

Study Leave and Study Budget Arrangements

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This document has been revised following approval by the HEE DEQ Senior Leadership Team on guidance from the HEE national working group on Study Leave Arrangements, and recommendation from COPMeD



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Accessing centralised study leave and study budgets – a guide for trainees

1. What is Study Leave?

Study leave is defined in the 2016 National T&Cs as leave that allows time, inside or outside of the workplace, for formal learning that meets the requirements of the curriculum and personalised training objectives. This will include regional educational events where the time is protected.

2. What is Study Budget?

Study budget is defined as funding to facilitate attendance at approved training events.

3. Why did the Study Budget process change?

Many trainees had experienced inconsistency and inequity when accessing the study budget which has led to frustration with the old system. The Study Budget changes were made to address these concerns as part of Health Education England's (HEE) initiative 'Enhancing Junior Doctor Working Lives'.

Previously, money for study leave was part of the 'Education and Training Tariff' (aka Tariff) which Trusts received to support doctors working in 'educationally recognised posts'. HEE made a decision to hold back a proportion of this money to manage it centrally through its local offices (i.e. HEE Thames Valley); the aim of this change to improve study leave access nationally, enhancing the educational training available to trainees and funding support.

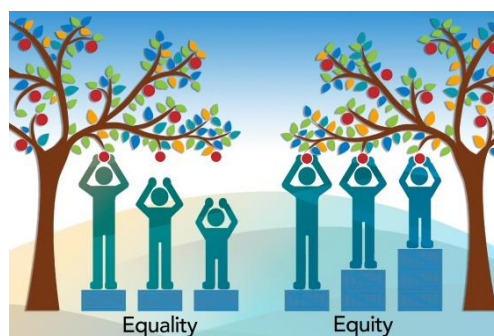
The money is no longer attached to a post (and was never attached to an individual), but the total sum was not increased when the changes were implemented on 6 April 2018 and is unlikely to be increased in the foreseeable future. Funding is available for doctors in secondary care training posts and those training in NHS funded Occupational Medicine pots. Doctors employed by the military should seek funding from the Defence Deanery.

No trainee should expect to be granted a specific sum each financial or training year, nor is there a requirement on the part of HEE TV to fully fund every request made, particularly those not directly aligned to curriculum requirements or the GMC Generic Professional Capabilities (2019) framework.

4. What are the benefits of the new process?

The new HEE-managed centralised process should make accessing study leave and study budgets a more transparent, equitable, and streamlined process for all trainees in programmes in England.

N.B. Equity is not the same as equality: it is well recognised that training in some specialties is more expensive than others. The undertaking to cover the costs of training events to achieve curriculum requirements ensures equity of achievement for trainees in all specialties. Equality ensures everyone has the potential to access an opportunity, not that they will be able to achieve it. The graphic below illustrates the difference.



Equality is shown on the left where everyone has a box of the same height (or funding of the same value) but they can't all reach the apples (or attend the necessary courses). On the right, everyone has a box of the height (or value of funding) to reach their goal; this is equity.

There is a clearer definition of how the study budget should be used to support individual professional development. This includes:

- Covering costs of educational courses/activities that support curriculum attainment
- Agreement that NHS Trusts will cover costs of all mandatory training required to fulfil the trainee's clinical role which are not part of the specialty curriculum
- Guidance on what the study budget *will not* cover e.g. College examination fees
- Provision of discretionary funding for individualised training opportunities.

Centralised oversight will enable HEE to:

- better monitor the courses trainees are attending
- promote high educational standards for courses
- consider funding and implementing high quality local courses for the training initiatives in highest demand – reducing trainee costs and improving trainee access to these learning opportunities.

Currently the new process will **not apply to trainees in Public Health, GP trainees in their GP placements or Dentistry**. Trainees in these programmes should refer to their Head of School for guidance.

5. Gold Guide 7th Edition 2018¹

The Gold Guide states that access to study leave should form part of the educational contract between Postgraduate Deans and providers of postgraduate medical educational placements. It highlights the Postgraduate Deans responsibility to ensure less than full time (LTFT) trainees have equitable access to study leave. Doctors on maternity or paternity leave can access study leave and budget for training events.

¹ A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Specialty Training in the UK, The Gold Guide v7, <https://www.copmed.org.uk/gold-guide-7th-edition/the-gold-guide-7th-edition>

The Gold Guide also encourages trainees on career breaks to keep up to date by attending educational events but stipulates that there is no entitlement to study budget for this.

