk/the-application-form/application-scoring.html>

1. QUALIFICATIONS

- Medical degree (a given!)
- Additional undergraduate BA/BSc degree
 - The higher the grade, the more points you will achieve
- Masters degrees
 - There are increasing numbers of masters that you can consider undertaking depending on your interests, such as medical education; sports science; public health. You may even be able to obtain deanery funding for some of these (particularly medical education courses)

1. QUALIFICATIONS

◎ MPhil / MD / PhD - Research degrees

- Clearly these should be considered if you are plan to pursue an academic career, and increasingly may be required to be competitive to secure teaching hospital consultant posts

◎ Royal college examinations

- Get on with these as soon as is permitted
- Helps you to demonstrate commitment to specialty on application forms

2. PRIZES

- Academic prizes

- College/university prizes - performance related

- Other prizes

- There are a range of other prizes that you can consider competing for:

- Conference presentation prizes

- Most conferences have several prizes for best oral presentation / poster, so find out details and bear this in mind when preparing the presentation

- Other prizes

- Many institutions run essay prize competitions - including Cambridge University. These are often not widely advertised and are often clinical specialty specific, which reduces competition. Search for information online.

- The Royal Society of Medicine have various specialty training and medical student meetings at which there are a plethora of essay/case presentation/poster prizes available. [<https://www.rsm.ac.uk>]

- Similarly look at Royal College websites and other similar bodies and you will find many other potential prizes that can be applied for.

3. RESEARCH

Some research experience is becoming essential. Engaging in research provides opportunities to tick many other boxes (presentations, publications, prizes)

◎ Undergraduate opportunities

- Intercalated degree research projects
- Summer vacation research projects
 - There are many programmes available supporting summer research for students, for example:
 - Imperial College Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP)
[\[www3.imperial.ac.uk/physics/studentinfo/urop\]](http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/physics/studentinfo/urop)
 - Leeds University Summer Vacation Studentship
[\[www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/research/studentships/index.htm\]](http://www.fbs.leeds.ac.uk/research/studentships/index.htm)
 - European Amgen Scholars Programme
[\[www.amgenscholars.eu/about_amgen_scholars/host_universities/europe_program/\]](http://www.amgenscholars.eu/about_amgen_scholars/host_universities/europe_program/)

3. RESEARCH

◎ Clinical research

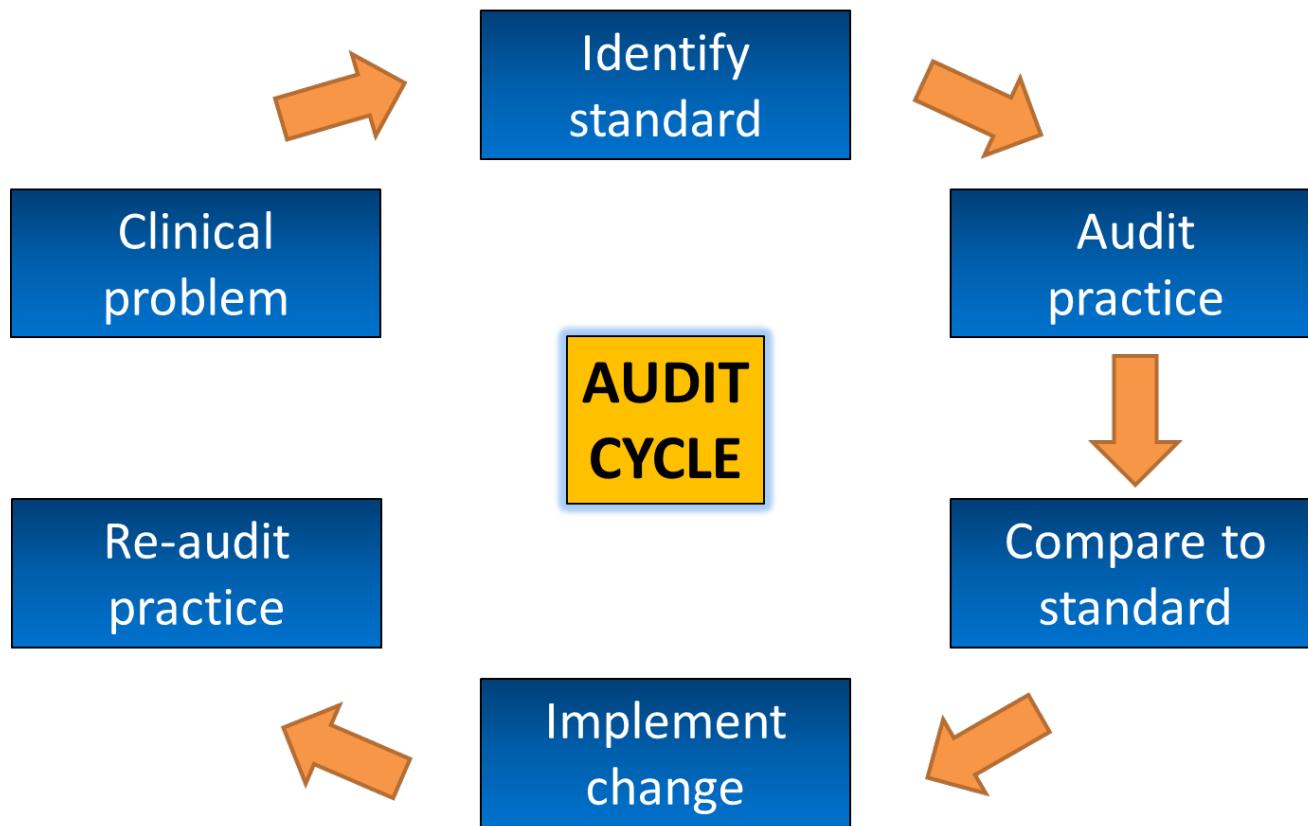
- There are many opportunities to engage in clinical research whilst at clinical school - such as using student selected components wisely; research on electives etc.
- There is a lot of research available, but you need to be proactive and ask supervisors/consultants for potential research projects that you can get involved in.

