

NON- MEDICAL STUDY LEAVE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY	Policy Register No 09074 Status: Public
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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy seeks to provide a fair, equitable and consistent framework for the allocation of study leave in relation to education, training and development. Priority will be given to study leave development opportunities that meet the business and service requirements of the Trust.
- 1.2 This policy has been devised to help clinicians, managers and staff to develop good practice in all aspects of education, training and development, and:
- Places the Individual Performance and Development Review process at the centre of development, identifying, and prioritising staff development
 - Ensures all available resources are planned and used in the most cost effective way to add value to service delivery
 - Encourages staff to take responsibility for, and make a commitment to their own learning
- 1.3 The policy sets down the process for the allocation and agreement of study leave and funding

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Patients and their families depend on the skills and knowledge of our staff. The Trust recognises this and is committed to developing each and every person to his or her fullest potential. Study funding and associated leave represents a significant investment in the people and services of the organisation.
- 2.2 Study leave allocation must be linked to the Trust's service and strategic planning process and to national drivers for education and training to ensure that staff are appropriately skilled to fulfill the Trust's objectives.
- 2.3 The learning needs of all staff are equally important. Staff should experience equality of access and opportunity to study funding and leave in order to develop and maintain their knowledge and skills throughout their career.
- 2.4 The provision of study funding and leave in an open and transparent manner supports this commitment by extending the opportunities both for formal learning and development activities.
- 2.5 Study funding is allocated and planned on a yearly basis linked to the business planning cycle. Training plans and requests are submitted to the Head of Learning and Development, and appropriate funding agreed within a finite budget. The Trust also receives external income for specific professional education and training, and this is taken into account when allocating Trust internal funding to ensure equity of access across all areas
- 2.6 Because study funding and leave require significant resources, the allocation and agreement must be considered in the context of other resource demands. All study funding requests which total £2000.00 or over will require the signing of a learning agreement which will enable the trust to redeem any funding agreed if the individual is in breach of the terms of the agreement. To ensure optimal use of limited funds, the allocation must therefore

must also be linked to other resource implications. As a minimum, these should include an assessment of:

- The drivers underpinning the study leave application and applicability to the service objectives.
- Relevance and benefit to service delivery and patient care outcomes.
- Overall directorate financial position and other operating constraints
- The mandatory training, attendance and sickness record of the individual applicant

3.0 Scope

3.1 This policy applies to all staff, with the exception of medical and dental who are covered by the study support and leave policy for medical staff.

3.2 Study leave is granted over and above the Mandatory and role related essential training allocation. Mandatory/role related training requirements will vary between staff groups and is defined commensurate with the responsibilities of the role

3.3 This policy includes statements that relate to people who have disabilities or language difficulties. HR, People & Organisational Development, and Managers will address these needs as necessary, and wherever possible make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the need.

3.4 Study Leave refers to leave which is allocated in relation to:

- Short courses, conferences, seminars, workshops and any active learning opportunities arranged either internally or with other organisations and education providers
- In-house education and training teams
- Academic, professional, apprenticeship/vocational/pre-professional study leave leading to a qualification or award
- Any learning activity approved through charities funding or sponsorship

3.5 The Trust is committed to equal opportunities, and the allocation of study leave must be fair and equitable for all staff, and applied pro-rata for part-time staff.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 The term study is used in this policy to refer to any learning activity that necessitates the individual being released from their 'normal' work duties. The words 'training', 'learning', 'education' and 'development' are often confused. For the purposes of this policy they are all subsumed by the term learning activity, as they are all part of the process of increasing capability, usually of individuals but also of teams and whole organisations.

4.2 The terms study and study leave are used to cover all opportunities for learning activities.

5.0 Duties and Roles

5.1 Any application for study leave is considered in the context of service objectives and desired outcomes balanced with benefit to the individual's development. Access to funding and study leave is therefore to be negotiated between individual staff and their line manager.

