|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Document**  | **Acting Up as a Consultant**  |
| **Category**  | Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)**This SOP is only applicable to relevant programmes within Specialty Training.** |
| **Purpose**  | This document is one of a suite of Standard Operating Procedures to support the management of trainees across England. 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.This SOP does not apply to Dentistry trainees who are managed under a separate SOP. Within the SOP, whenever reference is made to the Postgraduate Dean, it refers to the NHS England English Dean/Postgraduate Dean or their nominated representative who will be responsible for managing the process on their behalf. Throughout the document, unless otherwise stated, the term ‘trainee’ refers to postgraduate doctors in training and also applies to public health trainees with a medical or non-medical qualification. This SOP is intended to be a guide to encourage consistency of practice across England. Due to the complex nature of training, there will be occasions where Postgraduate Deans will apply their discretion in enacting this SOP to take account of individual circumstances and varying local structures (e.g. Lead Employer).  English Deans are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), with a duty to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and ensure inclusive opportunities are available to all with regards to age, disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief in the design and delivery of all our services. English Deans aim to meet and exceed their statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 by adopting a continuous improvement approach.This suite of SOPs will be routinely screened against relevant Equality and Diversity documentation.  |
| **Authorised by**  | Health Education England Deans (HEEDs), now English Deans |
| **Date Authorised**  | 27/06/2017  |
| **Implementation Date (current version)** | 02/08/2023 |
| **Next Review Date**  | SOP to be reviewed in line with any future Gold Guide revisions, or every 12 months, whichever comes first.  |
| **Document Author**  | English Deans and Senior Managers Group (formerly HEED & HEED Senior Managers Group) |
|  **Version**  | **Date**  | **Author**  | **Notes** Reason for Change, what has changed, etc  |
| 1  | 26/06/2017  | HEED  | Document signed off at HEED  |
| 2 | 22/06/2018 | HEED | Document signed off at HEED |
| 3 | 17/09/2019 | HEED | Document signed off at HEED |
| 4 | 28/04/2021 | HEED  | Document signed off at HEED |
| 5 | 11/10/2022 | HEED  | Document signed off at HEED |
| 6 | 19/07/2023 | HEED | Document signed off at PGMDE Operational Oversight Group |

|  |
| --- |
| Related Documents * *Gold Guide 9th Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK -* [https://www.copmed.org.uk/gold-guide/gold-guide-9th-edition](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/RvNQCwKv9ig579NSViV9S?domain=copmed.org.uk)
 |

#  Background

Trainees who are within one year of their anticipated completion of training (CCT) date are eligible to ‘Act Up’ as consultants via Out of Programme (OOP), for a fixed-term period of a maximum of three months. For LTFT trainees, the period of acting up may be pro rata of the three months. “Acting up” provides trainees with the experience of navigating the transition from trainee to consultant, whilst maintaining the supervision associated with being in training.

Reference is made to acting up within ‘The Gold Guide 9th Edition: A Reference Guide to Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK (3.160)’, which states,

*“Trainees may be able to take OOP to act up as a consultant and may be able to credit this time towards a CCT if it is explicitly allowed by the College/Faculty. This would normally be undertaken in the final year of training. Trainees acting up as consultants will need to have appropriate supervision in place. If the experience afforded by this post is in a location already approved for training in the relevant specialty by the* *GMC, additional prospective approval for* *OOPT is not required from the GMC. If acting up as a consultant is undertaken in another location, prospective approval will only be necessary if the acting up placement is relevant and contributes to gaining the capabilities, knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the curriculum. In these circumstances, OOPT will normally be for a period of three months or pro rata for LTFT trainees. However, length of periods approved for acting up as a consultant may be specified in the relevant College/Faculty guidance. Specific provisions around acting up roles need to be adhered to.”*

