

GUIDANCE FOR TRAINEES APPLYING FOR TIME OUT OF PROGRAMME (OOP) or Acting Up as a Consultant (AUC)

1. Introduction – Who does this guidance apply to?

Health Education England London and Kent Surrey and Sussex recognise that trainees may wish to take a period Out of Programme (OOP) for one of a number of reasons. They may also wish to make an application to act up as a consultant (AUC). These can be categorised as follows:

1. Time out of programme for approved clinical training in a post which already has prospective approval from the GMC (Out of Programme Training - OOPT)
2. Time out of programme for clinical experience in a post which will not count towards the award of a CCT (Out of Programme Experience - OOPE)
3. Time out of programme for research (Out of Programme Research - OOPR)
4. Time out of programme for career breaks (Out of Programme Career - OOPC)
5. Time out of programme pause (Out of Programme Pause - OOPP)
6. Acting up As a Consultant (AUC)

Full details of out of programme guidance can be found in the following guides:

Specialty training – [The Gold Guide](#)

Foundation training – [Guide for Foundation training](#)

Dental training – [Dental Gold Guide](#)

[OOP FAQs](#)

This guidance should be read before an application is submitted to the Healthcare Education Team via our [online form](#). This in turn will help to minimise the likelihood of an application being returned as incomplete or rejected.

2. General Principles for all applicants

It is important for prospective applicants to take in to account the following principles before making an application for time OOP or AUC

- A. Trainees requesting OOP must apply via the online support portal at least 6 months prior to the projected start date of their OOP. Trainees must discuss their request with their Educational Supervisors / Training Programme Director and ask them to complete the OOP sign off form to support their application.

Trainees requesting a period of acting up must apply via the online portal at least 16 weeks before the intended start date of their AUC.

The application form can be found on the PGMDE support portal and must be submitted with all applications.

Trainees should also contact the HR and Pensions Departments at their Trust when considering time OOP/AUC. This is important to clarify the implications for their continuity of NHS service and any possible effect on maintaining their license to practice during the proposed period OOP/AUC.

- B. Trainees will not normally be allowed to take time OOP in the final year of training other than in exceptional circumstances. Any such applications must be discussed with the Head of School.

OOPT / OOPR / OOPP requests (may count towards CCT where prospective GMC approval is obtained in the case of OOPT/OOPR) the following documentation must be returned to the Healthcare Education Team:

- OOPT: attach details of your proposed training for which GMC prospective approval will be required if the training does not already have GMC approval (e.g. if it is part of a recognised training programme in a different region it will already be recognised training). For on-going OOP this document should accompany the assessment documentation for ARCP.
- OOPR: attach your outline research proposal to this document and include the name/location of your research supervisor. For on-going OOP a report from the research supervisor needs to be attached to this document for the ARCP. Please be aware that you are not permitted to take time out of programme for research in excess of 3 years unless in highly exceptional circumstances with prospective permission from my Head of School and HEE
- OOPP: Upload the OOPP supplementary information form. Trainees may retain their training number while undertaking an OOPP opportunity as long as the OOPP has been agreed in advance by the Postgraduate Dean and trainees continue to satisfy the requirement for annual review, including revalidation.

C. For OOPE / OOPC requests (cannot count towards CCT) the following documentation must be returned to the Operations Department of HESL:

- OOPE: describe the clinical experience you are planning to undertake (e.g. overseas posting with a voluntary organisation). For on-going OOP, a short report from your supervisor confirming that you are still undertaking clinical experience should accompany this for the ARCP.
- OOPC: Provide a brief outline for your reasons for requesting a career break whilst retaining your training number. Please note that breaks longer than 12 months will need to be discussed with your PG Dean.

- D. For OOPT / OOPR applications, once the above documentation has been received and reviewed an application will be made by the Healthcare Education Team for prospective GMC approval where the Head of Specialty/ Dean is willing to endorse the application. Approval will be granted only once GMC approval has been received.
- E. A maximum of 3 years out of clinical training will be allowed. Extensions to this will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and will require further written approval from the Head of Specialty/Postgraduate Dean and STC Chair / Training Programme Director.
- F. You should check with your Royal College to determine whether the curriculum under which you are training permits any proposed OOPR to count towards training. Some Colleges do not make provision for this.
- G. Six months' notice must be given to the Training Programme Director of any changes to the anticipated date of return to the programme. Failure to do this may result in delayed re-entry to the programme or being allocated to another programme.
- H. The Healthcare Education Team must be given an up-to-date contact address and e-mail address throughout the duration of the OOP placement.

Acting up as a consultant

AUC: This must be completed in the Specialty you are currently training and permitted under the curriculum. (If not, you must submit a Royal College / JRCPTB / JCST letter of support at the time of application)

3. Supported Return To Training

All trainees going out on OOP are required to complete SupportTT paperwork as part of the application process. Details on the Supported Return to Training process can be found here:

- SuppoRTT Website - <https://london.hee.nhs.uk/professional-development/supported-return-training>

4. Making an application

- Application should all be made via the [online support portal](#).
- The SupportTT Pre-Absence Form can be found here:
<https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/home?trainee> and
https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/tickets/new?form_37 – Pre Absence Form
- Please ensure that you have uploaded all of the relevant information before submitting your form as failure to do so may impact on your application.

