Study Leave Guidelines for Doctors in Training

All doctors in approved training posts (except F1 doctors) are entitled to annual study leave. The educational approval of study leave and its funding is vested in the Director of Medical Education, in collaboration with the College / Speciality Tutor/ FPD and taking into account service needs within the Trust. This guidance provides clarity about what is approved, the number of days available, and the control of the budget.

**Background**

Study leave is for the purposes of exam courses and exams, educational courses, conferences, teaching, research, visiting other specialities and private study for an exam (maximum of 5 days). Priority should be given to educational courses provided within Wessex. Each event must be approved by the trainee's Educational Supervisor and documented on their E Portfolio. Study leave is **not** available for interviews, as the department where the trainee is working should release them. A personal record should be kept of study leave which will be reviewed at the ARCP. The Medical Education Department keeps a database of all study leave.

**Allowance**

The job contract for trainees allows for 30 days study leave per year whilst at SFT. Local and regionally led training programmes usually count for up half of the study leave available. The remaining 15 days may be used for 'external' purposes as above.

It is possible for the DME to approve up to 30 days study leave where trainees can demonstrate that there are no local or regional training programmes or it is impossible for trainees to attend or where there are no research or other study sessions in their weekly rotas.

In posts where the trainee has several placements within SFT the study leave should be taken pro-rata, as much as possible.

Trainees can apply for up to 5 days of private study in the six weeks prior to an exam. For Foundation Year 2 doctors, this allowance is 2 days. Only one period of private study leave per exam is allowed.

The H@NT course (all F2s and ST 1/2 in surgical specialities) is obligatory for all new H@NT doctors and takes 1 day of study leave, despite being run over 2 days. F1s undertake an ALS course and 2 days of study leave is ‘borrowed’ from their F2 allowance for them to do so.

Study leave to attend international conferences etc. will only be granted if the equivalent curriculum requirements cannot be obtained in the UK. One such aspirational meeting/conference is permitted in each training programme i.e. Foundation/Core/Higher

**Application**

For Deanery trainees all study leave has to be applied for via the Accent system. Please contact Anna Spicer (anna.spicer@nhs.net) if you do not have access to this system

For locally-employed doctors, they have a separate study leave application form. Once this has been completed and signed by the doctor and rota coordinator, the form should be sent to sft.studyleave.doctors@nhs.net for Medical Education and DME approval.

**Deanery approval**

Trainees need Training Programme Director (TPD) and Deanery approval in the following circumstances, before they apply for study leave on Accent:

* Any expenses more than £750 (combining cost of course fees, accommodation, travel, subsistence etc.)
* Any international conference/course regardless of cost

Please E-mail your TPD, if they approve the study leave request, forward this to studyleave.wx@hee.nhs.uk for final approval and then send a copy of the approval E-mail to Anna Spicer.

Locally-employed doctors should E-mail the DME directly (e.halliwell@nhs.net) for this prior approval.

**Expenses**

As of April 2018 the previously agreed study leave ‘funding limit’ no longer applies. Clearly there is not an unlimited fund but the agreement is that funding for study leave will meet curriculum requirements. There is recognition that different specialties have different requirements and as a result trainees will, by definition, have access to differing levels of funding. In general trainees should be meeting core curriculum requirements before considering discretionary enhancement activity. Funding may also be available from charitable sources e.g. the Salisbury Hospitals Foundation Trust.

The cost of one preparation/revision course per exam can be funded from the study leave budget. Any additional exam preparation courses for the same exam will not be covered and you will need to fund these yourself.

External or commercially run courses will only be funded if no local course is offered - it is expected that the least expensive courses will be selected.

The following limits on funding apply:

* In the case of exams, funding can be used for accommodation and travel only, not exam fees.
* Claims over £750 or claims for international events have to have prior approval by the trainee’s TPD and the Deanery. The DME needs to approval prospectively any expenses over £750 for locally-employed doctors.
* Overnight accommodation will be reimbursed to a maximum of £120 per night or £150 per night if in London.
* Deanery approved international events will be reimbursed to a maximum of £1000. The course or the accommodation and travel will be reimbursed (whichever is lower), and subsistence cannot be claimed
* Mileage is calculated as distance from home or SDH to the course venue, whichever is smaller, and is reimbursed at 30p/mile.
* Subsistence can be claimed up to £15 a day for an evening meal in the case of a residential event.

**Reimbursement of expenses**

This is a paper-based process. Expense forms are available from the Education Centre and should be completed as soon as possible after the leave (within 3 months). They need to be submitted with **receipts**, and the **course certificate**.

Please email your claim form with the certificate and receipts to sft.studyleave.doctors@nhs.net.

Funding will only be approved if the trainee is up to date with their MLE e-learning and Learn Pro blood transfusion training.

Reimbursement will occur through payroll.

**Summary**

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| **Trainee** | **Days** | **Funding** |
| Foundation year 1 | 0 days (up to 5 days for ‘tasters’) | £0 |
| Foundation year 2 | 12 days (+ 3 days for ALS and H@NT) | No individual cap |
| All other trainees | 15 days (up to 30 days as above) | No individual cap |



Dr Emma Halliwell, Director of Medical Education, 2023