

STUDY LEAVE POLICY

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POLICY SUMMARY		
<p>EPUT is committed to developing its staff to enable them to meet both present and future challenges. This policy evidences that commitment by setting out the mechanisms by which staff can obtain support for training and development as well as continuous professional development (CPD). This policy does not cover Induction/Mandatory Training (see HR21). This policy will cover core courses, Talent management strategy, Apprenticeships and Work base learning courses</p>		
The Trust monitors the implementation of and compliance with this policy in the following ways;		
<p>Centralised data base to be maintained by workforce development and learning</p> <p>Equality data to be maintained and a 3 yearly audit will be undertaken by workforce development and learning.</p> <p>Reports will be produced by the workforce development and learning department on study leave process as required for trust committees.</p>		
Services	Applicable	Comments
Trustwide	✓	

**The Director responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy is
Executive Director for People and Culture**

ESSEX PARTNERSHIP UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

STUDY LEAVE POLICY

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ESSEX PARTNERSHIP UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

STUDY LEAVE POLICY

Assurance Statement

This policy is intended to outline the processes by which staff may apply for support, in terms of study leave and/or funding.

Funding will be allocated on the basis that the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements of different professional bodies and expenditure targets for current service and business developments can be met. All expenditure will be evaluated to ensure it provides value for money and benefits service users, staff and the Trust.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Trust's Training and Study Leave Policy and Procedures set out the criteria for requesting and approving study leave for all staff. Mandatory courses do not require formal study leave application

Applications for courses will fall within one of the two categories below.

1.1.1 **Core / Short** courses cover the majority of short duration training and development activities and everything that is not covered by the extended study leave definition as given below. It covers not only external courses but also:

- In-house training
- In-service training provided by Higher or Further Education Institutions (HEIs or FEIs) or similar organisations
- Open learning
- Conferences and seminars
- Refresher courses
- Professional special interest development groups (SIG)
- Staff undertaking work based learning programs, including apprenticeships.

1.1.2 Extended Study Leave applies to longer duration professional development which:

- Lasts for one academic year or more,
- Where course costs amount to £1800 or more (threshold to be reviewed as required). This includes NHS Leadership Academy or other courses where penalties apply for failure to complete.

- Where the individual has attended the extended study leave panel by request of the manager
- 1.2 A study leave application must be submitted for all categories of training and development, or CPD activities, (except allocated mandatory training) This application can only be on the approved electronic form that is available on the Trust Intranet.(see **Procedure A (HRPG18a) and Procedure B (HRPG18b) for details**) No other forms will be accepted or processed.
 - 1.3 Training budgets that are externally sourced, and are intended for the use of specific staff groups, will be ring-fenced and allocated accordingly.
 - 1.4 If additional funding becomes available to internal budget holders, and is to be used for training, the relevant training approval processes must be followed and the funding must be transferred to Workforce Development. These applications must be registered centrally.
 - 1.5 Expenses incurred through attending study leave are at the discretion of the service and are paid from service budgets.
 - 1.6 All staff that attend CPD activity in order to enhance skills and expertise, are expected to assist with the implementation of projects, CQUINs or cascade their knowledge to others within the organisation in order to enhance practice across the Trust.

2.0 EQUALITY STATEMENT

In line with the Trust's Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights Policy, this policy aims to ensure that no individual is directly or indirectly discriminated against in an unfair manner. It is a framework within which managers may adopt a certain degree of flexibility to suit local needs, and within which they can control and commit the amount of time for which staff are released.

