

Application for Unpaid Leave to Take Time Out of Programme (OOP)

Doctors in training are required to obtain formal approval from the Postgraduate Dean (PGD) to take time out of a clinical training programme whilst retaining their national training number. Requests for OOP relate either to obtaining clinical training (OOPT), clinical experience (OOPE), or research (OOPR) in a different setting or a career break (OOPC). This would also include requests to undertake subspecialty training that is not part of the normal Training Programme.

In exceptional circumstances the Postgraduate Dean may consider requests for OOP that do not fall within these Guidelines.

1 General Principles

1.1 Doctors in training wishing to take time out of programme must have the written agreement of the Postgraduate Dean or nominated Deputy. The Postgraduate Dean can only consider requests that are submitted on Health Education England working across Yorkshire and the Humber (HEEYH) OOP application form, which has the support of the Training Programme Director and is accompanied by the relevant supporting documentation. Please note that HEEYH **will not** accept applications submitted on any other form.

1.2 Doctors in training should notify HEEYH and their Training Programme Director of any possible time out of programme **at least six months** in advance of the proposed start date.

1.3 Time out of programme will not normally be agreed until a trainee has been in a training programme for a least one year, unless at the time of appointment a deferred start date was agreed.

1.4 A trainee whose annual review of progress is deemed unsatisfactory or with unmet objectives identified at their ARCP or RITA will not normally be granted a period of OOP.

1.5 Doctors in training will retain their NTN during the period of OOP. However, where a trainee's CCT date falls within a period of OOP Doctors in training will be expected to resign their NTN.

1.6 Before requesting out of programme training or research (OOPT/R), Doctors in training must seek support of the application from the appropriate Royal College or Faculty. The College/Faculty should also indicate the length of time the OOPT/R should count towards CCT. If time can count towards the CCT date then the Postgraduate Dean will expect it to do so. Requests for OOPT that do not count towards CCT will not be considered. OOPR will be expected to count towards training where this is allowed in the relevant College curriculum. The trainee's CCT date will be reassessed on return to the programme in the light of educational progress and the time left in programme.

The General Medical Council (GMC) is the only body that can educationally approve OOPT/R to count towards the award of a CCT. HEEYH is responsible for submitting OOPT/R applications to the GMC for educational approval: The GMC will not accept applications from any other source, e.g. the trainee, College etc. Applications must be submitted to the GMC in advance of the OOPT/R as they **will not approve applications retrospectively**.

1.7 Doctors in training must comply with College regulations (e.g. RCA requirements that the last six months of training must be spent in programme).

1.8 Doctors in training must ensure that HEEYH has an up-to-date contact address and e-mail address throughout the period of OOP.

2 Types of Application

2.1 **OOPT** – clinically-based training that will be used towards the award of a CCT. All OOPT must have the GMC prospective approval. A clinically-based OOP placement will not normally exceed the period approved as counting towards CCT, usually up to a maximum of two years, i.e. will not normally result in a delay to the trainee's CCT date.

OOPE – clinically-based experience, which will not be used towards the award of a CCT. OOPE will normally be for one year in total, but may be extended for up to two years with the agreement of the PGD.

NOTE: If Doctors in training are undertaking clinically based placements they will be expected to apply for OOPT and not OOPE. If the application is for clinical experience a covering letter explaining why the out of programme is not to count should be submitted by the trainee; exceptional circumstances will be considered (e.g. work overseas in developing countries).

2.21 OOPR - research-based OOP. Time spent out of programme for research purposes can be recognised towards the award of CCT when the relevant curriculum includes such research as an optional element. This should be explored with the relevant College or Faculty.

Applications for OOPR must:

1. Not normally exceed three years (of which at least one year should count towards CCT, where this is allowed by the relevant College). **Note that Doctors in training in their final year of training will not normally be granted OOPR, which would result in a delay to their CCT.**
2. Have secured ethics approval and funding for the project or be in the process of doing so.
3. Enable the trainee to submit for an appropriate higher qualification, where 2-3 years are requested

4. Be eligible for publication in periodicals and journals and/or be presented at an accredited educational meeting.

2.22 Integrated Academic Trainees

Academic Clinical Fellows (ACF) on the integrated academic training (IAT) pathway are expected, following completion of their three year program to successfully submit a Research Grant application and thereby gain a higher degree (e.g. PhD). This period of work usually requires 3 years as OOPR. There are Research Fellow opportunities which may be supported within the ACF post of no more than 12 months, which facilitate development of research training and the grant application process. Exceptionally these additional periods of OOPR may be approved.

