

# Quick Overview of the ‘Gold Guide’ for Christian Junior Doctors

Junior Doctors’ Committee  
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# Quick Overview of the 'Gold Guide' for Christian Junior Doctors

## What is the Gold Guide and who does it apply to?

The Gold Guide<sup>1</sup>, a 136 page document written in June 2007 and due for review in August 2009, sets out the arrangements for all training doctors appointed after August 2007 and therefore replaces the 'Orange Book' (Guide to Specialist Registrar Training) and the 'Green Book' (GP Registrar Scheme Vocational Training for General Medical Practice UK Guide). Training doctors appointed to specialist training programmes prior to August 2007 (SpRs, GPRs) may, after discussion with their educational supervisor and training programme director, switch to the new curricula. The new programme places more emphasis on competency unlike the old programme which concentrated more on 'time in service'.

## How will training now work?

Most training doctors will apply, in competition with other trainees, for speciality training during their F2 year. The intention is that most will be accommodated on a specialty training programme of their choice and be given a National Training Number (NTN) which they will use until they complete their training. Specialty training will take a number of years (total depends on specialty) during which time trainees will have an annual review at which the trainee must show evidence of their progress in training. The annual review which will include appraisal, assessment and annual planning, is overseen by the Annual Review Competence Panel (ARCP). Towards the end of specialty training, the trainee can apply to PMETB (Postgraduate Medical and Educational Training Board) for CCT (Certificate of Completion of Training). Provided the trainee has completed the training programme and has satisfied both the Postgraduate Dean and Royal College/Faculty that they have achieved all necessary training goals and have the necessary documentation in their portfolios, a CCT will be issued to the trainee allowing the trainee to join the Specialist/GP Register and therefore work as a Consultant/GP. It should be noted that at present those doctors undertaking *core* training (i.e. Medicine, Acute Care Common Stem, Surgery or Psychiatry) will be 'allocated', most likely competitively, into one of a number of designated follow-on specialties that share the core curriculum, and so there will most likely be further competition during training to obtain a ST3 or ST4 place (depending on the specialty) despite the training doctor holding a NTN. However this arrangement is currently being reviewed.

## What alternatives are there to specialty training?

Not everybody will be successful in applying for a place on the specialty training programme. However there are other positions, some of which can still be counted towards a CCT:

### FTSTA (Fixed Term Specialty Training Appointment)

These appointments, each lasting up to a maximum of a year, offer formal, approved specialty training which are usually (but not exclusively) taken in the early years of a

specialty curriculum. Although doctors aren't given a NTN and can't obtain a CCT with only FTSTAs, they can count time spent in a FTSTA towards CCT once selected for the relevant training programme. FTSTAs are useful to prepare training doctors for further specialty training or career grade posts, and allow training doctors to consider alternative specialty careers. However doctors are discouraged from more than 2 years of FTSTAs.

#### LAT/LAS (Locum Appointment for Training/Service)

Employers may appoint a LAT/LAS in order to fill gaps in training but this must be approved by the relevant Deanery. Doctors in LAT/LAS aren't given a NTN and therefore cannot use time spent in LAT/LAS towards a CCT (although they can count towards CESR/CEGPR-Certificate Confirming Eligibility for Specialist/GP Registration) unless they subsequently enter an approved run-through training programme. Each LAT must have both a clinical and educational supervisor while LAS are only required to have a clinical supervisor.

#### **What's the difference between CCT and CESR/CEGPR?**

Most doctors will apply for CCT once their training is complete. However some will not fulfil the criteria for CCT because of the type/mix of jobs completed by the applicant, but the applicant can still apply to be on the Specialist/GP Register through CESR. In order to do so the applicant must have completed training on a CESR training programme and also submitted the relevant portfolio and application form.

#### **PMETB, GMC, Deanery, etc – What do they all do?**

There are a number of bodies involved in specialty training which have different responsibilities:

PMETB: This body was set up in September 2005. One of its main responsibilities is to set and secure maintenance of standards for postgraduate medical education, which with the help of the Royal Colleges/Faculties involves setting curricula and approving specialty training courses, posts and programmes. The delivery of these standards is the responsibility of the 4 UK Health Departments who implement them through the work of the Postgraduate Deans and Royal College/Faculties. PMETB also confirms eligibility of doctors for inclusion on the Specialist and GP Registers which includes the awarding of CCT/CESR/CEGPR.

GMC: The GMC is the statutory authority for undergraduate medical education and, with respect to specialty training, also maintains the Specialist/GP Register.

Deanery: The Deanery is responsible for organising training programmes, recruiting trainees and for the ARCP.