There may be occasions when the Trust will take positive action in respect of its training activities to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the workforce. Positive action is a range of lawful actions that seek to address an imbalance in employment opportunities among targeted groups. The Trust is committed to ensuring that it has a well-developed workforce that, at all levels, broadly reflects the community it serves and is therefore better placed to understand its needs and provide effective services.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Study Leave can be defined as either:

- 1) Core courses – Courses that directly support the delivery of local services and their development will be fully funded if funds are available.
- 2) Short courses/other development - leave for short term training and developmental activities (seminars, conferences, reviews and updates etc.) where any associated cost is less than £1,800.
- 3) Extended - leave required for longer duration professional development (for example College or University courses, open and distance learning of a longer duration) and/or costing in excess of £1800
- 4) Apprenticeships - Applications for Apprenticeship funding will be made through the study leave process. Applications for clinical courses will require an assessment and interview before approval is granted. Applications for non-clinical courses will depend on availability of funds and may be referred to the Study Leave Panel for a decision when funding needs to be prioritised.
- 5) If an apprenticeship is offered in-house and the candidate is not eligible for Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding, then the application must go through the extended study leave process with the cost of the course identified as the ESFA tariff and learner contributions will be applied.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 This policy undertakes to support staff development in all forms and for all members of staff, substantive and part time, where the requirements are met.
- 4.2 Most development needs should be identified as part of the annual appraisal process (**Supervision & Appraisal Policy (HR48)**) and training needs analysis (TNA). The Trust, and staff involved in the approval of study requests, will need to ensure that all professional requirements for CPD are identified during the appraisal processes, particularly where CPD is required to maintain professional registration/licensing/ re-certification.
 - 4.2.1 For non-medical staff, priority will be given to training required as part of professional CPD requirements or as part of the Trust pre-professional workforce development pathway.
 - 4.2.2 Development should be discussed with individual members of staff at their annual appraisal and recorded on Personal Development Plans to ensure there is a thorough and clear record of development activity being carried out within the team/service.
 - 4.2.3 Discussion regarding development outside of the annual appraisal should also be recorded as appropriate. Outcomes should be

evidenced and supported within Personal Development Plans and supervision records.

- 4.2.4 The Trust Executive Team will determine the size and allocation of internally sourced training budgets. In the case of the Medical staff, the determination of funding will follow seeking advice from the Medical Director and engaging in consultation with the Local Negotiating Committee. The allocations will need to take account of historic levels of funding, CPD requirements of all professional staff, and the contractual issues for medical staff as set out in 4.2.5 and 4.2.7.
- 4.2.5 For medical staff, the Trust, and those involved in the approval of medical study leave, will need to ensure that all CPD required to maintain medical re-licensing/re-certification is identified and met through the appraisal and study leave processes. This process will also need to ensure that the minimum requirements to maintain professional standing with the respective Royal College are met.
- 4.2.6 The Trust will support any study identified as part of the preparation for the specialist college examinations taken by the medical specialist trainees.
- 4.2.7 The Trust will meet its contractual study leave obligations of 30 days per three years for career grade doctors and 30 days per year for specialist trainee doctors as per Section 250 of the terms and conditions of service for medical and dental staff. The Trust will comply with the standards regarding consultants study leave and expenses as set out in Paragraph 13 of schedule 18 of the terms and conditions of service.

Where dental staff have contractually agreed funds study should be identified at the start of the financial year and allocated accordingly.

- 4.3 All requests for Study Leave should be supported by application through line management.
 - 4.3.1 Any request for extended study funding, other than for medical or social care staff, will be reviewed by the Study Leave Panel. The Study Leave Panel is made up from members of the senior management team and convenes on a regular basis to decide on extended study leave requests. The Panel will report its decisions to the Executive Team following each sitting of the Panel. Applicants are allowed to appeal against a decision by requesting a re-submission. Only one resubmission will be granted for each application.
 - 4.3.2 There are separate approval processes to cover training requests for social care staff and medical staff. The outcomes of these should be

conveyed to the Workforce Development Department so that a single report can be presented to the Executive Team when requested.

