Academic Clinical Fellow Handbook 2026-27

This handbook contains general information about The University of Manchester's ACF programme as well as the schedule for assisting and monitoring academic progress.



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Welcome to the Academic Clinical Fellows Programme

Welcome to the NIHR Integrated Academic Training (IAT) Programme at The University of Manchester (UoM). We are delighted that you have chosen our programme for the next phase of your clinical and academic research training. As an Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF), you are employed by NHS England (NHSE). Clinical placements, rotations and clinical progress are managed by NHSE, and the University will support you to develop your research skills, ideas and careers. The two organisations work very closely together to deliver individualised high-quality education.

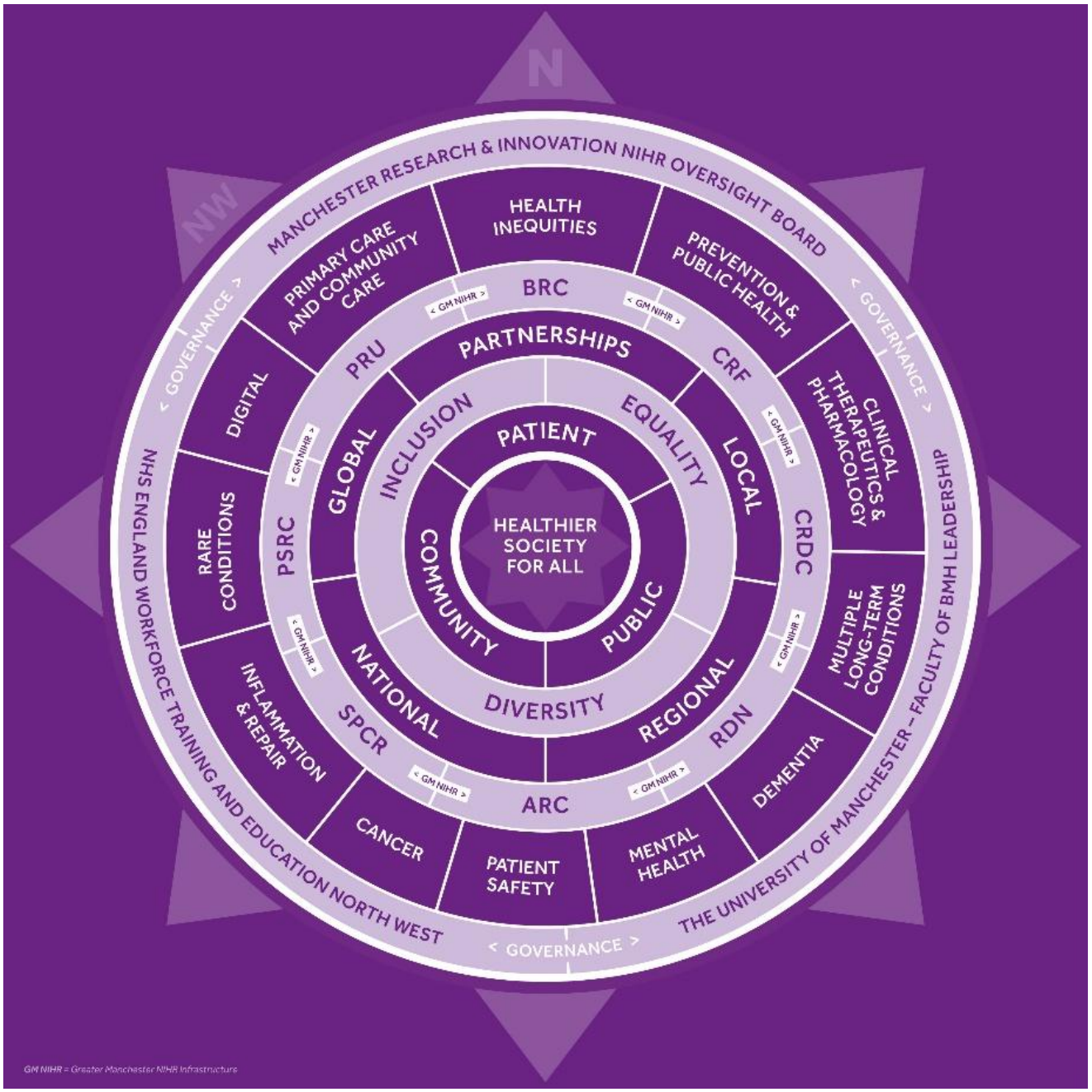
The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, at the University of Manchester, hosts one of the largest ACF programmes in the UK, with over 300 ACFs recruited since 1997. The Faculty has an international reputation for high quality impactful medical research, and the overall scale and diversity of our research at this University is unrivalled in the UK.

The Integrated Academic Training (IAT) team is here to make sure you make the most of this opportunity, and we are here to help and to advise. Further information can also be found on our webpages:

http://sites.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/icat

We are keen that you succeed and realise your potential. We want to help you build your research and academic skills, develop your profile and work towards successful Fellowship applications in order to undertake a cutting-edge PhD in your chosen field of study or advance your research through a postdoctoral fellowship or grant. To that end, you will also interact closely with wider support opportunities including the FBMH Doctoral Academy, the FBMH Fellowship Academy, FBMH Academic Development and University Researcher Development from the outset.

