

<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Removal from the training programme or withdrawal of the National Training Number (NTN)</b>
<b>Category</b>	Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) <b>This SOP is only applicable to relevant programmes within Foundation and Specialty Training.</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>Since 2020, Foundation Training is embedded within the Gold Guide. Therefore, the NHS England suite of SOPs applies to all doctors in training, including Foundation, unless specified otherwise.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This suite of SOPs will be routinely screened against relevant Equality and Diversity documentation.</p>
<b>Authorised by</b>	Health Education England Deans (HEEDs), now English Deans
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<b>Document Author</b>	English Deans and Senior Managers Group (formerly HEED & HEED Senior Managers Group)

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1	26/07/2017	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
7	17/10/2024	English Deans	Document signed off at PGMDE Operational Oversight Group

#### Related Documents

- *Gold Guide 10<sup>th</sup> Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK:*  
<https://www.copmed.org.uk/publications/gold-guide>
- *Standard Operating Procedures:*
  - *Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) Process*
  - *Appeals: Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and Withdrawal of National Training Number (NTN) Appeals*

## 1. Background

- a. A National Training Number (NTN) is assigned to an individual specialty trainee upon commencement of a training programme. A trainee must maintain an NTN for the duration of their training programme.
- b. The NTN is withdrawn on successful completion of the training programme (having received an ARCP outcome 6 and, if relevant, completed a Period of Grace) or following resignation from the training programme.
- c. Additional circumstances where an NTN is withdrawn are highlighted in Section 2.

## 2. Procedure

- a. The decision to withdraw an NTN rests with the Postgraduate Dean (GG10:3.100).
- b. The Postgraduate Dean will inform the trainee in writing of the reasons for this decision and whether they have the right to appeal the decision. The reasons for cessation of training should be recorded in the relevant file(s) held at and maintained by the Deanery by the Postgraduate Dean, ARCP panel, Training Programme Director (TPD) or Head of School.
- c. An ARCP is not always required to withdraw a trainee's NTN. Either an N21 (resignation – without training issues) or an N22 (resignation – with training issues) will need to be recorded on the trainee's record.
- d. Once the NTN has been withdrawn (following exhaustion of any appeal), the individual is no longer a trainee and should be disconnected from the designated body for the purposes of revalidation. Refer to the *Revalidation SOP*.

### 2.1. When is a training number withdrawn?

*[Extracted from the Gold Guide (10<sup>th</sup> edition), p.37-38]*

Paragraph 3.100: The training number/contract will be withdrawn when a postgraduate doctor in training:

- i. has completed their training programme and has received an ARCP Outcome 6 (including a period of grace where relevant)
- ii. has received an Outcome 4 from the ARCP panel, and the appeals process (where relevant) has been concluded and the appeal rejected
- iii. is assessed by the Postgraduate Dean as not being suitable for returning to or continuing training in the specialty/foundation programme in NHSE WTE, NES, HEIW or NIMDTA Gold Guide version 10, August 2024 38
- iv. does not comply with the requirements for registering or maintaining their registration with the Postgraduate Dean, as set out in GG10 Appendix 2
- v. does not hold GMC registration with a licence to practise
- vi. has their name erased or suspended from the medical register, or where restrictions are applied to their registration and where such measures are incompatible with continuing in a medical training programme at their level of training
- vii. is dismissed by an employer, which may be an individual employer or the lead employer, and the appeal against the dismissal (where relevant) has been concluded and the appeal rejected
- viii. resigns their place in a training programme

Paragraph 3.107: The provision in paragraph 3.100 vi relates to decisions of the Medical Practitioners Tribunal Service (MPTS) after their full and formal Medical Practitioners Tribunal (MPT) process. This may also relate to decisions of MPTS Interim Orders Tribunals (which are temporary arrangements pending the decision of a full MPT) where such measures are assessed by the Postgraduate Dean as being incompatible with continuing in a training programme for a period likely to be in excess of two years (in accordance with paragraph 1.15).