5.2 Duties are divided between managers within the directorates, POD, and the individual staff member.

5.2.1 Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all study requirements for funding, with rationale and priority are documented on the training request template (Appendix A), submitted annually to learning and development and clearly linked to the yearly business planning cycle.
- Helping their staff to identify learning needs at their annual appraisal, and noting as part of the development plan, any study funding and leave that is required
- Considering the needs of different work patterns and ensuring that part-time staff and staff who work outside normal hours are not disadvantaged.
- Entering approved study leave is identified on the Health Roster system to ensure the appropriate staffing levels and skill mix is maintained. Pending the development of further fields in the MAPS system, study leave which is not mandatory should be allocated as '*non-stat*'
- Ensuring that a record of the agreed study leave application (Appendix B, section 1), and learning activity agreement (Appendix B, section 2, as appropriate) are kept in the individual's file. This will enable the Trust to redeem funding back from the individual if they do not fulfil all the terms of their learning agreement. This must be produced if required demonstrating the allocation of study leave is open to scrutiny, and can be monitored for equality purposes
- Ensuring that each of their team members do not exceed the allocated amount of study leave / year
- Ensuring that an application form for study funding/leave is completed on a case by case basis **outside the collective yearly return**, and attaching a signed study leave application and learning activity agreement (Appendix B)if the funding exceeds £2000.00.
- Ensuring that study leave feedback and learning is linked back into practice through supervision and reviewed at the yearly Individual Performance Development Review. Using the learning reflection template(Appendix C) is recommended to support the process

5.2.2 Directorate/ Lead Managers are responsible for:

- Demonstrating that they have enabled staff within their directorates to access learning and development opportunities

- Taking account of the study leave requirements within the directorates and ensure that staffing, budgets, and service plans reflect this requirement in a way that shows equity across all staff groups and members
- Signing their approval of the collective training submission (Appendix A), including the relevant applications for study funding, leave and learning activity agreement (Appendix B) This will be taken as proof that relevant discussions have taken place within the directorates, and all parties are clear that the Trust will seek to redeem funding monies where the learning agreement has been breached. Approved study leave is a commitment by the directorate to ensure that every effort is made to release staff to attend study days. The signing of the approval also represents an agreement by the directorate that that they could be financially liable for incurred costs if the individual is withdrawn by the directorate from the agreed learning opportunity. This ensures that the limited education budget is not compromised and can be re-utilised for other areas that have requested support.
- Balancing the benefits of skills gained for the division through supporting the study leave against the financial risk of backfill costs / allocating the appropriate time out for study

5.2.3 Individual staff members are responsible for

- Demonstrating their commitment to the learning activity by undertaking 50% of the identified study in their own time
- Completing a study funding and leave application for all learning activity(Appendix B, section 1) and submitting to the POD Education lead. This applies even if no leave or funding is required in order to enable an entry to be made on their training record
- Completing a learning activity agreement for learning activity over £2000.00 (Appendix B, section 2)
- Maximising the learning activity by attending all approved study sessions and to satisfactorily complete any assignments given
- Contributing to overall learning environment through supervision, coaching and mentorship of team colleagues, as required
- Checking that a copy of the completed and authorised study application form (Appendix B) has been added to their personal file
- Completing a personal Learning Reflection (Appendix C) to be used as evidence of the agreed development during the appraisal process
- Completing an expenses form as appropriate for travel or accommodation and submitting said form, complete with proof of expenditure to the line manager or training and development respectively. Overnight costs will be reimbursed to a maximum agreed amount of £55.00 based on annex N in the Agenda for Change terms and conditions handbook. Expense forms can be downloaded from the intranet

5.2.4 People and Organisational Development are responsible for:

- Recording all learning activity on the Trust database subject to information being submitted

- Producing reports of learning activity as required

5.2.5 The POD Education Lead is responsible for:

- Collating the yearly submissions into an organisational summary to be presented to the Workforce Advisory Group (WAG)
- Ensuring an equitable allocation of limited funds based on a clear criteria, informed by service objectives and Trust workforce and business planning priorities
- Managing the education budget for the Trust centrally to maximise costing efficiencies
- Including a report of learning activity in the monthly workforce report submitted to the Finance and Performance Committee
- Rejecting applications that have not been submitted using the appropriate documentation

6.0 Process

6.1 The process is as follows:

- A collective training request (Appendix A) is completed by each area, approved by the directorate manager/lead and submitted annually to the POD Education Lead. The requests must show explicit links to the service outcomes, and the business planning cycle
- Funding and study applications that are not covered by the core educational contract or annual submission should be made to the POD Education Lead using the study leave application form: (Appendix B) Permission should be sought at **least ten weeks prior to the event of study, as due consideration needs to be given to cover**, rosters etc. If the request is not permitted, reasons for refusal will be given
- A decision regarding funding will be returned within 10 working days of receipt of application
- All applicants must complete a Trust study leave / funding application form (Appendix B, section 1) and send to the Learning and Development department even when funding is not required. This will enable the episode / event to be recorded on the individual staff member's training record.
- All study leave and funding must be agreed with the relevant line manager, budget holder and directorate manager prior to booking it and any associated expenditure or expenses.
- A yearly summary of all learning undertaken will be submitted to the WAG, and Trust Board as required.