We hope that you enjoy your time in Manchester… as an ACF and beyond!



Key contacts

The University of Manchester

Name	Position	Email
Natalie Cook & Adam Reid	ACF Programme Co-Leads	natalie.cook17@nhs.net / adam.reid@manchester.ac.uk
Jenny Myers & Tom Blakeman	IAT Co-Leads	jenny.myers@manchester.ac.uk / t.m.blakeman@manchester.ac.uk
Rachel Cowen	Equality Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Lead for IAT	rachel.cowen@manchester.ac.uk
Wendy Thompson	Lead for Dentistry	wendy.thompson-2@manchester.ac.uk
	IAT Coordinator IAT Admin Assistant	icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk
John Blaikley	ACL programme Lead	john.blaikley@manchester.ac.uk
Miles Smith Chloe Williams Noha Soliman	ACF Trainee Reps	miles.smith12@nhs.net chloe.williams@doctors.org.uk noha.soliman@nhs.net
Aysha Nijamudeen	GP ACF Trainee Rep	ayshanijamudeen@gmail.com

External

Name	Position	Email
NIHR Academy	General Enquiries	IAT@NIHR.ac.uk
Paul Baker	NHS England North West Postgraduate Associate Dean	paul.baker20@nhs.net
Natalie Dawson	Programme Support Manager	natalie.dawson14@nhs.net

Academic support roles

Academic programme lead (APL)	Each GMC specialty has a clinical-academic lead who will help you identify an appropriate supervisor and advisor. (contact details on our IAT webpage)
Academic supervisor	Your academic supervisor will guide you to develop research ideas, understand expected standards and help identify appropriate training.
Advisor	Your advisor will support you to reflect on your academic progress and ambitions, support you in meeting challenges, encourage you to develop yourself and your skills, and help you to articulate your achievements.

Introduction

NIHR ACFs are part of the Integrated Clinical Academic Training (IAT) Pathway in England, established to promote academic medicine and dentistry, and to provide a clear route for doctors and dentists interested in an academic research career. An NIHR ACF post is intended to support medical and dental trainees who are at the early stages of specialty training and who wish to develop an academic research career alongside their clinical training. If you are appointed to an ACF post at ST1 or 2, and meet all the required competencies at ARCP you will automatically go into speciality training at ST3 (e.g. you do not need to reapply for a speciality training position in the same speciality). Please see NIHR 2026 recruitment pages for more information.

ACF Posts have 25% protected academic time for trainees to develop their academic research skills and prepare an application for a Fellowship award to undertake a higher research degree The duration of an ACF is for a maximum of 3 years (4 years for GPs). During this time, alongside clinical training, ACFs will develop their academic skills and be supported in preparing an application for a Research Training Fellowship (to undertake a higher research degree), or for those already with a PhD, an application for an Academic Clinical Lectureship (ACL). Success in these applications is a measured outcome of the ACF programme.

Occupational Health

ACFs will receive health screening as routinely performed for clinical roles by the lead employer (NHSE). There may also be a requirement for UoM Occupational Health screening; for example, for laboratory work or those working towards a Home Office personal licence for carrying out procedures on animals in the Biological Service Facility.

University of Manchester Visitor Contracts

From Autumn 2026, ACFs will usually be required to obtain a visitor contract with the University of Manchester (UoM) for research placements. This replaces the previous honorary contract arrangement and will provide you with the following:

- IT account
- Access to the library and associated UoM library resources
- UoM ID card for building access

New starters will be contacted by the IAT team in advance of their start date for some information required for the People Services. You will also need to provide an up-to-date copy of your CV.

On the induction day, ACFs will be required to complete a right to work check with the University's People Services, and you will need to bring your passport. If you are not a British or Irish citizen, you will need to bring a share code.

For IT access, you can be given an email address and access to the library for one year, but ideally ACFs should apply for a visitor contract. **Please allow up to 6 weeks for visitor contracts to be processed, and up to 8 weeks for non-British and Irish citizens.**

Visitor contracts will need to be renewed after 3 years for GP ACFs trainees working at less than full time LTFT. Please contact icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk 3 months in advance of your visitor contract end date to for guidance on renewing the contract.

ORCiD

All ACFs must register with ORCiD to create a free and unique identifier that stores automatic links to all your research and links all your research with you. By allowing trusted organisations to add your research information to your ORCID record, you can spend more time conducting your research and less time managing it and ensure that your research and clinical academic profile is as visible as possible within and outside the research community.

Organising your Academic/Clinical time split

Academic training time must fit in with clinical rotas as well as the academic department where you are based.

ACFs can organise their 25% academic time in various ways, including:

- One day per week (+extra days to achieve 25%)
- One week in four
- One month blocks
- Three month block per year
- Six month block in second year
- One nine month block

With the exception of GP ACFs, most ACFs have found that blocks of time are far more productive than day release, especially if in busy clinical posts. For lab-based work, blocks are almost certainly necessary. This should be a discussion between the academic programme lead (APL) for the specialty, training programme director (TPD), academic supervisor and ACF to ensure productive time whilst aligning clinical responsibilities and training progression.

