

Study Leave Frequently Asked Questions

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Section 1: Applying for Study Leave

How do I apply for study leave?

Postgraduate Doctors in Training (PGDiTs) are expected to discuss their study leave plans with the Education Supervisor (or Training Programme Director) at the start of each placement.

You will need to follow the local application process to apply for study leave time and funding, all applications must be submitted with a minimum of 6 weeks' notice. Applications submitted later than this or after the activity has taken place may be declined for reimbursement.

How much study leave funding can I claim for in the year?

There is no longer an 'allocation' of funding per PGDiT per training year.

Is there an upper limit to how much I can claim from the study budget?

The new centralised study budget process means there is no annual allowance. If the course will support you achieving the curriculum or falls within the agreed optional courses, it will be covered by the study budget to a certain extent.

Discuss any courses/educational activities you would like to attend with your ES/TPD and they will be able to advise and support your application if it is appropriate.

Please ensure that you have completed all your statutory and mandatory training.

How much will I be reimbursed for course fees covered by the study budget?

Reimbursement of course fees covered by the study budget, will depend on the category under which the course falls:

Category 1 Curriculum Requirement: Fully funded

Category 2 Enhanced Knowledge: Fully funded

Category 3 Career Progression: Discretionary: Part funded -i.e., 50%

Travel and accommodation associated with the attended course will be fully funded, in line with the guidance.

What happens if the course is not on the course list?

Courses not on the course list may be approved by the employing Trusts (if under £1000) subject to TPD approval AND it has been a prospective requirement on their PDP, i.e. it has been included as part of the early discussion with their ES/TPD.

Please note: the course will only be reimbursed at Category 3 in this instance.

Any course over £1000, on the course list requires NHS England SW to approve prior to approval by the Trust. The request for approval should be sent to NHSE SW by the employing Trust ONLY.

There are certain courses whereby categories don't apply and have separate funding arrangements:

- Leadership and Management Courses (including Professional and Generic Skills)
- Revision Courses
- Train the Trainer, teaching, and educational supervisor courses
- Postgraduate and higher courses
- Life Support courses

How much private study leave am I entitled to?

PGDiTs are entitled to a maximum of 5 days out of their allowance for private study leave per year.

What can I not use study leave for?

Study leave cannot be used to buy revision books, online resources, journal subscriptions, membership fees, attend interviews or cover exam fees. It can only be used for costs associated directly with attending a course (i.e. course fees, travel, subsistence, and accommodation).

Can I claim e-portfolio and /or Royal College fees from the Study Leave Budget?

E-portfolio fees and College fees are not covered under the study leave budget and cannot be claimed.

Can I claim fees for research paper registration?

Registration fees for research papers are not covered under the study leave budget and cannot be claimed.

Can I claim for membership fees?

Membership fees are not normally covered by the study leave budget. We will only consider supporting membership fees if this proves to be a cost-effective approach to claiming for a particular course.

I wish to apply for my ALS (or ATLS/NLS etc.) – is this covered by the study leave allowance and study budget?

If ALS is a specified written curriculum requirement, a relevant course aligned to the current Resuscitation Council UK (RCUK) guidelines will be fully funded from the study leave budget.

If ALS is required by your local education provider, but is not a curriculum requirement, then your local education provider (i.e. Trust) should be responsible for funding the ALS course and the time spent undertaking the course should not come out for your personal study leave time allowance.

A course does not require study budget but requires study leave days. How do I apply for this?

The study leave limit for number of days available for PGDiTs has not changed and is set as 15 days per year for FY1 Doctors and 30 days per year for all other Doctors in Training. Less than full time trainees will have a pro-rata entitlement. Please apply for this leave to your Trust as per the Trust study leave process.

I am doing an online course - can I get study leave/budget to do it?

If the online course, you wish to apply for is listed on the Study Leave lists then you can apply for study leave to your Trust as per usual. If the course is not on the list, then you will need to apply to your TPD for approval in writing. Please note that if the online course is part of your Trust statutory or mandatory training requirements then you should be given the time to complete this without having to request study leave.

Can I claim against the study budget for “Tasters” e.g. commuting?

No – Tasters should be covered locally by the Trust where the PGDiT is currently working and therefore no commuting costs should be required.

I want to apply for study leave and funding to attend a course at the start of my next rotation which will be based at a different NHS trust – how should I apply?

Discuss any courses/educational activities you would like to attend with your current ES/TPD for approval. For the time off required to undertake your study leave, you must obtain approval from the rota co-ordinator who will be managing cover at your new NHS Trust. Once you have been on the course, submit your expense claim to the new NHS Trust where you will be working at by then.

Can I claim study leave funding to attend a course, if I am a Southwest Clinical Lecturer or Academic Clinical Fellow, working part time or full time with a recognised South West University?

Yes, you are entitled to claim study leave if you have time allocated to attend the course. First check if the course you wish to attend appears on the study leave lists and submit your request by email to the NHSE Study Leave Team. They will go through the steps you need to claim funding. Please note you will need to demonstrate you will be given time out of your working week to attend a course. You will be unable to request study leave if you use annual leave or take time out of training/your working day. All course attendance must be attributed to a paid day or time off in lieu.