ACF's should apply for OOPR **in advance** of confirmation of Research Grant acceptance to ensure sufficient notice is given for the OOPR application to be processed.

Doctors in training, not on the IAT pathway, may, with the support of their Training Programme Director also be eligible for OOPR.

2.3 OOPC – career break from training. Requests for a career break will be considered sympathetically however there may be limiting factors within the specialty which will not allow the application to be approved. Applications will be considered on its individual merits and be prioritised on a needs basis. Career breaks will normally be limited to two years. If Doctors in training wish to take longer they will be expected to relinquish their NTN and reapply in open competition in order to return to the specialty.

3 Annual Review

3.1 All OOP will be subject to an annual review. Doctors in training will be required to return an annual out of programme report for consideration of a review panel. If the OOP is based over-seas then the trainee will not be expected to return for an assessment however documents should still be submitted as stated below.

- o Clinical-based OOP – normal assessment forms for their specialty to be completed and accompanied by a progress report from clinical and educational supervisors.
- o Research-based OOP – report on progress of Research towards the stated objectives from the Research Supervisor.

4 Application Process

4.1 OOP application forms can be obtained from www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk (Please note there is a separate form for OOPR)

4.2 Doctors in training must complete Sections A and B of the OOP application form and forward it together with the supporting documentation detailed in Section B to the Training Programme Director with whom they should have already discussed the proposal.

4.3 The Training Programme Director completes Section C and forwards the form and accompanying documentation to the appropriate Programme Support Team at HEEYH.

4.4 Doctors in training will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.

4.5 To facilitate submission to the Royal College of Physicians, JRCPTB have requested that their OOP application form is sent either directly to the college or with the HEEYH OOP form.

5 Funding/Contractual Issues

5.1 Doctors in training whose OOP applications are successful will normally be granted unpaid leave for the period of the OOP.

5.2 Doctors in training must ensure that the organisation/authority offering the OOP post issues a statement of terms and conditions of service.

5.3 It is a trainee's responsibility to contact their current employer to establish how the OOP will affect their:

- Continuous employment
- Incremental progression
- Maternity leave entitlement
- Employer's contributions to superannuation
- Any other employment issue.

5.4 Doctors in training taking career breaks should get advice from their employers on all statutory rights in relation to career breaks.

5.5 Doctors in training on OOP are not eligible to apply for funded study leave from the specialty study leave budget. Any study leave taken during the period of OOP must be funded either by the trainee or the organisation/authority hosting the research/clinical experience post.

5.6 Doctors in training on OOP are not eligible to receive expenses from the HEEYH budget. It is the responsibility of the host organisation/authority offering the post to meet any expenses associated with it.

6 Changes to approved applications

6.1 Doctors in training wishing to extend or curtail periods of OOP must have the approval of the Postgraduate Dean.

6.2 Doctors in training must make a formal application at least three months in advance of their currently approved end date.

6.3 The Postgraduate Dean can only consider requests submitted on the appropriate form and accompanied by a letter outlining the reason(s) for the extension/curtailment, and have the support of the Clinical/Research Supervisor and Programme Director.

6.4 If the application is to extend OOP (T or R) the trainee will be expected to explore with the appropriate College Advisor the extent to which the extended time out can count towards CCT

6.5 If time can count towards CCT then the Postgraduate Dean will expect it to do so. Exceptions to this will be where:

- The extension is for no more than one month
- The extension is due to prolonged period of illness during OOP
- The extension is due to maternity leave taken during OOP
- Or where the full allocation for time counting has already been granted.

6.6 The revised period of absence will be approved under the terms stated in items 1, 2, 3 and 5.

7 Application Process (Change to approved periods of OOP)

7.1 Application forms can be obtained from the HEEYH Website at:
<http://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/pgmde/policies/>

7.2 Doctors in training should discuss their application in advance with their Clinical or Research Supervisor and Training Programme Director.

7.3 Doctors in training must complete Sections A and B of the OOP application form and forward it together with the supporting documentation detailed in Section B to the Training Programme Director.

7.4 The Training Programme Director completes Section C and forwards the form and accompanying documentation to the relevant Programme Support Team at HEEYH

7.5 Doctors in training will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application.