### Guidelines for Study Leave for Core Medical Trainees in the East of England

If you would like to take study leave, the first stage is to discuss your requirements with your educational supervisor so that it can be agreed and included in your personal development plan. The budget for study leave is held in Trusts by the Clinical Tutor or the Director of Medical Education, who has overall responsibility for the allocation of study leave time and funding. Your Trust will have a local policy for applying for study leave, which you should follow. There is not an automatic right to study leave, and there may be occasions when study leave has to be refused because, for example, patient safety might be compromised if a large number of other trainees are away at the same time. It is important that when you are asking for time for study leave, you agree it with the team with whom you will be working at the time of the leave. To be fair to all trainees working within a hospital, the College Tutors and others who organise medical rotas have often worked with their medical staffing departments to develop ‘local house rules’ regarding the taking of study leave. We recommend that you make enquiries about these local house rules well in advance of making any requests for study leave; this will increase your chances of your requests being granted.

The study leave budget for all trainees in the East of England is currently around £600 per year. For Core Medical Trainees (CMTs) this has been supplemented considerably by the complete funding of Medical Masterclass (which is available free to all of our CMTs), the funding of six mock PACES courses each year and the funding of simulation training.

Medical Masterclass provides all the material that is required for preparation for [Part 1](http://www.mrcpuk.org/Pages/Home.aspx), the written part of [Part 2](http://www.mrcpuk.org/Part2/Pages/_Home.aspx) of the MRCP and PACES. Medical Masterclass now features screencasts to help trainees preparing for PACES, as well as questions for Part 1 and the written part of Part 2 of the MRCP examination.

If you have not taken these examinations in your Foundation years, you should start preparing for them as early as possible in core medical training. This preparation is largely self-directed and there should be no need for you to take study leave to prepare for these two parts of the MRCP examinations. There will, of course, be a need for your Trust to allow you study leave to attend the examination itself.

Training directed towards the [PACES](http://www.mrcpuk.org/paces/Pages/_Home.aspx) examination is provided in most of our Trusts. The School funds six mock PACES courses each year, in order to make it easier for you to prepare for this part of the examination without having to travel far and at a low cost to you. It is a reasonable use of study leave time and funding for you to go on one external PACES preparation course during your two year core medical training programme. Ideally, you should plan to go on this course just before you sit PACES.

The School has commissioned two types of simulation training (acute medical emergencies and ultrasound-guided procedures) for the last two years and we expect Trusts to release you to attend these. We recommend that you attend these courses as early as possible in your core medical training as they are designed to enhance patient safety as well as to help you meet the requirements of the core medical training curriculum. In 2015, we are piloting two new types of simulation training. One will be help you to develop the skills needed to act up as a medical registrar, which will be hosted by the University of Hertfordshire and the second will be a practical procedures course using cadaveric material. Priority for both these courses will be given to CMT2s who have applied to ST3 posts in specialties which contribute to the acute medical take in the East of England.

**A note on requests for leave for Private Study**

If you wish to take “private” study leave to help you prepare for any part of the MRCP examination, please discuss this with your RCP College Tutor. If you can justify your request and you have your educational supervisor’s support, up to five days in any six months period may be allowed, provided that safe and effective cover can be arranged and that patient safety is not compromised. Please remember that, if any of your colleagues are taking the examination at the same time as you, your taking time off might increase their workload and impair their preparations for the examination. If private study leave is approved, then you will be expected to be flexible in the timing of this and to fit in with the requirements of other trainees on your rota.

**Other courses**

Requests from CMTs to take study leave in order to attend other courses or meetings (for example, to help your personal development in the speciality for which you are applying) will be considered on an individual basis by your RCP College Tutor and/or Clinical Tutor. It is unlikely that your request will be granted if you have not attended (or do not have a definitive plan to attend) the Deanery-funded simulation courses or if you have not passed all parts of the MRCP examination.