

# Less Than Full Time (LTFT) Training Policy

This document sets out the policy for applying to train less than full time in Health Education England, East of England for Foundation and Specialty Doctors in Training.

February 2023

## 1. Introduction

Any doctor in training including academic doctors can apply for LTFT training.

This SOP is drawn from the Gold Guide (9<sup>th</sup> edition), the NHS Employers document [Principles Underpinning the New Arrangements for Flexible Training \(2005\)](#), the GMC position statement on [LTFT training](#) [HEE LTFT Policy](#)

## 2. Eligibility for LTFT Training

All employees have a [legal right to request flexible working](#) – not just parents and carers. Therefore, all doctors in training can apply for LTFT training and section 3.123 of the Gold Guide provides a list of illustrative examples for requesting LTFT training:

- i. Trainees with a disability or ill health – This may include ongoing medical procedures such as fertility treatment.
- ii. Trainees (men and women) with caring responsibilities (e.g. for children, or for an ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependant)
- iii. Welfare and wellbeing – There may be reasons not directly related to disability or ill health where trainees may benefit from a reduced working pattern. This could have a beneficial effect on their health and wellbeing (e.g. reducing potential burnout).
- iv. Unique opportunities – A trainee is offered a unique opportunity for their own personal/professional development, and this will affect their ability to train full time (e.g. training for national/international sporting events, or a short-term extraordinary responsibility such as membership of a national committee or continuing medical research as a bridge to progression in integrated academic training).
- v. Religious commitment – A trainee has a religious commitment that involves training for a particular role and requires a specific time commitment resulting in the need to work less than full time.
- vi. Non-medical development – A trainee is offered non-medical professional development (e.g. management courses, law courses or fine arts courses) that requires a specific time commitment resulting in the need to work less than full time.
- vii. Flexibility for training and career development with the option to train less than full time with flexibility that might enable development of a broad career portfolio.

It should be noted that the previous “Categories” for LTFT training no longer exist.

All well-founded reasons will be considered, however support to progress the application may be dependent on the capacity of the programme and the effect the request may have on the training available to other doctors in training on the programme.

It is expected that all those applying due to disability or ill health and caring responsibilities (i and ii above) will be accommodated. It is no longer necessary to supply evidence from your GP or from OH in the first instance, although this may be requested at a later time point.

### 3. Overseas Sponsorship and LTFT Training

Those trainees on a Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa must comply with the UK Visas and Immigration requirements for minimum salary and minimum hours. HEE cannot approve any LTFT requests where they do not meet these requirements regardless of the reason for the LTFT request. Full details of minimum salary and hours requirement can be obtained using the LTFT Calculator (a pdf summary of the result can also be downloaded and submitted as part of the LTFT application to confirm eligibility) or by contacting the HEE National Overseas Sponsorship team, [sponsorship@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:sponsorship@hee.nhs.uk)

INSERT LTFT CALCULATOR LINK  
ON FLOW CHART TRAINEE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS

### 4. Applying for LTFT Training

Requests to work LTFT can either be made at point of application for entry into training or at any time after they have been accepted into training.

Doctors in training will need to apply for LTFT training to their local HEE Office. The application form and process vary between offices across the UK. The process and application form for LTFT in the EoE can be found on the HEE EoE website [HEE EoE LTFT training](#). Trainees must use the current form on the website; out of date forms will be rejected.

The GMC Postgraduate Board have issued a position statement determining that all Trainees will be required to undertake at least 50% of full-time training and that no trainee will be permitted to train at less than 20% of full-time training. This includes Trainees on an integrated academic pathway. For a small number of trainees who experience exceptional difficulties, the Post Graduate Dean has flexibility to reduce the percentage of hours to less than 50% for a period no longer than 12 months. Such a request requires additional discussion and agreement with both the relevant TPD, and the Associate Dean for LTFT, prior to submission of the application.

All trainees must agree their LTFT training plan with their TPD prior to submitting any application.

**The application form must be submitted along with any supporting documentation (if required) to the HEE local office with at least 16 weeks' notice before the proposed start date for a change in working hours or before the next rotation change dependent on local HEE Office processes. This is to allow at least 12 weeks' notice to the employer of the proposed changes in line with code of practice. It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure the form is fully completed and correctly completed prior to submission to HEE.**

Where a doctor in training wishes to increase or decrease their whole time equivalent (WTE), they must make an application to their local HEE office providing at least 16 weeks' notice.

