



East of England

School of Anaesthesia

School of Anaesthesia
The Deakin Centre, Box 111
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Guidance for Study Leave in the East of England School of Anaesthesia

Study Leave funding in the East of England is a process which evolves over time. The rules governing study leave funding are set by Health Education England East of England (HEE EoE), and the School of Anaesthesia works within these rules. Full details are available in the *HEE EoE Study Leave Policy, January 2021* (abbreviated to SLP henceforth). The policy is updated periodically and the current version will be on the HEE EoE Study Leave webpage.

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify the current Study Leave process for trainees in the EoE School of Anaesthesia. We seek to apply the rules to ensure equity of opportunity for all trainees in the School. Weblinks to all relevant resources are provided at the end of this guidance.

Study leave

It is important that you apply for study leave **prospectively**. The process of application and approval takes time, so plan well ahead (months).

There are two parallel processes for securing study leave:

1) Release from work commitments: Follow your Trust's departmental application process for leave (time off). This is all you need to do if no funding is required, eg for free courses / meetings where no registration fees, travel expenses or subsistence are to be claimed.

2) Study Leave funding: If you require funding for registration fees, travel expenses and/or subsistence you are likely to need to fill in a Trust form for funding as well, so that your expenses can be reimbursed via your payslip (follow your department's local process). Depending upon the type of study leave requested, this may require additional approval by the School of Anaesthesia and/or HEE EoE. The rest of this document explains the process.

If funding is required, **do not part with any money until this funding has been fully approved by your local Trust and/or the School of Anaesthesia**, unless you are prepared to pay for your study leave from your own pocket.

For ACCS Anaesthetics, the School of Anaesthesia will manage approval of funding for your study leave even while you are on non-anaesthetic placements. For ACCS Acute Medicine or Emergency Medicine trainees, your parent speciality will manage approval of funding – please consult your parent School for guidance.

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Terminology

There are four types of programmes eligible for Study Leave funding. The distinction is important because it affects the application process. The process is detailed in a *Flowchart for Applications* available on the HEE EoE website.

1) 'Individual requirement for the School' courses:

The only 'individual requirement for the School' courses (formerly known as curriculum requirements) are the resuscitation courses. For the School of Anaesthesia these are currently ALS / ELS, ATLS / ETC, APLS / EPALS, and the re-certifications for these.

If the total funding requested is less than £600 this may be approved by your local College Tutor (or Educational Supervisor if that is the agreed process in your department). Follow your local departmental policy.

If the total funding requested is more than £600 you will need to complete an additional *HEE Study Leave Additional/Aspirational Form* for the funding to be approved by your Training Programme Director (TPD). This form is available on the HEE EoE Study Leave webpage.

2) School of Anaesthesia / ICM Regional Training Days and Region-wide Simulation programme:

These days are listed on the School's webpage and are 'free' for our trainees (funded by the School), so no registration fees are required. You must still apply for release from work commitments from your Trust. You may apply for travel expenses if you wish to do so. These may be reclaimed as described above for 'Individual requirement for the School' activity, ie via your local College Tutor (or Educational Supervisor if that is the agreed process in your department). Follow your local departmental policy. Your travel expenses must not exceed £600 per day!

3) Study leave for non-clinical units of training (Generic Professional Capabilities):

This form of study leave recognises that trainees may spend a significant amount of time undertaking non-clinical work. It encompasses activities such as quality improvement projects, preparing teaching sessions for regional programmes, undertaking research, and preparing presentations for regional or national meetings. There are likely to be other examples and these may be granted at the discretion of your college tutor. Individual departments may manage this leave differently, and the School has agreed a set of principles to guide this form of leave. The guiding principles are as follows:

- The activity must be related to your curriculum
- The activity isn't achievable in normal clinical time.



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- Any activity **must be prospectively included in your Personal Development Plan (PDP)** on your Lifelong Learning Platform and discussed with your educational supervisor in advance.
- Evidence of completion must be uploaded to the LLP, visible in your ESSR and reviewed by your ES afterwards.
- Currently the EoE School of Anaesthesia suggests a maximum of 6 days per year (pro rata for LTFT) for this type of study leave, and this will count as part of your 30 day annual allowance. It is acknowledged that this will vary between stages of training, and in particular trainees are likely to need significantly less than this in the periods leading up to major examinations. This is currently under review nationally and we will update our guidance as needed.
- Release from work commitments is via your trust's departmental application process.
- Normally no funding will be necessary, so no aspirational study leave forms need to be completed. If any funding is required then either a business case must be presented to the appropriate body or the aspirational study leave process followed. For example, if you have a presentation accepted at a national meeting you may apply for study leave via this process to produce the presentation but your expenses associated with attending the meeting will need to be claimed via the aspirational study leave process below.

4) 'Aspirational' study leave activity:

All study leave other than the above is 'aspirational'.

Eligibility for approval of funding for aspirational study leave activity is covered by strict rules. Aspirational activities are described as:

"Whilst not explicitly recognised as requirements for the trainee's curriculum, such activities may help the trainee complete parts of the curriculum" [SLP]

Your application for aspirational study leave funding needs to be accompanied by a **Supporting Statement**. This should explain how the programme will help you complete parts of the curriculum, which competencies will be gained that cannot be achieved from local and/or regional programmes, and what will be your personal gain.