7.0 Allocation of Study Leave

- 7.1 The total number of study leave days (comprising of conferences, seminars, day courses, academic, long term degree or vocational study) that an individual may have during a 12 month period (April to March) is dependent on the learning activity approved. All leave awarded should be divided 50:50 between the individual and the directorate. For example a learning activity that involves 12 study days will be supported by the Trust for 6 days. The individual is expected to undertake the other 6 study days in their own time.
- 7.1.1 **E x c e p t i o n s** to this allocation are roles which have an agreed study allocation built into said role. This is usually due to a specialist/research agreement or a post that is jointly funded with academic partners.
- 7.2 In agreeing long term educational leave, the budget holder will be required to consider the affordability of approving the leave and service demands. This will limit the number of staff able to access it in any one academic year and needs to be planned accordingly.
- 7.3 To support the planning process, any learning activity which lasts for more than one year should be considered for the study leave support and agreed for the full learning activity period.
- 7.4 Irrespective of the length of the learning activity and the leave agreed, funding can only be agreed on a yearly basis. There is no guarantee that funding will be able to be provided for future academic years.
- 7.5 Staff undertaking courses involving examinations should request study leave in the same way as they would for the learning activity.
- 7.6 Re-sits of examinations should be undertaken in members of staff's own time i.e. annual leave and at their own cost.
- 7.7 In exceptional circumstances, additional leave may be granted but this has to be formally agreed with the Directorate Manager. Any additional days are usually taken either as annual leave or unpaid leave in agreement with the manager. Unpaid leave must be recorded appropriately by the manager on the relevant salary return form if the area is not on HealthRoster so that pay is withheld as directed.

8.0 Subsistence Costs

- 8.1 Staff will be reimbursed for the necessary extra costs of travel and accommodation that are specifically linked to the period of approved study if this takes them away from home and is integral to the completion of the study event.
- 8.2 Travel - Re-imburement will be agreed for travel at the appropriate public transport or at the standard mileage rate, as stated in the Agenda for Change terms and conditions handbook.¹ The most economical form of travel must be utilised in order to claim. Proof of expenditure must accompany the claim form. **The directorate will be expected to fund the travel costs.**

¹ Agenda For Change Terms and conditions of service handbook; version2, August 2007, updated April 2008

- 8.3 Accommodation – the overnight costs will be reimbursed to a maximum agreed amount of £55.00 based on annex N in the Agenda for Change terms and conditions handbook.² This is payable on receipt of proof of expenditure that must accompany the expenses form. Expense forms can be downloaded from the intranet, completed and submitted to traininganddevelopment@meht.nhs.uk

9.0 Monitoring

- 9.1 Study leave that is not mandatory is recorded by managers on the Trust roster/MAPS system under *non-stat*(pending the development of specific study fields)
- 9.2 For areas not on MAPS, local records of study leave should be kept.
- 9.3 A report of learning activity will be included in the monthly workforce report submitted to the Finance and Performance Committee
- 9.4 A yearly summary of all learning undertaken will be submitted to the WAG, Finance and Performance Committee and Trust Board or as required.
- 9.5 This policy, study leave allowance and subsequent application will be monitored through the workforce advisory group..

10.0 Communication

- 10.1 This policy will available on the Trust Intranet and will be promoted via the staff newsletter 'focus' and sent via email to all mangers for dissemination to their teams
- 10.2 An update on the policy and key requirements will be distributed to all managers.

11.0 Counter Fraud

- 11.1 Employees alleged to be involved in fraudulent activity may render themselves liable to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.
- 11.2 Employees must be aware that failure to provide a true declaration when asked by the Trust, or the making of a false declaration, could result in an investigation by the Local Counter Fraud Specialist which could lead to disciplinary and/or criminal/civil action.

