# Flexible Portfolio Training (FPT)

## Guidance for postgraduate doctors in training

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## Overview

Flexible Portfolio Training (FPT) is a flexibility initiative that allows postgraduate doctors in training in England the ability to have one day per week (or 20% time equivalent) protected for personal and professional development in one of four pathways. The availability of FPT may vary by HEE local office and specialty.

## The Offer

FPT is designed to complement the clinical element of training. Portfolio projects undertaken during this time will contribute to personal and professional development, enable accessibility to different individuals and networks and bring wider benefits to the health system. Any doctor in training who undertakes FPT will work on a project agreed with the Dean/TPD and supervisor under one of the following pathways:

* [**Clinical Informatics Pathway**](https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/Comms/Digital/ETAV9qs3YgBOuX_ciaRiPOUBcRY-eLo8232cEd3CNn0-Eg?e=ODT3SD)
* [**Medical Education Pathway**](https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/Comms/Digital/EZi6wmGDo4FDotDm-Mc-MeoBeaEZ4m8Ec5ZfWGTYykg3Aw?e=4NKdPc)
* [**Quality Improvement Pathway**](https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/Comms/Digital/EQQhNzSszopNj0hdxZadUjkBnYB8Sc7P56FqcxkKTbeK2w?e=kDJhZQ) **(Clinical Service Improvement)**
* [**Research Pathway**](https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b:/g/Comms/Digital/EQDhFQVlsBNCvSJURSiRKtEB7vC5I4DTsYb1gWpIxoxPxA?e=8R2fRS)

Please click on each of these links for further information.

The pathways describe a structured framework of activities a doctor in training might sample and undertake developing a range of experiences and are not intended to be exhaustive in their implementation. Each pathway is mapped to the General Medical Council (GMC) *Generic professional capabilities framework* required of every doctor.

Doctors undertaking FPT may spend a minimum of one year on the pathway and may have the option to continue for the duration of specialty training (subject to satisfactory progress in your clinical training and agreement with your supervisor).

### Project

The project of a doctor in training will be bespoke to you. The pathway and the opportunities available through your supervisor and employer will vary. However, during the pilot phase of this work the RCP provided examples of possible projects which have been summarised below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Pathway | Example projects |
| Medical Education | Plan, deliver and facilitate grand rounds; Reform the doctor in training induction programme; Develop and deliver alternative training such as simulation; Develop a local mentoring programme; Research, design and facilitate interdisciplinary learning opportunities locally; Design and develop a PACES teaching programme; Design and deliver sessions on ethics, professionalism and wellbeing; Review types of work-place based assessments in terms of reliability, validity and educational impact; Identify learning needs of staff and students and gaps in provision to develop new resources/opportunities; Evaluation the impact of new curriculum such as IMT; Develop educational resources for clinicians in training or patients to be used remotely; or Contribute to the bank of educational content and scenarios for undergraduate exams. |
| Quality Improvement (Service Improvement | Benchmark current service performance in the speciality against best practice such as NICE guidance; Participate in national audits/QI programmes; Improve weekend discharge; Improve hospital at-night handover or similar processes; Establish ambulatory care and acute hospital at home pathways; Redesign care pathways; Reform induction processes; Improve ward round standards; Reduce wastage in testing; Scope and facilitate single doctor clerking; Improving on call working patterns for doctors in training; or Prepare a business case to improve or expand a service. |
| Clinical Informatics | Write and present a policy around procuring new clinical systems; Develop analysis and reports of data held in electronic health records for personal or department use; Survey clinicians’ use of messaging services in clinical contexts and lead on implementing an acceptable alternative; Investigate outpatient DNA rates and implement text reminders or other interactive solution; Redesign a referral system or discharge letter record if current process ineffective; Lead on digitising or improving a treatment pathway on existing electronic patient record system; Implement an electronic weekend handover system; Design a new intelligence dashboard e.g. for service performance and patient flow; Survey patients acceptability of apps, wearables and telemedieine; Creating information leaflets or consent forms; Create a patient information video or similar to improve digital literacy; or Scope the need for and implementation of video consultation in an outpatient service.  In the North East, HEE has worked with Newcastle University to offer a CPD programme in health informatics to form the protected development time. |
| Research | Write an appraisal of a research paper or topic; Write an evidence-based review of a clinical subject; Design a consent form, participant sheet and study protocol; Write a scientific abstract or paper for presentation or publication; Perform a clinical audit; Perform a thematic analysis of qualitative data from either a focus group or interviews; or participate in or help develop doctor in training research collaboratives regionally/nationally. |

Further information on this and resources to support some projects can be found on the HEE website: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/flexible-portfolio-training>

### Supervisors

Doctors in training undertaking FPT will have a portfolio/FPT supervisor alongside the educational supervisor.

