

The History of Medical Specialisation, 1700-1950

Credits: 10

Assessment: 1 x 3000 word essay

In the 1700s only a few brave medical practitioners and a number of quacks dared define themselves by their medical specialisms. Remarkably, by the second decade of the twentieth century, nearly one half of British doctors declared themselves specialists. This module aims to explore this transformation in medicine over the last three centuries. Beginning in an era in which specialisation in medicine was regarded with scepticism, this course will examine the gradual emergence of specialisms, concentrating on five particular branches of modern medicine: obstetrics, paediatrics, ophthalmology, psychiatry and general practice. Besides examining the role of medical pioneers in each field, the module aims to discuss specialisation as a form of knowledge production. Given the specialists' close links with clinical practice, it will examine the emergence of the institutions, including hospitals, medical schools and professional organisations, which fostered and helped dramatically to increase specialisation in medicine during the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries.

[Study here and find out why the University of Birmingham was awarded The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2013-14 \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2013/09/20-sep-Birmingham-announced-as-University-of-the-Year.aspx)

Entry requirements

International students:

Depending on your chosen course of study, you may also be interested in the Birmingham Foundation Academy, a specially structured programme for international students whose qualifications are not accepted for direct entry to UK universities. Further details can be found on the **[foundation academy web pages](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx)** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/students/foundation-academy/Pathways/index.aspx>).