Flexible Training in the Oxford Foundation School

Introduction

The Oxford Foundation School supports trainees who wish to train flexibly using a personal and individual approach. All trainees, both men and women, are eligible to apply for flexible training. Those wishing to do so must show that training on a full-time basis would not be practical for them for well-founded individual reasons (EC Directive 93/16/EEC doctorstraining_flexible_principles).

What should I do if I wish to train flexibly?

If you think you want to or need to train flexibly we would recommend approaching the Foundation School Director sooner rather than later. She/he will be able to advise you about eligibility for training, and what your options might be. You should also arrange to see Dr Rebecca Mather the Associate Dean for Flexible Training.

Who is eligible for flexible training?

All trainees, both men and women, are eligible to apply for flexible training. There may be a number of different legitimate reasons for wanting to train flexibly. One of the commonest is caring for small children. Other reasons include personal health and/or disability or caring for a close relative. Below is a list of currently approved reasons for flexible training. If your reason does not appear on this list then please discuss this with the Foundation School Manager who can raise this with the FSD. Category 1 applicants will be more strongly supported than Category 2.

Category 1
Those doctors in training with:
- disability or ill health (this may include those on in vitro fertility programmes)
- responsibility for caring (men and women) for children
- responsibility for caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependant.

These result in the individual doctor or dentist being professionally disadvantaged by circumstances, and less able to fulfil their potential on a full-time rather than on a part-time basis.
Category 2
Those doctors in training with:
- unique opportunities for their own personal/professional development, for example training for national/international sporting events, or short term extraordinary responsibility, for example a national committee
- religious commitment – involving training for a particular religious role which requires a specific amount of time commitment
- non-medical professional development such as management courses, law courses, fine arts courses or diploma in complementary therapies.

Other well-founded reasons may be considered but it would be dependent on the particular situation and the needs of the specialty in which the individual was training.

What should I do next?

If you think you are eligible and you wish to train flexibly the FSM will arrange for you to meet the FSD to discuss what options might be available. You should in addition arrange to see Dr Rebecca Mather the Associate Dean for Flexible Training.

What are the options for training flexibly in foundation?

In foundation the main options include working in posts that are suitable for part time training (arranged through the Foundation School) or seeking supernumerary funding through Dr Mather (there is usually a waiting list for this). There is a requirement that for training to be recognised you must work a minimum of 50% of a fulltime post, on a weekly basis. The time you will need to spend in Foundation to achieve sign off is calculated on a pro-rata basis. Thus if you work 50% of a fulltime post you will need to work for two years. An on-call commitment is not essential as long as the posts offer suitable day time emergency experience.