### How to apply

FPT is managed by your local HEE office/Deanery. Please contact your local office in the first instance. If you have any other queries, please email [flexibleportfoliotraining@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:flexibleportfoliotraining@hee.nhs.uk).

Please visit the website for further information: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/flexible-portfolio-training>

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Q: Why was FPT introduced?

A: FPT aims to improve the morale and wellbeing of doctors in training and respond to the desire to train more flexibly. It allows these doctors to aide their personal and professional development alongside clinical duties. It also provides benefits to the system, with meaningful projects being undertaken.

### Q: Is this open to all specialties and training grades?

A: Yes (barring Foundation). The application process is open to all postgraduate specialties and grades, however the feasibility and availability of FPT posts and the application process may vary by specialty and local office. You can contact your local HEE office and School to see where FPT is available.

### Q: Will FPT increase the length of training?

A: FPT provides 20% (or equivalent) protected time and it is not expected to impact the length of training, however in some cases your training may be extended, depending on your individual progress and the decision of your ARCP panel. Progress through training is regularly monitored and FPT can be curtailed or paused if it is having a detrimental impact on gaining the required curricular capabilities..

### Q: How does FPT impact my on-call rota?

A: Doctors in training are still expected to do a full on-call rota alongside FPT. Any change in rota pattern may impact your pay and has to be agreed with the employer/Trust.

### Q: I want to undertake and inter-deanery transfer (IDT), will this impact my FPT?

A: Yes. FPT arrangements are made with the HEE Local Office and relevant employers, so a change in geography would mean that this would have to be discussed with your new Dean. Some offices my wish you to go through an application process to re-start in the new geography.

### Q: If I find I am not enjoying FPT, can I revert to standard training?

A: Any doctor in training undertaking FPT is able to withdraw as they wish, however sufficient notice (normally12 weeks) has to be given to the employer for any change of rota

### Q: If I struggle to get all my competencies met for my specialty, what should I do?

A: This will form part of your regular discussions with your FPT and educational supervisors, who will also be keeping track of this. Any doctor in training who is undertaking FPT is able to withdraw as they wish, however notice has to be given to the employer for any change of rota.

### Q: I am currently training, or have a desire to train, Less Than Full Time (LTFT). Will this impact FPT?

A: FPT is accessible to LTFT trainees. The pathway chosen will comprise as standard 0.2 full time equivalent (FTE). This means that the dedicated time for FPT will be adjusted based on the working/training LTFT status of the doctor in training.

### Q: I am going on extended leave (e.g. parental leave), what happens to FPT?

A: As with training, your FPT will be paused during this period.

### Q: How will FPT be assessed?

A: Doctors will be assessed by the supervisor at regular points to ensure that the FPT and associated project is being delivered as planned. A yearly report should be completed by your FPT supervisor to support your ARCP process and portfolio.

### Q: How is the protected time for FPT recognised?

A: There is no official marker to show the exact protected time provided/taken for FPT. Depending on the project, regular updates to your portfolio or to the supervisor may be required. You should also keep the supervisor up to date with your progress and if there are times where you were unable to access that protected time.

### Q: How long is FPT?

A: As a standard measure, the doctor in training will undertake FPT for 12 months. This may be extended or shortened as required and is dependent on satisfactory ARCP outcomes. Some doctors in training to date have undertaken FPT for multiple years.

### Q: What happens at ARCP?

A: Progress on FPT is reviewed at the ARCP following a report submitted by the doctor training and the FPT supervisor. Please contact your FPT supervisor for more information.

### Q: Where can I find out further information?

Please visit the website for further information on FPT: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/flexible-portfolio-training>