Academic Intern Track Applicant Guide

A practical roadmap from first thought to interview

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Academic Track Intern, 2026/27

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Introduction

I first heard about the Academic Intern Track (which I will often call the academic track, or ac track for short) in fourth year, while I was trying to work out what I wanted to do with my career and what kind of doctor I wanted to be. I had enjoyed the research I'd done up to then and wanted to keep doing research as a physician, so a post that gave me dedicated time to work on a research project during intern year felt like a great opportunity, and that is when I started planning to apply.

If I'm honest, the part I found most overwhelming was the research proposal. The application meant bringing a proposal that was my own, presenting it, and putting it on my application, and I had no experience of doing any of that, so it felt like a big challenge ahead. The questions came quickly: how do I come up with a project of my own, and how am I going to find a suitable supervisor? I remember wishing there was one book that went through everything from start to finish, covering what the track is, who it's for, how to apply, what matters on the application, how to find supervisors and a suitable project, and what makes a good project. I wish that had existed, and that is why I am writing this.

This guide is for anyone thinking about applying, whether you are in final year or still a few years out and curious. Everything in it comes from my own experience of the campaign for internship starting in July 2026, so it is one route rather than THE route, and the details of selection can change from year to year. Please check anything that matters against the official criteria before relying on it, and take my advice, like anyone's, with a grain of salt.

Best regards,

Kenji

At a Glance

- **What it is:** the normal 12-month intern year, with one of your four 3-month rotations split roughly 50/50 between a clinical job and a research project of your own. There were 48 posts across six intern networks for 2026/27.
- **How you are selected:** a written application marked out of 300 (your experience and record, and a proposal for a research project), then an interview marked out of 400. The campaign I applied to closed on **16 January 2026**.
- **What carries the most weight on paper:** your current degree (60 marks), then experience and academic distinctions (30 marks each), with the project sections worth 120 marks in total (these can change each year).
- **How the final ranking works:** as I understand it, the order of merit comes from the interview score alone, and non-EU candidates are considered after EU candidates who passed.
- **When to start:** I began thinking about project ideas at the end of fourth year, and wrote the application over about two and a half months, from November to mid-January.
- **The project:** it has to be doable in 12 weeks, with a clear rationale, methodology and outcomes, and ideally something you can do remotely wherever you are placed.
- **Who it suits:** anyone interested in research or a particular specialty who is happy to spend 12 weeks of the intern year mostly on a project.

END OF PREVIEW

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That's the end of the free preview.
The full guide is available at
brain-with-kenji.netlify.app