

Mandatory Research Activity during Training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology

Formal research experience is a requirement for training towards FHKAM (O & G). The following are the regulations governing the minimal research requirements during training in Obstetrics & Gynaecology.

General

1. All communication to the Educational Committee on Research Training should be by e-mail, so as to minimise any unnecessary delay.
2. All trainees are encouraged to start their research training early in their specialist training.
3. Supervision of research activities should be a continuous exercise within the training unit. Under the training system of the College, every trainee should have a named trainer. This trainer should also be responsible for the supervision of this trainee's research training. Trainer of each trainee should see to that the trainee starts research training early. If a particular trainer feels that he/she is unable to provide such supervision and training, it should be his/her responsibility to find a suitable supervisor for this trainee.
4. The HKCOG undertakes through its Research Subcommittee to provide assistance in research to all training units and trainees. All trainees who have difficulties or who anticipates difficulties in their research training are encouraged to seek suggestions or assistance from the Research Subcommittee or the Educational Committee as early as possible. Seeking assistance shortly before completion of their 6-year training program may result in inevitable delay in their Exit assessment.

Category 1 - Trainees who have or will be applying for an elective period of training (one year or six months) in research:

1. Trainees in this category should show evidence that they have attended the College Research Course.
2. Trainees in this category may conduct unique projects or participate in larger ongoing projects, in which case they should be a major participant in the project. The standard of the work should be considered to be suitable for publication in an internationally recognized journal. Trainees should submit their research proposal and programme for the entire period, including courses to be attended, and their involvement in clinical and other duties, to the Education Committee for assessment not less than 3 months before the scheduled commencement of their elective training. If the proposal is deemed unsatisfactory and rejected, the training period may have to be deferred until a satisfactory proposal is received and accepted by the Education Committee. In case minor revision is required, the proposal and programme must be revised where necessary according to the recommendation from the Education Committee and be resubmitted within one month of

the commencement of the Elective Training. If the revised submission has not been received by the Education Committee within one month of the commencement of Elective Training, the Elective Training may not be recognised.

3. A named supervisor to supervise the research projects(s) and training. The supervisor must have relevant and appropriate experience in medical research on the proposed research field.
4. The elective period in research should be protected time for research.
5. Clinical work undertaken within this period should only be related to research.
6. Trainees doing research should not do night duty more than normal trainees.
7. The Education Committee reserved the right of approval of the duration of research according to the trainee's final report (the actual time spent in research would be considered).
8. The trainee should submit a report (at least 1500 words) on the progress and the work involved in the project within 3 months of completion of the training. The report must contain the following:
 - a) Hypothesis tested or the questions to be answered
 - b) Summary of literature review
 - c) Description of methodology and study population
 - d) Presentation of data and results
 - e) Discussion and conclusions
 - f) Statement of extent of trainee's involvement
 - g) Acknowledgement of contributions of other persons
 - h) Publications/ manuscripts arising from the research project (if available)
 - i) Any additional achievements or problems encountered (optional)
9. The trainee should also submit a report from the trainee's supervisor confirming satisfactory performance during the Elective training period within 3 months of completion of training.
10. The Research Subcommittee of the Education Committee shall appoint a Board to assess the report submitted by the trainee. The Board shall assess the report and any additional documents and recommend whether the amount and quality of the research work is adequate. If the Board cannot recommend acceptance, the Board shall interview the trainee, and areas of doubt clarified. The Board shall then make a final recommendation to the Education Committee.
11. Only when the Education Committee accepts the above reports as satisfactory could the trainee then proceed to apply to sit the next available Exit Assessment. The Education Committee will be allowed up to two months to assess the report and to inform the trainee of the outcome.
12. A trainee who undertakes the Elective Year of Training in Research in the second year of the Higher Specialist Training may not be eligible to sit the exit assessment to be held within the coming few months following the completion of his/her training. Therefore, it

is recommended that a trainee should not undertake Elective Training in Research in the last year of the Higher Specialist Training if the trainee does not wish to delay his/her exit assessment.

Category 2 - Trainees who do not intend to do an elective period in research will be governed by the following rules:

1. Trainees in this category should show evidence that they have attended the College Research Course.
2. Trainees in this category are required to personally in charge of at least 1 “acceptable” research project during the entirety of the candidate’s training. “Acceptable” research projects are those that fulfil the following requirements:
 - i. Must be relevance in the field of Obstetrics and Gynaecology.
 - ii. Could be prospective or retrospective studies. Could be randomised trials, observational studies, case-controlled studies or survey. The study must have a clearly defined objective, and contain original data or data analysis. Data obtained by extraction of information from existing medical records are considered original. Analysis of data extracted from existing clinical or audit databases are acceptable. A formal meta-analysis of current medical literature with appropriate statistical analytical tools is acceptable.
 - iii. Must result in a publication (or acceptance for publication) in a peer-reviewed local, regional or international medical journal. The trainee must be the first author of the publication.
 - iv. Case reports and pure literature reviews are NOT acceptable.
3. To apply for recognition of their research training, trainees in this category should apply to the Education Committee, with details description of their research activities, their role in the study, and all relevant research outputs. A publication or acceptance for publication, of an “acceptable” project in a peer-reviewed journal as a first author would be considered as fulfilling the minimal requirement for research training. A reply from the Educational Committee should be expected within 3 months. Approval of their research requirements should be obtained by trainees before the last day of April and October prior to their application for exit assessment in July and January respectively.
4. Each publication can only be submitted by one trainee for the application of fulfilment of research training requirement.

Candidates with research degrees

The possession of a research degree, such as a Doctor of Medicine (MD) [postgraduate] or a PhD, MA and M.Phil will constitute satisfying research requirements for training provided the degree has an original research component and is in the field of clinical medicine. The final

discretion shall lie with the Education Committee. The possession of an undergraduate degree will not in normal circumstances satisfy research requirements even if there is a component of research in the programme.

HKCOG Research Course

The HKCOG, through its Research Subcommittee will conduct a research course at least every 3 years depending on the number of trainees. The course usually will take a full day with full 8 hours of instruction.

The aims of the course are:

- (a) To teach basic statistical methodology of clinical medical research
- (b) To teach the proper conduct of a research project