I am attending a course which falls on one of my non-working days. Can I claim the time back in lieu?

For study leave taken over weekends, bank holidays and days when you would not otherwise be working you can take this time off in lieu. If you wish to take time in lieu for study leave, the days should be agreed with the Educational Supervisor at the time of agreeing the study leave, within a reasonable time frame from the activity.

Section 2: Overseas Study Leave

Can I claim study leave and/or travel and subsistence for an international conference or study leave event?

International courses are not contained in the approval list and are therefore considered aspirational in nature. This should initially be agreed by your Educational Supervisor/Training Programme Director/Head of School. Applications for time is through the employing NHS trust in accordance with their local Trust policy prior to your application for funding.

Application for funding should be submitted to the NHSE SW Study Leave inbox with the full agenda/conference details attached. Actual costs (if known) or estimated costs (if unknown) for accommodation and travel must also be included. The email subject heading should read "Overseas REQUEST for Study Leave" and sent at least a minimum of 8 weeks prior to the event (please ensure you use the NHSE SW Overseas Application Form).

If a postgraduate doctor in training meets the application criteria and their application receives approval, NHSE SW will consider funding either the cost of the course/conference fees or the cost of economy travel and/or accommodation whichever is the lower amount. Travel and subsistence whilst overseas are not funded e.g. travel costs from the airport to the accommodation, meals).

<https://severndeanery.nhs.uk/about-us/ped/education/doctors-in-training/study-leave-across-the-south-west-2324/#overseasapplication>

Section 3: Mandatory/Aspirational Courses

How will I know which courses are mandatory, and therefore covered by the study budget?

Courses under Category 1 are in principle generic courses chosen to help you achieve CCT and by attending them will provide significant evidence towards gaining your CCT. These are not mandatory, however, are recommendations to enable the PG DiT to be more informed. Your Head of School or TPD or Educational Supervisor will recommend which courses to attend during your PDP appraisal.

Mandatory curricular courses are generally part of the Regional Teaching programme and details will be provided by your Heads of Schools/TPD and Educational Supervisors or may be on the Annual Development Plan published on the website. Mandatory clinical or regional courses are funded centrally and therefore PG DiTs can claim travel costs and by exception overnight accommodation and subsistence. The course list has been prepared with information from the TPD/ES/Head of School and will be available on the website for you to review under Annual Development Plan (ADP).

A course list is also available for each specialty on the study leave website.

How do I make the case for an aspirational educational/training course/experience to be covered by study budget?

If you wish to apply for a course that does not appear on the study leave lists, you will need to contact your Education Supervisor (ES)/Training Programme Director (TPD) for approval with information regarding the course and the justification for attending. Your TPD will then review the request and if approved send to your Head of School (HoS) for final approval. Once you have this approval you can then apply to your Trust as per the usual process.

If you plan to apply for a course that does not appear on the study leave lists, discuss early with your ES/TPD and make sure you have achieved your required curriculum and competencies to support your application. Appropriate aspirational courses are courses which will add value to you individually and the wider system, for example quality improvement workshops, leadership/medical management courses, healthcare technology and innovation workshops, scientific conferences and TPDs will be seeking support from the Heads of School.

Do I need to take study leave from my allowance to attend my training programme's regional teaching days?

Yes. All PGDiTs are required to attend teaching days and study leave should be applied for via the employing Trust's local process.

Do I need to take study leave from my allowance to attend Trust mandatory days –e.g. induction/health and safety mandatory training?

No—anything which is employee related is not taken from study leave allowance.

What is considered an aspirational based activity and how is it approved?

An activity that is not part of your curriculum but referred to in your PDP is considered an aspirational activity. Aspirational courses are generally part funded (i.e., 50%).

I am a Foundation trainee, who do I need to contact to get approval to go on an Aspirational course?

For desirable courses you need to get the support of your Foundation Programme Director at your trust, and they will send to the relevant Foundation School Director.

Will I be able to access study leave funding for postgraduate courses such as PG Cert Ed, Diploma, or Masters?

Postgraduate certificates and diplomas are funded by applying for bursary funding. This is a competitive process. If the application is approved the PG DiT will generally receive up to 50% of the course fee. Master's courses are currently not funded.

I am preparing for my curriculum mandated exam– will the study budget cover revision courses and the exam fee? And how much study leave am I entitled to for this private study?

The study budget will cover courses to help you adequately revise and prepare for the examination – please refer to the guidance with regards to the financial support. The study leave budget cannot be used to fund examination costs. However, you will be able to claim associated expenses such as Travel and Accommodation.

The study leave limit for number of days available for PGDiTs is set as 15 days per year for FY1 Doctors and 30 days per year for all other Doctors in Training. Private study leave is available for PGDiTs to take in advance of an exam up to a maximum of 5 working days which is included in the 30-day allowance. You are advised to discuss your requirements with your Training Programme Director and/or Head of School. It is suggested that 1 revision course at lower level and 1 at higher level would be funded.

<https://severndeanery.nhs.uk/about-us/ped/education/doctors-in-training/study-leave-across-the-south-west-2324/#EXAMprep>

Section 4: Travel and Location Expenses

Can I claim any travel and subsistence expenses?