# Eligibility, General Medical Council (GMC) and College/Faculty Guidance

1. Opportunities to act up are not available to all trainees and are only possible if the opportunity arises and an employing or host local education provider/Trust extends an invitation.
2. Trainees wishing to act up should normally be within one year of their anticipated completion of training.
3. Trainees acting up as consultants will need to have appropriate named supervision arrangements in place at all times, including on call work. Approval will only be considered if the acting up placement is relevant to gaining competences, knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the curriculum. Trainees with unmet objectives, developmental (GG9: 4.89) ARCP outcomes (2, 10.1, 3 or 10.2) or outstanding capabilities are not normally eligible to apply to act up. Trainees will maintain their National Training Number (NTN) throughout the acting up opportunity and the Postgraduate Dean will remain the Responsible Officer for the purposes of revalidation.
4. The GMC and some Colleges/Faculties have guidance and/or additional requirements when applying for acting up to consultant posts. It is the responsibility of the individual trainee to check their respective curriculum, Royal College/Faculty and GMC guidance and fully comply with any requirements.

# Post Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) / Locum Arrangements

1. Trainees who are post CCT are not normally eligible to act up, but individuals could take up an arrangement as Locum Consultant. Although acting up often fulfils a genuine service need, it is not the same as being a Locum Consultant. Upon taking up a Locum Consultant post, trainees will be required to resign their National Training Number.
2. When in an acting up position, the term ‘acting up’ and not ‘locum’ must be applied.

# Approval Process

1. Before commencing an acting up position, trainees must formally apply and request approval. A sample application form is provided at Appendix 1. Trainees are responsible for arranging for the completion of Sections A, B, C and D, and for sending the completed form, along with evidence of support for the arrangement from the relevant local education provider(s) and/or local authority where relevant (including the funding element) to NHS England.
2. Recognition of the period of acting up is subject to conditions set by the Colleges/Faculties and the competences contained within their curricula. These conditions vary between colleges. It is therefore important that the trainee is aware of their own College guidance on acting up prior to applying.
3. Applications should normally reach the relevant NHS England local office a minimum of 16 weeks prior to the **proposed** start date of the acting up arrangement (in line with contractual notice periods) in order to meet Code of Practice requirements, however this notice period may be waived in exceptional circumstances and in agreement with the relevant Trust(s) and Postgraduate Dean. Trainees and Trusts are encouraged to have discussions as early as possible to facilitate the approval process, upon identification of acting up opportunities.
4. A trainee can only act up into a post within the UK which relates to their specialty Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT). If applying for an opportunity outside the UK, the trainee will need to consult the out of programme policy and submit an application, noting the GMC and College/Faculty requirements.

* 1. *Recognition of acting up when stated in the specialty curriculum*

If the specialty curriculum specifically references a period of acting up as a consultant, then no further College/Faculty or GMC approval will be required unless stated otherwise within the curriculum. In these situations, the period of acting up will automatically count towards training and will be undertaken in GMC approved training sites. The Training Programme Director must ensure that the post meets the requirements of the trainee’s developmental plan, and that appropriate supervision is provided.

* 1. *Recognition of acting up when not stated in the specialty curriculum*

If the specialty curriculum does not refer to a period of acting up as a consultant, then the subsequent acting up period will not be recognised as training by the relevant College/Faculty and GMC and therefore cannot be counted towards training time. In these situations, the trainee will need to consult the out of programme policy and apply for out of programme experience (OOPE). In these circumstances the subsequent OOPE application should be clearly marked as acting up.

1. A trainee will normally act up within the same NHS England local office area. In exceptional circumstances, a trainee may wish to act up in another region. Where the acting up post is in the same training programme in a different Local office/Deanery[[1]](#footnote-2), the usual out of programme approval process must be followed. GMC approval is not required in instances where trainees are acting up in approved training locations.
2. The opportunity to act up is not always available and is given on a case-by-case basis therefore there is no appeals process.

# Extensions

1. There may be some situations in which the Postgraduate Dean may exercise discretion (GG9:1.12) to extend the acting up offer, in order to aid patient care and ensure patient safety (e.g., pandemics or events of a catastrophic nature).

