

SSC4 programme introduction

Dr Nimesh Patel

Head of SSCs

Who's who

- Dr Nimesh Patel
 - Head of SSCs
- TBC
 - Deputy Head of SSCs (Years 3-5)
- Dr Gianluca Farrugia
 - Senior Tutor SSCs Malta
- Miss Adriana Coracini
 - London SSC4 Administrator
- Miss Francine Cauchi
 - Malta SSC4 Administrator

Aims of SSC4

- This will facilitate written communication in a knowledgeable, accurate and compelling style.
- To allow you to investigate the ways that specific areas of medicine impact on Public Health (see handbook).
- This is an opportunity for you to assess the wider impact of medicine on society.

Aims of SSC4

- To allow you to explore an area of medicine of your choice with a degree of analysis and reflection that is not possible within the core curriculum.
- The objective of this SSC is to enhance the experience of your medical education by providing the opportunity for an in-depth study.
- To provide you with the essential authoring skills needed to complete the project.

General info

- SSC4 is a hurdle for progression to Year 5.
- Work will be graded by the Tutor. A sample of work (up to 10%) will be reviewed by internal assessors to ensure marking consistency. A selection of work may also be reviewed by our External Examiners.
- All work will be subject to electronic screening for plagiarism.
- Tutors are strongly encouraged to give constructive feedback.
- Exceptional pieces of work will be considered for the **Sutton Prize**.

SSC4 structure

- Students can either:
 - Submit a literature review of 6-8000 words
- Or
 - Submit a literature review of 3-4000 words
 - And Submit an audit 3-4000 words
- Or
 - Submit a literature review of 3-4000 words
 - And a research project 3-4000 words
- You have 26 half-days during the whole of the academic year to complete this project
- As a guide to your time management, you should allow the equivalent of a minimum of 60 hours study to undertake the necessary preparatory reading and writing up of this project

A 6000-8000 word literature review

- You may have been assigned a title already by the school
- You can self-organise in an area of your interest

A 3000-4000 word audit or QiP

- You can self-organise if this is something you want to do
- You don't need to complete the cycle – one cycle is enough but if you start early you may well be able to complete the cycle
- In London, if in a Trust then you need approval from the Trust Clinical Effectiveness Unit – this can take time
 - Malta dependent on clinical director
- If in a GP practice – you only need approval from the lead GP
- Complete the literature review in the time you are waiting for approval

Research

- You can self-organise if this is something you want to do
- You will need to obtain appropriate ethics approval before starting any research – this can take a few months – see SSC4 handbook
- Without ethics – you will not be able to publish and it cannot be obtained in retrospect
- Complete your literature review in the time you are waiting for approval

Returning Intercalating Students

- SSC4 can follow on from your iBSc
- However, beware of plagiarism
- You cannot submit one piece of the same work for two grades
- We would suggest picking up another research question you did not have the chance to explore in your iBSc

SSC4 grading

- 20% of marks come from:
 - Attendance/contact with tutor (2 marks)
 - Provision of work plan (2 marks)
 - Ability to work independently (3 marks)
 - Motivation/engagement (4 marks)
 - Agreed Objectives Met (4 marks)
 - Quality of Dissertation (5 marks)
- 80% of marks come from the content of the dissertation (rubric will be available on QM+)

SSC4 grading

Grade	Score (%)	
A+	≥ 92.00	Excellent
A	83.00 – 91.99	
A-	74.00 – 82.99	
B+	70.00 – 73.99	Good
B	66.00 – 69.99	
B-	63.00 – 65.99	
C+	59.00 – 62.99	Satisfactory
C	55.00 – 58.99	
C-	50.00 – 54.99	
D	45.00 – 49.99	Borderline Fail
E	< 45.00	Outright Fail

Grades D and E will require remediation

Important to consider

- Deadline to self-organise will be 9am 6th November 2023
- Your clinical placement choices may restrict what you can do
 - Placed at Southend but doing an audit in Royal London – how feasible is this?
- Ethics can take anything from 1 month to 6 months
 - Literature review whilst waiting
- Your supervisor might be an excellent choice as an academic referee for UKFPO

Can I change my SSC

- Yes, but only up until the November deadline or under exceptional circumstances thereafter.
- However, if you have been allocated an SSC and now decide to self-organise you must inform your allocated tutor upon submission of your self-organised form.
- Failure to do so demonstrates poor communication, a lack of collaboration.

