# Job Description

# NIHR Academic Clinical Fellowship

# Rheumatology ST1 (1 Post)

The University of Leeds, in partnership with NHS England North East and Yorkshire and the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, has developed an exciting pathway of academic clinical training opportunities.

Applications are now invited for an **Academic Clinical Fellowship in** **Rheumatology at ST1**. This new post has been created as part of the NHS England (NHSE) and National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) programme of Integrated Academic Training and offers candidates a comprehensive experience of clinical academic medicine working alongside internationally renowned clinicians, researchers and undergraduate medical educators. *This is a multi-specialty vacancy, an appointment may not be made in this specialty. There will be 1 ACF post in either Rheumatology, Immunology or Trauma and Orthopaedic Surgery.*

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. This Academic Clinical Fellowship (ACF) programme in Rheumatologywill be run by the University of Leeds, the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and NHS England North East and Yorkshire.

Academic Clinical Fellowships (ACFs) are 3 year fixed-term national training posts. They attract an NTN(A) and trainees undertake 75% clinical and 25% academic training over the term of the post. They are employed by the NHS Trust and have an honorary contract with the University at whose Medical School their academic research is supported.

ACF trainees also undertake a Research Training Programme provided by the University for which funding is provided by NIHR. They also are eligible for a £1,000 bursary per year to support research training activity (e.g to attend academic conferences).

ACF trainees would also normally complete and submit an external funding application for a research fellowship to enable them to complete a higher degree (PhD or research MD) following the completion of their ACF fixed-term post, which would be completed as Out-of-Programme-Research (OOPR).

All Academic Clinical Fellowships are run-through posts, regardless of specialty, with the exception of ‘Medical Education’ ACFs. All trainee entering ACF in a specialty with a Core Training period would therefore be guaranteed continued training to CCT in the eventual specialty, as long as they progress satisfactorily through both their academic and clinical training. Run-through status is withdrawn if ACFs do not complete the academic component.

# POST DETAILS

## Job Title

NIHR Academic Clinical Fellow (ACF) – Rheumatology

## Duration of the Post

Up to 3 years (25% academic/75% clinical FTE).

## Lead NHS Hospital/Trust in which training will take place

Rheumatology ACFs will be based at the regional Rheumatology Unit at Chapel Allerton Hospital, Leeds, within the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

## Research institution in which training will take place

**Leeds Institute of Rheumatic & Musculoskeletal Medicine (LIRMM)** within the School of Medicine, University of Leeds.

## Research Protected Time:

ACFs would have day release training to attend and complete an accredited postgraduate programme in health research methodology at the University of Leeds (24 contact days plus additional private study usually completed in one year). Arrangements for research blocks or weekly research days, constituting 25% FTE academic time (and comprising a total of 9 months over the 3 year ACF post), are managed by local agreement with the academic supervisors and clinical training programme director. This period of research will be used to obtain specific experience and knowledge in the research area of interest, obtain pilot data and apply for an external doctoral research fellowship (see below). **Please note: in the Internal Medicine Training curriculum research time cannot be taken during the Elderly Medicine or ICU Clinical training rotations.**

## Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Research Component

The Leeds Institute of Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Medicine (LIRMM) is a world-renowned centre for arthritis research at the core of the Leeds NIHR BRC. LIRMM has a highly successful track record in developing its clinical academic trainees from ACF to Clinical Lecturer and Clinician Scientist. ACFs within LIRMM will have access to excellent teaching and research opportunities. The size and diversity of research streams within our department offers significant opportunities. The central aim of the Rheumatology ACF programme is to enable trainees to prepare and secure a competitive external Clinical Research Fellowship. This will be achieved by focussing on the core skills required for research and with exposure to the many on-going rheumatology research programmes within the department, develop research studies to guide a Fellowship application.

Musculoskeletal diseases cost NHSE >£10bn/year to treat and affect 25% of the UK population. Our [NIHR-Leeds-BRC-Musculoskeletal-Disease](https://leedsbrc.nihr.ac.uk/musculoskeletal-disease/) theme aims include accurate detection, early diagnosis and identification of novel treatments.

Embedded within the BRC the ACF will have the opportunity to choose their research project within the following areas:

Autoimmune rheumatic diseases (AIRDs; rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, scleroderma) are long-term conditions associated with substantial health burden and costs. Delayed diagnosis, when organ damage has already occurred, is associated with particularly severe consequences. Current screening tests are insufficiently specific to justify toxic therapies; shifting to digital health data combined with novel biomarkers, clinical imaging and multi-omic approaches will profile individuals at highest risk of autoimmune disease. Smoking and dysbiosis/abnormal microbiome are linked to AIRD development suggesting very early prevention potential via lifestyle/modifiable risk factors. ACF projects include precisely characterising individuals and developing risk algorithms to better identify “at-risk” individuals.

Metabolic dysregulation (adiposity and metabolic syndrome) is a key driver of adverse prognosis and refractory phenotypes in osteoarthritis. Metabolic syndrome and osteoarthritis are recognised to be closely linked. Polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR) is an age-related autoimmune/autoinflammatory disease accompanied by age-related vasculitis (giant cell arteritis). ACF projects include exploring the interrelationship of metabolic syndrome and age-related pathologies.

