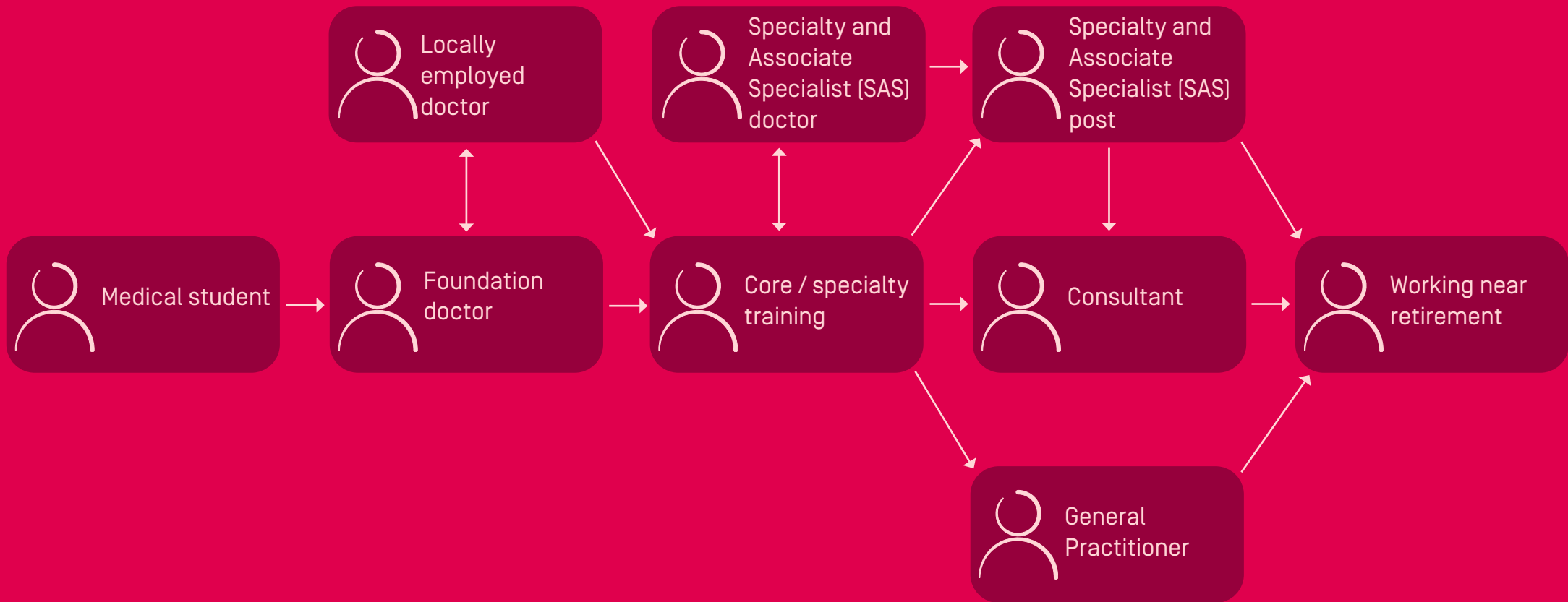


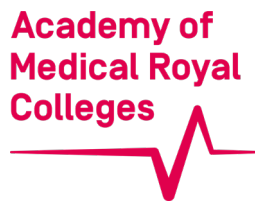
Flexible working in medicine

Click on the boxes to find out more



Alternative roles e.g. Pharmaceutical medicine, armed forces, research, medical journalism, law, prison health service

Further information on working flexibly



Core /specialty training

All medical training is based on the Gold Guide, which is regularly updated: [Gold Guide - 9th Edition - Conference Of Postgraduate Medical Deans \[copmed.org.uk\]](#)

England [Postgraduate medical and dental education | Health Education England \[hee.nhs.uk\]](#)

Northern Ireland [Specialty Recruitment - Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency \[nimdta.gov.uk\]](#)

Scotland [Medical Training Scotland | Foundation, Specialty, GP doctor training](#)

Wales: [Specialty training - HEIW \[nhs.wales\]](#)

Either **Run through** e.g. Obstetrics and gynaecology, GP, pathology, paediatrics, radiology, or

Core (2-3 years FT) then apply to **specialty training** (3-4 years FT) e.g. medical and surgical specialties, anaesthetics

GP: 3 year programme in the same or different hospitals or practices, often has six 4-month secondary care placements (hospital, psychiatry, public health etc) and one year as a GP Registrar in a GP practice. Combined GP training: recognition for relevant experience above Foundation training obtained outside a training programme e.g. SAS work, UK or abroad [Combined training \[rcgp.org.uk\]](#) **Accreditation of Transferable Capabilities [ATC]** for applicants who are transferring to general practice training from another GMC approved specialty training programme, **Certificate of Completion of Training: Combined Programme [CCT CP]** for trainees outside a GMC training programme

Flexibility in training: out of programme (OOP) activity.

Discuss with TPD and Educational Supervisor as early as possible, and a minimum of 6 months before plans. Each Deanery will have an application form and further information.