Requests to carry out locum shifts during an academic block are considered on a case-by-case basis. Any locum work must be carried out entirely in the trainee's own time. It must not compromise any element of the clinical academic training or protected ACF hours. Approval must be obtained in advance from the TPD and IAT team, as well as the APL.

NIHR Bursary

The NIHR bursary provides all ACF trainees with a source of funding to enable attendance and/or present their research findings at external research meetings and conferences that are relevant to their academic training. The University of Manchester's IAT team manages the bursary fund of £3000 per trainee (over the course of 3 years, £4,000 over 4 years for GP ACFs) and is responsible for approving expenditure against the bursaries. We recommend you keep a log of expenditure and time spent on study leave too.

You will be eligible to receive bursary funding of £3000 or £4000 at the commencement of your ACF. The funds will automatically roll over on an annual basis until the end of your ACF. In cases where the ACF is undertaken on a less than full-time basis and the ACF end date is extended accordingly, the annual bursary

amount of £3,000 or £4,000 will continue to apply throughout the extended period and will not increase. The way the bursary is utilised throughout the duration of the ACF is at your discretion. It is recommended to use at least 10% of your bursary on PPIE activities. ACF bursary funding cannot be used after the ACF post has ended, except for pre-booked travel arranged during the ACF. To make the most of the funding available, it is recommended that bursary-supported activities are planned in advance.

Eligible expenditure

The bursary may be used towards the costs of academic courses and conferences, with associated travel, accommodation and subsistence costs.

The bursary does **not** cover claims for clinical courses, including revision courses, consumables, kit, laptops, books, etc.

For more information please visit the IAT intranet:

IAT | ACFs: NIHR Bursary – how to claim - IAT (manchester.ac.uk)

Bursary approval

All use of bursary funds must receive prior approval from the IAT team. To request approval, you must complete the designated bursary request form in advance of the intended event or activity. Please submit your form at least three weeks prior to the event date to allow sufficient time for review and approval. The IAT team will review each submission and provide a decision within one week. A separate request form must be submitted for each individual event or activity for which bursary funding is sought.

Risk assessment

A risk assessment will be required each time you are requesting your bursary for travel – such as attending a conference or research meeting.

Travel always involves some level of risk, so it's essential to identify and assess these risks before making any bookings. You must also comply with the University's Travel Policy and health and safety guidance for working off campus.

To determine the appropriate type of risk assessment for your destination, please refer to the University's Travel Flow Chart. Most travel will fall under the "low risk" category, in which case a generic risk assessment is sufficient.

Downloadable risk assessment templates for UK travel and low/moderate-risk international travel are available via the flow chart link. Once completed, please email your risk assessment to **icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk** before booking travel. It will be reviewed alongside your bursary request.

Risk assessments should be tailored to your personal circumstances. If you have any medical conditions or other factors that may affect your ability to travel, please declare them. These may also impact your eligibility for university travel insurance.

To check if your destination is considered moderate or high risk, use the following country risk list. If you plan to travel to a high-risk country, contact the IAT team **before** completing a risk assessment. They will assess the necessity and safety of the proposed travel.

Key Travel

For any travel bookings we recommend using the University's official Travel Management Partner – Key Travel. This can be used to book flights, accommodation, rail, Eurostar and book international car hire. Booking through Key Travel will ensure compliance with the University's travel policy and will be covered though the University's travel insurance. All bookings through Key Travel will be paid in advance and charged automatically to your NIHR bursary.

Obtaining access

Due to your employment status with The University of Manchester, a guest profile must be created to access Key Travel.

To create this profile, you must have an @manchester.ac.uk email address, which is issued upon receiving a visitor contract (see visitor contract section for details).

Once you have obtained your honorary contract and University email address, please notify the IAT team. They will coordinate with the Key Travel team to set up your guest profile using your @manchester.ac.uk email. You will be informed once access is granted and can then follow the setup instructions provided below.

To complete your profile setup:

- Visit https://www.keytravel.com/uk/ and log in using your university email.
- When accessing the system for the first time, select the option to request a new password to set up your account.
- Once logged in with your new credentials, navigate to the **'Profile Manager'** section.
- Go to the **'Profile Form'** and complete all required details:
    - The **personal details** section requests information exactly as it is displayed on your passport. Please do not use nicknames or contractions (such as Bill for William) which do not appear on a passport, as that may incur airline penalties.
    - Airlines often require contact details for travellers and the information used below will be provided to airlines when making a reservation. Key Travel only requires a business contact number, but other numbers may also be provided. Key Travel recommends providing a mobile number, which may be used to contact you in the event of travel disruption.
    - The **passport details** section information is mandatory as it is required by many airlines. Key Travel supports the collection of data for a second passport, however the data you supply for your first passport is what will be used by default in bookings created. As a service to you, Key Travel may notify you if your passport details are due to expire in the near future. Should you not wish to use this service, simply un-tick the corresponding box.
    - **Travel preference** information references personal travel preferences such as aisle seat, vegetarian meal, etc. You may also supply information related to airline, car-hire company, hotel, or rail preferences.

If you encounter any issues accessing Key Travel or setting up your profile, please contact the IAT team at **icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk**. They can assist you directly or liaise with the Travel Helpdesk on your behalf.