BRC Rheumatology has on-site laboratory facilities, in-house imaging capabilities (ultrasound and MRI) co-located with PPI expertise, database and infrastructure support alongside multiple specialist clinics. This provides expertise in supporting IAT ACF/CLs including 5 Advanced Fellowships from CL (now 3 Associate Professors/ 2 Professors). Co-location of the clinical and academic departments at Chapel Allerton Hospital provides the critical mass for collaboration and we have interdisciplinary collaborations across the university including with Leeds Institute of Data Analytics and the Institute of Mechanical and Biological Engineering.

Key publications include: [Pre-Arthritis-Epitope-Alleles-and-Smoking-2022](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34285049/), [Dysbiosis-in-Rheumatoid-Athritis-2021](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33004333/), [Leucotoxin-A-Antibodies-in-RA-2023](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37601773/), [Abatacept-Clinical-Trial-Lancet-2024](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38364839/), [Anifrolumab-Phase-III-2022](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35338035/), [Oral-Methotrexate-in-Knee-Osteoarthritis-2024](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39074374/).

## Academic Clinical Fellowship Training Programme: Clinical Component

This post is offered at ST1/IM1 in Rheumatology. The post is intended for an individual intending to pursue an academic career in Rheumatology. As a Group 1 specialty Rheumatology training will be dual certified (Rheumatology/GIM) and require successful completion of the IM stage 1 curriculum and the GIM (IM stage 2) and Rheumatology (IM stage 2) curriculum. The ACF will join (as an academic NTNa) the Internal Medicine Training programme at IMT1 and move into the Rheumatology ST4 training programme in Yorkshire (Training Programme Director: Dr Cathy Lawson, Dr Shouvik Dass, Dewsbury District Hospital) following successful completion of IM training.

ACFs will undergo internal medicine and rheumatology clinical training supervised by the Yorkshire School of Postgraduate Medicine whose remit is to ensure the provision of an education of a consistent high quality across the Yorkshire Deanery, manage initial selection, subsequent allocation and appropriate placements. They will also provide induction (in collaboration with the host NHS Trust), appraisals and competence based curriculum delivery assessments. The clinical training programme will be tailored to suit the needs of the trainee and will rotate through academic medical units where the ACFs will complete their internal medical training and obtain the MRCP.

Numerous educational opportunities are available with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. Specific to the Rheumatology clinical programme, a teaching Professorial ward round takes place weekly at Chapel Allerton Hospital and all doctors in training are invited to attend. A regional postgraduate Rheumatology meeting takes place every Wednesday afternoon, with the emphasis on education for all grades of Rheumatology doctors in training within the region. The content of the postgraduate afternoon comprises (i) Topic teaching that follows the Rheumatology training curriculum so that over a two year period most areas of this are covered (ii) Research updates presented by research fellows that provide an additional opportunity to become conversant with ongoing research activities and opportunities in the Institute (iii) Specialised, integrated research meetings attended by basic and clinical researchers to develop research plans, discuss grants and manuscripts. A weekly radiology conference is also held in the Radiology department at Chapel Allerton Hospital.

# CONTACTS

## Academic Supervisors:

**Associate Professor Sarah Mackie**

Leeds Institute of Rheumatic and Musculoskeletal Medicine

Chapel Allerton Hospital

LeedsLS7 4SA

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Academic, Educational and Clinical supervisors will be assigned following appointment to align with the individual’s needs

**Training Programme Director (clinical):**

**Dr Tarun Bansal**

Internal Medicine Training TPD

Email: [Tarun.Bansal@bthft.nhs.uk](mailto:Tarun.Bansal@bthft.nhs.uk)

**Dr Cathy Lawson**

Rheumatology Clinical TPD

Email: cathy.lawson@hdft.nhs.uk

**Dr Shouvik Dass**

Rheumatology Clinical TPD

Email: shouvik.dass@nhs.net

## Academic Training Programme Director

Professor Phil Quirke [p.quirke@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:p.quirke@leeds.ac.uk)

# Further Information

Because of the nature of the work for which you are applying, this post is exempted from the provisions of Section 4 (2) of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 by virtue of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Applicants are therefore, not entitled to withhold information about convictions, which for other purposes are “spent” under the provisions of the Act, and in the event of employment any failure to disclose such convictions could result in dismissal or disciplinary action by the University. Any information given will be strictly confidential and will be considered only in relation to an application for positions to which the Order applies.

For further information about the Academic Clinical Fellowship programme, please refer to the NIHR Integrated Academic Training (IAT) page on

[https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/academy-programmes/integrated-academic-training.htm#one](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.nihr.ac.uk%2Fexplore-nihr%2Facademy-programmes%2Fintegrated-academic-training.htm&data=05%7C02%7CL.C.Wallace%40leeds.ac.uk%7C8c663698c201424df43f08dc9f4e27aa%7Cbdeaeda8c81d45ce863e5232a535b7cb%7C0%7C0%7C638560406464737503%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Vh0hHjCu%2BIO1z4MV5dplncAHQHfHKZIZ3TvMXhU4gf0%3D&reserved=0)