Any decrease in working hours will be subject to the minimum requirements for recognition of training set by the GMC's 2017 position statement on [LTFT training](#). For those trainees on a Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa please refer to section 3 of this Policy.

### 5. Approval of LTFT application

The HEE local Office will assess the application for LTFT training and where necessary prioritise according to the provisions of the Equality Act relating to protected characteristics.

Approval of the LTFT training plan will be subject to the agreement of the employer / host training organisation before any placement can commence. This includes changes in placement. The application and approval process for LTFT training is outlined in Appendix A of this document.

Approval to work LTFT will normally be given for the duration of the programme but will be subject to review every the time the trainee changes placement, or sooner if requested by the trainee. For placement changes, the local Trust (HR and the department in which the trainee will be placed) must be contacted to confirm that the trainee can be accommodated LTFT. It is the responsibility of the TPD to obtain such confirmation. The discussions should also include agreement on the working pattern for the trainee.

Correspondence will be sent to the doctor in training and other stakeholders as necessary to confirm the outcome of the LTFT application, in order that all parties are aware of the decision and can respond accordingly in terms of rotational notification. To comply with Code of Practice requirements, employers will receive 12 weeks' notice of a change in status to LTFT. It is recognised however that, in exceptional circumstances which would be discussed with all relevant parties, this is not always possible.

### 6. Change of Plan/Placement

If a trainees circumstances change and they no longer want to continue LTFT, they must discuss this with their Training Program Director. The Training Program Director will determine when and where in a training program it is possible for the trainee to revert to Full Time training. This may be delayed/limited by post availability. The TPD must inform the EoE LTFT team ([ltft.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:ltft.eoe@hee.nhs.uk)) if and when an LTFT trainee is reverting to full time training. However, it is not necessary to submit any forms for this.

Trainees must complete a Change in Plan Form if there is any change in their LTFT percentage or if there is a change in their slot share partner.

A Change in Plan form must be submitted 16 weeks prior to commencement of the change.

### 7. Refusal of LTFT application

Where a request to work LTFT is rejected a member of the HEE Faculty (HoS, TPD, Postgraduate Dean or nominated deputy) should meet with the doctor in training to explain the reasons for the decision. The reason should align to the business reasons set out in the legislation: -

- the burden of additional costs
- an inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff.
- an inability to recruit additional staff.
- a detrimental impact on quality
- a detrimental impact on performance
- a detrimental effect on ability to meet service demand.
- insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work.
- a planned structural change to the business

If following discussion, there is new information or an omission it may be possible to accept the LTFT request with modifications. This may include working a different WTE or a change to the proposed start date or a change in the location of training.

## **8. Appeal**

Where a request to work LTFT has been rejected the doctor in training has the right to appeal that decision. It is recommended that trainee first attempt to resolve any issues informally via discussion with TPD and the Associate Dean for LTFT. If a doctor in training has had their application to train LTFT declined, they may appeal in writing to the relevant Postgraduate Dean sending the email to [ltft.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:ltft.eoe@hee.nhs.uk). The Postgraduate Dean's decision will be final.

## **9. Progressing in a LTFT Placement**

All doctors in training, full-time or LTFT, need to meet the requirements for progression in training as set out in the relevant GMC-approved curriculum and will be assessed in accordance with the ARCP process. Where an extension to training is required, trainees on a Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa will be able to have their sponsorship extended. Trainees should contact the HEE National Overseas Sponsorship team [sponsorship@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:sponsorship@hee.nhs.uk) approximately 4 months before the expiry of their visa to request an extension.

Where trainees have been approved on a time limited basis, they should be appropriately managed back to their full-time basis on their training programme.

Key points relating to LTFT doctors in training: -

- Doctors training LTFT should have an ARCP not less than annually, but at intervals of no more than 15 months. The timing of this may be related to a critical progression point in their training.
- LTFT doctors are expected to demonstrate the capabilities relevant to their stage of training on a pro-rata basis.
- Training extensions awarded after the award of an ARCP outcome 3 or 10.2 will be pro-rata.

