



# Guidance notes

## Award of the Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT)

### Introduction

These guidance notes are for trainees intending to apply for the award of a Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT) in the following specialties:

- chemical pathology
- diagnostic neuropathology
- forensic histopathology
- histopathology (and related subspecialty of cytopathology)
- medical microbiology
- medical virology
- paediatric and perinatal pathology

Trainees wishing to apply for a CCT in haematology, immunology and joint trainees in medical microbiology, virology and infectious diseases should apply via the [Joint Royal Colleges of Physicians Training Board \(JRCPTB\)](#).

### Legal requirements in the UK

It is a legal requirement that a doctor must have his or her name entered on the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council (GMC) before taking up a substantive, honorary or fixed-term NHS consultant post in the UK.

For trainees who satisfactorily complete specialist training in the UK, entry to the Specialist Register will be dependent upon the award of a CCT, a Certificate confirming Eligibility for Specialist Registration (CESR), or a Combined Programme CESR (CP) which will be awarded by the General Medical Council (GMC) upon recommendation from the relevant College.



## Criteria for the award of the CCT

The criteria upon which The Royal College of Pathologists will recommend to GMC that a CCT may be awarded to a trainee are:

- evidence of satisfactory completion, in a GMC-approved UK training programme, of the relevant curriculum and minimum training period as confirmed by the Postgraduate Dean, which may include:
  - any training prospectively approved towards the CCT by GMC
- attainment of the Fellowship of The Royal College of Pathologists (FRCPath) **by examination**
- acquisition of an ARCP outcome 6

Trainees who would like to have training considered towards completion of training that has not been approved by the College or training that has not been prospectively approved by GMC must apply for entry to the Specialist Register via the CESR route. Trainees who are not sure about their route of entry to the Specialist Register can contact the Training Co-ordinator (see the last page) for advice.

## Applying for the award of the CCT

The Training Department will contact all trainees who have passed FRCPath Part 2 and are within 6 months of their CCT date with details about how to apply for entry to the Specialist Register. Alternatively, trainees who meet the criteria for the award of the CCT can contact the Training Co-ordinator at the College for application details.

There are two stages to the CCT application process:

1. Completion of a Royal College of Pathologists notification form which, along with guidance notes, can be downloaded from the [College website](#) at any time. Alternatively, the notification form can be requested from the Training Co-ordinator at the College.
2. The College will also inform the GMC that you are nearing your CCT date. The GMC will then contact you directly on how to complete their online CCT application.

Until you receive your Certificate of Completion of Training and are listed on the GMC Specialist Register, you may undertake locum consultant posts but not substantive consultant posts.

## CCT application timescales

The Postgraduate Board at the GMC has approved the introduction of a limit on the timeframe within which a doctor can apply for a CCT. This limit will be 12 months from the doctor's expected end-of-training date. Doctors will continue to have the ability for entry to the specialist register, but they would need to do so via the equivalence routes of CESR and provide the necessary documentation to confirm their current competence.



## What to send to the Royal College of Pathologists?

Trainees must send electronically to the Training Department at the College (see the end of guidance for contact details):

- the completed notification form, ensuring that you have obtained the signature of the Postgraduate Dean (or Associate Dean) to confirm completion of training (and subspecialty training if relevant).
- a copy of the ARCP outcome 6
- an updated CV.

Trainees who have had training prospectively approved towards their CCT by GMC must enclose a copy of all relevant documentation with their CCT application to the College.

Trainees applying for subspecialty recognition on the Specialist Register must **also** provide the evidence outlined overleaf.

## Applying for inclusion of a subspecialty against a CCT entry on the Specialist Registrar

Satisfactory completion of a structured recognised subspecialty training programme can lead to inclusion against an entry on the Specialist Register.

**For histopathology:** the recognised subspecialty is cytopathology. The requirements for satisfactory completion of a recognised subspecialty are outlined in the Curriculum for specialist training in histopathology and related subspecialties. Please contact the Training Department for a copy of the subspecialty curriculum.

Trainees must provide the following minimum evidence if they require inclusion of a recognised subspecialty against an entry on the Specialist Register:

- appraisal form or supervisor's report providing evidence of successful progressive structured training
- a certificate or other verifiable evidence of completion of a structured training programme in the subspecialty applied for (e.g., ARCP outcome 6)
- evidence that sub-specialty training was undertaken at the Higher Specialist Training level; such evidence might include the award of an NTN number or the overseas details of the training post/programme appointment. Where subspecialty training has taken place Out of Programme (either in the UK or overseas), this must be accompanied by evidence of prospective GMC approval.



## How will the College complete the CCT process?

Trainees should send their CCT application electronically via email to the Training Department. On receipt of a completed College notification form and documentation at the College, the Training Co-ordinator will normally:

- check that the trainee meets the criteria for the award of the CCT, that all relevant documentation has been provided and that all requirements of the relevant curriculum have been satisfactorily completed.
- check that there is a full set of ARCP forms in LEPT/the trainee's file that covers the full specialist training period. Where gaps in ARCP periods are identified, these will be checked with the relevant Deanery and/or trainee. If gaps are identified between ARCPs, this will not affect the recommendation of the award of the CCT by the College but will be reported to GMC.
- ask a representative of the relevant College Specialty Training Committee (CSTC) to check the CCT application.
- send a recommendation for the award of the CCT to GMC **within 15 working days**.
- acknowledge receipt of the CCT College notification form by informing the trainee when the recommendation has been made to GMC. Trainees are advised to contact the Training Co-ordinator (details below) if they do not receive acknowledgement of their application from the College within 15 working days.

**NB Incomplete or late applications may result in the award of the CCT being delayed.**

The processing of CCT applications from trainees who have not previously registered with the College may also be subject to delay. In addition, such individuals will be required to pay any outstanding annual registration fees.

Please contact the Training Co-ordinator if there are any further queries regarding the CCT application process.

## Further queries about the award of the CCT

Any queries concerning the CCT process should be directed to the Training Department.

Email: [training@rcpath.org](mailto:training@rcpath.org)

