

# Supported Return to Training West Midlands Guidance for Shielding Trainees

## Introduction

Shielding trainees by virtue of not being in clinical practice will therefore need clarity of process, guidance and support. Going forward some of these trainees will benefit from the Supported Return to Training scheme (SuppoRTT). In addition, trainers will undoubtedly benefit from guidance and a framework in supporting these trainees.

This framework is to help identify and stratify the trainees based on their individual circumstances, speciality of training and placement to ensure the best support is available to them. This would also enable the trainers to explore options, identify competence requirements and transferable skills in clinical services that have been re-modelled (green zones, new pathways, IPC policies and social distancing, limited face to face, flexible working), and restored safeguarding patients and trainees.

Circumstances will be unique to each individual trainee. It will be important to identify a return to training plan which addresses the individual needs of the trainee. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Is the trainee in Primary Care or Secondary Care?
- Is the trainee in a craft or non-craft speciality?
- How will the trainee upskill in the areas of knowledge and skill?
- Does the trainee require any additional support in relation to their wellbeing?
- Does the Trust have a SuppoRTT champion that the trainee can seek advice and guidance from?

## Eligibility

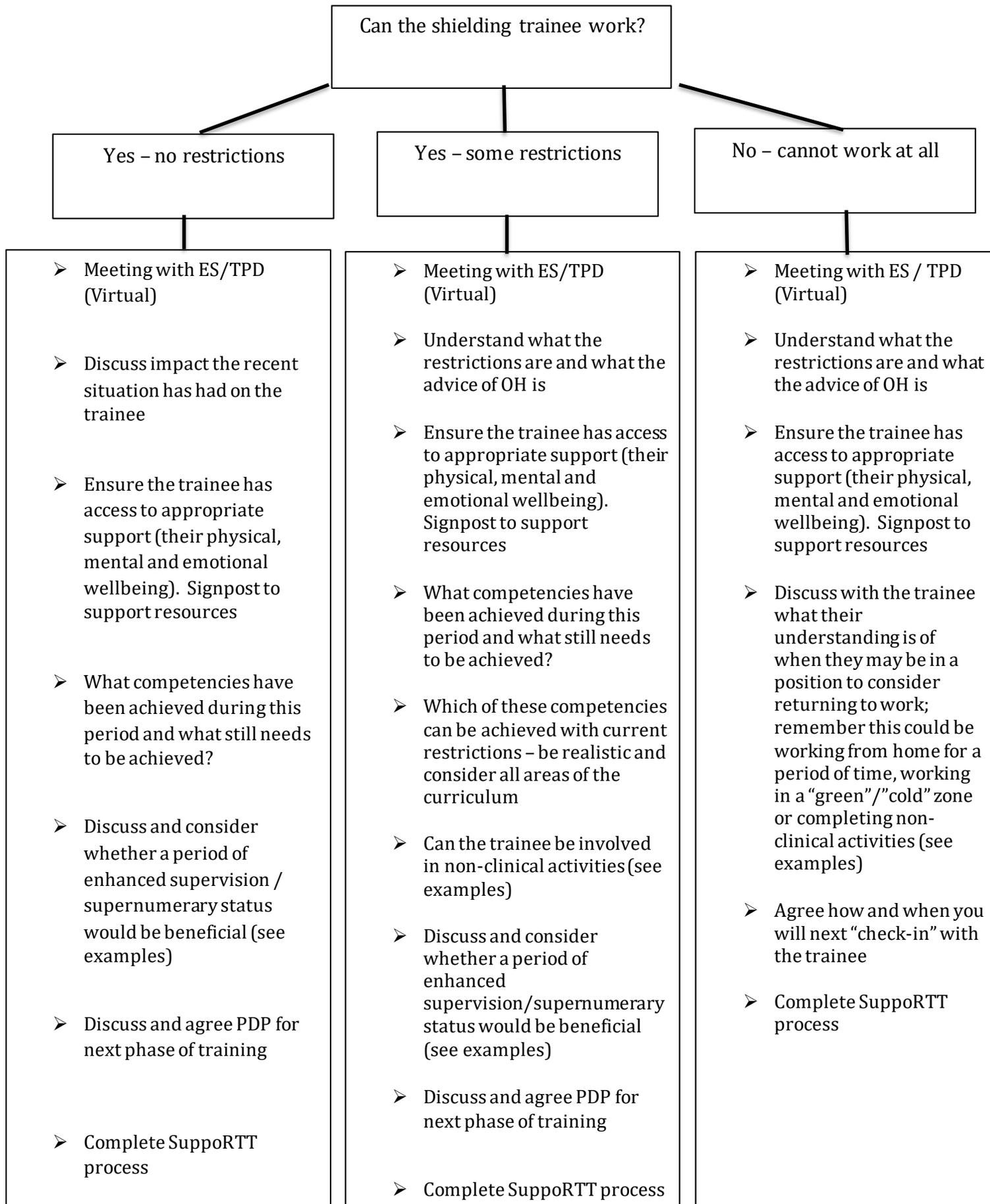
There are a variety of reasons why a trainee might be shielding. These could include:

- Shielding for a medical reason
- Shielding due to a household member who is themselves shielding / at risk
- Stringently social distancing due to a medical reason
- Self-isolating due to a medical reason

As and Educational Supervisor or Training Programme the reason(s) that a trainee may be shielding are not the important factor, the fact that they are shielding is all that you need to be aware of. Some trainees may choose to disclose the reason(s) to you but others may choose not to and this is entirely appropriate.