- Day time working, on-call and out of hours duties will be undertaken on a pro-rata basis to that worked by full time doctors in the same grade and specialty but will vary according to whether or not the trainee is slot sharing or not. For example an 80% LTFT trainee not involved in a slot share would normally be expected to undertake 80% of the on call of a WTE. However, where trainees are in a slot share which exceeds 100% WTE, local discussions will be needed to agree on call arrangements and frequency. The funding for all on call is paid by the Trust. It is expected that the LTFT trainees in the slot share will cover at least the WTE element of the on call on a 50:50 basis. Any on call above this will be negotiated, funded and agreed locally. The only exceptions to this are circumstances for LTFT training which make this impossible, provided that legal and educational requirements are met.
- Study Leave, Annual Leave and Bank Holiday entitlement are pro rata. Study Leave should be applied for using the local trust processes.
- LTFT doctors in training will normally be expected to move between posts within rotations on the same basis as a full-time doctor in training in the same specialty, to ensure they receive a coherent programme of training that is educationally comparable with full time doctors in training.
- LTFT doctors in training can be interviewed for a consultant post 6 months prior to CCT, this is fixed-term time basis and not pro-rata.
- LTFT doctors in training can apply to act up as a consultant in their final year of training. This will normally be for three months but can be extended to reflect the LTFT training percentage.
- The purpose of the period of grace is to provide Specialty Registrars (excluding those in General Practice) time to secure a Consultant or other post following attainment of their CCT. The maximum duration of the period of grace is six months whether the doctor is full time or LTFT.

## 10. Funding of LTFT Trainees

Current funding arrangements for LTFT are outlined in Appendix D.

## 11. Additional work during LTFT.

LTFT trainees are not precluded from undertaking additional work. If they are planning to do so, this should be discussed with the ES and TPD. It should be noted that where LTFT trainees are undertaking significant numbers of extra shifts they may be asked to increase the percentage of time that they are in training. LTFT trainees undertaking additional shifts should ensure they are practicing in accordance of the GMC's standards [GMC Good Medical Practice](#), and that there is no negative impact on their training. They should ensure the Post Graduate Dean is aware of all additional work undertaken by declaring all additional work on annual Form R or SOAR submission and this should be reviewed at the ARCP.

## **12. Public Health registrars**

Public Health Trainees working in the community are the responsibility of St Helen's and Knowsley. Any LTFT applications should be authorised by St Helen's and Knowsley before submission to the deanery for approval.

### **Related Documents**

- Gold Guide 9<sup>th</sup> Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK - [COPMeD Gold Guide 9th editionhttps://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/less-than-full-time-training-position-statement-nov-17\\_pdf-72374278.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/less-than-full-time-training-position-statement-nov-17_pdf-72374278.pdf)
- GMC Position Statement: Conditions for Less Than Full Time Training November 2017
- [GMC Less than full time position statement Nov 17](#)

## **Appendix A – Responsibilities of Trainees**

Trainees should understand that LTFT training is not an automatic right, and its availability is governed by finite resources, including funding, availability of suitable posts and the ability of departments to staff their rotas safely. Although HEE and service providers will always aim to maximise the opportunities for LTFT, it may not always be possible to accommodate an LTFT request.

When applying for LTFT training, Trainees must ensure all information used in support of their application is accurate and is not in any way misleading. HEE reserves the right to cross-check all information entered onto application forms and any evidence provided.

Trainees should not dictate the terms and conditions of their LTFT training placements to TPD's or Trusts. The process is a negotiation between all relevant parties, ensuring the requirements of the relevant curriculum are met by the agreed pro-rata basis.

Trainees must ensure that LTFT application forms are submitted to the relevant Trust with three months' notice prior to their planned start date. This usually requires starting the LTFT application process at least 16 weeks in advance of their start date and ensuring all paperwork is submitted complete to HEE by 14 weeks prior to their start date. It is the Trainee's responsibility to raise concerns about the progress of an application with the relevant parties.