- 4.3.3 On occasion it may be appropriate for Medical or Social Care requests to be considered by the Study Leave Panel
- 4.4 Where the training and development activity is essential to undertaking a specific role and linked to team and Trust aims and objectives, the Trust undertakes to fund the activity in full, if it is deemed appropriate, through the relevant approval mechanism.
- 4.4.1 It can be desirable to support staff undertaking development/ education not directly linked to their current job role or not essential to their role. Courses and activities which are related to, but not essential preparation for the job, and which offer scope for personal, professional and career development may be considered if management approval is given. In these circumstances it may be reasonable for the employee to make a financial contribution to the cost of the course and associated expenses. Where agreed, the Trust will contribute 75% of the course fee and the applicant 25%. Support may also include reasonable paid or unpaid time off to attend training (see also the Trust **Special Leave Procedure (HRPG24d)**). Extended Study Leave will be deemed as desirable, but not necessarily essential, unless full rationale is given by the relevant Director.
- 4.5 Where funding is available and supported (within the HEI contracts or HEE funding), the course will be fully funded. For staff undertaking degree or masters programmes only a proportion of the modules may be funded. Staff may be expected to self-fund additional modules if they do not meet the requirements of the organisation.
- 4.5.1 However, where a course is supported through the Trust's Extended Study Leave process, the principle will be that the Trust pays 75% and the individual pays 25%, as well as his/her own travel and book costs. This cost is waived if the member of staff is obliged, by the Trust, to do the course. Any Apprenticeship Course will be exempt from the 25% contribution in order to comply with Education and Skills Funding Agency rules unless the applicant is not eligible for ESFA funding.
- 4.6 Educational funding from Health Education England (HEE) will be held centrally and reviewed annually. These budgets support all professional, clinical, general management and non-clinical training and development activities.
- 4.7 Social care staff also have access to Local Authority training funds. These monies are managed differently by the different Local Authorities, but in all cases recommendations for training will be made by Trust Social Care leads.

- 4.8 All employees are not permitted to do a bank shift during their 'coursework' study days between the hours of 9am and 5pm.
- 4.9 All employees are reminded that bank shifts must not impinge on their work and/or training commitments.
- 4.10 This policy will be operated at all times in accordance with the Trust's Equality Diversity and Human Rights Policy (CP24).
- 4.11 Further advice on this policy may be sought from the Workforce Development & Learning Department.

5.0 CORE / SHORT COURSES/OTHER DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Where study Leave with funding is granted, study costs will be met in full by the Trust if determined as a service need or development. If the study leave activity is related to but not essential preparation for the job role then the Trust will contribute 75% of the course fee. Applicants will also be required to sign the data protection disclaimer form. In certain circumstances study leave can be granted without associated funding.
- 5.2 For each individual, priority should be given to mandatory courses (including refreshers and updates) and study for qualifications which are a requirement of the post, prior to courses connected with staff or service development.
 - 5.2.1 Study leave applications will not be considered unless mandatory training is up to date and managers should not sign off applications unless this is the case (managers will have to make a case for exceptional circumstances).
- 5.3 Managers will be expected to ensure that staff are given the opportunity to cascade knowledge, skills and information from the training, as appropriate, for the benefit of other staff and colleagues.
- 5.4 All staff attending short course (conferences, seminars,) will be expected to write a briefing note regarding the session attended for cascade to other staff across the Trust. An employee who is granted study leave where the Trust is making a contribution will have to agree, in writing, that they may be required to refund the course costs incurred for non-completion of a course (**see Appendix 1**), unless they can provide a satisfactory explanation for their failure of attendance. If a member of staff leaves the Trust within a certain timeframe, they may be required to pay the cost of the course, or a proportion of the cost back to the Trust. For timeframe/reimbursement details see section 6. This will apply to apprenticeship programmes as well.

6.0 EXTENDED STUDY LEAVE

Extended study leave applications will not be considered unless mandatory training is up to date and managers should not sign off applications unless this is the case (managers will have to make a case for exceptional circumstances).

