

Memo: Acting Up to Consultant within School of Pathology

This is a general document to outline some procedures and practicalities for utilising the acting-up protocol. This is intended to be complementary to the Gold Guide and to Local guidance produced by HEE, working across Yorkshire & the Humber:

https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/learner_support/policies/training_guidance

Basic Principles

The School of Pathology endorses acting-up as a worthy training opportunity, and an excellent chance for senior trainees to fill a genuine consultant level role.

It is essential that the TPD has oversight of the process, both from a programme management perspective, and also in ensuring that the acting-up is suitable for the individuals training needs, and part of their approved curriculum. At the current time acting-up is specifically approved in the following curricular: General Histopathology (2015), Medical Microbiology (2014) and Infectious Diseases (2014). All other specialties should consult with their SAC to clarify any individual requests.

Acting-up should be made available to all eligible trainees on an equitable basis.

Acting-up should be for a maximum of three months whole time equivalent.

Trainees cannot act-up past their CCT date.

Acting-up should only be undertaken on GMC approved training sites if to count towards CCT.

Trainees require local clinical supervision and ongoing educational supervision by accredited trainers. They will be expected to continue progress through the latter stages of the curriculum, and subject to normal appraisal and assessment process, to include ARCP.

Trainees should normally be released to attend for scheduled educational events, where relevant to their personal development plan.

There needs to be a genuine consultant level vacancy for the trainee to fill, and the employing Trust must agree to cover 100% salary costs. Such rates are subject to individual negotiation, typically at Point 1 of the consultant scale. New or previously unfilled posts cannot be utilised (local policy).

Local HEE policy indicates that trainees may not act-up into a post to which they have been appointed through an AAC. The reason for this is that it may be construed as a proleptic appointment. If a trainee is appointed to a consultant post during their acting-up position then the period of acting-up should be allowed to run its agreed course.

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Out of region opportunities would tend to be considered as OOP applications.

Operation of Acting-up within School of Pathology

There have been a number of instances whereby acting-up has been arranged between a trust and an individual trainee without full knowledge of the training programme and the TPDs. Such applications are signed of by the Head of School and then Associate/Deputy Dean and potentially bypass the TPD all together. To assist in providing a more robust and equitable process the following guide should be adhered to:

- The STC should identify the range of acting-up opportunities available within the region on a regular and ongoing basis. This can be conducted remotely, and need not be limited to formal meetings.
- The TPDs should match the available opportunities to the cohort of trainees who are potentially eligible for acting-up responsibility.
- The TPDs will then oversee the matching process. If more than one trainee is seeking a particular placement then a pragmatic solution should be sought, to facilitate the optimal match and even share the opportunity if at all possible. If no agreement is reached then the final decision remains with the employing trust. Similarly if the employing trust is not happy with any proposed acting-up placement they may choose to decline.
- If an acting-up opportunity involves moving a trainee to another Trust then the consent of the “losing” Trust must be sought before the application is submitted, and recorded in writing.
- Once the opportunity has been agreed the application form should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the commencement date. It is essential that the form is only submitted to the Deanery offices once Sections A, C and D have been completed. Specifically Section D requires signature of an individual with budgetary authority.
- Prior to approving any acting-up application (Section C) the Head of School will contact the relevant TPD, to confirm such arrangements have been undertaken.
- Any significant deviations from this process should be discussed and documented at STC meetings.



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