Please note that you will be provided with a **standard user account**, which allows you to create travel itineraries but not to book travel. All bookings must be made by an **approved booker**.

The IAT team can support you with this process. Please send your itinerary to ICAT team **approved booker Olivia Smith – olivia.smith-3@manchester.ac.uk**.

In cases where you cannot use Key Travel you may book travel yourself and claim back via a PR7 claim form. However, justification must be provided when submitting the request for reimbursement to the team as to why you could not use Key Travel for the expenses claim to be processed. When booking travel yourself, or general advice surrounding suitable use of bursary funds, please also refer to the University of Manchester's travel guidance to ensure bookings remain in policy:

- Flights
- Accommodation
- Rail
- Private car and car hire
- Public transport
- Taxi Fares

PR7 expenses claim form

A PR7 is an expenses claim form, specifically for non-university and external personnel.

A PR7 expenses claim will be required when claiming back any other costs that cannot be covered by using the Key Travel system related to each NIHR bursary claim. This will include, for example, conference fees, subsistence, public transport, taxis and car mileage. Please review the links above, and finance guidance pages for submitting your claim.

PR7 expenses can only be submitted **after the event.** Please ensure the form is signed (original signatures only accepted) and return it along with all the receipts to: icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk

All PR7 expense claims must be submitted within **three months** of the associated travel or event. Claims submitted after the 3-month deadline may be subject to rejection and will not be reimbursed unless exceptional circumstances apply.

PPIE

At least 10% of the bursary is recommended to be used towards Patient Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE).

You will receive dedicated training and support for PPIE through a session in the ACF Research Training Programme and be connected to the Faculty PPIE team and our partner VOCAL.

Contact the IAT team for further information on how to utilise funds (icatadmin@mancheser.ac.uk).

Laptops

If you are working on UoM projects with research data, is it suggested you discuss the safety of this data with your academic supervisor.

The IAT programme is unable to provide laptops for ACFs. The University does not provide these but please speak to your APLs to understand what options may be available in your division.

ACF Research Training Programme (RTP)

Facilitated by **Professor Rachel Cowen and Dr Natalie Cook.**
A series of ACF specific training workshops are available each year focusing on essential research skills. Attendance on the RTP is mandatory, and you would also have the option to enrol on the PG Cert in Medical Sciences (this is not mandated but encouraged). Planned dates can be found here. These will be held face to face and include lunch and refreshments.

- Ethical Aspects of Clinical Research
- Patient and Public Involvement in Research
- Refereeing of Papers and Grant Applications
- Diversity and Equal Opportunities in Research, and Cultural Competence
- Time Management and Personal Effectiveness
- Leadership: Practitioner, Partner and Leader Roles

It is **compulsory** that each of the subjects in these sessions is covered during your training as they form part of the specified NIHR academic training programme. You should be able to attend during both research and clinical attachments. Following each workshop, you will be provided with a Certificate of Attendance for your portfolio, and this can be credited towards the **Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) in Medical Sciences** (if enrolled, and you would also need to submit the reflective assessment).

The Deputy Dean has stated that if you cannot attend due to ward commitments, despite giving adequate notice for study leave request and having sufficient study leave remaining, it is reasonable for an educational exception report to be submitted to the Guardian of Safe Working (GOSW).

Research training funding

As an ACF, you are eligible to access up to £4,500 in research training funding in addition to your bursary fund of £3000 (£4000 for GPs). This funding can be used towards:

- Bespoke **Postgraduate Certificate in Medical Sciences** for ACFs.
- Course fees for an **NIHR-approved qualification**.
- Appropriate **research modules and units** that support your academic development.

Funding for PG Cert in Medical Sciences

We strongly recommend enrolling in the **Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) in Medical Sciences**, which has been specifically developed for ACFs and we have negotiated with UoM so that fees are fully covered by your research training funding. This course integrates the mandatory ACF Research Training Programme (RTP) and offers a streamlined pathway with the option to progress to a Master's degree.

Key benefits of the PG Cert:

- Tailored content aligned with ACF training needs
- Reduced course fees for ACFs (covered by the research training funds)
- Internal fee management by The University

You will be contacted by the IAT administration team at the start of your ACF post to confirm your interest in enrolling and to arrange the use of your funding for this course.

Alternative funding opportunities

If you choose not to use your research training funding for the approved **PG Cert in Medical Sciences**, you may instead apply the funding towards other suitable programmes either at The University of Manchester or at an external institution.

Please note the following:

- The **maximum available funding** during your ACF is:
    - **£4,500** from your research training allocation
    - **£3,000 or £4,000 (GPs only)** from your NIHR bursary.

Other programmes at The University of Manchester do not offer the discounted fee available for the PG Cert in Medical Sciences. You may therefore need to self-fund any remaining costs if the total exceeds your available funding.

Regardless of your chosen course, you are still required to complete the mandatory RTP workshops.

If you wish to pursue a course other than the PG Cert, whether internal or external to The University of Manchester, you must complete the designated course approval form. This form requires a supporting statement from your Academic Programme Lead or supervisor. Please ensure you request this in advance and paste their response into the form. All research training fund requests will be reviewed by the IAT leadership, and a decision will be made within two weeks of receiving the form submission.