Trainees should discuss any of the changes in circumstance below with Medical Staffing/HR at the employing Trust, TPD's and Educational Supervisors. If any of the changes below are agreed, this must be confirmed in writing by the Trainee via email [lftt.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:lftt.eoe@hee.nhs.uk) to HEE:

- The planned LTFT start or end date.
- Time out of programme including maternity leave.
- Resignation from the training programme.



**Appendix B Responsibilities of Trainers and HEE**

HEE will treat all applicants equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex/sexual orientation, or any other discriminatory factor as per the Equality Act (2010).

HEE is responsible for ensuring that all LTFT training is undertaken in posts and programmes that have been prospectively approved by the GMC.

HEE will manage the LTFT training system in such a way that information pertaining to an LTFT Trainee flows between all relevant parties. "Relevant parties" include, but are not limited to; the Trainee, TPD's, Medical Staffing Departments, Finance Officers, and internal HEE teams.

HEE is committed to enabling as many eligible LTFT applicants as possible to train on an LTFT basis. This includes promoting the mainstreaming of LTFT and ensuring that short-term supernumerary placements are arranged if required (for a maximum of 3 months).

HEE will endeavour to adapt its policy as required to reflect changes in national guidelines and / or legislative changes relating to LTFT training or part-time working in general. The most up-to-date policy will be accessible on the HEE website.

HEE EoE will collect data in accordance with the minimum required national dataset. Local data will be made available at least annually.

**Appendix C Responsibilities of trusts**

Trusts are expected to treat LTFT Trainees no differently from full-time Trainees and in accordance with the policies and procedures of HEE/the lead employers.

## **Appendix D Funding of LTFT Training**

From the 1 April 2023 a new LTFT funding policy has been agreed across England. This policy applies to postgraduate medical placements that would be eligible for the [Department of Health and Social Care \(DHSC\) education and training tariff](#). The funding for both supernumerary and slot share LTFT placements will be consistent across England from 1 April 2023.

For postgraduate medical placements that are not eligible for the DHSC tariff, such as GP practice placements, Public Health placements and Private, Independent and Voluntary Organisation (PIVO) placements, current arrangements will remain in place, as for these placement types HEE provides funding for the individual postgraduate medical trainee, as opposed to the placement.

### **b) Supernumerary Placements**

HEE recommends that LTFT supernumerary placements would not normally exceed a maximum period of 3 months and that where possible, all postgraduate doctors in training should be managed within standard rostered placements. This is to avoid postgraduate doctors in training being in permanently supernumerary placements. Any exceptions to this must have the prior agreement of the Regional Postgraduate Dean.

Supernumerary placements will be used to support postgraduate doctors in training with complex circumstances who require additional support that a standard LTFT training post cannot offer. This might include the following circumstances (however this is not an exhaustive list)

- Someone who has been out of training for a significant period of time and requires a carefully calibrated return to training. This may include additional supervision to support a return to a normal training pattern.
- Circumstances which are exceptions to standard training arrangements.
- Circumstances that are not already supported via the Supported Return to Training (SuppoRTT) programme.

Supernumerary Salary contribution:

HEE will contribute towards the salary of LTFT supernumerary placements as per Annex A of the most up to date version of the DHSC education and training tariff guidance.

Supernumerary Placement tariff:

HEE will also contribute a pro rata placement tariff at a rate consistent with the latest version of the DHSC education and training tariff guidance, depending on the working time equivalent (WTE) of the postgraduate medical trainee occupying the placement.

HEE will not contribute towards the costs of statutory leave (such as parental or sick leave) as this is an employer responsibility.

HEE will not provide incentive payments to NHS trusts for taking on LTFT trainees.

### **c) Slot Share placements**

From 1 April 2023, where two or more LTFT postgraduate medical trainees occupy a full-time placement HEE will top-up their salary contribution where this equals more than 1.0 full-time equivalent (FTE). All slot share salary top-up contributions will be made as per table 1 below:

## Health Education England

	Grade	Outside London	Annual Prices - Outside London						
		22/23 Rates (Full Time Contract)	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%
Slot Share Top Ups	FY1	£36,408	£7,282	£10,922	£14,563	£18,204	£21,845	£25,486	£29,126
	FY2	£42,341	£8,468	£12,702	£16,936	£21,171	£25,405	£29,639	£33,873
	CT1	£50,345	£10,069	£15,104	£20,138	£25,173	£30,207	£35,242	£40,276
	CT2								
	CT3	£64,138	£12,828	£19,241	£25,655	£32,069	£38,483	£44,897	£51,310
	ST1	£50,345	£10,069	£15,104	£20,138	£25,173	£30,207	£35,242	£40,276
	ST2								
	ST3	£64,138	£12,828	£19,241	£25,655	£32,069	£38,483	£44,897	£51,310
	ST4								
	ST5								
	ST6	£73,599	£14,720	£22,080	£29,440	£36,800	£44,159	£51,519	£58,879
	ST7								
	ST8								

Table 1: Salary contribution – Slot Share Top-Ups (2022 – 2023 rates)

### Slot-Share Placement Tariff:

HEE will also top up the placement fee where the WTE is greater than 1.0. This placement tariff will be at a rate consistent with the latest version of the DHSC education and training tariff guidance.

If a LTFT postgraduate medical trainee is occupying a full-time placement and there is no slot share arrangement in place, HEE's contribution will be as per standard education contract and education and training tariff arrangements.

For trust funded placements, HEE will contribute the top-up of salary and placement fee only. Please see example three below.

HEE will not contribute towards the cost of statutory leave (such as parental or sick leave) as this is an employer responsibility.

HEE will not provide incentive payments to NHS trusts for taking on LTFT trainees.

## Appendix E

### Appendix F East of England Process for Applying to LTFT

1. Trainees must submit the LTFT application forms at least 16 weeks prior to their intended starting date of their LTFT post. This is to allow processing of the application in time to give employers 12 weeks' notice of the change in employment status.
2. Trainees are required to discuss their intention to apply for LTFT with their TPD prior to starting the application process.
3. Trainees should agree their working pattern with the ES/Tutor in the department/practice in which they will be working prior to submission of the LTFT application or change of placement form. It should be noted that departments/practices may not necessarily be able to accommodate a specific working pattern and that a rigid working pattern may impact on educational opportunities.
4. Trainees should access the local HEE website HEE EoE and complete the application form. The application form should be signed by both the Educational Supervisor and the Training program Director. Additionally for GP Trainees working in Primary Care, the Practice Manager must also sign the form.
5. The Training Program Director should only sign the form if they are satisfied that a) the training program can accommodate the trainee as LTFT AND b) the Trust/Practice in which the trainee will commence in post can accommodate the trainee at the requested level of LTFT.
6. Once signed by the appropriate parties it should be returned to the LTFT inbox [lftt.eoe@hee.nhs.uk](mailto:lftt.eoe@hee.nhs.uk) along with any relevant supporting documents.
7. Trainees are not eligible to commence LTFT training until written HEE approval of the LTFT application form has been approved.
8. Eligibility will be assessed by the HEE EoE LTFT Associate Dean.
9. Trainees will be informed of the LTFT Associate Dean decision by email, usually within two weeks of submitting their application form, providing no information, or required evidence is missing. Ideally, and to comply with Code of Practice requirements, employers will receive 12 weeks' notice of a change in status to LTFT. In exceptional circumstances this may not be possible, in which case OH/GP/ Specialist Health Care Provider / PSW support will be required.
10. If further supporting evidence is required, the Trainee will be contacted by a member of the LTFT team. On occasion it may be necessary for the Trainee to liaise or meet directly with the LTFT Associate Dean to discuss their plans for LTFT and other possible training options. If the Trainee is deemed ineligible, they have the right to appeal, as per section 2.5 of this policy.

11. Trainees will be notified in writing via email once their LTFT Form has been approved by HEE. Other stakeholders who would be informed include, but are not limited to; TPD's, Medical Staffing Departments, Finance Officers, and internal teams of HEE.

### Document History

Version	Date	Remarks
1.0	January 2023	Adapted from previous version of LTFT Guidance February 2022 RB
2.0	January 2023	Vilma Leonoviciene, Anna Stockburn, Susan Knight revisions
3.0	February 2023	Rowan Burnstein
4.0	February 2023	Francesca Crawley Ritwik Bannerjee, attendees of Stakeholder meeting Jan 25 2023 taken into account
5.0	February 2023	Rowan Burnstein