6. Terms and Conditions of Service for NHS Doctors and Dentists in Training (England) 2016²

The terms and conditions related to study leave are covered in Schedule 9 and state the following:

1. Study leave must be used for the purposes for which it is granted.
2. Study leave includes but is not restricted to participation in:
 - Study (linked to a course or programme)
 - Research programmes
 - Teaching remote from the immediate workplace (e.g. faculty member/ ALS instructor etc.)
 - Time off to sit an examination
 - Attending conferences for educational benefit
 - Rostered training events such as 'Academic half days', study days provided within Post-Graduate School education programmes
3. Attending NHS Trust statutory and mandatory training is not counted as study leave.
4. All requests for study leave will be properly considered by the employer. Any grant of study leave will be subject to the need to maintain NHS services (and, where the doctor is on an integrated academic pathway, academic responsibilities) and must be authorised by the employer.
5. Study leave up to the limits described in Table 1 below will normally be granted flexibly and tailored to individual needs, in accordance with the requirements of the curriculum. Requests for study leave in excess of these limits should be considered fairly where circumstances indicate such requests to be reasonable and may be granted by the employer provided that the needs of service delivery can be safely met.

² Terms and Conditions of Service for NHS Doctors and Dentists in Training (England) 2016, Version 2, 30 March 2017

<http://www.nhsemployers.org/~media/Employers/Documents/Need%20to%20know/Terms%20and%20Conditions%20of%20Service%20for%20NHS%20Doctors%20and%20Dentists%20in%20Training%20England%202016%20Version%202%2030%20March%202017.pdf>

6. Table 1: Study Leave allowance for trainees.

Grade	Up to x days per annum
Foundation Doctor Year 1 * F1 doctors may 'bring forward' five days from F2 to organise a taster placement in their intended core or specialty programme.	15 (normally all are used to deliver the F1 teaching programmes in Trusts)
All other Doctors in training	30 (normally 15 days are used up in the regular teaching and training provided through the local school programmes)

7. Study leave for Foundation Year 1 doctors will take the form of a regular scheduled teaching/training session as agreed locally. Study leave attendance at ILS and simulation are usually included in this.
8. Study leave for doctors at Foundation Year 2 will include periods of regular scheduled teaching/training sessions, and may also, with approval from the educational supervisor and service manager, include:
- Undertaking an approved external course
 - Periods of sitting an examination for a higher qualification or attending a preparatory course.

NB. Doctors in foundation programmes are directed to read the study leave document on the Foundation school pages of this website for clear instruction on what may be applied for.

9. Study leave for doctors in core and specialties will include periods of regular scheduled teaching/training sessions, and may also, with approval from the educational supervisor and service manager, include:
- Undertaking an approved external course
 - Periods of sitting an examination for a higher qualification or attending a preparatory course.
10. For AFC's and ACL any grant of study leave will be subject to:
- The same rules as trainees not on the academic pathway
 - The study leave is for clinical education but may be taken in academic time where necessary e.g. if a clinical course is only available in academic time.
11. Doctors who are OOP (Research) are being funded and employed outside training, in positions which do not attract a placement fee and thus this cannot be 'top sliced' through HEE to provide study budgets. The employer is expected to meet necessary costs.
- For doctors who are OOP(T) there is study budget funding available to allow curriculum progression only. This must be approved by the 'host' employer for

leave of absence, and by the 'home' TPD in Thames valley as HEETV will be meeting the fees incurred and therefore need to be aware in advance. Doctors who are OOP(E) are not acquiring curriculum competencies per se as the post is not recognised for training. Doctors on a career break (OOPC) are similarly taking a break from training. Applications for funding whilst on OOP E and OOP C will be considered on a case by case basis by the Associate Dean responsible for study leave in HEE TV.

12. A doctor on a contract of employment of less than 12 months' duration is entitled to study leave on a pro rata basis.
13. Where a doctor working less than full time (LTFT) is required to undertake a specific training course required by the curriculum, which exceeds the pro rata entitlement to study leave, the employer will make arrangements for additional study leave to be taken, provided that this can be done while ensuring safe delivery of services. LTFT trainees will have the costs of events reimbursed at the same rate as full time trainees.
14. Where a doctor takes maternity leave their entitlement to study leave continues, and this may be taken during 'keeping in touch' days or will otherwise accrue to be taken at a later date.
15. Academic Trainees will have equitable access to the study budget.
16. Doctors in Period of Grace have no access to study budget under any circumstances as by definition, they are no longer in training.

7. What are my responsibilities when planning study leave?

Trainee

- Discuss personal development plan and educational activities with Named Clinical supervisor (CS)/Educational Supervisor (ES) at start of training placement and note in your Personal Development Plan (PDP)
- Complete learning agreement with ES at your induction meeting
- Identify a relevant course or period of leave and complete the HEE TV study leave application form. **NB please read FAQs and your School guidance on the deanery website for what is likely to be approved or rejected**
- **Obtain approval for time off the rota from your rota co-ordinator at least 6 weeks before the event AND**
- **Obtain approval from your Named CS / ES / departmental educational lead / College Tutor for educational activity as soon as the absence request has been approved. They will confirm that the proposed activity is appropriate for the stage of training you are at**
- **Submit the forms to your Trust Study Leave Officer as soon as possible and certainly BEFORE you go on the course, ideally six weeks prior to the event, and a minimum of one week prior.**

