

North West School of Ophthalmology Early Completion of Training (Acceleration) Guidance

1. Introduction

The Ophthalmic Specialist Training (OST) programme has an indicative duration. In exceptional circumstances, a resident doctor may complete training earlier if they demonstrate capability significantly ahead of the expected trajectory.

Any decision to bring forward the CCT date must be based on sound educational principles and must consider the impact on:

- Other resident doctors
- Service provision
- Training rotation planning

All applications will be managed exclusively through the ARCP process, with the final decision resting with the Postgraduate Dean.

2. Principles for Review of a CCT Date

a. Previous Experience

- Previous experience (UK or overseas) may justify earlier progression only if assessed at the first ARCP.
- Experience gained during OOPE does not count towards progression or capability sign off.
- Only placements pre approved as OOPT may contribute to training outcomes.

b. Exceptional Progression During Training

- Resident doctors may progress faster than the indicative timeline if they demonstrate capability significantly ahead of their expected stage across all aspects of training.
- Evidence must be consistent, robust, and documented in the portfolio, including workplace-based assessments, supervisor reports, and progression in clinical and surgical skills.

Although a CCT change may be educationally appropriate, service and rotation considerations may mean that early release is not feasible. Decisions should be taken at the penultimate ARCP, allowing forward planning and programme stability.



3. Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for acceleration, the resident doctor must meet all the following:

- No previous developmental ARCP outcomes (i.e. Outcomes 2 and 3).
- No concerns regarding professionalism, conduct, or patient safety.
- All examinations and mandatory requirements for the stage completed.
- Evidence of capability significantly ahead of expected level across all aspects of training on E-portfolio.
- Educational Supervisor and TPD support.
- Impact on service and rotation planning must be manageable.

4. Adjustment to Training Duration

- There is no minimum reduction specified for Ophthalmology, as placements are typically six months.
- Any reduction must be educationally justified and operationally feasible within the rotation.
- The maximum reduction is normally up to 12 months, in line with Gold Guide 10.
- LTFT resident doctors may apply; assessment is based on whole time equivalent capability.

5. Less Than Full Time (LTFT) Training

- LTFT resident doctors are eligible to apply for acceleration under the same principles as full time resident doctors.
- Any acceleration will be based on capability.
- If a resident doctor moves to LTFT, their CCT date will automatically adjust to reflect their working percentage, as per Gold Guide 10.
- LTFT resident doctors may still have their CCT date brought forward if they demonstrate exceptional progression on a whole-time equivalent basis.
- All other eligibility criteria apply equally to LTFT resident doctors.

6. Process

a. Early Discussion

- The resident doctor and Educational Supervisor must discuss acceleration at an educational meeting.
- This discussion must be documented in the ES report.



b. Notification

- The TPD should be notified ideally 12 months in advance of the proposed accelerated CCT date to support rotation planning.

c. Evidence Submission

- Evidence must be uploaded to the portfolio.

d. TPD Review

The TPD will consider:

- Impact on service
- Impact on other resident doctors
- Feasibility within rotation planning

The TPD will confirm support or non support.

e. ARCP Panel

- The penultimate ARCP is the final opportunity to approve acceleration.
- The panel reviews evidence and determines whether acceleration is educationally appropriate.

f. Final Approval

- The Head of School and Associate Dean provide specialty specific approval.
- The Associate Dean authorises the revised CCT date on behalf of the Postgraduate Dean.
- Once agreed, the CCT date cannot be brought forward again, except in exceptional circumstances.

7. Additional School of Ophthalmology Rules

- Acceleration will be considered only once during training.
- OOPE experience does not count towards any curriculum competencies or Level 4 sign off.
- Only pre-approved OOPT placements may contribute to training outcomes.
- Applications after the penultimate ARCP will not be considered.
- Once accelerated, the CCT date cannot be reversed.
- Any further extension requires an Outcome 3.



8. References:

- [Gold Guide Version 10](#)
- [RCOphth Curriculum 2024](#)
- RCOphth [Assessment Strategy](#) and [Curriculum Handbook](#)
- [North West Deanery Acceleration of Training Principles](#)
- [COPMeD Guidance on Changes to Programme Completion Date](#)