Can I change my SSC

- If you don't do the SSC you have been assigned or approved to do, you will fail the SSC even if you complete it and are graded for it.
- You must then complete a compensatory piece of work.
- You will also not be eligible for merit or distinction.
- You can make changes in content of your SSC4 up until 9am 12th January 2023

SSC4 submission of work

- All written work **MUST** be submitted to your tutor
- All written work **MUST** be uploaded to QM+
- Failure to do so will result in grade deductions...
- **Deadline: 12pm Monday 6th May 2023**
- Submission after this date will incur a 5% score deduction per day for up to 7 days. Submission after 7 days will result in an outright fail.

SSC4 submission

- All students are reminded to keep copies of all written (or otherwise) work.
- All SSC related documentation such as assessment forms, handbooks, etc should be kept.
- You may be asked to provide copies of your assessments and other documentation for all five years for examination board purposes.

Extenuating Circumstances

- Form on QM+/MySIS
- The timeframe for extension will be dependent on the circumstances
- Max. 1 week with self-certification
- Max. 4 weeks from deadline with evidence
- Last year...

How to write a better dissertation

- A short journey through some of the problems and pitfalls that you may encounter while writing your dissertation
- Ways to improve your dissertation.

Advice

- The sooner you start the better.
- Don't wait! you should work on it throughout the year.
- You can submit from Monday 27th November 2023.
- Grades and feedback will be informed together with end of year results.
- You must contact and interact with your tutor.
- You will be marked down if you do not.

Literature review structure

- Summary / abstract.
- Short introduction to your review
 - Short background – define the problem
 - What are you going to cover/ what will you discuss
- Typically you should write in the style of a review article – use headings and sub-headings to break up your work and make it easier to read and understand (not one long narrative).
- Endgame –bring it all together and draw your conclusions
 - many dissertations often fizzle out

Research/Audit/QiP

- Abstract
 - Introduction
 - Methods
 - Results
 - Discussion
-
- Typically you should write in the style of a research article – use headings and sub-headings to break up your work and make it easier to read and understand (not one long narrative).
-
- For Audits/QiP follow the format for the Trust/GP for whom you are completing it for.

Appearance- figures

- Not too many bells and whistles. Clarity is vital.
- Make sure that diagrams and figures are relevant and without lots of extraneous information - figures are there to support your argument. How many figures are appropriate?
- Make sure you make the appropriate acknowledgement. It is often better to create your own figures.
- There should be a good blend of diagrams, figures and tables.
- It is important to have each one labelled with a number, title and legend. They must all be referred to in the text.