- 6.1 Where Extended Study Leave is granted and paid for by Trust funding, it will normally be on the basis of 75% funding, with the individual contributing 25% and paying for their own travel and books. If at appraisal it has been identified by the manager that the course applied for is essential for service development, then 100% funding will be considered. Applicants will also be required to sign the data protection disclaimer form.
- 6.2 Funding will normally be granted only for 75% of the least expensive local provider of the course, unless the applicant can satisfy the Study Leave Panel that a more expensive choice is justified.
- 6.3 Bursaries and/or grants obtained by the applicant should be deducted from the full cost of the course, and not from the applicant's 25% contribution.
- 6.4 Other than in exceptional circumstances, applicants will normally be expected to have a consolidation period between courses of study (e.g., between BSc and MSc, and between CMS, DMS and MBA).
- 6.5 Staff new in post will be expected to consolidate their position for a minimum of 1 year before undertaking additional study, with the exception of pre-planned preceptorship pathways.
- 6.6 In the second and subsequent years of a course, a further application will be required and applicants will be required to attend the Study Leave Panel (or follow the relevant approval process); however, individuals can expect their applications to be approved unless they have failed to maintain satisfactory progress on the course during the previous year or the level of funds available will not support the course.
- 6.7 An employee who is granted extended study leave will have to agree, in writing, that they may be required to refund a proportion of the financial assistance received or pay a proportion of any financial penalties incurred for non-completion of a course (**see Appendix 1**). Unless they can provide a satisfactory explanation, for their failure to:
- Sit the examination
 - Maintain regular attendance and/or satisfactory progress
 - Complete the course – this applies if they have cancelled and the Trust has still been charged

- Remain in the employment of the Trust for certain prescribed time periods after completion of the course

Timescale	Amount to be reimbursed
2 years or more	0
1-2 years	50%
6 months - 1 year	75%
less than 6 months	100%

6.8 The amount to be refunded will be at the discretion of the Study Leave Panel and will depend on prescribed levels of commitment/ progress shown. Mitigating circumstances will always be taken into consideration.

6.8.1 The sum would normally be expected to be between 50% and 75%

6.8.2 For Pharmacy Staff

Pharmacy Staff- Criteria for paying back Course Fee	Amount to be paid back to Trust
Staff leaving in Year 1 of Training or up to half way through Year 2 of Training	100% of Year 1 Course Fee
Staff in Remainder of Contract	100% of Year 2 Course Fee
Staff leaving after Contract ends	No Fee to pay

6.8.3 It should be noted that repayment applies to courses which have been internally funded and does not usually apply where the funding source has been external (e.g. Education and Skills Funding Agency, Health Education England). Staff should enquire at the time of application to ensure that they are aware of whether repayment rules would apply or not.

6.9 It will be the responsibility of the individual's manager to advise Human Resources and Workforce Development & Learning and to ensure that the costs are retrieved. Workforce Development and Learning will inform Human Resources in writing of the total study costs incurred by the Trust so that the amount to be refunded can be calculated.

All course materials/ tools remain the possession of the Trust, but may be kept at the discretion of the line manager.

6.10 Extended Study Leave applications are approved on the basis that any projects, dissertations, research, etc. undertaken during the course are selected to benefit the Trust. Staff will be expected to share the results of such work with colleagues, for example, as formal presentations open to all interested staff to attend. An electronic copy of any written dissertations,

projects or research should be offered to the Workforce Development and Learning Department.

If the course is undertaken at a local HEI via an HEE program then the results of the course will be sent to the Trust and shared with line managers.

Employees who fail to make satisfactory progress during any year of a course covering one or more years, or a succession of separated stages, may have all assistance by the Trust withdrawn. Facilities to retake examinations will only be granted where the Trust believes the employee has otherwise made satisfactory progress in their studies. Where an employee without good reason fails to sit for an examination within a reasonable period, fails to show satisfactory progress, or does not attend regularly, the Trust may withdraw their financial support and require the repayment of all or part of the financial assistance granted in accordance with the above paragraph. In exceptional circumstances, and where no valid reason is received, employees may be liable to action under the Trust's Disciplinary procedure.

6.11 Additional leave:

6.11.1 Where exams are taken the employee will be entitled to time off to sit the exam. For exams longer than an hour and a half employees will be entitled to the day off to sit the exam, plus one day's study leave per exam (see 6.11.3).

6.11.2 Where a degree or similar type of course does not have exams but requires the completion of a major project (e.g. a dissertation), three days' study leave will be granted per project (see 6.11.3).

6.11.3 The amount of leave given will, however, be at the discretion of the line manager and will depend upon individual circumstances; the times given here are to be taken as guidelines only.

