

Period of Grace Standard Operating Procedure

Yorkshire and the Humber Deanery

Workforce Training and Education, Yorkshire and Humber, NHS England





Name of Document	Period of Grace
Category	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) – Trainee management
Purpose	This document is one of a suite of Standard Operating Procedures to support the management of trainees across Yorkshire and the Humber. This SOP is aligned to the principles of ‘A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK’ (The Gold Guide) and ‘A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Dental Core and Specialty Training’ (The Dental Gold Guide). Please refer to the most recent versions.
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Document Author/Reviewer	Hannah Glew, Programme Support Manager

Version	Date	Author/Reviewer	Notes Reason for Change, what has changed, etc
1	September 2013	Jon Hossain	New guideline
2	September 2014	Jon Hossain	Amendments made in line with revision of the Gold Guide
3	December 2015	Jon Hossain	New guidance on intent form
4	March 2016	Jill Hanson	Amended in line with new HEE branding guidelines
5	January 2024	Hannah Glew	Rebranded to NHS England. Updated in line with updated National SOP.

Document Status

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version posted on the SharePoint site is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled.

This document is not intended to be interpreted as a policy statement. This is a local guidance document for faculty and staff in the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery to enable consistency of application; it is recognised there may be exceptional circumstances when deviation from this guidance may be required.



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1. Introduction

This document aims to set a framework for management of “period of grace” after the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) or Certificate of Eligibility for Specialist Registration via the Combined Programme (CESR-CP), in specialty training in the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery.

This document is subject to change resulting from national decisions or guidance.

General practice training is excluded.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- Gold Guide 9th Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK.
- Dental Gold Guide 4th Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Dental Core and Specialty Training in the UK.
- Yorkshire and Humber Deanery 2024: Acting Up as a Consultant Standard Operating Procedure.

The Gold Guide (2022 9th edition) makes no reference to a period of grace after CCT/CESR(CP).

2. The Purpose of a Period of Grace

Doctors and dentists in postgraduate training (PGDiTs) are eligible to apply for consultant posts up to six months before their anticipated CCT/CESR-CP date. Not all PGDiTs are able to do this or are successful in their applications.

The Period of Grace allows PGDiTs who have completed their training to continue in the Specialty Registrar grade for a time limited period, whilst they find employment, usually in a consultant level post. The PGDiT is no longer considered to be in training but is in post for the purposes of service.

Once a PGDiT has accepted a Consultant post or Locum Consultant post, they must resign from their training programme with effect from either their CCT/CESR(CP) date or following the appropriate period of notice (See Termination below for full details). In doing so their National Training Number (NTN) is relinquished and the right to a Period of Grace is given up. There is no option to return to training after this.

Please see Appendix A: Period of Grace Flow Chart.

3. Duration of Period of Grace

The usual duration of Period of Grace is **six calendar months**. There is no pro-rata modification for less than full time working. The Period of Grace will start on the date following the CCT/CESR(CP) date, regardless of whether an application has formally been submitted.

An extension to a period of grace is typically not available. In exceptional cases the Postgraduate Dean may agree to extend this for up to a **maximum of twelve months**. To do this the PGDiTs must have support from their Training Programme Director (TPD). The request should be made in writing to the Postgraduate Dean within the normal timeframe for requesting a period of grace.

Extensions will be considered when:

- Active attempts have been made to apply for posts in that speciality with no geographical restrictions.
- There are no available locum posts.
- There is a service need.
- The TPD supports the extension.

Lack of availability of suitable Consultant posts within the PGDiT's specialty is not considered to be exceptional.

4. Requesting a Period of Grace

PGDiTs are required to notify the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery of their intent to take up a Period of Grace usually a **minimum of six months** prior to the date of CCT/CESR-CP.

PGDiTs should have discussions with their TPD prior to the mid-point of their final training year to support their decision as to whether a Period of Grace will be required.

If the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery are not notified of the intention to take a Period of Grace, the TPD will not be able to arrange this. The PGDiT's NTN will subsequently be relinquished at CCT/CESR-CP.

If a Period of Grace is applied for with less than six months' notice, the PGDiTs should include a covering letter with their Period of Grace Intent Form detailing the reasons for the late submission.

5. Confirmation of a Period of Grace

Once notification of intent been received within the programme, the TPD will work to accommodate the requests within available posts.

It is not possible to guarantee the availability of a post for a PGDiTs to complete a Period of Grace. All posts are subject to availability within the training programme.

