

EoE Public Health Training Programme

Study Leave Policy – v.3 (June 2023)

1. Overview

This policy sets out study leave and curriculum delivery arrangements provided for registrars in Public Health. It outlines the responsibilities and study leave entitlement specifically for Public Health registrars in accordance with the 2021 HEE EoE Study Leave policy¹ and should be read in conjunction with this policy. As detailed in the March 2023 update, *“although the funding does not derive from the same sources, the high-level principles outlined in this document should be followed for all postgraduate doctors, dentists and public health trainees within HEE.”*²

HEE’s document, “Enhancing Junior Doctors’ Working Lives”³, includes a commitment from HEE to ensure that every trainee has the opportunity to gain all competences relevant to their level of training as defined in each curriculum.

Study leave is granted in accordance with both overall training programme requirements and individual educational objectives.

2. Regional training courses/activities

The Training Programme funds attendance at the MPhil course at the University of Cambridge and commissions a programme of core teaching and training events to meet curricular requirements.

Core teaching and training courses are commissioned annually by the TPD and Registrar representatives (‘Core training managers’), with oversight by STC, to meet curricular objectives and educational needs. The aim is to source courses, within the EoE where possible, which have been reviewed or evaluated to provide high quality teaching opportunities relevant to the curriculum and required skills. Commissioning these as a group enables such activities to remain affordable and available for all registrars. The quality of the training courses delivered is evaluated and monitored to ensure it is of an appropriate standard and meets registrars’ needs. A prospectus is produced by the registrar reps each April outlining the courses on offer for the subsequent 12 months. Registrars should discuss with their ES to identify the courses suitable for their stage of training, and book and attend all relevant regional teaching sessions.

¹ HEE EoE ‘Study Leave Policy’. Jan 2021. Available at: <https://heeo.ee.hee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/study-leave/study-leave-policy>

² Health Education England (HEE). ‘Study Leave: An overview of the HEE-wide approach’ Version 4.0 – published 31 March 2023.

³ HEE. ‘Enhancing Junior Doctors’ Working Lives.’ Available at: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/doctors-training/enhancing-working-lives>

The Training Programme also offers support for exam preparation: supporting the registrar reps in facilitating peer-led revision, funding an annual mock OSPHE exam and arranging Consultant feedback for mock Diplomate exam questions.

Trainee bursaries can be applied for from HEE to fund course fees for postgraduate courses in medical education (see <https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/faculty/bursary-funding>). Registrars can use their study leave days to attend face:face or virtual contact days on these courses.

The Training Programme recognises that attendance at PHREE days is important for links across cohorts as well as shared learning, and attendance is expected throughout training. Six study leave days are allocated for PHREE attendance in each calendar year; these are non-transferable and may not be used for other purposes.

3. Study leave allowance

Specialty registrars are allowed up to 30 days study leave per year. LTFT registrars' time allowance will have a pro-rata entitlement, except in ST1 and ST2 where extra days are allowed in order to attend all mandatory training programme events and PHREE days.

The study leave year runs from 1 August to 31 July (i.e. from the usual commencement date of the programme for a 12 month period), and unused study leave time cannot be carried forward into the next year.

Registrars in their grace period post-CCT will not normally be granted study leave (as training has been completed). Registrars who reach CCT partway through a year will be entitled to study leave days and funding pro-rata.

Where a trainee takes parental leave, their entitlement to study leave continues. This may be taken during 'keeping in touch' days.

Registrars on Out of Programme Experience (OOPE), Out of Programme Research (OOPR) or Out of Programme Career Break (OOPC) are not entitled to study leave for the period they are out of programme.

Trainees on Out of Programme Training (OOPT) are expected to attend PHREE days.

In ST1, study leave is allocated entirely to attending the MPhil course at Cambridge University (funded by the Training programme) and PHREE days for those undertaking the MPhil. Time taken for study outside the MPhil during ST1 must be taken from annual leave or leave without pay. Absence from the MPhil other than for statutory leave requires TPD approval.

In ST2, study leave is almost entirely accounted for by group preparation for the first sitting of the Diplomate exam, the exam and PHREE days. Private study time for Diplomate exam revision in addition to the MPhil course and revision study groups should not exceed a maximum of 5 days (2.5 days per paper), and should be agreed with the Educational supervisor with a study plan agreed. Registrars are expected to spend some of their own time in private study for examinations.

