

**RPA 2000 Guidance Documents**

**GD4: Frequently Asked Questions about MPE Career Breaks and MPE Audits**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Individuals on the RPA 2000 MPE certificate holders list (referred to as the “MPE list”) are required to annually declare that they wish to remain in the MPE list, confirm they are working as an MPE and that they are doing CPD in accordance with their CPD scheme. They must also pay any MPE continuing recognition fees to RPA 2000 in order to remain on the MPE list.

Individuals on the MPE list will be selected at random and invited to participate in the RPA 2000 MPE audit. It is recognised that in some instances, individuals may be unable to participate in the MPE audit. This document is intended to help answer some common questions relating to MPEs having career breaks and the MPE audit.

## 2 MPE CAREER BREAKS, WORKING ABROAD & RETIREMENT

Career breaks can be taken for a number of reasons, and for many MPEs this is a choice that they actively make, for example individuals may choose to work outside of the UK, or take a temporary career break and not work during this period. To help inform MPEs on what to do when they take a career break, and how a career break will affect their status on the MPE list, the following situations have been identified.

### 2.1 Temporary career break of up to 2 years

You can take a break of up to two years and remain on the MPE list. However, you must inform RPA 2000 in writing of the length of time you will be away from work. You will also be required to complete your RPA 2000 annual declaration and pay any MPE continuing recognition fees to RPA 2000 to remain on the MPE list.

### 2.2 Career break for 2-5 years

If you plan to take a career break and not carry out work of relevance to the MPE Syllabus for more than two years and less than five years, you may remain on the MPE list so long as you continue to participate in one of the recognised CPD schemes, complete your RPA 2000 annual declaration, and pay any MPE continuing recognition fees to RPA 2000. You must inform RPA 2000 in writing of the length of time you will be away from work. You will automatically be selected to participate in the next routine MPE audit after you have returned to work.

Alternatively, you can request that you are removed from the list of MPE certificate holders. You would then not be required to complete your RPA 2000 annual declaration or pay any MPE continuing recognition fees. To rejoin the MPE list you will need to follow the initial MPE application process (as outlined in documents MPE 1 and MPE 2).

### 2.3 Career break for more than 5 years

If you plan to take a career break and not carry out work of relevance to the MPE Syllabus for more than 5 years, you must inform RPA 2000. You will be removed from the MPE list. To rejoin the MPE list you will need to follow the initial MPE application process (as outlined in documents MPE 1 and MPE 2).

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## **2.4 Working abroad in an MPE role**

If you work outside the UK you may remain on the MPE list providing you annually declare that you are working as an MPE (or an equivalent overseas role), and that you are doing CPD in accordance with a recognised CPD scheme. (As part of your CPD you should ensure your knowledge of IRMER is maintained.) You must also pay any MPE continuing recognition fees to RPA 2000 in order to remain on the MPE list.

## **2.5 Retirement/no longer working as an MPE**

If you are retiring and will no longer be working as an MPE please inform RPA 2000 and you will be removed from the MPE list.

# **3 THE MPE AUDIT**

When an MPE is invited to complete the MPE audit, they are given a specific date (usually three months) by which this information must be received by RPA 2000. Applicants are personally responsible for the timely submission of the audit response.

Extenuating circumstances may need to be taken into consideration when an individual is requested to undertake the audit, for example medical conditions or career breaks, and the Assessment Secretary is given the discretion to make allowances where appropriate. MPEs need to give priority to their audit and citing work pressures for any delays or extension requests is not usually considered to be an extenuating circumstance.

To help inform MPEs of likely scenarios where they might find the audit difficult to complete, some common situations have been identified. Where an actual situation varies from those identified, this will be reviewed by the Assessment Secretary before reaching a decision.

### **3.1 I will be going on maternity/paternity leave/taking a career break. Will I still have to do the CPD audit while not at work?**

RPA 2000 recognises that some MPEs may need to defer their MPE ongoing recognition audit, either due to being absent from work or due to the time required to submit their audit response. This may be as a result of illness, family circumstances, maternity/paternity leave, planned career break etc.

Any MPE selected for audit can write to the RPA 2000 and ask for a deferral. The MPE will need to provide evidence of the reason why they cannot submit for audit, and this will be reviewed by the Assessment Secretary. If an audit is deferred the MPE will automatically be pre-selected for audit the following year. If an MPE needs to apply for deferral more than once, the Assessment Secretary in collaboration with the RPA 2000 Board will review the application to look for clear evidence that a deferral is absolutely necessary.

### **3.2 I have missed the deadline to provide the audit response/further audit information request, as requested by RPA 2000. What should I do?**

If RPA 2000 are notified of any extenuating circumstances, it may be possible to extend the deadline for audit response or the deadline for request for further information.

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If there are no extenuating circumstances, you will be deemed to have failed the audit and you will be removed from the MPE list. To rejoin the MPE list you will need to follow the initial MPE application process (as outlined in documents MPE 1 and MPE 2).

**3.3 I have had a significant amount of time off work in the past 5 years and have now been invited to complete the MPE audit. I haven't had many opportunities to attend conferences. What should I do?**

If you have been off work for a significant period over the 5 year audit period and are selected for audit, inform RPA 2000 as soon as you receive your audit invitation, and provide details of the length of time you were away from work.

If you have worked as an MPE at any point within the 5 year audit period it is expected that you will be able to provide the required operational evidence. However, RPA 2000 recognises that you may have had limited opportunities to attend meetings and conferences and as a result may not achieve the full 25 points for learning based activities. In these situations, a sliding scale of learning based points can be applied, see below. Note that there is no reduction in points for being absent from work for 6 months or less.

Time absent from work in the 5 year audit period	Minimum number of required learning Based points
7-12 months	20
1-2 years	15
2-3 years	10
3-4 years	5

**3.4 I have not worked as an MPE in the past 5 years and have now been invited to complete the MPE Audit. What should I do?**

If you have not been able to work as an MPE at all in the previous 5 years, inform RPA 2000 as soon as you receive your audit invitation. You will be removed from the list of MPEs. To rejoin the MPE list you will need to follow the initial MPE application process (as outlined in documents MPE 1 and MPE 2).

**3.5 The evidence I submitted for my audit was deemed unsatisfactory and I failed the audit. What happens next?**

If you have failed the audit, and not provided any extenuating circumstances, you will be removed from the MPE list. To rejoin the MPE list you will need to follow the initial MPE application process (as outlined in documents MPE 1 and MPE 2).

You have the right of appeal to the Board within one calendar month of being notified of the audit result, and the appeals process is the same as with other RPA2000 certification schemes. You may appeal the audit outcome based on procedural matters related to the audit process. Appeals against judgements of assessors or other decisions made by the audit panel will not be accepted.

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