



How to optimise your chances

Given the current level of competition for StR posts in dermatology, it is helpful to begin to work on your CV as soon as you decide that you may wish to pursue the specialty.

Of the following avenues to explore, some can only be achieved after qualification, but some are perfectly possible as an undergraduate. Some are a major undertaking, but others can be done quite easily.

- Make yourself and your interest known to the local dermatologists – consultants or registrars may be able to involve you in projects (see below)
- Do a special study module or your elective in dermatology if possible – the BAD has a range of grants available at various stages, including undergraduate prizes such as Intercollegiate Degree Grant, Elective Prize/Project Grant and Essay Prize (see <http://www.bad.org.uk/healthcare-professionals/education/medical-students/undergraduate-awards>)
- Get involved in your medical school's DermSoc. If there isn't one, set one up! (see <http://www.bad.org.uk/healthcare-professionals/education/medical-students/dermsoc>).
- Undertake dermatology-related audits. The more tasks that you can do for this from initiation, data collection, data analysis and presentation, the better.
- Present cases at regional, national or international meetings. This could involve oral or poster presentations. Larger conferences such as the Annual Meeting of the British Association of Dermatologists publish abstracts of accepted presentations so even if you do not physically give the presentation, you may still gain credit as a co-author.
- Write up cases for publication (case reports). Similarly, first authorship carries most weight, but any relevant publications will be beneficial.
- See if you can get involved in a research project leading to publication (a research publication will carry more kudos than a case report).
- Consider taking time out to undertake a doctorate. This major commitment is certainly not essential, but will give you a large advantage in the short-listing process for registrar applications. It is also likely to yield valuable first-author research publications.
- Attend *DermSchool* as a medical student or junior doctor (see <http://www.bad.org.uk/healthcare-professionals/education/medical-students/dermschool-event>).
- Attend *DermDoc* (see <http://www.bad.org.uk/events/eventcalendar>).
- Attend other dermatology courses or meetings to demonstrate your commitment to the specialty.
- Try to secure a post on a Foundation or Core Medical rotation which includes dermatology (unfortunately, there are relatively few such opportunities nationally – experience in “allied” specialties such as GU medicine, rheumatology, plastic surgery, oncology or pathology could be useful).
- Use taster weeks during your Foundation and Core Medical rotations to gain experience in the specialty.
- Try to acquire dermatology-related practical skills such as taking a punch biopsy.
- Consider undertaking a clinical fellow job (or similar) in dermatology prior to applying for a registrar post.