



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 and is a continuation of guidance that was in previously in place.

1. The RCGP will allow time off from the training programme for sickness absence, jury service, maternity leave or paternity leave. However, the sum of these absences must not exceed two weeks over one calendar year. 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. Managing compliance with absence from training is a function of deaneries, therefore trainees must advise the Director of Postgraduate GP Education if they are going to be taking maternity/paternity leave and if they have to attend jury service. Trainees must also inform the Director of Postgraduate GP Education of any absences due to sickness.
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. Trainees that have been on sick leave and have returned to training on reduced hours because of an occupational health recommendation, should meet with their Director of Postgraduate GP Education to ensure that they will be completing the required 3 years of training.
5. 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.