

GUIDANCE ON THE SUPERVISION AND MONITORING PROGRESS OF CLINICAL ACADEMIC TRAINEES

The academic supervisor is a key figure in the successful development of clinical academic trainees. It is important that, as part of the educational process, these clinical trainees receive appropriate academic supervision, that their progress is carefully monitored, and that they receive feedback in good time to enable them to adjust their patterns of work as necessary. The aim of this guidance is to recommend a systematic framework to ensure that these aims are achieved and sets out the responsibilities to be carried out by the academic supervisor.

The academic supervisor should have a track record in research supervision at MD/PhD level.

Academic training will be centred around the trainee. For academic clinical fellows it is anticipated that the specialty lead will introduce the trainee to a number of research areas and potential supervisors during the first year of training. The specialty academic lead will essentially act as the academic supervisor in that first year until a formal research area and supervisor has been identified. It is expected that the academic trainee will have the same academic supervisor throughout the duration of the post once the area of research interest has been identified.

Responsibilities of Supervisors

The academic supervisor is responsible for the overall direction of the clinical academic trainee's research and is separate from the educational or clinical supervisor.

The academic supervisor is responsible for drawing up an academic training programme with the trainee, so that there is a realistic/achievable timetable with clear milestones for delivery. Research plans should be drawn up to include specific training, where required, together with plans for research experience and specific outputs. These targets will be summarised within the overall personal development plan for the trainee, which should be agreed within a month of commencing work and annually thereafter. Academic skills to be acquired should be defined under 3 domains, generic and applied research skills, research governance, and education and communication. The skills to be acquired will be specific to the trainee and determined by their area of research interest. It is the responsibility of the academic supervisor, in collaboration with the trainee, to determine what generic and specific academic skills are required to enable an individual trainee's research during the training period.

On entry into the academic training post, the academic supervisor should make research plans with the trainee, as the context against which to assess their academic progress. This should be within the framework of a general statement about the standards expected of the trainee if they are to make satisfactory progress throughout the programme and should reflect the fixed time period of the combined programme (25% protected research Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF), 50% protected research Academic Clinical Lecturer (ACL)).

A discussion between education and academic supervisors should be undertaken to ensure that both aspects of the programme are realistic and both academic and clinical competencies are supported. The educational supervisor and academic supervisor should ensure that clinical and academic objectives are complementary. Both supervisors and the trainee should be aware of the trainee's overall clinical and academic requirements. Face to face discussions should ideally occur at least annually.

It is expected that the academic supervisor will work with the trainee to ensure all meetings are arranged and documented within the trainees e-portfolio where possible. The trainee will be responsible for documentation.

Monitoring and Review of Progress

At the start of the academic placement, and annually thereafter, the academic trainee must meet with the academic supervisor to agree objectives and their personal development plan for the coming year. Regular meetings with the academic supervisor should take place throughout the academic placement to review progress, and decisions taken should be agreed and documented for later presentation to the annual assessment of academic progress.

The academic supervisor is required to complete the *Report on Academic Progress* form (see below), which needs to be signed by the trainee for submission to the annual joint academic/clinical Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) panel. The form must include details of academic placements, academic training modules and other relevant academic experience, together with an assessment of the academic competences achieved as defined by the personal development plan.

This report must:

- provide a summary comment regarding overall progress during the period of academic training under review,
- reflect the learning agreement and objectives developed between the trainee and their academic supervisor, with a specific plan and timetable
- be supported by evidence from the research placements, including specific research outputs, attendance at research meetings or events, details of research training etc
- take into account any modifications to the learning agreement or remedial action taken during the training period for whatever reason,

The report should be discussed with the trainee prior to submission to the Panel. The report and any discussion which takes place following its compilation must be evidence based, timely, open and honest.

Advice on completion of the report

Comment should be provided confirming the date discussion took place with the trainee to set appropriate objectives in their personal development plan to develop academic competencies. There should be at least 5 objectives and comment should be provided on the content, appropriateness and completion of the objectives

The report should be formative and used to provide advice to the trainee on how to improve their academic development.

The descriptions of experience gained during the research placement should be specific. Research proposals, grant applications, and research reports and publications, may be listed as evidence of satisfactory academic progress and collated for submission.

Any concerns regarding progression, health or probity should be fully documented and specific. Any measures undertaken to address the concerns should be fully documented.

An overall summary of performance over the period in question should be commented on, what has gone well and what needs development. Appraisals and reports by other researchers may be used to inform comments, and other feedback received should be recorded if relevant to training or performance, with specific sources quoted.

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