It is generally accepted that heart carries an extensive lymphatic network. Although the existence of cardiac lymphatic vessels was first described by Rudbeck as early as in 1653, the mechanism of their development has been poorly understood for many years. Studies on rodents and avian showed that the development of cardiac lymphatics is later than the formation of blood vessels during embryogenesis. In the mouse for instance, Klotz et al³⁰ used whole-mount staining methods on E10.5 embryos and hearts isolated at E12.5 to postnatal day (P) 15 to study the spatiotemporal pattern of lymphatic system formation. Whole-mount E10.5 embryos immunostained for endomucin, Prox1, and VEGFR-3 showed that Prox1/VEGFR-3⁺ endothelial cells emerged from the common cardinal vein, migrating towards the sinus venosus. Staining of hearts isolated at E12.5 revealed an emergence of lymphatic vessel on the ventral side along the outflow tract. At E14.5, cardiac lymphatics vessels sprouting from the region of the sinus venosus emerged on the dorsal side of the heart. At E16.5, the major dorsal vessels expanded downward from the sinus venosus, whereas small vessels appeared between the atria. The cardiac lymphatics covered a large part of the surface of the heart by P10, reaching fully developed by P15³⁰ (Figure 1). However, as opposed to the traditional view, cardiac lymphatics also involve nonvenous progenitors from hemogenic endothelium and second heart field,³¹ and they are heterogeneous with respect to regional difference of origin and formation dynamics. It is now clear that second heart field lineages critically contribute to the ventral cardiac lymphatics independent of the general wave of lymphatic specification from the common cardiac vein,³¹ highlighting the spatial and temporal complexity of lymphatic development in the heart.

...highlighting the spatial and temporal complexity of lymphatic development in the heart...