*Please note that the above arrangements may be altered in the near future, following the recommendations of the Tooke report!*

#### **How might this affect Christian Junior Doctors?**

##### **i) Time Out**

In the past some Christian doctors have taken time out during specialist training to do short term Christian medical service overseas often as a 'trial run' for those thinking about long term mission work overseas but also as part of their Christian service to others. Not only can time spent doing medical work in a resource poor country allow one

to gain practical medical, surgical and management skills that aren't always afforded in the UK, it can give invaluable insight into another culture and allow us to mature spiritually as we learn to depend on God as we face unfamiliar problems in an unfamiliar setting. Indeed the Crisp Report<sup>2</sup> highlighted the importance of overseas experience and stated that 'the PMETB should work with the Department of Health, Royal Colleges, medical schools and others to facilitate overseas training and work experience'.

Once a doctor has made the decision to go overseas, deciding when to go can be a difficult decision, and the whole furore regarding MTAS has meant that many junior doctors are extremely reluctant to leave the training scheme in UK knowing the difficulties that may ensue on their return.

The Gold Guide<sup>1</sup> (please see Ref 6.91) covers this issue and has given guidance on how a training doctor can approach the possibility of taking time out of programme (OOP) during specialty training. Applicants may want to take time out for a number of reasons:

#### *OOPT: Out of Programme Training*

Doctors may want to apply for OOPT if they wish to undertake an approved training post in a different training programme (in UK) or to take up a post overseas which has prospective training approval. Prospective approval from the PMETB must be sought if the clinical training is to be used towards their CCT award. Training which is not given OOPT approval and therefore can't be used towards CCT may still be appropriate as OOPE. OOPT would usually be for a period of a year in total but may, in exceptional circumstances, be up to two years. CMF is aware of some overseas posts which are recognised training posts but up-to-date information should always be sought (please check CMF website [www.cmf.org.uk](http://www.cmf.org.uk), or email [healthserve@cmf.org.uk](mailto:healthserve@cmf.org.uk)).

#### *OOPE: Out of Programme Experience*

Application for OOPE should be made when trainees are considering using their time to undertake clinical experience which hasn't been approved by PMETB and won't contribute to the award of CCT. Overseas medical mission work, which does not have prospective training approval, would obviously fit into this category. The Gold Guide states that the purpose for OOPE may be to enhance clinical experience for the individual so that they may experience different working practices or gain specific experience in an area of practice. It also cites support for the recommendations of the Crisp Report. The request must be made using the appropriate OOP document (see appendix 1) which must be returned to the Deanery for agreement by the Postgraduate Dean on an annual basis while the trainee is OOPE. OOPEs will usually be for one year in total but can be extended for up to two years with the agreement of the Postgraduate Dean.

#### *OOPR: Out of Programme Research*

This is usually for applicants wishing to take time out to take a higher degree, e.g. PhD, MD or Masters, and will not usually exceed 3 year. When the relevant curriculum includes research, OOPR can be used towards CCT.

#### *OOPC: Out of Programme Career Break*

Trainees may want to take time out of training for a designated and agreed period of time to pursue other interests or take a career break to deal with a period of ill-health. OOPC may be taken once specialty training has started, but not normally taken until at least 1 year has been successfully completed. Priority for those applying for OOPC will be given to those with health issues, caring responsibilities (including childcare) and for those with a 'clearly identified life goal which can't be deferred'. OOPC is usually given for a period of up to two years but can be longer in exceptional circumstances. There is no guarantee that the return date will be within 6 months of the trainee indicating their wish to return to training.

Applications for taking time OOP aren't usually accepted until the applicant is in the training programme for at least a year except if the applicant is applying for the purposes of taking a higher degree. Applicants must give a minimum of 3 months notice and the request must be agreed by the Postgraduate Dean. PMETB approval is not needed if the time out is not intended to count towards CCT.

### Deferred Entry

The arrangements set out in the Gold Guide with regard to taking time out of one's career to pursue other interests (and so including mission work) are mainly aimed towards those taking time out DURING rather than BEFORE training. Deferred entry would only be granted on statutory grounds (e.g. maternity leave, sickness) or to complete research for a registered higher degree provided this had already been commenced or if the trainee had already been accepted at the time of being offered a clinical placement.

### **ii) What if I get married and need to move away from my deanery?**

#### Inter-deanery transfer

While trainees can move between deaneries there is no automatic entitlement and movement is made at the discretion of the Postgraduate Deans. Requests (see appendix 2) for well-founded personal reasons will give priority to disabled trainees, those with direct caring responsibilities (e.g. young children or family members/partners) or for those who transfer on grounds of ill health, and will only be considered where there has been a significant change in a trainee's situation since their original appointment. If a trainee wishes to move for any other reason or the request is not supported, trainees will have to compete for a place in specialty training programme in the receiving Deanery through the normal application process. Requests are normally only considered once the trainee has been present for at least a year in the training scheme except for GP trainees where trainees can request an interdeanery transfer before the first year is complete although the transfer won't happen until after the first year is complete. Requests are made directly between Postgraduate Deans.

### **Summary**

This brief overview aims to address some of the particular concerns raised by Christian junior doctors. Please refer to the original document (see reference 1) for full details. Trainees are always advised to plan well in advance any changes they are intending and to seek up-to-date information.

