

# Guidance for use of Outcome 5s for delays due to COVID: Summer 2021 ARCP season

## 1. Background and context:

Some specialties have indicated that due to timings of delayed and rescheduled exams at critical progression points, there is uncertainty about the time limits for outcome 5s. For example, for a small number of GP specialty trainees the timing of additional diets of RCA means that the result will not be known until 10 weeks after the latest ARCP date scheduled aligned to the expected CCT date.

Currently GG8:4.91, footnote 12 gives an maximum time limit of 8 weeks from the ARCP for the O5 review of missing evidence to enable the progression assessment and an O3/10.2 would be required to bridge the gap with a further ARCP to review the O3/10.2. This has the potential to increase the burden of assessment for trainees and educators in addition to increasing the administrative burden managing ARCPs.

The four nation Statutory Education Bodies (SEBs) and Gold Guide Reference Group (GGRG) have debated this issue considering the pros and cons of a COVID O5 derogation extending to maximum of 12 weeks together with unintended consequences.

The outcome of those deliberations is that there should not be an O5 derogation as there is sufficient flexibility in current O5 together with Postgraduate Dean's exceptional discretion (GG8: 1.12).

This document sets out some suggested principles and guidance on how Postgraduate Deans and ARCP teams might apply that exceptional discretion.

## 2. GG8: 4.91 Outcome 5

### Outcome 5

Incomplete evidence presented – Additional training time may be required.

The panel can make no statement about progress or otherwise where either no information or incomplete information has been supplied and/or is available to the ARCP panel.

The panel should agree what outstanding evidence is required from the trainee and the timescale in which it must be provided to be able to issue an outcome.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> **Footnote 12:** An Outcome 5 might be viewed as a 'holding position' to allow the missing evidence to be provided for the ARCP panel to review; that review would normally be **no more than 8 weeks from the date of the ARCP Outcome 5.**

## Management of Outcome 5s (COVID) March 2021

If the panel considers that an Outcome 1 is likely on the basis of the evidence available and satisfactory outstanding evidence is received, the panel can give authority to the Chair to issue an Outcome 1. However, if the Chair does not receive the agreed evidence to support an Outcome 1 or if the panel considers that an Outcome 2, 3 or 4 is likely on the basis of the evidence available, then a panel will be reconvened. This reconvened panel could be undertaken 'virtually'.

An Outcome 5 should also be recommended as a consequence of failure to submit Form R or SOAR (paragraphs 4.126 and 4.127).

### Suggested exceptional derogation by HEE Deans (GG8:1.12)

*This period may be extended up to a maximum of 12 weeks from the ARCP Outcome 5, where the reason for the Outcome 5 is due to a delayed or rescheduled examination (because of COVID) and where the result will be known within 12 weeks of the ARCP Outcome 5. The COVID O5 (extended up to 12 weeks) should NOT be used if this transgresses a progression point.*

**Outcome 5:** is used as a “holding outcome” where there is insufficient evidence, and an assessment of progression cannot be made at that time. Therefore, it might be viewed as an **administrative outcome** to give time for the supporting information (which might be an outstanding exam result) to be presented.

## Outcome 5s



- **Outcome 5:** is used as a “holding outcome” where there is insufficient evidence (including exam result), and an assessment of progression cannot be made at that time.
- Outcome 5s are time limited up to max of 8 weeks from ARCP (GG8:4.91).
- If at ARCP, the review of progression is dependent on an exam result which would be known within 8 weeks of the ARCP then O5 could legitimately be used.
- O5 should NOT be used if an exam has been cancelled, unless it is rescheduled, and the result known within the maximum 8 -week period for an O5.
- ARCP panels should assess and review evidence and agree likely appropriate outcomes to be enacted at O5 review

### 3. Principles for flexibility in Outcome 5s (HEE Deans)

1. The use of an O5 outside of the 8-week limit should be restricted to awaiting the outcome of a critical progression assessment such as an exam.
2. The maximum period for exceptional discretion for O5 **should not exceed 12 weeks.**
3. ARCP panels can and should review all the evidence and have decided on the likely outcomes dependent on the exam result so that when the O5 is reviewed the ARCP Chair can review the outcome and convert to the agreed appropriate outcome without the need to convene a separate ARCP panel. This streamlines the process and reduces the perceived burden of assessment for trainees and educators.
4. It is good practice managing expectations, for trainees to be briefed on the likely outcomes prior to the ARCP, which may be appropriate for the educational supervisor/TPD conversation with trainees ahead of the ARCP.
5. HEE Deans should accept the “quality assurance hit” when ARCPs outcomes are reviewed externally where an O5 has been applied over 8-week limit.
6. Where an exceptional derogation is made, the ARCP administration notes should record the justification / reasons why, for the audit trail and to facilitate quality management monitoring.