3.107 i If a doctor has their training number/contract withdrawn following an Interim Orders Tribunal decision, and this decision is subsequently revoked and registration reinstated (within the two-year period defined in paragraph 1.15), the individual may request that the Postgraduate Dean restores their training number/contract; and

3.107 ii providing that there are no outstanding fitness to practise issues or unresolved concerns (paragraph 3.109), the Postgraduate Dean will make a decision on restoration of the training number/contract, taking into account all the

relevant factors, including any outstanding fitness to practise issues or other unresolved concerns that affect suitability to continue in or return to a training programme.

### 2.1.1 Appeals

The trainee has a right to appeal if the NTN is withdrawn. Where appropriate the appeal process will follow that as stipulated in the Annual Review of Competence Progression (ARCP) and Withdrawal of National Training Number (NTN) Appeals Standard Operating Procedure.

If an appeal is conducted and the original outcome is upheld, there is no further right of appeal.

The Postgraduate Dean will write to the trainee's employer to notify them of the decision to withdraw the NTN from the trainee. As the contractual relationship between the individual and employer continues, they will need to consider next steps for the individual with regards to their employment contract.

Suspension from the GMC register may not require an automatic removal of NTN. In some circumstances, it may be necessary to remove a training number. This will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, but clear reasons for the decision must be recorded in the trainee's file.

In some circumstances, a trainee will neither be currently employed in the NHS nor hold an honorary contract with an NHS organisation (e.g. they will be working overseas or taking a break from employment). Where the Postgraduate Dean believes that the conditions under which such a trainee holds an NTN have been breached and that the NTN should be withdrawn, the Postgraduate Dean will write to the training number holder to tell them of their decision. The trainee will have the right of appeal.

## 3. Resignation from the training programme

- a. Trainees who choose to resign from the training programme before their planned completion date should normally meet with their TPD to discuss their intention to resign from the programme and the reasons for the resignation. The TPD may explore with the trainee whether there is any opportunity for support to be put in place so that the trainee may continue in their training programme. If following this meeting, the trainee still wishes to resign from the programme, they are required to inform the TPD, PGMDE Programme Team and their employer in writing.

- b. Trainees will be required to work a period of notice as per their contract of employment. This is enshrined in GMC Good Medical Practice and the employer may refer trainees who do not work the appropriate notice period to the GMC.
- c. Where a trainee has resigned from a training programme part way through a training year, they should be informed that an ARCP panel will review their progress between their last ARCP and the point of resignation (unless the effective exit from the programme occurred within three months of the last ARCP). The trainee will need to complete Form R for the purposes of informing the revalidation process. The ARCP panel should document any relevant competences that have been achieved by the trainee; however, no outcome will be awarded, and the N21 and N22 codes should be utilised. It is expected that trainees will engage in this process.

## 4. Reapplying to Specialty Training

- a. Foundation and specialty training posts and programmes are not normally available to individuals who have previously relinquished or been released/removed from a training post/programme in that specialty or in foundation training. However, provided there are no outstanding fitness to practise issues, unresolved concerns or factors that impact on suitability for foundation or specialty training, it is open to those who have had their training number/contract/foundation programme place withdrawn or have given their training number/contract up voluntarily to reapply to specialty/foundation training at a later date.GG10:3.109.
- b. In order to reapply for training in the same specialty, where a trainee has previously been removed or resigned, they must have the support of the Postgraduate Dean in the locality where training in this specialty was previously undertaken. Applications will only be considered if a trainee provides a 'Support for Reapplication to a Specialty Training Programme' form. No other evidence will be accepted. Re-entry in such cases will be by competitive process with other applicants.
- c. In order to reapply for foundation training, where a trainee has previously been removed or resigned, they must have the support of the Postgraduate Dean/Deputy in the locality where foundation training was previously undertaken. Applications will only be considered if a trainee provides a 'Reapplication to Foundation Training' form. No other evidence will be accepted. Re-entry in such cases will be by competitive process with other applicants. Where the applicant

has not practised medicine for more than two years, they will have to undergo an approved assessment of their clinical skills.