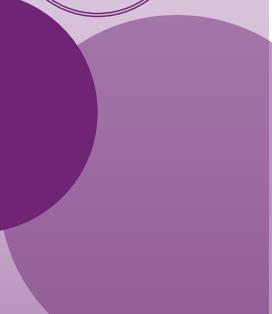
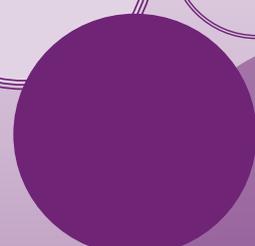
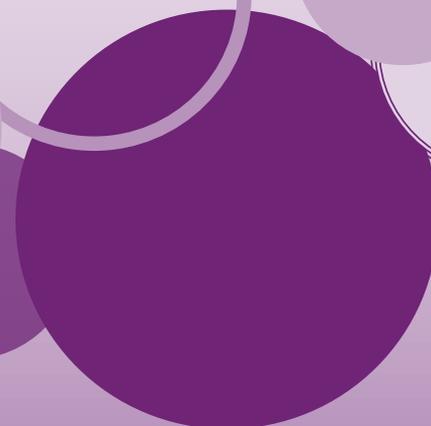
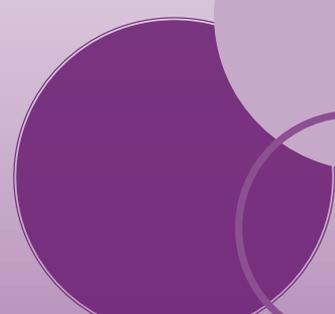
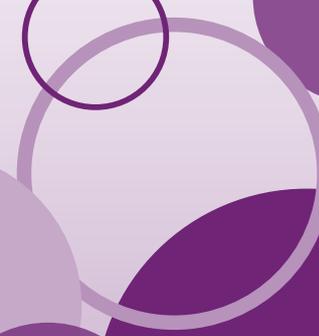
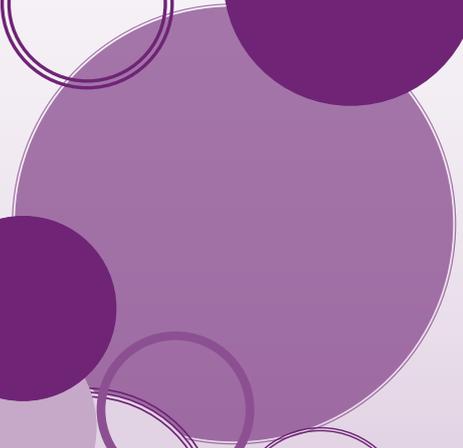
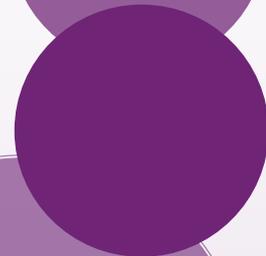
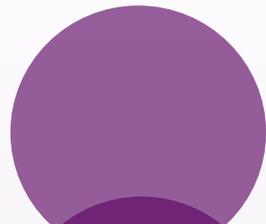
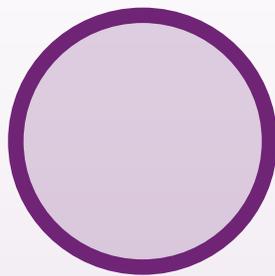
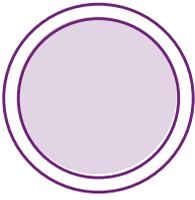




The Royal College of  
Emergency Medicine



# COVID-19 FAQs from trainees



## **FAQs from trainees compiled by EMTA and RCEM**

This is a very fast moving and challenging situation and it has to be accepted that some of the answers will change from the time this is written. Whilst we will endeavour to update this on a frequent basis we suggest that trainees liaise with their local Schools, review HEE, NES, NIMDTA and HEIW websites including:

<https://www.aomrc.org.uk/covid-19-education-and-training/>

[The HEE covid-19 webpage](#)

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/coronavirus-information-trainees>

**Trainees own School specific pages will also contain useful information:**

[East Midlands](#)

[East of England](#)

[London](#)

[North East](#)

[Peninsula](#)

[Severn](#)

[Thames Valley](#)

[Wessex](#)

[Yorkshire and the Humber](#)

[Northern Ireland](#)

[Scotland](#)

[Wales Deanery \(English\)](#)

[Wales Deanery \(Welsh\)](#)

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**Chair, Training Standards Committee**

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## **1. What if I want to/ am invited to return from my OOPT/ OOPE/ OOPR early?**

COVID 19 presents unique issues to staffing and this uncertain time may provide added challenges on top of those which accompany any return to training.

