



**NHS England – East of England &
Anglia Ruskin University**

JOB DESCRIPTION

**NIHR ACADEMIC CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP
IN PAEDIATRICS**

ST1 LEVEL

ARU PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH CENTRE

September 2026

JOB DESCRIPTION

Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) in Paediatrics

This post has been awarded under the Primary Care and Community Care theme

Objective of the post

This ACF post is aimed at medically qualified trainees in paediatrics with outstanding potential for development as academics. The post provides an opportunity for combined paediatrics and academic training. The post allows trainees to combine first class training in paediatrics with research training and is specifically designed to support the post-holder to develop and submit a highly competitive application for a PhD training fellowship during the initial three-year training period.

The post will be appointed with an NTN (A) and will allow the trainee to undertake paediatrics training with 25% of their time protected for research.

Clinical training programme director

Dr Nick Schindler (TPD)

Dr Damodaran Sudeep (TPD)

Dr Kapadia Jogesh (TPD)

Dr Shazia Hoodbhoy (Head of School)

Academic training programme director

Dr John Davies, Clinical Academic Training Lead

Academic contact, duration of the post and outcome

The post will be appointed at ST1 level

This ACF post is for three years and carries an academic national training number - NTN (A). After appointment, the ACF will be provided with an individually tailored training programme that will comprise 25% research and 75% paediatrics training.

It is expected that the post holder will compete for and successfully secure a competitive research training fellowship within the three-year tenure of the post, allowing them to complete research towards a higher degree (PhD or MD). In their application to competitive clinical PhD fellowships, the ACF will be supported by our named clinical academic mentors, as well as the IAT Lead, and University academic support services. The clinical academic mentors will also provide advice on clinical academic careers, liaising with local trusts and universities where appropriate.

After completion of a research training fellowship, it is anticipated that the post holders will continue higher training within NHS England - East of England to complete specialist training in paediatrics. They will also be in a strong position to apply for the post of Clinical Lecturer or compete for an Intermediate Fellowship to pursue their academic career.

If the post-holder is unsuccessful in obtaining a further research fellowship opportunity, they may have the opportunity to continue in the clinical programme on a non-academic track.

NHS organisation(s) in which training will take place

East of England Paediatric Core Training Programme. Hospital placements are to be confirmed, but it is likely that trainees can expect to experience two or three sites to ensure broad experience.

Research institution in which training will take place

ARU Primary Care Research Centre

Day release or block release for protected research time?

Day release or block release, as appropriate based on discussion with the Training Programme Directors.

Clinical component of the training

Paediatric training in the UK offers a range of possibilities, so you can take your career in the direction that suits you. An innovative, capability-based curriculum underpins the standard run-through programme, and this will equip you with the skills needed to become a consultant paediatrician.

This new post has been created as part of a programme of Integrated Academic Training and offers candidates a comprehensive experience of clinical academic medicine working alongside internationally renowned clinicians and researchers. We are seeking highly motivated, enthusiastic individuals with the potential to excel in both their clinical and academic training and who have the ambition to be the next generation of academic clinicians.

Full training in good clinical practice will be provided. As a core trainee (ST1-4) you will receive training in core curricular capabilities including in General Paediatrics and Neonatology. Your core training will encompass some time in a level 3 NICU (Cambridge, Norwich or Luton) and we would expect you to transition to the tier 2 rota at some point during or at the end of ST3.

This programme gives you as a trainee dedicated protected research time in addition to a normal clinical training programme. Over the first three years (usually ST1-ST3) you are given 25% per year (total of 9 months WTE) for research without clinical commitments and without lengthening your core training. This can be taken as 9 continuous months, broken up into shorter blocks, or fixed time each week over 3 years.

At the start of each ST1 intake, we hold an 'Introduction and Welcome to the Deanery' day for new trainees. This is held in September and is an opportunity for new trainees to meet the Head of School and Training Programme Directors. It covers some of the basics of how paediatric training works in the deanery, including topics such as study leave, e-portfolio, exams, working LTFT, and ARCPs. In addition, we hold a day for 'common paediatric and neonatal skills' to help new trainees gain some confidence. Trainees who have not had any previous paediatric experience have found these particularly useful.

We hold a number of study days over a year structured to the core curriculum for ST1-4 trainees. In this way, within the first four years of training we aim to provide a wide variety of topics to assist trainees with their knowledge of paediatrics and in obtaining the MRCPCH examinations.