This study leave should be taken close to the examination or dissertation submission date and not accrued to be taken in bulk at other times. All such study leave must be agreed with the employee's manager in advance

7.0 SECONDED SOCIAL CARE STAFF

7.1 For Social Care staff employed by their respective Local Authority and seconded into EPUT the process will be:

7.2 For training/courses provided by EPUT social care staff will follow the processes outlined in sections 5 and 6 above.

7.3 Training/courses provided and funded by the local authority (including ASW/AMHP CPD) the applicant will discuss their needs with Trust Social Care Leads and the relevant Local Authority Workforce Training Department.

8.0 INFORMATION FOR MANAGERS – SHORT AND EXTENDED STUDY

8.1 Responsibility for identifying staff development needs and recommending study leave provision lies jointly with individuals and their line managers as part of the Appraisal process stated above. When considering requests for study leave, managers need to bear in mind the following:-

- The subject matter must have direct bearing on the employee's normal work, or continuing professional development, and be of potential benefit to the Trust or contribute to future strategic directions.
- There should be a cost/benefit realisation
- Cover arrangements during employee's absence
- Are there any alternative means of updating skills/knowledge available?
- The number of applications for any particular development activity
- The evaluation of the development activity by any previous attendee
- Decisions should be made with consideration to ensuring an equitable distribution of opportunities to all members of a given staff/professional group.

8.2 Managers are expected to review each application critically and to decline or suggest amendments, if they feel the request is unreasonable or unlikely to be approved by the relevant approval process. This includes checking the application to ensure it meets the guidelines set out above, and adding a supporting paragraph on the application form stating how the course would benefit the applicant, the service, and the Trust.

- Even for courses costing less than £1800, managers should still review whether the course justifies the amount of study leave that will be necessary.

8.3 Managers should not make any provisional commitment to their staff on the basis of expecting a study leave application to be approved. This includes not offering short/extended courses or other developmental study leave as an incentive when recruiting new staff, without first discussing the proposal with the appropriate director.

9.0 DUTIES – MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 9.1 Some development activities can be undertaken in the workplace, and it is the responsibility of line managers to identify and offer these opportunities as appropriate (projects, assignments, secondments & acting up (see also HR3), shadowing etc.) Managers must submit their annual TNA process for consideration for courses required for their teams and this must reflect the agreed direction of travel for the services operated or development planning for individuals.
- 9.2 Managers are responsible for monitoring staff on Study Leave and dealing with any problems as they arise (e.g. disciplinary action may be taken for persistent non-attendance at training courses) and advise Workforce Development & Training.
- 9.3 Managers are responsible for agreeing the Learning Contract with the member of staff and keeping a copy of this with the study application. Managers should support members of staff to ensure they meet the learning outcomes expected of them both before and after attending any form of training and development activity.
- 9.4 Pastoral support for students on any study funded by the Trust is available from Workforce Development and Training.
- 9.5 Managers will not put forward any staff member whose mandatory training is not complete.

10.0 DUTIES – INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 10.1 Actively participate in, and contribute to personal and professional development through a variety of learning activities including E learning, secondments, shadowing and coaching opportunities.
- 10.2 Take a pro-active approach to learning and development.
Be prepared to share learning with colleagues.
- 10.3 Be prepared to consider new ways of working to help enhance the service provided.
- 10.4 Be prepared to develop new skills to support the development of new services.
- 10.5 To attend planned study leave sessions.
- 10.6 To notify workforce development and learning when sessions or components of the course are not attended or completed.

11 MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

- 11.1 Centralised data base to be maintained by workforce development and learning
- 11.2 Equality data to be maintained by workforce development and learning and a 3 yearly audit will be undertaken.
- 11.3 Reports will be produced by the workforce development and learning department on study leave process as required for trust committees.

12 POLICY REFERENCES / ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Equality, Inclusion & Human Rights Policy
Study Leave Form
Extended Study Leave Form
Supervision & Appraisal
Travel & Business Costs Policy
Workforce Wellbeing
Conduct & Capability

13 REFERENCE TO OTHER TRUST POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Short Course/Other Training Procedure
Extended Study Leave Procedure
Special Leave Procedure
Mandatory Training
Equality & Diversity

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