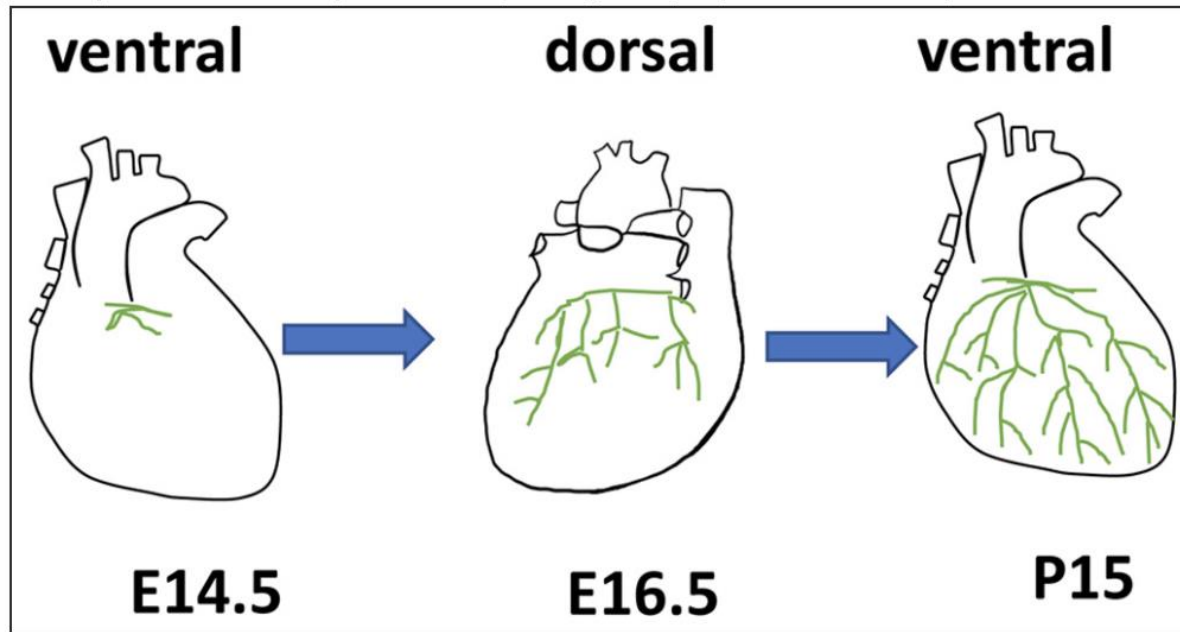


Figure 1

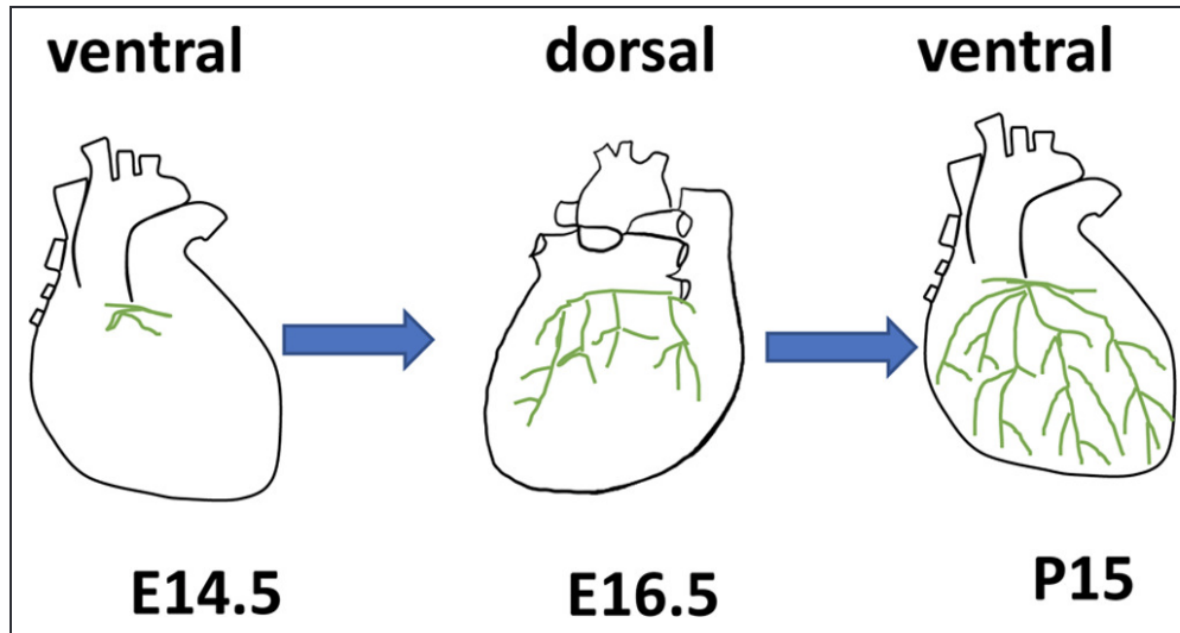


Figure 1. Development of cardiac lymphatics in mouse embryo. The development of cardiac lymphatics begins at embryonic day (E) 10.5 and reaches fully developed by postnatal day (P) 15. Prox1 (prospero homeobox 1)/VEGFR (vascular endothelial growth factor receptor)-3⁺ lymphatic endothelial cells emerge from the common cardinal vein, migrating towards the sinus venosus at E10.5. At E14.5, cardiac lymphatics first sprouts from the region of the sinus venosus and emerges on the dorsal side of the heart. The major dorsal vessels expand downward from the sinus venosus to form an extensive network at E16.5. The cardiac lymphatics reach fully developed, covering the majority of the surface of the heart by P15. The schematic figure was drawn based on the findings of previous publications listed in the references Srinivasan et al,²⁴ Bos et al,²⁵ and Jeltsch et al.²⁶

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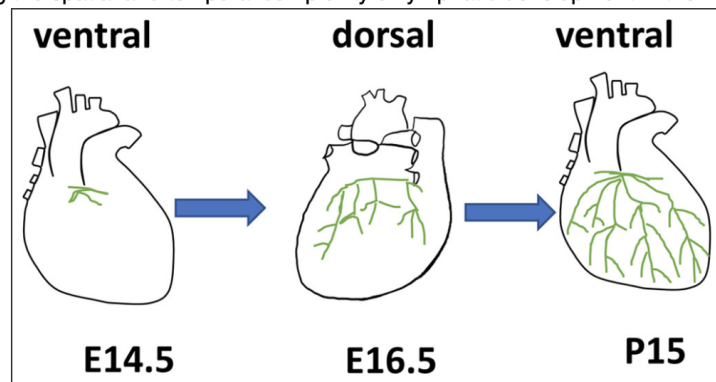


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SSC4 - the text

- Remember sometimes less is more.
- Avoid long sentences, beware of repetition
- Don't mix tenses.
- Everything must be properly referenced.
 - 30-50 references is about right.
- Choose one referencing style and stick to it (e.g. Harvard). Make sure you find the guidelines on the internet. All journals provide strict guidelines on referencing. Find one and stick to it.