² Agenda For Change Terms and conditions of service handbook; version2, August 2007, updated April 2008

Appendix A: Training Requests Submission Template
Mid Essex Hospital NHS Trust

Learning and Development: Training Requests Submission

PLEASE READ THROUGH THIS FIRST PAGE BEFORE ENTERING YOUR REQUESTS

Please enter your CPD(Bands 5 and above) requests based on:

- service delivery – noting the organisations agenda and priorities
- current workforce planning – what areas have gaps/skills needs priorities - elderly and frail/urgent and emergency care developing other healthcare roles
- appraisal outcomes – development plans as a result of objective setting
- national agenda (e.g. all graduate nursing profession –who should be doing degrees/masters etc, leadership and management priorities **mentorship or supervision requirements** linked to your local educational audit profile) –

GUIDANCE : YOU MUST IDENTIFY

- Credits–0-15-30-45-60
- Level – 6/7 - 6 is degree level / 7 is usually masters
- Start Date – some modules have up to 3 intakes per year

Bands 1-4

- foundation degrees(for associate practitioner role)-must be able to supervise and mentor as you would a pre-reg student
- apprentices - can you also support a Princes Trust placement (could be a future apprentice)
- other development requirements (? linked to the care certificate where appropriate)

FOR ALL REQUESTS Please allocate priority; you must have an open and transparent process (e.g. good attendance record, flexible staff member, good team player, represents the ward/dept and Trust values):

H High / mandatory or linked to role / service changes

M Medium, but would benefit patient / service [need brief rationale]

L May have already had previous study etc, but is motivated, and will undertake if others decide against

Please, where possible, put name of person against the courses/workshops, so that if things change a replacement may be sought to substitute Note: Those managers who completed this last year following the above instructions received 100% of what was requested, the planning paid off, and where substitutions had to be made, we were able to do it with relatively short notice

IF IN DOUBT SUBMIT A REQUEST, AND IT CAN BE FOLLOWED UP

CPD continued

OTHER TRAINING NEEDS – think about conferences, other specialist provision, not provided at UoE or ARU

University Training Body/ Conference Company	Course title and code	FTE / credits	No. req	Name	Place of Work [e.g ward / dept]	Priority/Rationale H/M/L

Leadership and Management Development

Consider new managers and leaders, succession planning, ready for an expanded role with increased responsibilities identified through talent management conversations during the appraisal process.

University Training Body/ Conference Company	Course title and code	FTE / credits	No. req	Name	Place of Work [e.g ward / dept]	Priority/Rationale H/M/L

All Staff - In house training comments – what else is required – mentor updates/customer care/core skills / teaming communications – how to do e-learning on OLM etc.

Subject/course	No. req	Names	Place of Work	Priority H/M/L	Comments

Bands 1-4

Consider Apprenticeships/foundation degrees/link roles/practical skills set as a result of assessment against the care certificate

Subject/course	No. req	Names	Place of Work	Priority H/M/L	Comments

Training requests are in accordance with workforce and business plans for this area

Approved by Directorate Manager/Head of Service (signature).....

Name (printed).....

Appendix B: Study Application and Learning Agreement
 This application (Section One) must be completed in full, and returned **to Training and Development**, with the fully completed and signed learning agreement (Section Two)

Section 1: Part A

ESSENTIAL DETAILS:

APPLICANT TO COMPLETE PART A

Name.....Post/grade

Ward/Department.....

Development identified at appraisal, and is part of PDP	
Date of last appraisal	
Is all mandatory training in date?	
Sickness in the last 2 years	

COURSE DETAILS

Organisation providing course			Costs Involved	
			Fees	
Commencement date			Travel	
Total number of study days involved		Total Leave Agreed and Allocated	Accommodation	
Total Costs requested				
<i>How does this course / study event relate to organisational, directorate, and personal Objectives</i>				
<i>How will the knowledge/ skill gained be shared within the work area?</i>				

1.1 Part B:

APPROVAL TO BE COMPLETED BY LINE/IMMEDIATE

PRIORITY LEVEL OF TRAINING LOW/MED/HIGH AND RATIONALE	
NAME OF MANAGER	

Scan and email Section 1 to traininganddevelopment@meht.nhs.uk for all learning activity; this will then be recorded on the individuals training record.

Section 2: Learning Activity Agreement
For any learning activity £2000.00 or over in total costs.

