Less Than Full Time (LTFT) Training Policy

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

1.1 Less Than Full Time (LTFT) training is a scheme whereby eligible trainee doctors of all grades are able to work on a part time basis. **Full time training relates to a standard 40 hour week.**

1.2 The **Improving Working Lives (IWL) standard** aims to improve employees’ working lives by improving their work / life balance and providing employment conditions which enable all doctors to work and train in the NHS to their full potential. LTFT is included as one of the IWL standards.

1.3 Health Education East of England (HEEoE), the former Multi-professional Deanery, fully endorses the principles set out in the NHS Employers’ guidance document, *Doctors in Flexible Training: Principles underpinning the new arrangements for flexible training.*

1.4 HEEoE aims to provide a robust provision of LTFT, to promote LTFT, and to manage the LTFT budget in such a way that LTFT is available to as many eligible trainees as possible.

1.5 **Information for Tier 2 Visa Holders**

One of the eligibility points for a Tier 2 Visa application is receipt of an ‘appropriate salary’. Currently (03/12/2014), the minimum appropriate salary is £20,500. This threshold must be met throughout the duration of the sponsorship in order for the visa to remain valid. It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure the less than full time hours of work the trainee is requesting meet this threshold. Any changes in contracted hours and salary must be reported to the trainee’s sponsor as soon as they have been approved.

2. Eligibility

2.1 LTFT training is available to doctors in training who are able to present well founded reasons as to why full time training is impractical. The eligibility criteria are described in European Union Council Directive 93/16/EEC 1993 and provisions of the Employment Rights Act (as amended) 1996 and its associated legislation.

2.2 There are two eligibility categories:

**Category 1** – Those doctors in training with:
- disability or ill health
- responsibility for caring (men and women) for children
- responsibility for caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependant.
Category 2 - Those doctors in training with:

- unique opportunities for their own personal/professional development, for example training for national/international sporting events, or short term extraordinary responsibility, for example a national committee
- religious commitment – involving training for a particular religious role which requires a specific amount of time commitment
- non-medical professional development such as management courses, law courses, fine arts courses or diploma in complementary therapies.

Other well-founded reasons may be considered but it would be dependent on the particular situation and the needs of the specialty in which the individual was training.

2.3 You will be eligible for LTFT Training if you have a child up to and including the age of 16 years old or a disabled child who is under 18 years, and receives disability living allowance (see NHS Employers - Applying for flexible working).

2.4 Category 1 applicants will always take priority over Category 2 applicants. HEEoE will support all Category 1 applicants on the grounds of their health, disability or caring responsibilities, subject to available funds and training capacity.

2.5 Access to Category 2 is dependent on individual circumstances and the availability of suitable training placements.

2.6 It should be noted that all trainees have a right to request LTFT training, and HEEoE has a duty to consider each application positively. However, there is no right to LTFT training in itself.

2.7 Where an application is refused by HEEoE, the applicant has a right of appeal, however, the overall training capacity of a training programme and service commitment will have to be taken into consideration.

3. Arrangements for LTFT training

3.1 The training programme for a LTFT trainee should contain the same educational opportunities on a pro-rata basis as that of a full-time trainee, including, but not limited to out of hours opportunity, audit, research and teaching.

3.1.1 The GMC Postgraduate Board have issued a position statement determining that trainees will be required to undertake no less than 50% of full-time training.

GMC position statement on less than full-time training
GMC additional position statement on academic training in a LTFT setting

3.1.2 For the small number of trainees who experience exceptional difficulties, it has been agreed that postgraduate deans should have flexibility to reduce the time requirement further. The absolute minimum would be 20% of full-time training, with an expectation that trainees should not undertake a placement at this level for more than 12 months.

3.2 There are three ways a LTFT trainee may be accommodated within HEEoE.

3.2.1 LTFT in a Full Time Slot

The trainee occupies an established full-time post at reduced hours. Working LTFT in a full time slot offers the most flexibility as trainees are permitted to work at up to 90% of full time, subject to Trust and specialty agreement. The full time post is funded through the education contract so no further funding is committed from the LTFT budget.

Trusts are entitled to utilise the left over funding for the full time post as they see fit. For example, where a trainee is occupying 60% of a post, the Trust would have 40% left over; usually this would be to fund additional cover.

3.2.2 Slot Share

Slot shares comprise of two trainees occupying one full time post, with both trainees arranging the out of hours component between them.

Full time training relates to a 40 hour week, and the percentage of full time is calculated on this basis. A slot share may be arranged with both trainees working a minimum of 50% of full time. However, HEEoE provisionally agree to provide an uplift in funding of 20% of basic salary to enable both trainees to work at up to 60% of full time. This is subject to receipt of approved training plans for both trainees.

3.2.3 Supernumerary

HEEoE may agree to fund a supernumerary placement in exceptional circumstances (such as illness) for a limited period of time only. These exceptional circumstances will be the subject of discussion between the Deputy Dean, the Programme Director and the host Trust.

HEEoE does not fund out of hours or banding payments.