Postgraduate Certificate (PG Cert) in Medical Sciences (Med Sci)

We offer a degree programme specifically for ACFs, which includes elements of the RTP, resulting in a PGCert qualification (PGCert Med Sci). There is also the option of incorporating a research proposal and dissertation based on a research project to complete a full Masters (MSc). This degree programme is designed to equip students with the essential knowledge, critical awareness, and specialist skills needed to pursue a successful research career in the broad spectrum of medical sciences research. The PGCert is composed of 30 credits per year aligned to the core training elements (RTP) of the ACF programme (Core Skills in Medical Sciences Research), and two 15 credit data analysis units which normally form part of the PGCert Clinical Data Science. Graduates will be equipped with a broad and adaptable set of research skills over a 2-year part-time programme delivered in a flexible format to allow completion alongside clinical duties. Completion of a full MSc requires an additional year of study (3 years total) and can be transferred to at the end of the 2-year PGCert.

The PG Cert is split over 2 years as follows:

Core Skills in Medical Sciences Research (30 credits in total completed in years 1 and 2)

This interactive unit introduces students to essential concepts and skills required for the design, analysis, and interpretation of clinical and clinically related research. Students will explore a range of subjects in Research Skills in Practice (delivered on-line) alongside their mandated RTP training (Delivered in person, please see RTP section above). The RTP assessment will consist of a piece of reflective writing (1000 words)

based on the RTP session which will be discussed within the session. These assessments will be submitted over the two years (3 per year).

Clinical Data Engineering (15 credits completed in year 1)

Studying this unit alongside Clinical Data science students allows development of data analysis skills key to research. This unit introduces students to foundational concepts and practical skills in clinical data engineering. It covers fundamental data types and structures, the distinction between structured and unstructured data, and the use of Python and its libraries for data science. Students will explore how data is modelled across different database systems, how to query and filter data, and how to assess data quality. The unit also includes working with data-frames, cleaning and transforming data (including imputing missing values, encoding variables, and reshaping datasets), and combining datasets through data linkage.

The assessment for this module requires course participants to produce a Data Management Plan (DMP) for a dataset they work with or one previously used on the course. The DMP should address how the data are stored, accessed, represented and retained, as well as the associated ethical and governance considerations and the purpose and methods of the original data collection. A DMP is a standard document used in many research and transformation projects.

Maths, Stats and Machine Learning for Data Science (15 credits completed in year 2)

This unit provides an introduction to the mathematical and computational foundations of data science, with a focus on applications in healthcare and clinical research. Students will explore the fundamentals of applied mathematics, descriptive and inferential statistics, and hypothesis testing. The unit introduces both R and Python programming languages, along with key libraries used in data science. Core topics include variable types, machine learning approaches such as supervised, unsupervised, and reinforcement learning, and common algorithms for classification and regression. Students will also learn about dimensionality reduction techniques, natural language processing for textual data, and how to select appropriate analytical methods and evaluate model performance. The unit concludes with a critical look at bias in data, and the ethical and legal implications of automating tasks using machine learning, particularly in relation to patient outcomes.

Assessment for the unit takes the form of a proposal outlining possible improvements in the way existing data is utilised in a healthcare setting. Learners describe how the project will implement some form of either statistical or machine learning modelling, the nature of the data to be explored and what benefits the leveraging of the information currently embedded within the data will provide.

Other development opportunities

You will also have optional access to the Academic Development Programme. This open programme aims to support the FBMH academic community with the skills they need to carry out high quality research, teaching and learning and social responsibility (the three core goals of the University of Manchester). This programme provides valuable networking opportunities with peers and experienced academics. ACFs with evidence of teaching, learning and work that enhances the student experience (including research supervision and support) will also be supported to gain professional recognition (internationally recognised Advance HE Fellowship).

For further information and to register on the programme email acadresdev@manchester.ac.uk. Please note you will be required to have a UoM email address to access the booking system for workshops associated with the ADP. See section visitor contracts on how to obtain a UoM email / login.

In addition, the Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research offers a number of short courses focused on quantitative social science which must be booked directly in advance.

Study Leave

Alongside your protected research time/blocks, and mandated attendance at the RTP, you are also entitled to normal study leave for courses/conferences. Your NHS trust/GP practice will be able to inform you of your study leave entitlement in each clinical training post, and this should be booked through your trust/GP process.

Mentoring support

ACFs can access further research and career training support via University Researcher Development and mentoring and coaching through UoM Talent Development delivered, Manchester Gold scheme. If you are having any difficulties accessing a mentor or an advisor, please discuss this with your Academic Programme Lead.

CATCH

CATCH - Clinical Academic Training & Careers Hub [catch.ac.uk]

CATCH covers all aspects of clinical academic careers across multiple healthcare disciplines, offering step-by-step guidance for aspiring academics in all four UK nations. This site provides an accessible introduction to what these careers involve, who they suit and how to take your first steps, with links to further resources for those ready to explore in more depth. You can also explore interviews featuring inspiring academics sharing their experiences and insights.

Specialised Foundation Buddy Scheme

ACFs can sign up to a buddy scheme for specialised foundation programme (SFP) trainees to provide peer-peer support for F1s and F2s in the North West Deanery.