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## Categorising Level of SupportTT Required



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## Things to Consider When Planning the Return

The trainee and Educational Supervisor should think about all areas of training when discussing and planning a return to training or a return to full duties.

## Enhanced Supervision

It may be appropriate for trainees to participate in a period of enhanced supervision upon their return. This period should allow the trainee to regain confidence, clinical knowledge and skills in a supported environment. This time should not be used to provide service provision alone and should be tailored to individual training needs particularly in relation to duration and exposure to different clinical environments. If it is agreed that a period of supernumerary status is appropriate and the Trust which to request additional funds to support this, the ES / TPD / College Tutor must prospectively email the SupportTT team with the request ([supporttt.wm@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:supporttt.wm@hee.nhs.uk))

Where it is agreed that a period of enhanced supervision is not required, it may be enough for a pairing or buddy system to be in place for the trainee for a few days on their return.

## Examples of Enhanced Supervision Arrangements

- Inpatient/Ward work
- Outpatients/Clinic work
- Acute services – Emergency medicine/Assessment Units/Delivery suite as applicable to trainee
- Optimisation of skills/procedures – theatre, procedure lists, simulation, courses as appropriate
- Out of hours work - representative of specialty commitments with a clearly identified colleague and not as “on-call doctor”
- Experience relevant to ongoing work commitments. For example, if a GP trainee was returning to a Paediatric rotation it may be relevant for this time to be utilised in acute paediatrics
- A period of shadowing, for example with on-calls

## Non-Clinical Activities

If a trainee has restrictions placed upon their practice due to the current situation, it may be appropriate to discuss with them whether they are able to complete non-clinical activities. Examples may be:

- Involvement in preparing for MDTs / follow up clinics / follow up patients
- Leading on updating guidelines / policies / process for the department or Trust
- Participating in leadership or management opportunities within the department or Trust
- Involvement in planning and delivering virtual teaching sessions to medical students and/or other healthcare professionals
- Are there any Quality Improvement Projects that the trainee can lead on or supervise?

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If it is agreed that a trainee can complete non-clinical activities it will be important to review the curriculum and map the activity to relevant competencies

## Knowledge

When a trainee has had a period of not working or working with restrictions, it will be important to discuss any concerns the trainee may have in terms of knowledge gaps and to agree how these gaps could be addressed: As part of planning the return, you may wish to consider:

- Are there any specific specialty courses / webinars that would be appropriate, review the College website, the e-learning for health platform and also the HEE digital resource <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/supporting-doctors-returning-training-after-time-out/supporttt-digital-online-resources>
- Have there been any important changes in policies or guidelines (either specialty, departmental or Trust)

## Skills

Following a period of not working or working with restrictions, it will be important to ensure that the trainee feels skilled enough to return to clinical work and/or work without restrictions. You may wish to consider:

- The supervision arrangements for the trainee on their immediate return to ensure reassessment of skills if this is something the trainee is concerned about
- Are there any remote / virtual clinical opportunities that the trainee could observe or shadow initially?
- Would a period of shadowing be beneficial for the trainee?
- Are there any local simulation opportunities that the trainee could participate in?

## Wellbeing

It will be important to ensure that the trainee has access to appropriate support resources now and at each stage of their return. Discuss and consider:

- Is OH input required?
- Would the trainee benefit from discussing their situation with their own GP?
- Is there any other local support (mentor / peer buddy for example) that may be beneficial to the trainee?
- Is additional support required over and above what can be offered at a local level? If so, consider whether as the ES/TPD you need to seek advice and guidance from the Professional Support and Wellbeing team ([psu.wm@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:psu.wm@hee.nhs.uk)). It is strongly recommended that if as the ES / TPD you think this is required that you contact the PSW team rather than asking the trainee to do this themselves
- Is the trainee aware of the resources available? If not signpost them: <https://www.westmidlandsdeanery.nhs.uk/support/professional-support-and-well-being>

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<https://www.nhsemployers.org/retention-and-staff-experience/health-and-wellbeing>  
<https://www.practitionerhealth.nhs.uk/>

## The SuppoRTT process

### 1) Complete '[Planning Your Leave Form](#)'

This should be completed approximately 3 months prior to your anticipated planned leave date. If the absence is unplanned you should aim to complete it at the earliest opportunity following the start of your leave period

### 2) Complete '[Pre-Return Form](#)'

This should be completed approximately 3 months prior to your anticipated return date. If this is not possible, you should aim to complete it at the earliest opportunity

### 3) Complete the '[Return Review Form](#)'

It is advised that this is completed approximately 2 weeks after your return

All steps in this process should be completed collaboratively between the trainee and their ES/TPD/College Tutor

## Reimbursement

Trainees must follow their employer's expense process in order to claim reimbursement for SuppoRTT activities; a copy of the '[course approval request form](#)' must be submitted with the claim. Only activities that have been prospectively approved by the ES/TPD/College Tutor are eligible for reimbursement and these should all be documented on the 'pre-return form'.

Through SuppoRTT employers can claim reimbursement. Employers must complete the [SuppoRTT Reimbursement Form](#) and email it to [Supportt.wm@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:Supportt.wm@hee.nhs.uk) on a quarterly basis for reimbursement which will be made through the Learning and Development Agreement (LDA) on a quarterly basis. Failure to submit the SuppoRTT Reimbursement Form on a quarterly basis may result in an employer not being eligible for reimbursement

## SuppoRTT Team

If there are queries the trainee, ES, TPD or College Tutor can contact the SuppoRTT team at any time [supportt.wm@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:supportt.wm@hee.nhs.uk)