3.3 LTFT trainees must do the same amount of on call work pro rata as a full time trainee as a minimum requirement.
3.3.1 Additional hours will inevitably vary from specialty to specialty, and also within a specialty, and even for the same level within a specialty across different Trusts; this does not affect CCT dates.

3.3.2 If willing, LTFT trainees are permitted to carry out full time on-call, as long as the total hours worked per week (plus basic on-call) does not exceed 40 hours; This does not affect CCT dates.

3.4

3.4.1 Since 1 December 2007, in conjunction with Royal Colleges / Faculties, Deaneries have responsibility for ensuring that all LTFT training of any kind is undertaken in prospectively approved posts and programmes which meet the statutory requirements of the General and Specialist Medical Practice (Education, Training and Qualifications) Order 2003 and the requirements of the Foundation Programme Curriculum.

3.4.2 HEEoE, the former Deanery, will therefore approve LTFT training, unless the introduction of LTFT / supernumerary training increases post numbers above the specialty maximum capacity for HEEoE. Trainees should also be aware that they may require approval from their Royal College, and should discuss this with their Programme Director or Head of School.

4. **Application Procedure**  (see Appendix 1)

4.1 Once the trainee has decided they wish to apply for LTFT training, they need to have their eligibility assessed against the standard eligibility criteria as set out in Section 2.2 of this policy by submitting an Eligibility Form. Eligibility Forms may be submitted at any time.

4.2 Following submission of the Eligibility Form, the trainee’s eligibility is assessed by the Deputy Dean with responsibility for LTFT.

4.3 Trainees will be informed of the Deputy Dean’s decision by email, usually within two weeks of submitting their application form.

4.4 If further details of supporting information are required, the trainee may be contacted by the LTFT Administrator. On occasion, it may be necessary for the trainee to meet with the Deputy Dean to discuss their plans for LTFT and other possible options for training.

4.5 If the trainee is deemed not to be eligible, then they have the right to appeal, as per Section 2.6 of this policy.

4.6 If eligibility is confirmed, the trainee should download the Training Plan Form and complete this with their Programme Director and Educational Supervisor. The form
must also be authorised by a senior Medical Staffing manager, or Practice Manager in GP posts, on behalf of the employer.

4.7 The process of completing a Training Plan Form should be initiated at least three months before the trainee is hoping to start as a LTFT trainee, or is due to rotate into a new Trust.

4.8 The Training Plan Form must be approved by HEEoE before the trainee starts in post. Failure to do so may result in the trainee being paid incorrectly by their employer.

4.9 Trainees will be notified in writing by email once their Training Plan has been approved by HEEoE, which will include an end date for the Training Plan.

5. **Renewal Procedure**

5.1 Trainees are required to reapply for confirmation of eligibility and approval of their training plan at least annually and at every change of placement by completing a Renewal Form. Failure to conform to this requirement will result in any deanery funded support ending on the date of the original change of placement or the annual anniversary, whichever is sooner.

5.2 For the avoidance of doubt, Section 4.1 is applicable whether the trainee is supernumerary, less than full time in a full time slot, or in a slot share, as all of these arrangements will have a staffing impact, financial impact, or both.

5.3 The process of completing a Renewal Form should be initiated at least three months before the trainee is due to rotate into a new Trust, or their current Training Plan end date, whichever is sooner.

5.4 When planning the rotation of a supernumerary trainee, it should be considered whether they can be moved into a slot share or work less than full time in a full time slot. Every effort should be made to accommodate trainees in slot shares or working less than full time in a full time slot.

5.5 Trainees are expected to notify HEEoE if they no longer meet the eligibility criteria. If it is determined that a trainee is no longer eligible under the eligibility criteria, they will be notified in writing.

6. **Funding Arrangements and Pay**

The method for calculating pay for LTFT trainees can be found in the national guidance from NHS Employers, [Doctors in Flexible Training: Equitable pay for flexible medical training](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/hee.enquiries@nhs.net). The system for paying LTFT trainees is one where the basic salary is determined by the
actual hours of work, as derived initially from the rota and confirmed by subsequent monitoring.

As part of the application process for LTFT, trainees should discuss their training plan with medical staffing in HR in acute trusts and mental health trusts and practice managers in general practice, who will advise on rotas and pay.

7. **Additional Guidance**

7.1 **Study Leave**

7.1.1 LTFT trainees are entitled to periods of study leave with funding pro-rata of their sessional commitments. For example, a trainee working at 60% of full time will be entitled to 60% of the equivalent full time study leave and funding per year.

7.1.2 At the discretion of the study leave budget holder, LTFT trainees may be permitted to receive additional study leave funding to undertake necessary courses.

7.2 **Annual Leave**

Annual leave and bank holiday entitlement for LTFT trainees is generally calculated on a pro-rata basis. Employers may have additional policies in this regard.

7.3 **Increase of Sessions**

7.3.1 LTFT trainees who are working LTFT in a full time slot have the greatest flexibility in terms of the number of sessions they can work per week, up to 90% of their full time equivalents. Increases to the initial agreed level may be negotiated with HEEoE, the trainee and the employer, taking into account training and service needs.