The idea of this scheme is to pair you with a Manchester Foundation Trust SFP doctor who is interested in a future career in Research/ Medical Education / Leadership. We hope you can act as a point of contact and support for your SFP trainee, providing advice on ACF/CT1/ST1 applications, interviews, CV building and general careers advice.

Trainees will currently hold a SFP post as either a foundation year 1 or year 2 doctor within MFT; so, we expect you to work with your trainee and tailor your support and advice to their current level. The role of the ACF buddy is to act as a 'critical friend' to the SFP Trainee, offering support and guidance and using the benefit of your previous experience to help them in their SFP years.

Examples of this might include:

- General support and advice to help the new SFPs settle into their job

- Advising on how to cope with a busy workload and prioritise tasks effectively
- Helping the SFPs to focus on setting realistic goals and providing challenge where appropriate
- Signposting to sources of help and support
- Supporting /advising on next steps in their academic journeys / ACF applications / Interview tips

We will hold scheduled buddy forums where you will be able to share difficulties and learn from your peers supported by the MFT SFP team.

You will be able to contact the MFT SFP administrator / AFPD at any time if you have any questions or concerns: **foundation@mft.nhs.uk**

To register your interest please let the IAT administration know: icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk who will work with the SFP team to match buddies.

Role of the ACF Advisor

In addition to support from your Academic Programme Lead and Academic Supervisor, having an academic advisor can provide further support with your training and career development. Your Academic Programme Lead (APL) can help you identify an appropriate academic advisor.

An ACF would normally retain the same Advisor throughout their training, but it should be recognised that some flexibility might be beneficial or indeed necessary. ACFs are able to request a change of Advisor at any time. However, in order to establish a meaningful relationship between advisor and advisee, it would seem appropriate that ACF Advisors would be assigned for a minimum of one academic year.

The ACF advisor will be expected to meet with their advisees according to the meeting times outlined on the meeting schedule below. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that:

- An appropriate project and supervisor have been identified early
- To advise and encourage a process *from the outset* leading to the ACF being ready to submit a PhD Fellowship application
- To help the ACF overcome any difficulties that arise
- To facilitate the ACFs active engagement in wider training opportunities

ACF Programme Leads, Natalie Cook and Adam Reid, will act as point of reference to advisors and to clinical specialty leads, disseminate good practice, liaise with the Integrated Academic Steering Group and the Postgraduate Deanery, and oversee any relevant quality assurance issues.

IAT administration will support the role of the ACF Advisor by providing relevant information in a timely fashion (e.g. monitoring attendance/performance).

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Open and Responsible Research

The IAT programme and its partner organisations are committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and open, responsible research. Without diversity of thought, perspective and background, and a responsible and inclusive culture and approach to research and academic clinical career development we are restricting ideas, standards, the quality of our research and the range of evidence-based solutions and health and social care challenges we can address. We are working towards 3 EDI priorities to ensure an **inclusive environment and culture**, training and support to enable diverse ACFs careers and inclusive

research to thrive; **diversity and equity across our community** through our inclusive policies, practice and guidance in recruitment and training; and **inclusive practice** by monitoring the impact of the programme and meaningfully listening to the experiences of our diverse ACF community. All ACFs should have read and understood the code of good research conduct, undertake University of Manchester mandatory EDI training (needs UoM email and log in access) and research integrity training and will be supported through the ACF RTP programme to embed EDI and an open and responsible approach into your research approach. We have a zero tolerance of bullying, harassment and discrimination re-enforced through the University of Manchester Dignity@Work and Study Policy. All ACFs should read and understand the policy. If you or someone you know has experienced or witnessed any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination, gender-based violence, hate or micro-aggressions, or have a safeguarding concern, you can report it anonymously or get support from a trained advisor through our confidential report and support system. Report + Support - University of Manchester

Links to essential information/training

- Essentials | Talent Development | StaffNet | The University of Manchester
- Good Research Conduct | Research and Business Engagement | StaffNet | The University of Manchester
- Research Integrity Training | Research and Business Engagement | StaffNet | The University of Manchester

Other useful University EDI & open and responsible research related information

- University research and business engagement (including governance, ethics and integrity)
- University EDI strategy
- University EDI Team
- Undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment of your Research
- Diversity Calendar of Events and Celebrations
- Staff Networks
- ALLOUT Ally Network

NIHR and external EDI related links

- EDI Toolkit (rdsresources.org.uk)
- Research Inclusion Strategy 2022 - 2027

Office for Open Research

The University's Office for Open Research, based in the University Library, supports researchers in making their work more accessible, transparent and reproducible, helping to maximise the public value of research. Through a range of services, guidance, and training, the Office empowers the research community to adopt open research practices. These include support for open access publishing, research data management, responsible use of metrics, and skills development. The team can also support you in raising your research profile.

For information and resources visit: Office for Open Research (Office for Open Research)

Peer Support

There are several appointed ACF trainee representatives (names and emails at the start of the handbook) who attend the IAT operational meetings with the leadership team to feedback trainee questions and queries. **There is also a trainee WhatsApp group for further peer support. To be added to this, please contact one of the ACF reps with your mobile number.**

IAT Trainee Representative Role Description

ACF and ACL Trainee Representatives are defined as current trainees on the IAT Programme who act as a conduit between the trainees and the UoM IAT Leadership Team, ensuring issues/feedback/updates are communicated in every direction. IAT Reps have a vital role in supporting the development of a culture that fully supports the clinical academic community. They help to raise awareness of relevant issues and opportunities and act as champions for researcher careers and skills development, reward and recognition.