Appendix 1: Sample Application Form

# ACTING UP TO CONSULTANT: APPLICATION FORM

* *Trainees must read the Acting Up guidance available within their local NHS England office prior to completing and submitting this form*
* *Trainees must complete all sections of this form prior to submission to NHS England, including signatures of support, collecting written evidence, etc.*

## Section A: Trainee Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Surname  | Forename |
|   |   |
| Specialty  | GMC number  | Mobile No  |
|   |   |   |
| Current training post  |  |
|   |  |
| Address of current training post  |  |
|   |  |
| Current employer (if different to above)  |  |
|   |  |
| Current email address (for contact regarding the application)  |   |
| Email address for contact whilst acting up (if approved). **It is essential that you provide us with an email that will allow us to contact you whilst acting up.**  |   |
| Please confirm that you will be in your last year of training at commencement of the acting up post **(a)**  | Yes / No **(Please delete as appropriate)**  | Please confirm your CCT date  |  |
| Current ARCP outcome |  |

**(a) Applications without confirmation that trainees are in their final training year will be rejected.**

## Section B: About the planned acting up post

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Is acting up recognised in your specialty curriculum and will it take place within the region?  | Yes / No **(Please delete as appropriate)**  | **If you are unable to answer yes to all parts of this question, you should submit an OOPE application**  |
| Title of acting up post  |  |
| Proposed dates  |   | to  |   |
| Location of acting up (Full address)  |   |
| Employer during planned acting up |  |
| Funding arrangements of planned post |  |
| Supervising consultant whilst acting up  |   | Email  |   |
| Structure of planned acting up post (where possible a timetable should be provided)  |
|   |

**Section C: Trainee declaration**

## (Please tick boxes to show compliance)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I have discussed this application with my Educational Supervisor and Training Programme Director and they both support my application.**  |  |
| I have completed all relevant parts of the form and, to my knowledge, all information is correct. |   |
| I have adhered to all guidance and **provide evidence** **attached** that the local education provider/Trusts affected are aware and supportive of this acting up and proposed timescales (losing Trust, gaining Trust and employer where this is not the same).  |   |
| I provide evidence attached that the acting up local education provider/Trust will fully fund the acting up opportunity (email or letter from relevant authority i.e. DME or deputy). |   |
| I understand that I must not begin acting up until I have approval from NHS England.  |   |
| I am aware that I cannot act up without supervision being in place and I have inputted details of my supervisory arrangements in section B. |   |
| I provide evidence of College approval (where applicable). |   |
| I provide evidence of GMC approval (Where applicable). |   |
| Where you have been unable to tick any of the above boxes, please explain why in the field below. Failure to do this will result in your application form being returned.  |
|      |
| Trainee name  |   | Date  |   |
| Trainee Signature  |   |

**Section D: Training Programme Director Declaration**

## (Please tick boxes to show compliance)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I can confirm that the trainee is meeting all educational requirement, and this application is appropriate. I support the approval of this acting up period.**  |  |
| I can confirm that the relevant trust(s) are aware of and have endorsed the acting up post. **Please attach written evidence from the trust which will have been obtained by the trainee. Approval cannot be given without this**  |   |
| The trainee will remain in their current post until the application receives NHS England approval.  |   |
| Where you have been unable to tick any of the above boxes, please explain why in the field below.  |
|      |
| Training Programme Director name  |   | Date  |   |
| Training Programme Director Signature  |   |

## Section E: Postgraduate Dean (or nominated representative) Approval

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Is the acting up approved or declined?**  | **Approved** **Please see conditions on support section below and complete if relevant**  |  | **Declined** **Please explain reasons fully below**  |  |
| Are there any conditions on the approval? **This may be proposed dates to be changed to fit with rotational changeover. If none, please write n/a.**  |
|  |
| If you have declined the application, you must complete the section below giving full reasons for your decision.  |
|  |
| Name of Postgraduate Dean  |   | Date  |   |
| Signature  |   |

 For Office Use Only

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **To be completed by NHS England Administration Team**  | **Yes / No**  | **Date**  |
| Complete application received  |  |  |
| Evidence of LEP/trust(s) agreement(s) provided  |  |  |
| Postgraduate Dean approval granted  |  |  |
| Trainee informed of outcome  |  |  |
| Details added to NHS England trainee data information systems (TIS) |  |  |
| Copy of approved form sent to: - * Trainee
* Losing Local Education Provider
* Gaining Local Education Provider (if different from the above)
* Employer (if different from the above)
* Training Programme Director
* Copy for Trainee File
 |  |  |

#

1. Terminology is subject to change but refers to the NHS England local office where training is delivered commonly referred to as “the deanery” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)