PGDiTs will receive the offer of a Period of Grace **no later than 14 weeks prior to the date of their CCT/CESR-CP**. PGDiTs will have two weeks in which to accept or decline the post.

If the post is accepted by the PGDiTs, they will be expected to work from the expected CCT/CESR-CP date to the end of the agreed timeframe, normally six months. If the PGDiTs opts to leave the Period of Grace early, they will be expected to work the agreed normal notice period of three months from date of resignation.

If the post is declined, the PGDiTs will relinquish their NTN at the expected CCT/CESR(CP) date. The PGDiTs will give up the right to a Period of Grace.

If a PGDiT is issued an Outcome 3 at ARCP, their Period of Grace rights are reset.

6. Commencing a Period Grace

PGDiTs must be in programme on their CCT/CESR-CP date and have not relinquished their NTN to be eligible for the Period of Grace. PGDiTs can only commence the placement if they have been recommended to award a CCT/CESR-CP by ARCP Outcome 6.

The Period of Grace commences from the date of the recommendation for CCT/or CCT via CESR-CP indicated on the ARCP Outcome 6 form.

It is not possible to complete a Period of Grace at the end of a Core Training Programme to bridge any gaps before the commencement of a Higher Specialty Training Programme.

7. Parental Leave

Parental Leave (e.g. maternity, paternity, adoption, etc) taken during the Period of Grace will be subject to local employment terms and conditions.

If a PGDiT takes statutory leave during the Period of Grace, the period is suspended on the date the statutory leave starts. A new Period of Grace Intent Form would need to be submitted for the remaining time (maximum six months' total time inclusive of time used prior to statutory leave and time following return from statutory leave) to request continuation of the Period of Grace on return from leave.

8. Placement, Location and Suitability

The Period of Grace is offered at the discretion of the relevant specialty school and local education provider (e.g. Trust or Dental Practice). Placements are subject to the availability of posts in the programme and the service needs of providers within the region.

The placement should not be to the detriment of current PGDiTs on the training programme. A specific location or sub-specialty attachment may not be possible.

The Period of Grace placement will not necessarily be in the same provider as the final training placement.

9. Employment Rights

PGDiTs employed in a Period of Grace post must be employed under the 2016 terms and conditions of service and have access to all the provisions of the TCS, except for those relating to education and training.

PGDiTs in their Period of Grace are not able to avail themselves of the opportunities available to those still within training (e.g. Inter-Deanery Transfer, Out of Programme, study leave, etc).

PGDiTs in the Period of Grace will not be expected to undertake research or other training orientated sessions except as explicitly agreed with the relevant specialty school.

PGDiTs will not be eligible for funded study leave as this is for meeting CCT requirements. However, they can receive time for ensuring revalidation requirements are met.

PGDiTs in a Period of Grace are entitled to statutory leave i.e., annual leave, and sick leave according to employer's policies. They should also attend departmental education sessions as appropriate.

10. Termination of Period of Grace

Once a PGDiT has accepted the offer of a post for a Period of Grace, three months' notice starting from expected date of CCT/CESR-CP is normally required to terminate the placement. This is to ensure that the employer is given adequate time to make provision for service need and is in line with NHS Employers' Junior Doctors Terms and Conditions for StR level doctors in training.

If a PGDiT has already started the Period of Grace, should they wish to leave the post prior to the agreed end date, a letter of resignation is required to the employer, provider and the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery. The PGDiT will be required to work the usual notice period (normally three months).

If a PGDiT chooses not to accept a Period of Grace, they will relinquish their NTN number on the date of CCT/CESR-CP. They are not required to follow a resignation procedure. Their training post will come to an end at the expected CCT/CESR-CP date subject to satisfactory completion of the training programme.

11. Revalidation

Revalidation only applies to Postgraduate Doctors in Training. During the Period of Grace, the Postgraduate Dean will remain the doctor's Responsible Officer. This will be the case until the end of the period of grace or until the doctor relinquishes their NTN.

12. Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act, the need for public bodies in England to undertake or publish an equality impact assessment of their policies, practices and decisions was removed in April 2011 when the 'single equality duty' was introduced. Public bodies must still give "due regard" to the need to avoid discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all protected groups when making policy decisions and are required to publish information showing how they are complying with this duty.

13. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

This Operational Guidance will be reviewed in accordance with updated or new guidance published by COPMeD, COPDEND, NHS England, the General Medical Council, the General Dental Council, or any other organisation as applicable. New iterations of this guidance will be ratified by the Postgraduate Dean's Senior Team within the Yorkshire and Humber Deanery.



Appendix A: Period of Grace Process Flow Chart