By signing this agreement the employee and manager are both in agreement to:

Manager and Applicant

- 2.1 Inform the Trust of any issues which arise during a course of study supported by MEHT. Such issues may include, but are not limited to:
- Failure of a course, or part of a course at any of the attempts
 - Plagiarism or other investigations
 - Conduct Issues
 - Absence from the course – unauthorized absence from agreed study leave such as non-attendance at agreed study days could be considered as fraud and action will be taken by the Local Counter Fraud Specialist and the Trust to recover monies lost through such action.
- 2.2 The line manager must ensure the follow up action will be taken as appropriate

Applicant

- 2.3 As an employee, applying for study funding and leave, I agree, if required, to repay a proportion of the cost / study time incurred. At the Trust' discretion, this could be repaid either through time owed/annual leave or direct financial payment. I may incur costs in the following circumstances:
- If I choose not to complete a course, or am excluded from completing a course through my actions.
 - If I undertake a programme of study, and decide to leave the Trust prior to completion
- OR
- If I leave the Trust prior to completing a required minimum period of service following completion of the course, repayment of course fees will be required on the following basis as outlined in Table 1(below), as will repayment for a proportion of study time taken.
- 2.4 The decision to discontinue a course must be discussed with both the course leader and line manager prior to the final decision to ensure that all measures are put in place to support the employee to complete.

Cost of course	Minimum period of service required following course completion / award of qualification	Cost repayment
<£2,000	12 months	1/12 th for every month remaining within the time frame

- 2.5 The decision to reclaim costs in accordance with the above table will be at the discretion of the Trust. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.
- 2.6 If the cost of a course is paid in advance and the employee subsequently does not commence, all effort must be made to fill the place appropriately. If the place still remains unfilled a charge appropriate to the cost of the programme may be incurred by the original member of staff/directorate.
- 2.7 If the employee leaves the Trust prior to or following completion of the course to commence employment with another NHS organisation, there is no requirement to repay course fees or time taken for study.

- 2.8 I understand that in accepting the offer of financial assistance from the Trust for the course specified that in the event of either:
- (a) leaving the course either voluntarily, or by exclusion
 - (b) leaving the Trust prior to completion of the course
 - (c) leaving the Trust following completion of the course but prior to completion of the required minimum service requirement as specified above in Table 1
- 2.9 I will repay to the Trust the relevant charge / proportion of course fees / study time as specified above.
- 2.10 I understand and agree that the Trust may recover any amount (in accordance with the above) from salary payment made to me prior to my date of termination. Where any sum remains outstanding at date of leaving I understand that a debtor account will be raised and sent to me for payment.
- 2.11 I agree to support other learners as appropriate within the organisation, to present the results of my work both in house and externally on request and share my learning with others.
- 2.12 I agree that I may be individually liable for further charges incurred in the event of (such as re-submissions, extensions to courses)

3.0 Signatory Agreement:

This agreement has formal status as part of the employee’s contract of employment.

Signatures:-

Employee/Applicant

Print Name

Line Manager

Print Name

Directorate/Lead Approval

Print Name

4.1 FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT USE ONLY

Date Received	
Entered onto OLM	
Approved by Head of L&D	
Individual and Manager notified (date and method)	

Agreement will be retained in Learning and Development Department

Exemptions to payback for courses costing over £2000.00

Where an individual has had to withdraw from a course due to extenuating circumstances, they will not be required to pay back the outstanding monies:

Exemptions are as follows:

- Extenuating family circumstances such as death or life limiting illness of the individual or close family member.
- Extended period of sickness that prohibits the individual from undertaking study or attending for study
- Maternity leave
- Cessation of employment by the Trust
- Redeployment or relocation undertaken by the Trust so that the course / study is no longer applicable or appropriate

NB: *The directorate may still be liable for a financial penalty – this may take the form of less funding for the remainder of the directorate from the education budget*

Appendix C: Learning Activity Reflection

For completion after learning activities, and used for evidence during the appraisal process.

Learning Activity

Date

Duration

How much study leave was used to achieve success (Trust and individual combined)

Reflective Section

1. How was I expecting this learning activity to inform my practice/ day to day work?
2. Has the learning activity made a difference to my practice/day to day work?
3. How does this learning improve the patient experience?
4. How does this learning activity support the service/Trust objectives and priorities
5. How and with whom will I share what has been learnt?
6. Is there further learning activity to be undertaken?