In ST3, some study leave days are allocated to the Membership exam. Private study time will not be granted for the OSPHE, which is an exam best prepared for in the workplace.

Table: Study leave events allocated by the programme for ST1-3

Year	Expected events	No. of days	Travel £ claimed via School Administrator
ST1 127 days	Regional induction	2	Travel @ PTR
	MPhil course	243	Travel @ PTR
	Faculty of Public Health (FPH) free induction event	1	Travel @ PTR
	PHREE days	6	Travel @ PTR
ST2 30 days	Diplomate exam revision study groups	11	Travel @ PTR
	Diplomate exam revision group mocks	2	Travel @ PTR
	Diplomate exam	3	*no travel expenses for exams
	Diplomate exam private study leave	5	*no travel expenses for private leave
	Core training course (e.g. financial management, media training)	3	Travel @ PTR
	PHREE days	6	Travel @ PTR
ST3 11 days (+ regional training activities)	OSPHE familiarisation course	1	Travel @ PTR
	1:1 OSPHE practice	3 (6x0.5)	Travel @ PTR
	Membership exam	1	*no travel expenses for exams
	PHREE days	6	Travel @ PTR

*PTR = Public transport rate

In ST3, ST4 and ST5, study leave is allocated to the regionally organised training and educational activities. Remaining leave can be used to attend specialist additional training according to individual educational need (see section 5). Please note that study leave will not be granted to attend courses which replicate the core funded training activities.

Registrars in ST3, 4 & 5 can apply for 'private study leave', for up to a maximum of 5 days, out of their allowance of 30 days. For example, registrars may request study leave for the preparation of a paper to be submitted for publication. In these circumstances, the Educational supervisor and registrar must agree milestones for the completion and submission of work in advance.

4. Study leave allowance (budget)

A study leave budget for all trainees is held centrally by HEE. This can be used to meet the costs of additional individual training needs required to meet the curriculum, or ‘aspirational’ training needs which are “not required by the curriculum but will significantly enhance the trainee’s progression to the next stage of their training” (HEE Study Leave policy, 2021).

Registrars may submit an application to the TPD for ‘aspirational’ study leave time and funds, including a supporting statement explaining why competences gained from such an activity cannot be achieved from local and/or regional training or experience and what they will gain from the activity. Registrars should only apply for funding to attend courses if the relevant curriculum requirements cannot be achieved through experiential learning and/or the commissioned core training activities. ‘Aspirational’ activities will generally only be approved if the trainee has achieved the curriculum competencies for their stage of training. Study leave funding will be distributed as fairly and as effectively as possible within the guidance provided in the HEE policy.

“There is no ‘cap’ imposed to any individual; each study leave episode applied for is considered for approval on its own merit, following the principles outlined in this document applied to the individual circumstances of the trainee. However, it is important to emphasise that the overall study leave budget is finite and local offices have a responsibility to manage the expenditure and financial balance. This may mean that some activities not required to achieve curriculum outcomes (termed ‘discretionary study leave’), may not be approved and/or part-funding may be required by the trainee reflecting both HEE and the individual’s commitment to their enrichment.”⁴

Study leave funding covers the cost of courses, travel at public transport rates and associated accommodation. It cannot be used to cover the costs of childcare. Exam fees cannot be claimed from the study leave budget; this includes any associated travel and subsistence.

As a national agreement with NIHR, Academic Clinical Fellows and Clinical Lecturers (academic trainees) are additionally entitled to £1,000 per financial year per trainee to attend meetings and conferences that are relevant to academic training. For NIHR funded academic trainees, a £1000 pa bursary is held by the local University. In order to maintain equivalence with NIHR funded trainees, locally funded academic trainees can claim up to £1000 pa to attend academic meetings and conferences via their employer’s usual study leave route (which is then recharged to the public health study leave budget).