◎ Laboratory research

- Lab research is generally slow and difficult to achieve something significant without a full time prolonged commitment, e.g. as an academic trainee with protected research time, or undertaking a research degree

4. CLINICAL AUDIT

You need to first understand what clinical audit is:



4. CLINICAL AUDIT

- There are plenty of opportunities to engage in clinical audit, both whilst a student and beyond.
- The critical thing is that you can complete the cycle - that is, collect date, make a change as a consequence and recollect data to confirm that your change has had a positive impact. Sustained evidence of a change in practice will achieve the highest score in recruitment application forms.
- So there are several things to consider when choosing to take on an audit
 - How long will data collection take
 - Is there likely to be something that you can do to improve practice
 - How long will this change in practice need to be in place before re-auditing can take place
 - Will you be around that department for long enough to achieve all this - or can you identify colleagues to help
- Clinical audit is an essential part of clinical practice and sustained engagement with clinical audit will need to be evidenced.

4. CLINICAL AUDIT

◎ Make sure you get the most out of any audit (and for that matter any research) you do...

- Could this be presented at a local/regional meeting
- Could this be submitted as an abstract to a national meeting for presentation
- Could this be written up and submitted as a paper

5. PRESENTATIONS

- Local/regional meetings

- A good opportunity to present small projects / audits that you have undertaken - take initiative to find out what meetings there are that you could try and present your work at

- National conferences

- Submitting abstracts to national conferences can be a good way to gain experience of presenting.
- Research supervisors will be able to advise you on specialty specific meetings
- There are also meetings aimed at students / foundation trainees to be considered. Many of these will consider presentation of small projects, and even interesting case reports. Furthermore, there are often medical student prizes e.g:

- RSM medical student days [www.rsm.ac.uk/events/students.aspx]
- Doctors Academy Research conference [www.doctorsacademy.org]
- National Student Association of Medical Research [www.nsamr.org]
- Association for Surgeons in Training (ASiT) [www.asit.org]

5. PRESENTATIONS

◎ International conferences

- Usually specialty specific and an opportunity to present research you have undertaken.
- Worth the most ‘points’!

There is a lot to be learnt from attending conferences, even if you are not presenting. Even critically observing how others present can be useful for your own development.

6. PUBLICATIONS

- Research publications usually require a substantial amount of work
- More achievable publications in a short time frame include:
 - Case reports
 - Descriptions of interesting/unusual cases and associated literature review
 - Literature reviews
 - Ask supervisors if there is something that you could write a review on.
 - Many supervisors are invited to write reviews - if you show interest, you could easily get involved in writing one

6. PUBLICATIONS

- If you have not undertaken research that will lead to a publication consider some alternatives journals that may be easier to write for - have a look at the types of article they accept and consider writing something appropriate:
 - Student journals such as ‘Cambridge Medicine’ [www.cambridgemedicine.org]
 - Student BMJ
- Note that many of these will not be PubMed indexed (a requirement to be counted on some specialty application forms). But don’t be put off, it will still be something for your CV, and will provide you experience of writing for journals, and the process of getting work published

7. COURSES

- There are many specialty specific courses that you can undertake. This is one means of demonstrating commitment to specialty.
- There are also many courses aimed at medical students / foundation trainees
- Look at royal college websites for example:
 - Royal college of Surgeons - [www.rcseng.ac.uk/courses]
- Note that these courses often cost a lot of money and are not essential

8. TEACHING

- Teaching is seen as an essential part of a doctors practice and as such emphasis is placed on having teaching experience
- There is a range of engagement you can demonstrate towards teaching:
 - Bed side teaching of students on clinical firms
 - Formal teaching positions
 - E.g. college supervisors, clinical supervisors
 - Being faculty on courses
 - E.g. ALS etc.
 - Designing and delivering a programme of teaching

8. TEACHING

- Engaging in courses on medical education are also available:
 - ‘Training/Teaching the teachers’ courses
 - Postgraduate certificate in Medical Education
 - E.g
 - Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education
 - Bedford University Postgraduate Medical School
 - Dundee University (Distance online course)
 - Masters in Medical Education
 - These latter two are University courses and are now relatively expensive with the rise in University fees - however, funding may be available from deaneries to undertake these courses

9. LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- ◎ This can be difficult when moving from hospital to hospital but some examples include:
 - Involvement as trainee representatives such as:
 - Local/National BMA trainee representatives
 - Deanery trainee representatives
 - Trainee representatives on medical school committees
 - Rota coordination

MEDICAL CV

- ◎ The categories described above should form the basis of structuring your CV (as subheadings)
- ◎ It is essential that you obtain evidence of EVERYTHING you write on your CV as this will be required to be presented in a portfolio at interview.
- ◎ Collect evidence as you go - don't leave it all until the few days before an interview!

SUMMARY

- Entry into medical specialty training is competitive
- Start to think early about the contents of this presentation to give yourself the best opportunity of getting the job you want
- Aim to have something in all categories
- No one will be able to get every point in every category