

Acting Up as A Consultant Guidance

To be referred to in conjunction with the AUC application form

Background:

Reference is made to acting up within the [Gold Guide 10th Edition August 2024.pdf](#) (3.160)

This guidance refers to formal acting up arrangements for a fixed period, rather than any ad hoc brief arrangements.

For the avoidance of doubt, AUC is defined as a block of time whereby a resident doctor steps out of their planned rotation placement to take up a consultant level role, without direct supervision. e.g. 3 months acting up as a consultant, which may include participating on the consultant rota at that site.

Resident doctors who are AUC need to have appropriate supervision in place. They must always have access to a named Consultant; however the supervisor is not required to always be on site.

FAQs:

When can I act up as a Consultant?

- You must be within one year of your CCT date to act up as a Consultant (AUC).
- Acting up allows resident doctors to gain experience of Consultancy whilst still maintaining the supervision afforded by their training programme.

How long can I act up for?

- There is fixed maximum period of 3 months.
- LTFT resident doctors may apply for a period of AUC on a pro rata basis.
- There may be some situations in which the Postgraduate Dean may exercise discretion to extend the acting up offer, in order to aid patient care and ensure patient safety (e.g. Pandemics or events of a catastrophic nature as per Gold Guide 10:1.12). Any requests for AUC over 3 months require exceptional PGD approval.

What are the eligibility criteria?

- There is no right to an AUC opportunity. Offers are made by host local education providers, as opportunities arise. As these are on a case-by-case basis there is no appeals process.
- Approval will only be given if the AUC placement is relevant to gaining competencies, knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the curriculum.
- Resident doctors with unmet objectives, developmental ARCP outcomes (2 or 3) or outstanding capabilities are not normally eligible to act up.

- Resident doctor will normally act up within the same NHSE local office area. In exceptional circumstances, a resident doctor may wish to act up in another region. In such circumstances the usual OOP approval process should be followed. GMC approval is not required for acting up in approved training locations.

How do I apply to act up?

- Before commencing an AUC position, you must formally apply and request approval using the AUC form.
- Resident doctors are responsible for arranging the completion of sections A-D and sending the completed form and supporting documentation to NHSE.
- You are responsible for informing your current local education provider of your plans.
- Where you will be directly employed by a local education provider, you must also ensure the relevant gaining organisation complete section E of the form.
- Applications should normally be made a minimum of 16 weeks prior to the proposed start date of the acting up arrangement in order to meet code of practice requirements, however the notice period may be waived in exceptional circumstances.
- You can only act up into a post in the UK that relates to your specialty CCT. If you want to apply for an opportunity outside of the UK you should apply for OOP, noting the GMC/Royal College/Faculty requirements.

Do I still need a supervisor whilst acting up?

- Yes. You must continue to have a named educational supervisor during the period of AUC. All supervisory arrangements must be confirmed in advance and agreed by your TPD and the educational supervisor.
- A resident doctor must always have access to an educational supervisor, whether in working hours or on call.
- Training programmes may have additional requirements according to their curriculum.

Will acting up count towards my training?

- This is dependant on your specialty curriculum.
- It is your responsibility to check your curriculum, Royal College/Faculty and GMC guidance. You must comply fully with any requirements.
- If the AUC experience is formally included in the approved specialty curriculum, the period of acting up will automatically count towards your training time and CCT.
- If the specialty curriculum does not make reference to a period of AUC, this cannot be recognised for training and an application for out of programme experience (OOPE) should also be made using the [OOP application form](#).
- The AUC form sets out pay arrangements, so both forms should be completed so that all parties are clear on what employment arrangements have been agreed.
- Your Royal College/Faculty may have separate paperwork to complete.
- If you are unsure, please discuss with your TPD.

Will I retain my NTN whilst AUC?

- Yes, you will maintain your NTN throughout the AUC period.

Who will be my Responsible Officer?

- You should remain connected to your Postgraduate Dean for revalidation purposes, rather than the Responsible Officer within the AUC placement.

Can I act up in a Locum Consultant post?

- No. Although acting up often fulfils a genuine service need, it is not the same as being a Locum Consultant.
- When in an 'acting up' position, the term 'acting up' rather than 'locum consultant' must be used.

Can I do locum on call shifts as a registrar whilst AUC?

- Yes, however you must declare these on your Form R and adhere to safe working hours/working time regulations.

Am I still eligible for a Period of Grace if I act up?

- To retain access to a period of grace, the AUC must be completed prior to your CCT date.
- Resident doctors who are offered the chance to AUC after their CCT date must exit the training programme and take up the opportunity as a Locum Consultant.

What are the employment arrangements whilst AUC?

- If AUC in the same local education provider (trust) as your current placement on the same rate of pay, you must remain in your current training post on the rotation and remain employed by the lead employer.
- There is no facility for additional remuneration whilst remaining in programme.
- If you have agreed additional remuneration with the local education provider you must be paid directly by your placement and not the lead employer, irrespective of whether that is the same local education provider as your current STR placement. You should therefore apply for OOP.
- If AUC in another local education provider to your current placement, you will be employed directly by them and should apply for OOP. The local education provider pays for the acting up and decide what to pay, so additional remuneration is possible if agreed locally. The term 'Locum Consultant' must not be used for the arrangement. The nomenclature can be agreed locally, e.g. Acting Consultant.
- Acting up should either be on your current pay and contract paid by the lead employer OR the local education provider needs to fund the whole acting up. It cannot be a hybrid of both.
- It is important to clarify who will be funding your AUC to avoid any payment issues.
- Please contact lead.employer@sthk.nhs.uk for any queries.

I am on a tier 2 visa, what are the implications of AUC?

- Please refer to: <https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training/overseas-applicants>

- You must inform the National NHSE Overseas Sponsorship Team of any change in circumstances by completing a [Reporting form](#) or emailing england.sponsorship@nhs.net