

Student selected components

Student-selected components (SSCs) are protected periods of time in the undergraduate medical curriculum which allow students to explore an area of medicine they are interested in.

Student selected components (SSCs; formerly known as special study modules or SSMs) are optional elements within the undergraduate medical syllabus in UK medical schools, introduced following the recommendations of the 2002 report, "Tomorrow's Doctors", by the General Medical Council (GMC) that the syllabus should include student choice.

In 2003, the GMC required that between 25% and 33% of curricular time be available for SSCs. However in the 2009 edition of Tomorrow's Doctors this requirement was reduced to a minimum of 10 percent.

They are particularly valuable in exposing students to smaller specialties like [neurosurgery](#), which are often sparsely covered in the rest of the undergraduate curriculum. Moreover, they provide opportunities for students interested in pursuing a career in neurosurgery to increase their likelihood of being successful in specialty training applications.

In a article, Clark et al. summarise the department's experience of hosting SSCs. Furthermore, they have set out to establish a series of achievable objectives over the course of a typical SSC in neurosurgery. This includes the possibility of participation in research and audit, which, if well planned, can be rewarding for both the student and the host unit. SSCs are an effective means of exposing medical students to neurosurgery and provide a multitude of opportunities for enhancing clinical competencies and career development ¹⁾.

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Clark DJ, Koliass AG, Garnett MR, Trivedi RA, Price SJ, Hutchinson PJ. Student-selected components in neurosurgery. Br J Neurosurg. 2015 Nov 26;1-3. [Epub ahead of print] PubMed PMID: 26610147.

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