1. OOPT: out of programme training, time used towards CCT. Prospectively agreed with GMC and maximum 1 year.
2. OOPE: out of programme experience. Not towards CCT. Usually 1 year, maximum 2 years, agreed by PG Dean
3. OOPR: out of programme research. Can count towards CCT, depends on curriculum. Usually, maximum 3 years
4. OOPC: out of programme career break. Planned time out to pursue other interests e.g. developing talent in another area. Maximum 2 years
5. OOPP: out of programme pause. Opportunity to stop training for a maximum of one year. Any competencies gained out of training assessed on return.

Apply to train LTFT

Minimum 50% FT, giving reasons.

Your Trust should have a Champion of Flexible Training.

Your training may be lengthened, but as 'competency based' this may vary. You must have spent at least the EU minimum time in GMC approved training — this varies per specialty recognised in the UK and is often shorter than the time [the GMC] usually expect[s] training to take.

For those in Core training, you need to plan your application to Speciality Training, and may have to defer your start date if you have not been 'signed off' by the required date.

Applying for LTFT training

All parts of the UK give priority to Category 1 then 2:

- Category 1 – individual disability or ill health and caring responsibilities either for children or an ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent
- Category 2 – unique opportunities [e.g. elite sport training], religion commitment or non-medical development.

Scotland: [Less Than Full Time Training | Scotland Deanery \[nhs.scot\]](#). All may apply if have 'well-founded reasons'.

Wales: [LTFT - HEIW](#) [nhs.wales]. All may apply if have 'well-founded reasons'.

Northern Ireland: [Less Than Full-Time Training Policy - Northern Ireland Medical & Dental Training Agency](#) [nimdta.gov.uk] NIMDTA will consider all individual requests for Less than Full Time (LTFT) training.

England: this can be personal choice (Category 3); working patterns need to be agreed with the employer/host organisation and trainees must be available to work across all shifts and days [Delivering greater flexibility | Health Education England](#) [hee.nhs.uk], [LTFT Cat 3 All Specialties Guidance](#) [hee.nhs.uk], [LTFT Cat 3 FAQ Final](#) [hee.nhs.uk].

GMC guidance: [Less than full time training position statement Nov 17](#) [gmc-uk.org]

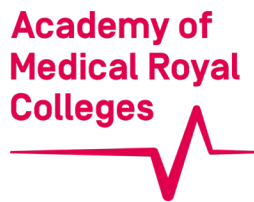
AoMRC guidance: [Guidance flexibility postgraduate training 0620.pdf](#) [aomrc.org.uk]

BMA guidance: [Flexible training](#) [bma.org.uk]

Physician advice, JRCPTB, although much applicable to all trainees [Physician trainer resources](#) JRCPTB

There is also an LTFT Facebook group for informal advice and support: [LTFT Trainees Forum](#) [Facebook]

There is lots of help available if you are returning to training after a career break for any reason or if you have been in a non-training post. It includes funding, which must be arranged in advance, as well as Return to Work courses and Keep in Touch (KiT) days. This can all be accessed via the 'trainee support' drop down menu on your local Deanery page and is based on the [SuppoRTT in England](#) HEE document published in 2017.

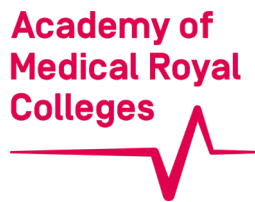


Specialty and Associate Specialist doctor (SAS)

SAS doctors have the opportunity to work flexibly without the requirements of a formal training programme. The standard full-time contract is 10 PAs (roughly 4 hours each) and includes a minimum of 1 PA for Supporting Professional Activities. Many will work more than this, e.g. 12 PAs including out-of-hours commitments. A 10 PA contract may feel flexible. E.g. 'on call work' is included, with more PAs allocated if disturbed a great deal; if working weekend hours, there may be more fixed weekdays off; etc.

- Specialty Doctor: minimum 4 years' post-graduation training, at least 2 in relevant specialty
- Specialist: [senior SAS post](#), 12 years' experience with minimum of 6 in specialty, meeting generic capabilities framework.
- The grades of Staff Grade and Associate Specialist closed in 2008, now all new appointments are Specialty doctors.
- From 2021 the specialist grade role has been introduced, offering career progression. The Specialty Doctor contracts limit OOH work to no more than 40% unless by mutual agreement. Resident OOH 1PA=3 hours, in normal time 1PA=4 hours. Contracts and Terms and conditions can be read [here](#).
- Opportunity to join [GMC Specialist register](#) via CESR/CEGPR

Support: Career Refresh For Medicine [CaReForMe programme](#). Many deaneries are also happy to accommodate non-career grade at their Return to Training days although financial support is not currently accessible.



Working near retirement

There is good evidence that gradual retirement from work is better for your health, so retirement is an ideal time to consider flexible working or a portfolio career. For some general information visit NHS Employers [Flexible retirement](#).

