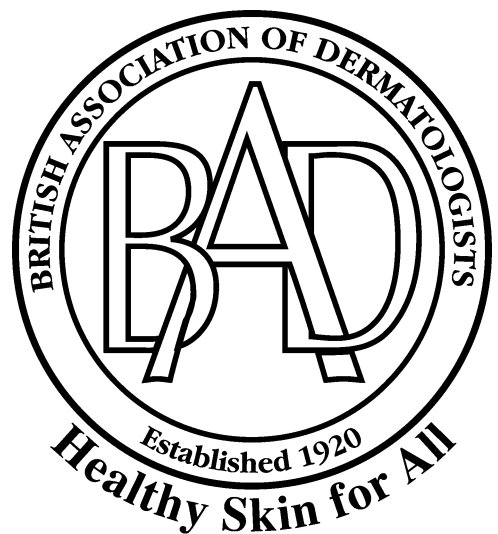


A Guide to Training in Dermatology



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A career in Dermatology

Dermatology is a medical specialty involving the management of skin conditions. It is one of the most diverse specialties treating patients from all age groups with inflammatory, inherited, environmental, occupational and malignant skin diseases.

Dermatology is predominantly outpatient based, with clinics in secondary care as well as in community hospitals. However, some patients with acute systemic upset or severe inflammatory skin disease may require specialist nursing input and inpatient facilities.

Within the hospital setting, dermatologists will frequently be called to consult on referrals from other specialties. In addition, a number of general medical conditions present first to the dermatologist necessitating joint management (e.g. rheumatology, haematology, paediatrics, gynaecology and infectious diseases). With the large volumes of skin cancer patients, dermatologists also work closely with plastic surgeons, otolaryngologists, maxillofacial surgeons and oncologists.

Dermatology training includes subspecialty experience in areas such as paediatric dermatology, phototherapy/photobiology, dermatopathology, allergic disorders and dermatological surgery. Participation in dermatological research is encouraged and there are many opportunities in dermatological science (e.g. in skin cancer, inflammatory dermatology, photobiology), public health, medical education and management.

An alternative career path in Dermatology is as a Specialty Doctor working as part of a Consultant-led team. For this, you will need to have completed at least 4 years of postgraduate training, including 2 years in Dermatology. This usually means FY1 & 2, CMT 1 & 2, plus 2 years' full-time Dermatology.

Pursuing your interest

Dermatology is a competitive specialty, so career planning is crucial and you will need to demonstrate your interest in the specialty. There are a variety of ways to achieve this at various stages of training.

Clinical experience

Gain as much dermatology experience as possible before pursuing Higher Specialist Training. This will give you a realistic insight into the specialty and whether it is suitable for you as a career. At the undergraduate level, this can be during Special Study Modules (SSMs), Selectives/Options & Electives. During Foundation or Core Medical Training, there may be opportunities to choose rotations in Dermatology or related specialties (e.g. rheumatology, GUM, haematology, paediatrics and infectious diseases). You could also arrange taster sessions or work placements in Dermatology.

Extra-curricular activities

There are a number of ways to pursue your interest in Dermatology outside clinical training. During undergraduate training, get involved with or set up your local DermSoc. Support and advice is available from the BAD (e-mail: dermsoc@hotmail.co.uk). Students and junior doctors can apply for BAD Junior Membership which will include a free subscription to the British Journal of Dermatology and Clinical & Experimental Dermatology. Dermatology courses will further enhance your knowledge and skills. The BAD organises an annual DermSchool educational conference for medical students and Foundation doctors interested in dermatology.

Research & Audit

Find opportunities to get involved in research and audit projects related to dermatology during your undergraduate and postgraduate training. If you are interested in research, seek advice from dermatologists and academics and consider pursuing an intercalated degree, academic training or taking time out to undertake a postgraduate degree.

The training pathway