Any aspirational activity applied for **must be prospectively included in your Personal Development Plan (PDP)**. Please ensure that this is documented, agreed and signed by your Educational Supervisor in your Lifelong Learning Platform **before** application, as this will be looked at before agreeing the funding.

If the total sum applied for is less than £100 it may be approved by your College Tutor (Note: This is a special arrangement for the School of Anaesthesia and is different to that stated in the SLP).

If the total sum applied for is greater than £100 you will need to complete an additional form for approval of the funding by your TPD. Complete the additional *HEE Study Leave Additional / Aspirational Form*.

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If you are requesting a **high amount of funding** please discuss this with your TPD prior to submitting your application. There's no fixed definition of 'high amount', but we suggest anything above £800 should be discussed. You or your Educational Supervisor may seek advice from studyleave.eoe@hee.nhs.uk if you are unsure about whether an application is appropriate.

Eligibility for Study leave

HEE EoE stipulates criteria for eligibility for **any** study leave. You must have fully engaged with local and regional training programmes. You must also be making appropriate progress with meeting curriculum competences. Full details are in the SLP.

Common queries

Travel / subsistence / accommodation

Apply for travel and subsistence expenses in the same way as any other study leave expenses as outlined above. Guidance is available in Appendix 1 of the SLP. In short, please be mindful that resources are finite, so the most cost effective options should be chosen.

In region / out of region programmes

"Where a course is available locally or regionally, funding should only be approved in truly exceptional circumstances for a trainee to undertake the course elsewhere." [SLP]

Always consider courses within our region first before considering out of region events. The School of Anaesthesia considers that a course may not be *available* in region if it is not delivered locally at all, if all equivalent courses within the region are fully booked, or if the timescale for local programmes is not suitable. If you feel that an equivalent course is not available in our region you must explain the reasons why you need to apply out of region in detail in your supporting statement.

Overseas study leave

Rules on overseas study leave are explicit in the SLP:

"Funding for overseas study leave will only be considered if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- 1. For conferences, when the applicant is the first author and sole presenter of a paper which has been accepted for a poster or presentation. This poster or presentation must be based on the trainee's own research undertaken as part of a clinical training programme or an NIHR recognized academic clinical fellowship or clinical lectureship.*



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2. For other courses or activities when there is no equivalent course or activity in the UK. (for example, an international conference for a very small specialty which does not have a UK conference).
3. When the funding claimed to attend an overseas activity is less than that of attending the cheapest equivalent activity in the UK. It is the trainee's responsibility to provide evidence of this when applying for funding.

[...] Joint UK and Irish Society meetings will not be counted as an overseas conference when they are held in Ireland." [SLP]

Please see the SLP for additional criteria and the full application process. Approval of all overseas study leave requires sign off by the EoE Postgraduate Dean.

Examination courses

You may apply for funding for one course per segment of the Primary and Final FRCA exams – for example a Primary MCQ course, a Primary SOE / OCSE course, a Final Written course, and a Final SOE course. Because of the high cost of some courses, funding will be limited to a maximum of £1000 per part of the examination [SLP]. Funding is restricted to one course per segment, but you may attend additional courses if you wish to pay for these yourself. As above, if any course you wish to attend is out of region, you must justify the application in your supporting statement. Courses in our region may be very popular and become fully booked in less than the timescale it would normally take to approve study leave funding. Please see the advice below.

At the time of writing, as part of the Covid 19 recovery package, HEE EoE is accepting second applications for funding to support attendance at a second exam preparation course. Note that the webpage states this will be reviewed in March 2021, however we have received confirmation that this will extend for the current financial year (March 2021 – March 2022). This special arrangement may not continue thereafter.

Courses with limited capacity

Some courses may be very popular and become fully booked in less than the timescale it would normally take to approve funding for study leave. In this case you may decide to plan ahead, apply for, and secure agreed funding well in advance of the course date. The same applies for courses that you may not know if you will be eligible for at the time of application (eg if you have not yet passed the Primary MCQ, but would like to apply for a popular Primary FRCA SOE / OSCE course if you do pass). This should be explained in your supporting statement. Leave and funding can be cancelled if not needed.

School of Anaesthesia / ICM Regional Training Days and Region-wide Simulation programme

Your study leave for these days will count as part of your 30 day annual allowance. Dates, programmes and further information can be found on the School webpage.

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Private study leave for exams

This is at the discretion of your current department (College Tutor). Study leave taken for this counts as part of your 30 day annual allowance.

Study leave in the Covid-19 era

Up to date information is available on the HEE EoE Study Leave webpage.

Links to documents and resources

HEE EoE Study Leave webpage:

<https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/study-leave-homepage>

Study Leave Policy (January 2021) (SLP)

<https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/study-leave/study-leave-policy>

Flowchart for applications:

https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/study_leave_application_process_flowchart_eoe_v2.pdf

Individual Requirements for the School of Anaesthetics

https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/individual_requirements_school_of_anaesthetics_v4.pdf

College Tutor approval for Aspirational Leave <£100

<https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/study-leave-homepage> (tab at bottom of page)

Covid Related Support - Exam Preparation

<https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/faculty-educators/study-leave/study-leave-faqs> (tab at bottom of page)

School of Anaesthesia Regional Training Days

<https://heeo.ee.nhs.uk/anaesthesia/east-england-anaesthesia-regional-training-days>

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TPD for Education

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