Within the NHS options are:

- Step down: You can step down to a different role, for example, to reduce the level of responsibility.
- Wind down: You can wind down to retirement by remaining in your current post and reducing the number of hours or days at work.
- Retire and return: You can request to retire, claim your pension benefits and then return to NHS employment.
- Draw down: You can take part of your pension benefits and continue in NHS employment.
- Enhancement: You can retire later than the normal pension age and have pension benefits increased.
- Early retirement: You can pay additional contributions to buy out the reduction applied to your pension if you retire early.

On reaching your pension retirement age, depending on your pension scheme, you retire for a minimum of 24 hours, and then can again work for the NHS and claim your pension, requiring a new contract.

[Returning to work after retirement](#) [BMA]

[Medical careers: A flexible approach in later years](#) [AoMRC]

[Revalidation: frequently asked questions](#) [GMC]

Royal college advice

RCP [Later careers: Stemming the drain of expertise and skills from the profession](#)

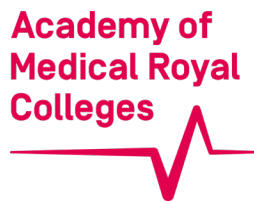
RCSEng [Retirement](#)

RCGP [Later career and retired GPs](#)

RCR [Overcoming barriers to continued working for radiologists aged 55+](#)

RCPCH [Thinking about retirement – resources](#)

RCOG [Later Career and Retirement Report](#)



Further information on working flexibly

Flexible working is an arrangement that supports an individual to have greater choice in when, where and how they work. This may include changes to a working pattern, hours and role, and/or the location in which their work takes place.

'Flexible working needs to be seen as the solution and not the problem' The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Chair, Health and Social Care Committee 1st March 2022

Much advice is available about flexible working, but it is often difficult to locate and know what is relevant to you. The links and resources below have been collated to help you make a start.

[Flexible careers](#). Academy of Medical Royal Colleges

[Flexible working: raising the standards for the NHS](#). NHS England

[Flexible working](#). NHS Employers

Abbreviations

AoMRC	Academy of Medical Royal Colleges
ATC	Accreditation of Transferable Capabilities [for GP training]
BMA	British Medical Association
CCT	Certificate of Completion of Training
CCT CP	Certificate of Completion of Training: Combined Programme [for GPs]
CEGPR	Certificate of Eligibility for General Practice Registration
CESR	Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration
DCC	Direct Clinical Care
FT	Full time

FY1	Foundations year 1
FY2	Foundation year 2
GMC	General Medical Council
GP	General Practitioner
GPwER	GP with Extended Role
LE	Locally Employed Doctor
LTFT	Less than full time
OOH	Out of hours
OOP	Out of Programme activity
PA	Programmed Activity
SAS	Specialty and Associate Specialist doctor
SPA	Supporting professional activity

Other things to consider

- All jobs are covered by national employment law: [Employment Rights Act 1996](#).
- There is general guidance on flexible working at [GOV.UK](#).
- Full Time in the UK is a maximum of 48 hours per week on average over months, by law. Individuals can opt out: "*A doctor may voluntarily choose to opt out of the Working Time Regulations 1998 (WTR) as amended and replaced from time to time average weekly limit of 48 hours, subject to prior agreement in writing with the employer. A decision to exercise this option is individual, voluntary and no pressure may be placed on the doctor to take this option.*" NHS Employers
- If a training post or a rota exceeds 48 hours per week, the Trust should pay penalties. [Exception reporting for junior doctors in England](#) (bma.org.uk)
- If you become LTFT then your salary will drop, taking financial advice is advised. If you have a Visa there may be a minimum salary threshold to consider.
- When negotiating flexible or less than full-time working consider looking at NHS Employers resources on [flexible working](#) and their [guide to consultant job planning](#). As well as considering:
 - Fixed days off?

- Half-days e.g. for health or childcare
- Fixed on-calls?
- Flexibility [e.g. to take a dependent relative to appointments?]
- Annualised hours: agreeing to x clinics or sessions per year allows for variable working - sometimes more intensely than others over a year.
[Consultant part-time and flexible working](#) [BMA]
- Compressed hours, job planning a long /3 session day in exchange for a one session day
- In a training rotation commuting adds time to the working day [e.g. arranging childcare]. In a fixed [Consultant, SAS, LE post] 'full time' post can feel more flexible
- Talk to others in the department. Some Anaesthetists have come off the on-call rota in return for fixed alternate Saturday daytime trauma lists.
- Financial implications:
 - If you come off out-of-hours work, you will lose any “banding” or similar payments.
 - If you reduce your hours, your salary goes down but your outgoings may improve: You will reduce your [pension contributions and the taxation](#) you have to pay on any hypothetical increase in your pension pot over the 'annual allowance' will reduce.
- Job planning guidance by specialty is at the [BMA website](#)
- Disability advice [Disability Guidance](#) [Disabled Doctors Network]
- [CIPD The Professional Body for Human Resources and People Development](#)
- Your Trust should have a Champion of Flexible Working

For employers – on why flexible training is essential to retaining talent

Why: [The case for flexible working](#) [Timewise]

Case studies: [What NHS organisations are doing to support staff to work flexibly](#) [NHS Employers]

How: [Flexible working](#) [NHS Employers]