- **If your application includes international travel, please also forward the signed form to HEETV for final authorisation – studyleave.tv@hee.nhs.uk**
- Ensure you book the event / leave period
- Update your ePortfolio with evidence of attendance after event
- Submit expense claim with receipts to Postgraduate Centre / Education Centre manager within 12 weeks of attendance of the event. NB it is your responsibility to register with the system used at your employing organisation (i.e. usually the Trust)
- Inform Postgraduate Centre if you do not attend an event for any reason (e.g. event cancelled, illness etc.)
- **No retrospective application for time, with or without funding, nor claim made more than 12 weeks after an approved event will be reimbursed. No claim without a receipt can be processed.**

Educational Supervisor (or Named Clinical Supervisor if not working on same site as ES)

- Discuss personal development and study leave plans with trainee
- Clarify appropriate courses/educational activities to support curriculum attainment **NB there are lists for each stage of training for all programmes on the Oxford Deanery website of what is considered essential. Trainees are also directed to check before requesting your agreement to support the request**
- Authorise study leave in timely manner (within 2 weeks of application receipt)
- **Do not approve retrospective requests for either study leave or study budget**

8. Accessing funding for events not listed as 'essential'

Discretionary funding may be available to trainees for training events which add value to the individual and support the wider system, but are not 'essential' for curriculum completion. Ideally these will map to specific domains in the GMC's Generic Professional Capabilities framework 2019. If you plan to apply for such funding, discuss early with your ES/TPD and make sure you have achieved your required curriculum and competencies to support your application. These requests will be referred to your TPD / Head of School, and occasionally the Associate Dean so please ensure you leave good time for enquiries

9. International study leave requests

HEE will allow one application per programme if in Foundation, Core / IMT1 or Higher programmes, or one every three years if in a run-through programme (e.g. Paediatric, O&G, Ophthalmology).

If attending an international opportunity is evidenced to be cheaper than a UK alternative/equivalent, then the international opportunity will usually be approved and would not count as the one occurrence above.

If service requirements prevent a trainee in attending a UK based educational opportunity, an international alternative/equivalent could be considered.

As part of the approvals process, requests to attend overseas study courses/conferences will only be considered in very exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances include:

- for the presentation of significant research findings from within an NIHR recognised academic clinical fellowship or clinical lectureship
- for the presentation of research undertaken as part of a clinical training programme
- where the training course is not available in the UK
- where the course or activity is part of the college curriculum or guidelines on required training
- where the course is set out as a mandatory requirement of college training to reach the required qualification to practice

For international study leave requests where the individual will be presenting, such applications should take priority.

The course/conference must provide a clearly stated curriculum outcome and there must be a documented discussion with the ES about the clear need of the course/conference to meet curriculum requirements.

A full programme should be provided. A report covering the entirety of the leave may be requested from the doctor in training after attendance.

Any contribution to funding of such leave will need the prior written approval of the HEE local Postgraduate Dean.

International study leave should occur when the learning outcomes from the course/conference are not available in the UK (joint societies with a UK and Ireland remit for these purposes are considered as UK). The DHSC has made requirements clear in the tariff publication for 19/20.4

HEE Deans have agreed the following principles:

For approved international study leave applications, HEE will consider funding either the full cost of the course/conference fees or the full cost of economy travel and accommodation whichever is the lower amount. For accommodation, in alignment with the agreed maximum rate for study budget claims within the UK, the overnight rate should not exceed £150 per night. Subsistence expenses will not usually be reimbursed by HEE.

If further periods of international study leave are required this will be considered on a case by case basis by the Associate Dean, and budget allowing.

10. Appeals Process

If your application is not approved for educational reasons, this will be communicated to you in writing, normally by email. You may appeal on this ground only, not if leave cannot be granted for service capacity reasons, by making a written submission to Health Education England, Thames Valley. This should include the reason/s for his/her complaint and any evidence to support the appeal. All written

submissions must be sent via email or as an attachment, with the original application form and outcome received. This should be emailed to studyleave.tv@hee.nhs.uk and must be made within 10 working days of being notified of the outcome. Two members of the Senior Leadership Team at HEE, TV will review the decision made, taking into account the evidence submitted and HEE TV's Study Leave Policy. The decision following appeals is final; there is no further right of appeal.

Study budget DOES COVER	Study budget DOES NOT COVER
Courses or activities such as workshops to help you achieve the curriculum	Post graduate exam fees. These are your financial responsibility
Courses to help you pass postgraduate exams (NB one course per stage of exam)	Any Statutory and / or Mandatory training required by your employer. Your employer must bear the cost of these
Discretionary courses that add value to you individually and support the wider system (NB please read detail in this guidance and on your School / specialty pages on Oxford Deanery website)	Any revision aides, such as books, online tutorials/ MCQs etc. These are your personal financial responsibility

How can I access study leave and budget?

