



Royal College of
General Practitioners

Absence from training and additional training requirements

The RCGP Certification Unit regularly receives requests from deaneries and trainees asking for advice on the amount of training that a doctor has to make up when they have been absent due to sickness, jury service or through maternity and paternity leave.

Although a competency based system is now in place, the PMETB Order still requires *a full three years* of training to be undertaken, and does not make any allowances for sickness absence, jury service or maternity and paternity leave. In addition, with training increasingly being made up of four month posts, an absence of more than a month within a post could be disruptive to the acquisition of the breadth and balance necessary for a generalist.

The following policy should be referred to when a trainee has been absent from training due to sickness, jury service, maternity leave or paternity leave.

1. The RCGP will allow time off from the training programme for sickness absence, jury service, maternity leave or paternity leave. However, the total, aggregated allowance for sickness absence, jury service and or maternity/paternity leave must not exceed one week in any post, up to a maximum of two weeks in a twelve month training period, and six weeks over the three-year training period (Please note that one year would be a calendar year beginning from programme start date). Any sickness and/or jury service and/or maternity/paternity leave taken in excess of this must be made up in full, but not necessarily in the speciality or post where the absence occurred.
2. Trainees must first seek advice and agreement from the Director of Postgraduate Education if they need to take maternity/paternity leave, have to attend jury service or are absent due to sickness. Managing compliance with absence from training is a function of deaneries.
3. Trainees should confirm with the RCGP and their deanery that their plans to make up lost time will mean that their programme of training conforms, on completion, with regulatory requirements.
4. It is RCGP and PMETB guidance that training periods of less than three months in duration will not normally count towards a CCT. However, in cases where a GP in training has to make up time lost through sickness, jury service and/or maternity/paternity leave, the College may be able to request that PMETB accept training periods of less than three months towards a CCT as long as a full three year training programme is completed. The final decision regarding this lies with PMETB.