

Study Budget

Principles for Approving Educational Activities in HEE Thames Valley and Wessex Dental School

Background

Study budget reforms are being introduced to deliver equity of access to educational resources on individual need and to facilitate improved quality, efficiency, flexibility, and transparency. The principles for approving study-budget-funded educational activities have been developed through consultation with trainees, their representative bodies, Colleges, Specialty Advisory Committees, and Faculties.

We are moving away from a notional individual annual allocation of study leave funding that varies, to implement a system whereby HEE supports:

- All trainees on approved dental core and specialty training programmes to achieve their curriculum outcomes.
- Discretionary or career enhancing activity and courses that add value to the individual and support the wider system.

A proportion of funding will be pooled from the secondary care/community trust/General Dental Service (GDS) placement rate to provide support for all trainees irrespective of post type (tariff – or Trust-funded). HEE TV&W will capture data on study budget funded activities from October 2018. Heads of Schools and Training Programme Directors will monitor and evaluate the range of funded educational activity undertaken to ensure that it is fit for purpose, providing quality and value for money.

Out of Scope Activities

- Funding and time for statutory and mandatory training is an employer responsibility and will not come from the Study Budget/Study Leave Days.

Approved Activities

- Colleges, Specialty Advisory Committees, and Faculties should describe expected capabilities and outcomes but not make mandate generic or

specific courses. High quality locally delivered activity is preferred where possible.

- Colleges, Specialty Advisory Committees, and Faculties should recommend a range of educational activities or courses that could be grouped around specific themes aligned to the curriculum that will help Schools maximise the resource.
- Colleges and local education providers may play a role in delivering courses aligned to the curriculum.
- The curriculum revision process is an opportunity to review how curriculum outcomes are delivered and what out-of-placement activities should be supported to achieve those outcomes. Master's degrees require consideration.
- It is essential that courses are quality assured.

Principles that constitute quality training activity

- Principles should be applied across specialties with the understanding that some specialities will require a greater proportion of the budget than others and that some curriculum stages will require a greater proportion of the budget than others.
- Delivery of curricula objectives based on individual requirements is the primary consideration.
- A good educational activity or course is aligned to the curriculum, receives positive feedback from trainees and faculty and offers value for money.
- Heads of Schools could improve efficiency by delivering local training where possible and release resource to reinvest in training.
- Data on current activity should be mapped against curricula to ensure that funds are utilised correctly. This will be essential to delivering quality educational activity that meets trainee and local needs.
- Management and leadership skills development should normally be supported.
- Exam preparation courses are supported.

Study Leave for Special Circumstances: Aspirational and International Activity

HEE Deans have agreed that:

- Educational or professional development activities mapping to the above is no longer called 'aspirational'. Going forward, aspirational study leave should be granted for: 'educational or professional development opportunities that enhance knowledge, skills and attitudes of the dentist in

training, or enhances any aspect of patient care, but is not mapped to any direct curriculum requirements.

- That study leave is granted dependent on the needs of the trainee to fulfil the curriculum. This is not dependent on the previous RCP outcome.

Given that best practice in many specialties is now shared at European and global meetings, the lack of ability to attend international courses/conference may hamper advancing of medical knowledge and service development. This may also have unintended consequences of preventing quality improvement within the NHS.

For these special aspirational circumstances:

- One international conference/meeting, providing all other curriculum requirements are met, will be considered for each dentist in training for any one programme, which can be defined as Core or Specialty or otherwise every three years.
- The educational supervisor should be aware of aspirations and performance to assess whether the request is aligned to the trainee's personal development plan, which may contain items in addition to curriculum requirements.
- Reasonable adjustments and consideration of individual circumstances must be given for aspirational study leave applications (including international) from trainees with protected characteristics.
- For such activities, part-funding may be considered reflecting both HEE and the trainee's commitment to the enrichment.
- HEE funding of postgraduate diplomas and degrees must be rationalised by an established link to the curriculum and a commitment that the qualification will be integral to the dentist's future career.

International Study Leave

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.

As specified in the Aspirational Study Leave section above, one international/meeting, providing all other curriculum requirements are met, will be considered for each dentist in training for one programme, which can be defined as Core or Specialty or otherwise every three years.

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 one of the occurrence above.

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

HEE Deans have agreed the following principles:

Attendance at a course/conference should be taken as close to the base of the trainee as possible.

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.

As part of the approvals process, requests to attend overseas 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 dentist in training after attendance.

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

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

If a dentist in training wishes to fund a period of international study leave by other means, the ES should still ensure the activity aligns to the curriculum or personal development plan. This must be the case for any period of international study leave irrespective of how it is funded.

Communicating the reforms and underpinning principles to trainees

- HEE should develop communications for dissemination through as many channels as possible with consistent messaging.
- The study budget process should be communicated to trainees at induction.
- Colleges and Specialty Advisory Committees should support the dissemination of guidance to their specialty trainees.

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