

North West of England School of Foundation Training and Physician Associates

Foundation Study Leave

**Additional guidance on the management and administrative
processes for Foundation Study Leave**

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This document should be read in conjunction with:

- NHSE (HEE's) study leave document 'An overview of the HEE wide approach' – available on the Foundation policies and procedures page of the website: <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/foundation-policies-and-processes>

This additional guidance has been produced to clarify the purpose and nuances of study leave funding for Foundation doctors in the North West and how it should be used in support of the training of Foundation doctors.

1. Principles

- 1.0) Resources, including funding, for study leave at Foundation level are intended to be used to:
 - support the aims of the Foundation Programme
 - achieve the Foundation curriculum outcomes
 - explore career opportunities and improve wider professional development.
- 1.1) The principal method of achieving the above intentions should be via the locally provided formal teaching programme. The formal teaching programme must be designed to support the Foundation Curriculum and should be mapped to Foundation Professional Capabilities
- 1.2) Attendance at the formal teaching programme is compulsory for all Foundation doctors.
- 1.3) The study leave resource can be top sliced to enable activities as part of that formal teaching programme to achieve those aims.
- 1.4) Foundation Year 2 doctors (F2) typically have 30 days paid educational time. A minimum of 20 of those days should be allocated to the generic teaching programme. F2 doctors may then take *up to* another 10 additional days study leave (max 30 in total), as long as this is approved in advance by their local Foundation Programme Director and is consistent with maintaining essential service.
- 1.5) In general Foundation doctors should be meeting core curriculum requirements before considering discretionary enhancement activity.
- 1.6) Statutory and mandatory courses and service requirements will be funded by the employer.
- 1.7) Local providers/trusts/training programmes are actively encouraged to develop low-cost, locally delivered courses, and reduce associated travel costs.

Study leave funding will **not** be available for the following:

- Costs associated with sitting national professional examinations/college examination courses and preparation courses, including any other expenses involved in undertaking them

- Commercial preparation for specialty/GP recruitment courses or assessment days. Such training should be delivered, as part of the generic teaching programme, utilising local and NHSE North West resources.
- Payment for local trust employees delivering formal teaching or simulation. In regard to locally delivered teaching, only costs associated with necessary equipment and consumables to deliver specific topics as part of the formal programme will be reimbursed.
- Catering expenses for Foundation Doctors attending the trusts formal teaching programme
- Commercial training courses for cosmetic enhancements such as Botox or Dermal Fillers

1.8) Resuscitation courses

The 2021 Foundation Curriculum no longer specifically references the requirement of ILS/ALS/equivalent for sign off.

When ILS/ALS is only required by the doctor's employer to enable them to perform within certain departments then the employer should be responsible for the cost, and this should not come out of doctors' study leave allowance.

When a Foundation doctor wishes to undertake a certification in advanced adult life support as part of their onward career progression or to improve their professional development then the school will cap reimbursement at £350

1.81) The exceptions to 1.8 above are the ATLS and APLS courses, which can be supported by study leave resources, as it appears that credit may be given for these courses in some ST applications, even though this is not necessarily signalled in the job specifications on the various websites. Similarly, Basic Surgery Skills (BSS) courses can be supported from the study leave allowance.

1.82) Reimbursement for Generic Instructor Courses will be given so long as the request is in keeping with the principles set out in the overview policy and this guidance.

1.9) Approval of funding for activities *not* held locally within NHSE North West will not automatically include entitlement to reimbursement for travel or subsistence. Travel and subsistence, including overnight accommodation costs, may be claimed for activities undertaken within the local NHSE North West region but may only be claimed for courses and events outside the local region if there are no similar opportunities available locally.

1.10) The overnight accommodation allowance outside of London should not exceed £120 a night which falls in line with the rates agreed nationally.

1.11) Foundation doctors who are training less than full time are entitled to pro-rata access to study leave resources.

1.12) International study leave

In line with NHSE (HEE) North Wests policy on international study leave, requests to attend overseas study courses and conferences will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and on the grounds that there is no opportunity to gain the identified Foundation competences or experience from any other local or regional course or event.

There must a documented discussion with the ES/FPD outlining the clear objectives of the activity against the foundation curriculum.

For approved applications the school 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. Any accommodation costs should not exceed the maximum amount permitted for study budget claims within the UK.

The trust must seek prior approval from the school for all intended overseas claims.

This policy is not exhaustive and if Foundation Programme Directors are in any doubt regarding the appropriateness of courses requested, they should contact the Deputy PG Dean for Foundation or the Foundation School Manager to discuss.

1.13) Study leave for F1 Doctors

Study leave for F1 Doctors will take the form of regular scheduled teaching/training sessions delivered locally.

To maximise opportunities an additional 5 days of study leave can be used to support taster sessions to inform future career decision making. There is the expectation that taster sessions should be taken locally unless relevant opportunities are not available locally and are approved by the local Foundation Programme Director.

In exceptional circumstances, F1 doctors may instead utilise the 5 additional days to undertake approved courses/programmes of activity that align with the core Foundation Professional Capabilities and/or inform future career decision making.

The study budget may be top sliced to facilitate delivery of resuscitation courses for F1 doctors in line with point 1.8.

With the exception of taster sessions, F1 doctors do not have an automatic right to take study leave or to access the funding and this is for the local programme to determine and approve.

F2 doctors are the intended beneficiaries of study leave funding and trusts should manage their budgets fairly and equitably ensuring they break even at year-end.

2. Process

2.1) The Foundation Programme Director is responsible for applying the NHSE (HEE) North West's guidance and process for study leave at local level and for managing the study leave budget allocated to their programme. This involves the following:

- bringing the guidance and process to the attention of their Foundation doctors
- top slicing study leave resources to support the formal teaching programme.
- considering and approving study leave applications from F2 doctors in line with the policy and guidance.
- considering and approving study leave applications from F1 doctors for support with career "taster" sessions, or exceptional requests for courses/programme of activity.
- taking advice from the Deputy PG Dean for Foundation, where clarity is required of whether the application should be supported.
- recording the details of those applications approved on the standard template supplied by the Foundation School

- organising the consideration of any appeals, in line with the locally published process.
- 2.2) Applications for study leave (time and funding) should be made by the Foundation doctor using the agreed local application form. Foundation doctors will be required to demonstrate how the course/activity maps to the core capabilities of the Foundation Curriculum
- 2.3) The Foundation/Postgraduate Education team at the trust is responsible for recording applications and requests for study leave to inform quarterly expenditure plans

Throughout the year as appropriate, the Foundation Programme Director is responsible for:

- presenting a quarterly breakdown of expenditure from the study leave budget to the local Foundation committee (which should include NHSE (HEE) North West representation) for approval and sign off;
 - providing a copy of the quarterly breakdown of expenditure, as directed by the Foundation School, to the Deputy PG Dean for Foundation and the Foundation School Manager for review.
- 2.4) Once the quarterly expenditure has been approved and signed off by the Deputy PG Dean for Foundation, as budget holder, the school will notify finance so that the Education Contract can be adjusted to reflect the approved amounts for reimbursement.