The expected time required to be allocated to the role will, in general consist of 9 hours of scheduled meetings per academic year plus planning and attending the trainee annual symposium. The time devoted to general responsibilities is estimated to be no more than 1 hour per week.

General responsibilities of this role are to:

- Regularly communicate with trainees to learn about issues that affect them
- Attend and contribute to the agenda of the bi-monthly IAT Operations Group Meetings in which the IAT Leadership Team, NHSE representatives, PS staff and link groups meet
- Cascade information from the meeting to trainees and provide input to actions as and when required
- Attend and take the lead on the planning of the IAT annual symposium

Selection process:
It is the responsibility of the IAT programme to appoint at least one ACF and one ACL Rep. The selection process will vary dependent upon the governance processes and needs of the programme but should be done in an open and transparent way so that the IAT rep pool fully represents the diversity of the clinical academic community.

Monitoring of Clinical Progress

Clinical progress is monitored by the North West Deanery through an Annual Review of Competency Progression (ARCP). This is the formal review of progress that all trainees are required to have for every year they are in training, whether working full or less than full time. The Postgraduate Associate Dean responsible for Academic Trainees is Paul Baker paul.baker20@nhs.net.

Monitoring of Academic Progress

There are several forms available to help structure the monitoring meetings with your APL, academic supervisor and advisor (see table below). The forms are available **HERE**.

Academic Progress Form 2 is mandatory and should be submitted to icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk before a deadline in **May** each year of the programme.

This form will then be reviewed by the IAT team to assess academic progress, and a recommendation will be made to the ARCP panel. At the Deanery ARCP, a panel led by the clinical Training Programme Director (TPD) will consider academic progress alongside their assessment of clinical progression. **If this form has not been completed, then you will receive an outcome 5**. Please ask if you need help with this.

Evidence of satisfactory academic progress is required at the Deanery ARCP, and progression depends on demonstrating this. Please note that this process is mandatory.

Annual ACF Monitoring and Academic Progress

The following table outlines the formal meetings required for monitoring the Academic Progress of ACFs.

Date	Meeting	With †
Year 1, September	**Induction (MANDATORY)** - Introduction to ACF Programme, Research Training Programme (RTP), PG Cert in Medical Sciences and monitoring procedures - Registration form including ORCiD - UoM visitor contract paperwork - Talk from the FMBH Doctoral Academy - An introduction to patient and public involvement and engagement from our PPIE partners, VOCAL	ACF Leads ACF Reps
Year 1, Before end-October (***Or*** within the first 3-months of ACF if not an August start)	**Project Planning Meeting (Form 1)** - Identify potential supervisor/s and advisor - Discussion about project and how it will lead to a PhD/ Fellowship - Consider engagement with FBMH Doctoral Academy - Discussion about Training and RTP - Planning: Personal Development Plan (PDP) objectives	ACF Supervisor *or* Academic Programme Lead (APL)
Year 1	**Advisor meeting (optional)** - General planning for the year including mapping of baseline competencies against the curriculum and setting agreed PDP targets for ARCP - Plans for obtaining intended competencies - Discussion about clinical-academic training	ACF Advisor

Date	Meeting	With †
ANNUALLY Before 1st May	**Academic Progress Form - Form 2 (MANDATORY)** - Progress – outputs (abstracts, presentations, papers) - Planning for fellowship applications - Discussion about project and training - Engagement with FBMH Doctoral Academy and/or FBMH Fellowship Academy - The documentation from this meeting to be submitted to the ACF Co-Leads at icatadmin@manchester.ac.uk	ACF supervisor/ APL/Advisor

APL and Training Programme Directors (TPDs) can be invited to ***any*** of the Progress meetings but are not routinely expected; however, we particularly recommend this if difficulties hampering progression are encountered. A summary of each meeting during the monitoring of ACFs will be sent to the appropriate TPD.

PLEASE NOTE: It is your responsibility to organise these meetings with the appropriate people in plenty of time and ensure you send your completed forms to meet the deadline.

End of ACF Process and Feedback Opportunity

As you approach the end of your ACF, the IAT administration team will contact you with a completion form. This form will request details about your next career destination and will also provide an opportunity to share feedback on your experience within the programme.

In addition, you will be offered the chance to participate in an exit interview with Professor Rachel Cowen. This conversation is a valuable opportunity to provide more detailed feedback and to discuss any support you may need for your future academic career. The IAT team will contact you with more information on how to book an exit interview.

GP ACF Trainees - Overall Training Pathway

The ACF programme involves an additional year of training when compared to standard GP training. This allows you to have dedicated time for academic work. This time can be distributed throughout the 4 years but tends to be mainly concentrated in the last two years. Along the way you will need to fulfil the GP training requirements, including passing an Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and exams. The time at which you choose to take the MRCGP exams can be relatively flexible, but we do have some recommendations based upon the experiences of previous GP ACFs.