5. Applying for study leave

Registrars in ST3 onwards should review the annual prospectus of regional core training and agree with their ES which activities are appropriate for their stage in training. (Please note that it is unwise to delay attending activities relevant for that stage of training in case there is insufficient interest to commission the course the following year. The prospectus indicates

⁴ Health Education England (HEE). Study Leave: An overview of the HEE-wide approach. Version 4.0 – published 31 March 2023.

which courses are likely to be commissioned annually and which on a bi-annual basis.) This should be noted in the learning agreement.

Study leave for exam revision and preparation, core training activities and PHREE days should be submitted as a block where possible, using one study leave form.

Any additional study leave should be formally applied for at least four weeks in advance, so that the employer can accurately record study leave taken. Any study leave which is not for core training activities, will be reviewed for approval by a TPD.

Retrospective requests (i.e. for leave already taken) will not be considered in any circumstances.

To apply for study leave the StR must:

1. Discuss and agree the application for study leave with their clinical supervisor;
2. Complete the Public Health study leave application form available on the School website (http://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/public_health/specialty-training-programme/hr-information-policies-processes-guidance.) and send it to their Educational supervisor for discussion and agreement;
3. Once agreed, to 'approve' the Educational supervisor must type in their name and the ES should email the form to the Public Health EoE School Administrator via phschool.eoe@hee.nhs.uk.
4. For activities which are not part of core training, the form should be flagged as 'For the attention of the TPD' and include details about the proposed activity and why it is necessary to meet curricular requirements.

If a registrar disagrees with a decision about study leave funding, they should in the first instance contact the TPD that refused the application to request an explanation / review. If the registrar remains of the opinion that the wrong decision has been made, they can appeal against the decision using the HEE East of England appeal process outlined in the 2021 study leave policy.

6. Study leave allowance claims

Payments for study leave claims will be made to registrars by the Lead Employer following attendance at the course. Claims for expenses incurred for study leave events should be submitted no later than eight weeks after the course date to phschool.eoe@hee.nhs.uk on the correct employer claim form (https://heeoee.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/study_leave_application_form_aug_2021_22.xlsx) and marked as study leave expenses. Every claim form must be submitted with proof of expenditure. Any claims received after the eight week deadline will not be paid.

Travel expenses are subject to the following criteria:

- Travel must be taken using the most cost-effective means possible
- Mileage is paid at public transport rate in line with most recent NHS Terms & conditions handbook

Subsistence expenses for aspirational individual study leave events are subject to the following detailed in Appendix 1 of the HEE policy:

- A meal allowance of one day's subsistence of £5 (>5 hours away, including the lunchtime between 1200-1400 hours) when lunch is not included as part of the event;
- A maximum meal allowance of £20 during a 24 hour period
- Maximum overnight subsistence of £120 for accommodation outside of Central London and £150 per night inside Central London
- Reimbursement for alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed

Specific criteria for funding for overseas travel is detailed in the HEE 2021 Policy.

7. Non-attendance for pre-paid study leave activities

Educational and clinical supervisors are expected to be familiar with this study leave policy. Host placements are expected to facilitate attendance for study leave, and registrars should contact their Educational Supervisor or TPD if there are any problems with taking study leave.

Registrars unable to attend an event that they have registered for should notify the provider, the regional training reps, their educational supervisor and the TPD (irrespective of whether a fee was charged). Failing to attend a pre-booked regionally funded event without prior notice may have a bearing on whether future study leave is agreed.

If a registrar is unable to attend an individual study leave event due to ill health and is unable to recover some or all of the advance costs, they should contact the TPD within 10 working days and provide evidence of receipts, correspondence illustrating they have attempted to recover costs and evidence of illness (e.g. sick note). Please see the HEE Study Leave Policy 2021 for further details.

8. Monitoring and dissemination of study leave learning

Registrars are required to keep a record of their study leave, including reflections on their learning, agreed by their Educational Supervisor and submit this annually at ARCP (<https://www.fph.org.uk/media/1165/8-study-leave-form.doc>).

Registrars are expected to share their learning and provide feedback if requested from any courses, conferences or other events that they have attended. Registrars should aim to disseminate their learning through e-mail to colleagues or presentation at PHREE events or similar.

Registrars are also expected to provide feedback in a timely manner on core training courses that they have attended, in order to support the evaluation and quality monitoring of commissioned courses.

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