References:

1. Gold Guide. [www.mmc.nhs.uk](http://www.mmc.nhs.uk)
2. Crisp Report: Global health partnerships: the UK contribution to health in developing countries (2007).  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_065374](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_065374)

**Out of programme (OOP) Request and Annual Review Document  
(OOPT/OOPE/OOPR/OOPC)**

**(For new requests, this form should be sent to the Postgraduate Dean, after it has been signed by the trainee's educational supervisor and training programme director. The Postgraduate Dean will use this to support the request for prospective approval from PMETB where this is required. For annual review and renewal, the document should be signed by the trainee and training programme director)**

Trainee's name:

Training number:

E-mail address:

**PMETB** Post/Programme approval number:

Contact address/e-mail address for duration of OOP if granted:

Specialty:

Training Programme Director (TPD):

Current indicative year of clinical programme:

Current provisional CCT date:

Have you discussed your plans to take time out of programme/continue your time out with your educational supervisor and/or training programme director?

Yes  No

Please indicate if you are requesting time out for:

New request    On-going

**Prospectively approved by PMETB for clinical training (OOPT)****Clinical experience *not* prospectively approved for training by PMETB (OOPE)****Research for a registered degree (OOPR)****Career Break (OOPC)**

Give a brief description of what will be done during time out of programme and where it will take place (not required for on-going OOP). In addition, for:

**OOPT:** attach details of your proposed training for which PMETB prospective approval will be required if the training does not already have PMETB approval (e.g. if it is part of a recognised training programme in a different Deanery if will already be recognised training). For on-going OOP this document should accompany the assessment documentation for ARCP.

**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.

**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.

**OOPC:** Please give a brief outline for your reasons for requesting a career break whilst retaining your training number.

How long would you intend to take time out/still remain on your OOP? .....

What will be your provisional date for completing training if you take/continue with this time out of programme? ....../.../...

**If time out or your programme is agreed, you will be required to give your training programme director and current/next employer 3 months notice of leaving the programme**

Date you wish to start your out of programme experience (which must take into account the 3 months notice period): .....

Date you plan to return to the clinical programme: .....

I am requesting approval from the Postgraduate Dean's office to undertake the time out of programme described above/continue on my current OOP whilst retaining my training number. I understand that:

- a) Three years out of my clinical training programme will normally be the maximum time allowed out of programme. Extensions to this will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances that will need further written approval from the Postgraduate Dean.
- b) I will need to liaise closely with my Training Programme Director so that my re-entry into the clinical programme can be facilitated. I am aware that at least six months notice must be given of the date that I intend on returning to the clinical programme and that the placement will depend on availability at that time. I understand that I may have to wait for a placement.
- c) I will need to return an annual out of programme report for each **year** that I am out of programme for consideration by the annual review panel. This will need to be accompanied by an assessment report of my progress in my research or clinical placement. **Failure to do this could result in the loss of my training number.**
- d) I will need to give at least 3 months notice to the Postgraduate Dean and to my employer before my time out of programme can commence.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(trainee's name)

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(educational supervisor)

Print name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Training Programme Director - TPD)

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

New requests: the Postgraduate Dean will only sign this document after it has been signed by the trainee's education supervisor and Training Programme Director. On-going OOPs: this document should be signed by the TDP and will need to be submitted to the ARCP panel.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Postgraduate Dean (or deputy))

**APPLICATION FOR AN INTER-DEANERY TRANSFER ON WELL-FOUNDED PERSONAL GROUNDS  
(trainee to complete and return to current Postgraduate Dean)**

Surname:                      First Name:                      NTN:

**PMETB programme approval number :**

Contact Address.....  
.....  
Contact Tel..... Fax/Email.....

Indicative year of programme: 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8 other.....Date of Appointment.....  
Expected date of completion of training...../...../.....Date of most recent annual assessment.....  
(attach all outcome forms to date)

Specialty:

If applicable specify sub-specialty.....Dual Specialty .....

My reasons for requesting an Inter-Deanery Transfer from my current programme to that in .....  
Deanery are briefly:

When did these circumstances change?

You should attach a more detailed explanation of your reasons for requesting the transfer (one side of A4).

You must also enclose all copies of your annual review outcomes to date.

Please confirm enclosure of: further explanation. Yes? ..... Annual Review Outcomes? .....

I hereby formally apply to transfer to ..... Deanery and confirm all the above information is correct.

- I understand that I should not approach the Postgraduate Dean in the Deanery to which I am seeking transfer directly but that my current Postgraduate Dean will do this on my behalf if he/she confirms that I have sufficient well-founded reasons for the transfer.
- I understand that I may be required to have an interview by the Deanery to which I wish to transfer.

Signed..... Date Signed:.....  
*Trainee*

*To be completed by current Postgraduate Dean:* I hereby approve the above trainee's application to transfer from my region and confirm the current NTN is ...../...../.....

Signed ..... Date.....

*Postgraduate Dean(current)*