

While you are out of programme

Keeping up to date

There is limited evidence about how time away from clinical practice affects your clinical skills, but it is suggested that there may be some impact after at least 3 months away from clinical work. However, this will be influenced by many factors, including:

- Duration of time away
- Nature of leave
- Prior level of experience
- Type and amount of clinical work done while away from usual practice
- Nature of clinical work e.g., acute care, highly skilled procedures

With this in mind, how much time you invest in keeping up to date during your leave, is left to you to decide.

The following are just a few thoughts to consider:

- Understand the purpose of your leave and what you hope to gain from your time away. It is perfectly acceptable to detach completely from your clinical training if this is the right thing for you.
- Accept that you will lose some clinical skills but have faith that you will regain these when the time comes, especially if you engage with the return-to-work resources available to you.
- Try not to feel guilty about taking time out, instead embrace your time out and appreciate the transferable skills you are undoubtedly acquiring.
- No one is judging you and you do not need to prove to anyone you are keeping up to date. Your time is precious, so any learning you do, should be meaningful and intentional and bring you closer to achieving your unique goals.
- Only take on projects that really spark your interests, this intrinsic motivation will help you get the project finished.
- Learn to say 'No' without saying 'No' when you are asked to take on a new commitment that you may struggle to fulfil or does not fit with your current goals. Use phrases like 'Thank you for thinking of me but I can't commit to this at the moment'. People will appreciate your honesty.
- If you do want to devote some time to your professional development, it may be more favorable to develop your non-clinical skills such as leadership, management, teaching, or mentoring, which may have been difficult to fit in when you had clinical commitments.
- Clinical skills and knowledge are easy to forget when you are not applying them in practice, so think about the right time to undertake these activities (nearer your return is ideal) and/or choose activities that promote deep learning rather than superficial learning, so they are more likely to stick.
- Be realistic about the time you have available and don't take too much on; it's often better to concentrate on one thing at a time.
- Be mindful & listen to your body – knowing when to take a step back takes strength of mind

- Time out can be a time for significant growth, particularly if the circumstances which led to your leave were difficult; reflect on this and don't be afraid to share what you have learnt with others when you return.

Keeping in Contact

- How much you keep in contact with work while you are away is up to you and may change with time. For some, receiving emails from work can cause unnecessary stress but for others it can make them feel in the loop and part of the team.
- Take some time to think about what type of information you want or need to receive and subscribe or unsubscribe from emails lists and/or social media groups accordingly.
- The table below will help you identify the right person/team to contact and which websites to visit to find the right information/documents you might need.

Organization	Key people	Responsibilities
<u>Health Education England (National)</u>	UKPFO deals with foundation programmes	Inter-deanery transfers Specialty recruitment (via Oriel) <u>Gold Guide</u> (Guidance on processes for training programmes)
<u>Local HEE/Regional deanery – HEE EoE</u>	Postgraduate Dean & Associate Deans, Support teams e.g., LTFT, revalidation etc.	LTFT approval Training programme management Revalidation/ARCP co-ordination Professional Support & Wellbeing SuppoRTT OOP approval/management Centralised budget for study leave
Specialty school for region (incl. foundation)	Head of School, Training Programme Directors (TPD), Regional Advisors, Educational Supervisors, Trainee Committee Specialty SuppoRTT champions	Regional training days Allocation of training posts Conduct ARCP LTFT approval OOP approval Study leave approval Educational supervision & pastoral support
Specialty Royal Colleges	College President, College Tutor (trust based), College Training Reps (regional).	College fees & E-portfolio Professional exams Educational conferences & courses Subspeciality recruitment
Hospital Trust	Medical Directors, College Tutors, Clinical Leads, Clinical Supervisors, Educational Supervisors, Trust Reps, HR/Medical Staffing, PGME Teams, Trust SuppoRTT Champions	Study Leave requests Induction & mandatory training Rota management Clinical supervision Contracts & pay (including sick pay) Parental leave & pay Occupational Health Security/parking CRB checks