For more information on Academic Clinical Training in Paediatrics, please visit the dedicated East of England website: <https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/paediatrics>

Research component of the training

This post has been awarded under the Primary Care and Community Care research theme and will be embedded within the [ARU Primary Care Research Centre \(PCRC\)](#).

The PCRC was established to address public health challenges and health inequalities, generating research that is directly relevant to primary and community care settings. Evidence-based practices are often derived from research conducted in secondary care, which does not accurately reflect the primary care environment in terms of population, timing, and available resources. The goal is producing sustainable, patient-centred research that directly applicable to primary care that improves health outcomes and reduces inequalities for underserved communities in Essex and beyond.

The Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) will join an outstanding multidisciplinary team environment led by [Professor Margaret Greenfields](#) and [Professor Lee Smith](#), whose work on inclusion health and population health spans clinical practice, public health and social policy.

The PCRC has established a growing national reputation for impactful research, supported by funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), NHS England and Integrated Care Boards. Researchers within the PCRC work extensively with community organisations, health and care commissioners, civil society organisations, and local and national government partners to ensure that research findings inform policy and practice. The PCRC has also undertaken commissioned work to develop guidance supporting ethical research engagement with inclusion health populations and has developed strong national and international collaborations.

Inclusion health and population health themes within the PCRC have a focus on addressing the needs of underserved and marginalised populations who experience some of the poorest health outcomes and greatest barriers to healthcare access. Projects use interdisciplinary and mixed-methods approaches, combining quantitative and qualitative research, co-production, implementation science and innovative engagement methods to better understand and address health inequalities.

ACFs will gain experience across the full research lifecycle, including study design, patient and public involvement, data collection, quantitative and qualitative analysis, dissemination and implementation. ACFs will work directly with healthcare providers, community organisations and policymakers, gaining valuable insight into how research can drive meaningful improvements in primary care services and outcomes for disadvantaged populations. Supported by experienced mentors, clinical academics and a vibrant community of early career researchers, this post offers an outstanding environment in which to develop a clinical academic career.

The Research opportunity at ARU

We prioritise building a strong community for our trainees, with the aim of providing support, both personally and developmentally, and a sense of belonging and have developed an IAT community to provide opportunities for trainees to meet, receive research insights and training, gain mentorship and career advice, as well as pastoral support.

Trainees will be encouraged to participate in ARU's community of researchers at various stages of their careers, and present at seminars to gain experience of presenting and receiving constructive feedback in a supportive, collegiate environment.

Each IAT trainee is assigned a Research Supervisor from their designated research group. In addition, the ACF will receive research training and mentorship from the head of the research institute, the head of the research group, and other research group members. The Research Supervisor meets with their trainee at least once every 2 weeks during their Academic block

and it is their responsibility to support trainees in engaging with research, developing as researchers, and preparing for higher research degrees. ARU Trainees are also assigned an IAT mentor, a clinician with IAT experience who serves as a key point of contact for non-operational issues related to their training.

We have established a monthly seminar series, tailored specifically for our IAT trainees. The core topics are based on the NIHR IAT guide and are reviewed annually to ensure relevance. All IAT trainees are enrolled in the [ARU Doctoral School](#), which provides training and support for postgraduate research students across the university, including support for applications to higher degrees. The ACFs will be enrolled into the Researcher Development Programme at ARU and thereby have access to postgraduate researcher development opportunities such as research proposal training, effective presentations training, academic writing training, ethics & research integrity training, and qualitative/quantitative methodology training. There are also opportunities for ACFs to join 'writing together' spaces, again open to all postgraduate researchers at ARU.

We offer IAT trainees access to a 12-week distance-learning, 30-credit module on [Research Methodology](#). This module offers flexible, multidisciplinary training for healthcare professionals on qualitative and quantitative research methods, with a focus on applying research principles to their own projects or ideas.

ARU upholds the [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) and became a signatory to the revised [Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers](#) in 2022. Committed to Athena Swan since 2012, ARU achieved an [institutional silver award](#) in 2024 for advancing gender equity, supported by our Athena Swan Silver Action Plan (2024–2029).

Programme contact for further information

Essex Clinical Academic Training Office Inbox, ecat@aru.ac.uk

NHSE local office contact for further information

england.recruitment.eoe@nhs.net

Further information about Integrated Academic Training pathways and programmes can be found on the NIHR website. Please visit <http://www.nihr.ac.uk/IAT> to find out more.