HEE wrote to OOPR trainees on the 18 March 2020 asking if they would agree to be seconded back to work. They have provided guidance on this together with those on other forms of OOP. Note at the time of writing this advice, this was an England only letter.

### **OOPR\***

If you are returning early from an OOPR please do not be concerned about any deadlines for submitting your academic work, as appropriate pauses or extensions will be made.

Please do speak to your research funder first about what approach you should take, but otherwise contact local HEE office/Deanery as soon as possible to say if you are willing to help, so that you can be factored into the regional contingency planning. Your TPD/ programme support will then need to confirm which Trust you will need to communicate with.

### **OOP**

All other trainees on an OOP, if you wish to return early then please contact your local office/Deanery as soon as possible to say that you are willing to help so that you can be factored into regional contingency planning. Your TPD/local programme support will then confirm arrangements for your return. Your CCTs will be recalculated accordingly.

If your OOP was overseas and you have returned to the UK, then you must notify your local office/Deanery as soon as possible as above.

Other information is available at

<https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/supporting-doctors-returning-training-after-time-out>

## **2. What about my OOPE plans for August 2020, can I put my paperwork in now?**

At present this is something HEE are discussing. It is expected the effects of this pandemic will likely be for months as will be the effect on the NHS.

## **3. What if I am on Maternity Leave, can I be pulled out early?**

No, Maternity leave is statutory, and trainees should not worry about being asked to return from maternity leave early. It is up to the trainee to decide when they wish to return from maternity leave. If they do wish to return earlier than originally planned, they should contact their TPD/ programme support and regional support\* office as soon as possible. We recommend in this case trainees should be placed in the same Trust from which they have taken maternity leave.

\*Supported Return to Training (SuppoRTT) is a funded initiative from Health Education England, which offers help to trainees who have been out of training for three or more months, to enable a safe, confident and structured return to work.

In the context of the NHS efforts against the COVID pandemic, HEE SuppoRTT National Team have put together some resource material for those who are returning now. This should be accessible via your local suppoRTT team. This includes signpost learning material/guidance during your return. Where some training events are being cancelled, there are materials online which you can access remotely. This can help you refresh your clinical knowledge. SuppoRTT teams in HEE Local Offices are also working on remote learning versions of their usual face-to-face courses.

Many Trusts in England now also have a suppoRTT champion who should also be able to help you with accessing refresher courses in the next few weeks.

Details of information from NES, NIMDTA and HEIW will be obtained and added above shortly.

**4. a) What if I am in sub-specialty training PEM/PHEM – can I be asked to return back to my parent specialty e.g. EM?**

The NHS needs to maintain services for patients during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak therefore if you are asked to move back into your parent specialty, you cannot refuse to move. This will be for no longer than is necessary and your EM training time should be adjusted accordingly. Please inform the RCEM Training Department on [training@rcem.ac.uk](mailto:training@rcem.ac.uk) of the changes so your CCT can be recalculated. Also contact your Head of School in advance to ensure your return to sub-specialty training can be planned.

**b) What if I am training in PEM as ST3/CT3 – can I be asked to return back to adults? If so, how will this impact on my ARCP?**

We recognise that many units will be experiencing a change in case mix during the pandemic, including diversion of workload originally done by EM direct to specialty. This is most likely to be pronounced for paediatric emergency medicine attendances. As a result of this, you may be asked to return to seeing adult emergency medicine patients. If this is the case, this should be for no longer than is necessary. In co located units you may still have the opportunity to continue to see some paediatric attendances. Every unit will be different and therefore the TSC Chair has asked Heads of School to take a pragmatic and flexible approach at ARCP. We would ask you to ensure you have either a life support course in paediatrics e.g. APLS or EPLS, or an assessment of your resuscitation skills in paediatrics as proxy evidence.

