



Emergency Medicine

OOPE & Retrospection Policy

National Emergency Medicine Training Programme



National Emergency Medicine Training Programme Retrospection and time out of programme

1.0 Retrospection

Retrospection is a process by which recognition is given to training or research activity undertaken prior to appointment to specialist training.

1.1 Retrospection at the time of appointment to CSTEM

Prior training and experience of successful applicants to Year 1 of the training programme is considered by the appointment panel at the time of interview. Where an applicant has prior training that closely matches that provided in CSTEM, they may, on a case by case basis and subject to Intermediate FRCEM progress, be offered appointment to Year 2 or 3 of CSTEM where training vacancies exist in the relevant year.

1.2 Retrospection at the time of appointment to ASTEM

Most trainees appointed to ASTEM will be progressing from Year 3 of CSTEM and the issue of recognition for prior training does not arise. A small number of successful applicants may have experience after completing CSTEM. In 2014, ICEMT reduced the duration of ASTEM (for the 2017 ASTEM intake onwards) from five to four years. In the context of the prior five year programme, a minimum of four years clinical training must be completed in Ireland. This stipulation persists in relation to the shortened four year ASTEM programme, particularly given the ongoing development of mandatory training elements across the four years and the increasingly modular FRCEM examination that now spans ASTEM rather than being concentrated in the final years. On that basis, retrospection at the time of appointment to ASTEM is not considered.

2.0 Time Out of Programme (OOP)

2.1 CSTEM

Due to the structured nature of CSTEM, particularly rotations into specialties other than EM, planned time Out of Programme is not considered.

2.2 ASTEM

There are 3 categories of planned time Out of Programme applicable to ASTEM:

- Out of Programme for research (OOPR)
- Out of Programme for clinical experience (OOPE)
- Out of Programme for career break (OOPC)

A fourth category, Out of Programme for Clinical training, is not applicable to ASTEM as a minimum of 4 years of clinical training (i.e. the duration of ASTEM) must be completed in Ireland. The one exception is trainees who have successfully applied for the Richard Steevens scholarship. This scholarship is relevant to those in ASTEM 3 and 4. However, trainees who undertake such a scholarship will be required to complete the balance of ASTEM (4 years in Ireland) on their return

ICEMT will consider requests for time out of programme in the above 3 categories.

2.3 Out of Programme for Research (OOPR)

Out of Programme for Research refers to time spent in a planned and structured research programme which meets the following criteria:

- Clear scientific rationale, directly relevant to EM, for the proposed programme of research e.g. MD, PhD

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- Clear and stated support of an educational supervisor, ideally from within EM (if the primary supervisor is not from EM then a co-supervisor from EM is required);
- Clarity with respect to the breakdown of proposed time spent in research and other activities e.g. 50% clinical:50% research;
- Obvious and robust funding, specifically in terms of the trainee's salary, for the programme of research;

Once these criteria are satisfied and ICEMT agrees to the proposal, the trainee must agree to 6-monthly RITA appraisals during the research period. Furthermore, the trainee must agree not to undertake locum work which would adversely impact the chances of successful completion of the proposed programme of research. ICEMT considers locum work that comprises greater than 10% of the overall workload of the research programme as inappropriate. ICEMT will not support a trainee in undertaking research where there is anything less than a minimum of 50% fully protected time for research.

For trainees on the 5 year ASTEM programme, time spent in full time research during ASTEM is recognised as counting towards the award of a CCST on a half time basis, to a maximum of one year. Trainees on the 4 year ASTEM programme are required to spend a minimum of 4 years in full time clinical training to be eligible (in combination with FRCER) for the award of a CCST. On that basis, time out of programme for research is not recognised for these trainees.

2.4 **Out of Programme for clinical experience (OOPE)**

Out of Programme Clinical Experience (OOPE) is defined as out of programme clinical experience that does not count towards the award of a CCST. The one exception is trainees who have successfully applied for the Richard Steevens' scholarship. This scholarship is relevant to those in ASTEM 3 and 4. However, trainees who undertake such a scholarship will be required to complete the balance of ASTEM (4 years in Ireland) on their return

- 2.5 An OOPE may primarily benefit the trainee (e.g. working in an area of special interest, a different healthcare environment or another country) or may help support the health needs of another country (e.g. working for voluntary organisations or supporting global health partnerships).

Out of Programme for career break (OOPC)

Taking time out of programme for a career break (OOPC) means stepping out of the training programme for a designated, agreed period of time. ICEMT recognizes that the 7 year streamlined training programme offers less opportunities for doctors in training to pursue interests outside medicine than was previously the case. A career break could be used to pursue other interests (e.g. domestic responsibilities, work in industry, developing skills in other areas).



3.0 ICEMT criteria for time out of programme (OOP)

- 3.1 Planned time out of programme is only available to ASTEM trainees from Year 2 onwards.
- 3.2 When deciding on OOP timing, trainees should be cognisant of the mandatory requirements of the training programme and their need to pass all elements of the FRCM examination before a CCT can be awarded.
- 3.3 ICEMT considers Years 2 and 3 of the programme to be optimal for OOP.
- 3.4 The duration of any period of time out of programme is agreed on a case by case basis. However, the minimum time is 6 months.
- 3.5 All requests for OOP must be submitted to ICEMT in writing a minimum of six months before the planned date of commencement.
- 3.6 Written requests for OOP should outline the category (research, experience or career break), the rationale for the request and a clear description of the trainee's plan for the time – this is particularly important for research requests (see above).
- 3.7 No more than 2 trainees may be out of programme (in any category) in any single year of ASTEM (i.e. no more than 2 from Year 2 and 2 from Year 3 and 2 from Year 4) at any one time.
- 3.8 Where the number of OOP requests exceeds 2 for any year, ICEMT will consider each on a case by case basis before deciding on approval.
- 3.9 Trainees are currently advised of their programme rotation posts for the 4 years of ASTEM at the outset. Where a trainee is taking time out of programme, their rotation will need to be revised and may well be different from that originally envisaged.



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