- **In ST1** GP ACFs undertake full-time clinical training. There is no formally allocated academic time.
- **In ST2** GP ACFs undertake two 6-month training posts. Over the 12-month period you are required to complete 6 months of training in GP (equivalent to 7 clinical sessions (28 hours) and 3 educational sessions (12 hours) per week for 6 months as per standard GP training requirements). You can consider doing some additional academic work at ST2, as long as this is allowed for in your final two years so that by the completion of training you will have done three years of clinical training and one year of academic training.
- **In ST3/4** GP ACFs distribute clinical and academic work across the two years to best meet individual clinical and academic needs, a decision made in consultation with their educational and academic supervisors. Over the 24-month period you are required to complete 12 months of training in GP (equivalent to 7 clinical sessions (28 hours) and 3 educational sessions (12 hours) per week for 12 months as per standard GP training requirements).

The table below summarises what will be expected of you in each year (if working full-time):

Year of training	**Clinical work**	**Academic time**	**Education time**	**Assessments required**
ST1	Hospital jobs – 2x 6 months	None formally allocated	GP/ST1/2 teaching – 4 hours per week (1 session) 8 hours per month to undertake WPBA activities including QIA, reflective log entries	Workplace Based Assessments WPBAs* Annual Review of Clinical Progress (ARCP), which will cover both clinical and academic ePortfolio entries
ST2	GP Posts - 2x 6 months 12 months of clinical training (7 clinical sessions, 3 educational sessions per week)	Can use half a day of educational time per week towards academic work. Can use more academic time if needed out of the ST3/4 allocation	GP/ST1/2 teaching – 4 hours per week (1 session). GP tutorial 4 hours per week (1 session) (integrated pro-rata across the 12 months if academic time is taken) Self-directed study/WPBA activities - 4 hours per week (1	WPBAs* ARCP as above. Think about doing AKT at the end of ST2 especially if considering SCA in ST3

			session) (integrated pro-rata across the 12 months if academic time is taken)	
ST3 - 4	GP training post – 12 months of clinical training (7 clinical sessions, 3 educational sessions per week) and 12 months of academic training, distributed over the 24 months	Academic time to complete 12 months in total	GPST3 teaching during the year you sit the SCA - 4 hours per week (1 sessions) GP tutorial - 4 hours per week (1 session) (integrated pro-rata across the 24 months) Self-directed study/WPBA activities - 4 hours per week (1 session) (integrated pro-rata across the 24 months)	WPBA* ARCP Recommended to do SCA and AKT when feel ready

Please refer to the latest requirements cited on the RCGP website: https://www.rcgp.org.uk/mrcgp-exams

There are 2 exams required for MRCGP and completion of training. The Applied Knowledge Test (AKT) is a multiple choice exam taken prior to the Simulated Consultation Assessment (SCA) which is an OSCE type exam. The AKT is normally done in ST2/3 and the CSA can be done in ST3/4. The exact time depends on when you are ready and should be discussed with both your academic and clinical educational supervisors. We strongly advise you to attend the ST3 Study Release Course (SRC) in the year you intend to sit the SCA. Completing the SCA in the ST3 year has the advantage that it frees up more time for research activity in ST4, but you do need to be confident that your consultation skills are ready, and it depends on the overall work you want to complete in ST3/4.

The Division of Population Health, Health Services Research and Primary Care

The research undertaken in the Division is diverse and multidisciplinary. There are researchers with a wide range of skills and from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds including social science, statistics, public health, informatics etc. Early on in your programme you will be introduced to the Centre Leads and encouraged to make contact with researchers leading programmes of work which you find interesting.

You will be expected to be self-directed in this, seeking out and meeting with researchers with whom you might like to work. This may seem a bit daunting at first, but you will be supported by your academic educational supervisor. Researchers will be delighted to engage with you, as you are enthusiastic, have clinical expertise, and represent potential research help which would come at no cost to the projects. Most will bite your hand off to have a clinician with free time to contribute to their work! You will be encouraged to work with researchers to gain a range of skills which might include, for example, qualitative interviewing and preparing articles for publication. In addition to your training programme, you will be encouraged to

take part in the full range of activities in the Centre for Primary Care & Health Services Research, including the regular research seminars (which take place on Tuesday lunchtimes at 1pm).

Research Groups in the Centre for Primary Care

The Centre for Primary Care & Health Services Research is acknowledged internationally to be one of the UK's leading research centres for research in primary care. The Centre is a founder member of the prestigious NIHR School for Primary Care Research, a collaboration of 9 leading primary care departments in England.

The Centre makes a major contribution to the:

- NIHR Greater Manchester Patient Safety Research Collaboration (GM PSRC)
- Department of Health Policy Research Unit for NHS Commissioning (PruComm)
- NIHR ARC for Greater Manchester

The work of the Centre is supported by multidisciplinary staff including general practitioners, psychiatrists, sociologists, psychologists, statisticians and health services researchers. You will have the opportunity to work with colleagues from the PSRC, PruComm, and ARC GM – it is up to you to investigate what is available and make the required links. Your academic educational supervisor will be able to support you in this.

The Centre also aims to support and promote the involvement of patients and the public in health research, through our Patient and Public Involvement Group PRIMER.