For run through trainees, future opportunities for development should be described in an individualised action plan for your next year of training at your ARCP.

For non-run through trainees at CT3, we would advise you to contact your TPD/Head of School early for advice.

## **5. What if I am LTFT can I be asked to return to full time?**

Currently there are no plans to make individuals who are currently working LTFT, work full time.

## **6. What will happen at ARCP?**

**Information source:** [Contingency planning for ARCPs – COVID-19 Outbreak, 19 March 2020 Letter](#)

The Gold Guide Reference Group will provide specific guidance for ARCPs during the pandemic period as to flexibility on using Outcomes 1 and 2 to accurately reflect satisfactory progress when competences are outstanding due to COVID-19. It would be expected that these competencies could be made up later in training without delaying progression to the next stage of training. Guidance for this is being sent to Heads of School and will be sent out on a rolling basis. More details are still under discussion.

The RCEM Training Standards Committee (TSC) will also be discussing this in the near future and will post updates shortly.

When arriving at an Outcome, ARCP panels will take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This will include:

- A more flexible approach to the available evidence, including Work Place Based Assessments
- A flexible approach to time-off due to illness or meeting isolation requirements. Any period of isolation will not disadvantage trainees

Individual concerns should be discussed with local Educational supervisors/TPDS/Heads of School.

## **7. What if I cannot do a course e.g. ALS/ATLS?**

There is a recognition that access to courses is currently difficult with an inability to complete courses during this period. The RCEM Training Standards Committee (TSC) are clear this will not affect the ARCP outcome. You may have some increased in situ training or alternatives which can be used as a proxy during the pandemic preparation which can be recorded as a reflection or in another format.

## **8. What if I cannot get my assessments done?**

We recognise there will be a significant reduction in opportunities for WPBAs and supervision meetings etc. Clearly the chief priorities for Trusts are clinical safety and patient/staff wellbeing.

We would hope that during this unprecedented period Heads of School will support the principle of a balanced and flexible approach. This would be one that allows, where appropriate, sign-off for placements that, in part at least, is based on global judgement and

generic acute experience gained rather than continuing to mandate separate evidence be presented for each and every curricular competence.

### **9. What about trying to meet up with my educational supervisor for an STR during this phase?**

A comprehensive educational supervisor's report will be required to provide the ARCP panel with as much information as possible to inform a decision about the ARCP outcome. We recognise this might not be easy. You may need to work out with your trainer how this is best done for example meeting via Skype, phone, frequent email updates etc.

The RCEM Training Standards Committee will be looking at the ARCP check list shortly for further information. The Intercollegiate ACCS Training (ICACCST) Committee will be making their own statement for trainees to access, please continue to monitor your emails.

### **10. When will we learn about August rotations?**

This is under discussion by HEE.

### **11. What are the new plans for examinations?**

#### **Information source: RCEM Examinations Subcommittee Meeting ,19 March 2020**

The RCEM Examinations Subcommittee, led by the Dean, will have monthly VC meetings to ensure all aspects of examinations including timings, numbers of trainees nearing CCT etc. come into consideration. At present RCEM is undertaking a scoping exercise to review options for delivering the FRCEM Final OSCE, SAQ and Critical Appraisal. We will ensure EMTA involvement as part of this and trainees are made aware in good time.

Progression within training that is exam success dependent will not be automatically halted but will be based on evidence of competence and capability provided there are no other issues, with the expectation that the exam is successfully completed at the next or a future sitting.

#### **Information source: [Exams for doctors in training Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, COPMED and GMC statement March 2020 document](#)**

Trainees in programmes will not be disadvantaged by missing exams because of circumstances out with their control related to COVID-19 and in particular:

- Payment for an exam that is postponed, or where the candidate has demonstrated the reason for inability to attend will carry over until the next sitting or be refunded

**12. With my study leave cancelled, will my travel costs be refunded if booked before cancelled travel restrictions?**

The answer is yes, however if asking for a refund from your HEE/ Deanery you will need to provide evidence that the expense was non-refundable. Please see the [HEE National Study Leave Guidance](#) for further details.