7.3.2 LTFT trainees who are in slot shares are generally only permitted to work up to a maximum of 60% each. In the case of one slot share partner leaving the arrangement (for example, a period of maternity leave), the remaining partner will usually be working LTFT in a full time slot and has the flexibility described in Section 6.3.1. If the slot share is re-established, both trainees would revert to 60% each.

7.3.3 If a LTFT trainee wishes to increase the number of sessions they work, they should contact the LTFT Administrator at HEEoE and submit a Renewal Form.
7.4 **Additional Employment**

7.4.1 The 2005 UK agreement states that “Trainees should not normally be permitted to engage in any other paid employment whilst undertaking flexible training. However, there will be occasions when short notice additional duties are required in order to deliver a service to patients and LTFT may undertake extra duties to assist colleagues, as this is professional behaviour.

7.5 **Locum Consultant Sessions**

Trainees in their final year of training have the opportunity to “act up” as a locum consultant, providing that it is under supervision, meets the requirements of the curriculum, and is limited to three months whole time equivalent. It also requires the agreement of the training programme director, the Trust and HEEoE.

7.6 **LTFT training in POG**

The **period of grace** runs for a period of six calendar months from the time of completion of training, and is not modified on a pro-rata basis for less than full time trainees.

7.7 **LTFT training for LAT Doctors**

LAT doctors may apply for LTFT training, and must complete the process in the usual way. However identification of a placement may not be immediately available. LAS doctors are not associated with HEEoE and therefore may not apply to work LTFT through HEEoE channels.

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8. **Responsibilities and Duties of Trainees**

8.1 Trainees should understand that LTFT training is not an automatic right and its availability is governed by finite resources.

8.2 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. HEEoE reserves the right to cross-check all information entered onto Eligibility Forms.

8.3 Trainees should not dictate the terms and conditions of their LTFT training placements to Trusts. The process is one of negotiation between all relevant parties. The requirements of the relevant curriculum have to be met on a pro-rata basis.
8.4 Trainees are not permitted to carry out any additional employment not covered by Sections 6.4 and 6.5 above.

8.5 Trainees must ensure that the LTFT Training Plan is completed in good time before their planned start date. It is the trainee’s responsibility to raise concerns about the progress of an application with the relevant parties.

8.6 Existing LTFT trainees must ensure that a new LTFT Training Plan form is completed for planned rotations where there is a move between Trusts.

8.7 Trainees should notify HEEoE (and other relevant parties) when there is a change in circumstances relating to:
   a) The planned start date
   b) Their eligibility
   c) A proposed change to their LTFT training arrangements
   d) The Trust they are working at (i.e. rotations)
   e) Time out of programme (including maternity leave)
   f) Resignation from the training programme

9. Responsibilities and Duties of Health Education East of England

9.1 HEEoE will treat all applicants equally, regardless of gender, age, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or any other discriminatory factor.

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

9.3 HEEoE will manage the LTFT training system in such a way that information pertaining to a LTFT trainee flows between all relevant parties. “Relevant parties” includes, but is not limited to; the trainee, training programme directors, medical staffing departments, finance officers and sections of HEEoE.

9.4 HEEoE is committed to enabling as many eligible LTFT applicants as possible to train on a LTFT basis. This includes promoting the mainstreaming of LTFT and ensuring that supernumerary placements are arranged only as a last resort.

9.5 HEEoE will endeavour to adapt its policy as required 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 HEEoE website.

10. Responsibilities and Duties of Trusts

Trusts are expected to treat LTFT trainees no differently from full-time trainees, and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the lead employers.
Appendix 1

1. Obtain a post in open competition. If already in post, go to next step.

2. Discuss options with Programme Director and Educational Supervisor in order to explore possible arrangements for LTFT.

3. Download and complete Application Form and Confirmation of Eligibility from the Deanery website.

4. Submit completed application form to Less Than Full Time Coordinator.

5. Deputy Postgraduate Dean for LTFT confirms decision in writing to trainee and their Programme Director.

If eligibility is confirmed, download and complete Training Plan form.

- Complete work schedule in discussion with Educational Supervisor.
- Discuss and confirm slot share / LTFT in a full time slot options with Programme Director.
- Request formal approval of proposed educational programme from Royal College / Faculty / Tutor.
- Obtain banding agreement from medical staffing and confirmation from Trust of support for arrangements.
- Confirm proposed start and end dates of placement.

6. Submit completed training plan form to Less Than Full Time Coordinator.
   Please note that incomplete forms will be returned.

7. Deputy Postgraduate Dean confirms in writing permission to train less than full time for the duration of the placement.

8. Submit a Renewal of Approval for Training Plan form at least two months in advance before starting work in another placement or one year has elapsed since starting LTFT training, whichever is sooner.

9. Deputy Postgraduate Dean confirms in writing permission to train less than full time for the duration of the placement.
## DOCUMENT HISTORY

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