SSC4- information sources

- Don't take everything you read at face value.
- Original papers are important, but if possible, start with review articles from the last 5 years.
- Make sure you understand what you are writing. If you do not understand something you have read you must check with your tutor.
- How to read a paper and interpret information/data?
Critical appraisal task: if you are not sure then ask your tutor or speak to the library.

SSC4- interpretation of sources

- Try to put your own spin/interpretation on things rather than regurgitating.
- There is a lot of information sources, books, library journals/e-journals, internet, pubmed. Ask your tutor for help if you are struggling to find sources or how to use them.
- Your tutor will often be able to help you identify key articles to set you off.

SSC4- presentation

- Read very carefully what you write – good grammar and spelling are essential, since the emphasis and meaning of what you want to say can change and can make reading your work very difficult.
- A well thought out presentation makes for easier reading and therefore better understanding.
- Tutors are not there to proofread your work!
- We ask tutors to take an inclusive approach to marking.

SSC4- layout

- Write across the page and not in columns and make sure that figures with their title and legend are on the same page.
- Very poorly presented essays will be penalised and in some cases we may ask students to rewrite their dissertation.
- You must not rely on Microsoft grammar and spell checker to proofread for you – it isn't fool proof.

SSC4- plagiarism

- Check for plagiarism yourself if you are uncertain (turnitin will pick up everything; essays from previous years, from other universities, your own work, you name it - it will find it).
- Problems which you feel cannot be dealt with by your tutor – contact the student office in the first instance

Sources of information

- Systematic reviews - Via Cochrane Library
- Other meta-analyses
- Reviews - Pub Med limited to reviews
- Large well run trials or studies
- QMUL Library services <http://www.library.qmul.ac.uk/medicine/referencing.htm>
- ONS publications
- Pub Med info & handouts
- Electronic journals
- Other library's holdings
- Plagiarism advice: <http://www.library.qmul.ac.uk/medicine/plagiarism.htm>
- Revision of epidemiology/statistics and aspects of public health: www.mds.qmw.ac.uk/wolfson/epm/students
- Human Sciences & Public Health Yrs 1 &2 ; Epidemiology and Public Health Yr 3
- Also: Medical Sciences (2009). Naish, Revest, Syndercombe Court (Eds) chapter 7. Epidemiology: science for the art of medicine. Saunders, Edinburgh. ISBN: 978 0 702 026 799 .
- Other Libraries (for photocopies)
- Univ of London college libraries (student ID)
- British Library (Euston Road)

Final Advice

- Backup, backup, backup - use the cloud
- It is your responsibility to ensure that assessments are completed and submitted on time.
- Turnitin
- Any problems, don't sit on it – come and ask.
- Meet and discuss the topic with your tutor as soon as possible
- Plan and write an outline for your dissertation; run it past your tutor

Final Advice

- Have headings as signposts for the reader (and yourself)
- Tables and figures also tell a story, and breaks up dense text, but make sure you cite them in the text.
- Number and label tables and figures separately, and cite the source unless you drew them yourself from your own analysis. Don't forget figure legends.
- Show what you have learned, and what you understood.

Final Advice

- Synthesise the information (lists are boring).
- Discuss, debate (if necessary) from your viewpoint.
- Develop aspects that are interesting for you.
- THINK.
- Write an interesting conclusion.
- Manage your time effectively; complete your draft essay by Easter if possible, leaving time for feedback from your tutor, for editing and reediting (tutors are only required to review one draft).

ENJOY YOUR SSC ASSIGNMENTS

Questions

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