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Timing of the FRCA Final examination: clarification for dual anaesthetic and ICM doctors in training

Background

In November 2016, the RCoA made provision for anaesthetists in training to progress to higher training (ST5) without having attained the Fellowship of the Royal College of Anaesthetists [FRCA] final examinations, on the basis that they had completed all the mandatory units of intermediate training and would complete the necessary exams within 6 months of commencing ST5.

Such anaesthetists would be awarded an Intermediate Level Progress Report [ILPR] on completion of ST4 and then awarded their Intermediate Level Training Certificate [ILTC] on attainment of the FRCA. For further details, please see Training Programme Update 01/2016, published on the College website: <https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/careers-training/curriculum-updates>.

It has come to light that this change has not explicitly been available to dual trainees and had not been incorporated into the progress requirements for stage 2 of the dual programme. This document seeks to clarify this.

As with the original training programme update this will be in effect for all dual anaesthetic and ICM doctors in training who commenced ST3 training from August 2016 onwards. Those who commenced ST3 training in the dual programme prior to August 2016 are not eligible for this process, as this was not agreed by the GMC retrospectively.

Procedure

- If a doctor in training has satisfactorily completed all units of stage 1 training, but has not yet attained the FRCA in full:
 - a) they may progress to ST5 and commence their special skills year (higher general anaesthetics)
 - b) they may not commence any of the stage 2 ICM units of training (Cardiac ICM, General ICM, Neuro ICM, Paediatric ICM) until the FRCA is complete
 - c) they should be issued with an Intermediate Level Progress Report [ILPR]; the ILPR must be uploaded to the Lifelong Learning platform or e-Portfolio and sent to the RCoA Training Team at the end of ST4.
- The ILTC will only be issued once a doctor has satisfactorily completed all intermediate level units of anaesthetic training *and* attained the FRCA. It is necessary for doctors to upload their ILTC to the Lifelong Learning platform or the e-Portfolio, and send a copy to the RCoA Training team.
- Trainees must have passed the Final FRCA examination before progression to remainder of ST5.
- If the FRCA final examinations are not passed before mid-way through ST5, approval of additional training time as per the Gold Guide is at the discretion of the ARCP panel on a case-by-case basis.

Currently prospective completion dates are calculated using an indicative period of a further three years from the date of commencement of ST5.