PGDiTs should be encouraged to use the most economical mode of transport, where this is not possible prior approval must be obtained from the Educational Supervisor or DME.

All travel and subsistence claims must be accompanied by dated receipts and are reimbursed in line with the employer's terms and conditions. Please refer to the [NHS Employers T&Cs](#)

Can I claim for accommodation costs?

PGDiTs can claim the amounts detailed below for overnight accommodation costs. Overnight accommodation expenses will only be granted if you are travelling from a base destination more than 100miles from the venue or if the course runs longer than one day and the round trip exceeds 100miles.

Accommodation costs will be limited to the duration of the event plus one night, either before or after the event dates. Overnight costs will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £120 including breakfast (outside of London) and £150 (in London) OR up to £20 per night if staying with family or friends.

Can I claim for travel expenses associated with attending a study leave event?

You can claim reasonable travel and subsistence to support your study leave event. Any claim for travel or subsistence must be in accordance with any travel or expenses policy within your employing organisation.

Can I attend courses in a location of my choice?

Where a course is available locally, funding should generally not be approved for a PGDiT to attend the course elsewhere. It must be noted that the overall study budget held by NHSE SW is finite and value for money should be considered at all times.

Section 5: OOP, Parental Leave and Post CCT

I am Out of Programme on an OOP, am I eligible to apply for Study Leave?

Only PGDiTs undertaking an OOPT can claim study leave and should claim from the employing Trust. PGDiTs whilst on an OOPC, OOPE or OOPR are unable to claim study leave funding.

<https://severndeanery.nhs.uk/about-us/ped/education/doctors-in-training/study-leave-across-the-south-west-2324/#OOP>

I am an OOPT, how do I claim for Study Leave?

You can claim, through your employing Trust and they will be reimbursed by the appropriate NHSE regional office associated with the Trust.

I am on parental leave. Can I still access the study budget or study leave?

Yes, study leave can be applied for as part of KIT days during your parental leave. However, you will need to liaise with the Trust HR team also to ensure you have your KIT days logged and are paid for the day. You are unable to claim KIT days as part of your accrued annual leave time when starting parental leave only during your statutory leave. There are 10 KIT days available during parental leave and generally 5 KIT days are considered adequate to support any training needs; the remainder are used for updates relevant to your employment. Please apply following the usual process through the organisation that you are employed by for your parental leave.

I am in my Period of Grace (POG), am I eligible to apply for Study Leave?

Individuals within a Period of Grace are not eligible for funding from the NHSE SW study budget as these funds are to be used for meeting Certificate of Completion of (Speciality) Training requirements. However, individuals can receive study leave time for ensuring revalidation requirements are met.

Section 6: Less than full time (LTFT)

I am a less than full time trainee. Do I receive less financial support?

No, you should be able to access funding in the same way as a full-time trainee, providing the study leave event appears on the approved study leave lists.

I am a less than full time trainee; how many days of study leave am I allowed?

Less than full time trainees receive pro-rata entitlement.

Section 7: General Information

Why has the study leave process been changed?

In previous years funding to support education and development for junior doctors has been made available to Trusts from NHSE SW through tariff funding. As part of a collaborative piece of work on improving Junior Doctors' working lives to address non-contractual training issues, involving NHSE SW, employer representatives, the BMA JDC, other junior doctor groups and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC), it has been proposed that: "NHSE SW centralises the study budget nationally, in order to ensure that PGDiTs receive the funding that they require to progress through their specialty curriculum, across the whole length of their programme".

What support is currently available to me to ensure I gain all competences relevant to my level of training?

Individual study leave funding is available for PGDiTs to support the achievement of competences as defined by the specialty curricula and aspirational activity identified in their Personal Development Plan (PDP). PGDiTs should ensure that curriculum requirements are relevant to their specialty and stage of training and part of their PDP as discussed with their Educational or Clinical Supervisor.

What happens if my course is cancelled?

If your event is cancelled or you choose not to attend, you should endeavour to obtain a refund for any expenses incurred.

If the event was cancelled and you are unable to obtain a refund, please submit your claim and receipts to your trust via the usual study leave claim process.

How are we informed if there have been any changes to the speciality course lists?

The Approved Courses document in the Study Leave page of the website is refreshed annually in order to ensure the process is managed equitably across the region and across specialities.

If I change specialty, how does this affect my access to study leave and study budget?

If you change specialty, then you can apply for any courses that are on your new specialties study leave lists as per usual.

I am concerned about the time delay between paying for the course I wish to attend and being reimbursed?

The new system will still require that you pay for the course and then claim for expenses through your Trust with proof of attendance and receipts. However, NHSE SW has established a centralised system to access study budgets so that you are now guaranteed to be fully reimbursed. Please bear in mind that all study leave expenses will be reimbursed in your Trust monthly pay and will therefore align with payroll.

I'm a SAS doctor / locally employed doctor, what am I entitled to?

Development for SAS/Trust Grade Doctors is provided by separate funding for, and you are advised to speak directly to your local SAS Tutor Lead.