Guidance for OOP requests for Wessex trainees in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

This document should be read in conjunction with the Wessex Deanery guidance on OOP requests.

Two key elements of this are

1. OOP requests should be planned at least 6 months in advance
2. The educational supervisor and TPD are the first port of call and trainees are recommended to contact their Training Programme Directors early in the process to ensure that there is capacity in 6 months time for OOP requests to be considered. Under normal circumstances it would not be possible for trainees in ST1/2 to request or have approval for OOP for either experience or research.

The school board and STC have ratified the decision that allowing unlimited numbers of trainees to be out of programme at any one time is not possible.

The limit has been set at 15%.

The reason for this is primarily to ensure that the programme minimises the number of vacant posts which can be backfilled by locums.

In previous years when this percentage has risen significantly there have been many vacant posts which were not filled as it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit quality locum doctors. The consequence of this for the remaining trainees in these units is they are often asked to backfill the on call and other service commitments with knock on effects for their own training opportunities.

The school recognises that not all out of programme leave can be predicted (maternity and compassionate leave ) and therefore where OOP activity for training or research has been approved, this will not be removed subsequently if the threshold is exceeded by unexpected compassionate or maternity leave. Where an out of programme application is made and the threshold would be exceeded trainees will need to delay their time out until such time as sufficient numbers of trainees have returned to the programme.

OOPEC (career break) is considered on an individual basis and will often involve PSU input.

Highest priority for out of programme requests will be given to trainees who wish to undertake a research post which is nationally funded and or which leads to the achievement of an MD or PhD.

Other research posts leading to publications in peer reviewed journals will be positively considered but are not considered as high priority as for an MD or PhD thesis. An appropriate balance of clinical and research time must be transparent within the job description when applying such that posts are not undertaken where the primary function is to maintain the middle grade rota of the receiving hospital. Equally the unit in question should have a track record in research to support the trainee in their application.

OOPE to undertake overseas experience or leadership development (eg Global Health or Quality Improvement fellowships) will also be positively considered.
OOPE in another deanery will not usually be considered (unless OOPT as the training is not available within Wessex eg subspecialty training).

Where more than one trainee request OOP time but for an equally prioritised reason a competitive interview may be arranged by the school to determine the timing of release.

Where a delay means that a trainee will have entered into ST7 (OOP requests are not permitted in ST7) the request would be decided on a case by case basis.

If you have any queries relating to this guidance please contact Karen Brackley (Head of School), Alexander Taylor (TPD ST3-7) or Sue Ksous (Programme Manager) by emailing: obsandgynae.wx@hee.nhs.uk in the first instance.