

Study Leave Provision

Virtual Teaching in the East of England

In order to continue delivering regional teaching for postgraduate medical and dental trainees during the pandemic, it has become necessary for regional training programmes to move to a virtual method of delivery, using digital platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Bridge and Panopto. The use of digital platforms is also part of our longer-term strategy for the delivery of regional teaching.

HEE EoE have worked collaboratively with the Trainee Forum and the Chair of the East of England DME Group to agree guidance and general principles to support the maximization of access to digital learning.

Guidance for Trusts:

Supporting trainees' opportunities to attend virtually delivered training in real time and, when available, face-to-face regional training, during which trainees can meet and network with colleagues and educators, remains highly important during this time. We would therefore ask that requests for study leave time to attend live virtual teaching sessions and applications for physical attendance at regional teaching be reviewed and approved whenever possible in a fair and equitable way.

Similarly, we would ask that applications for time to attend virtual conferences and other similar educational activities which are directly related to the trainee's curriculum be considered in the same way. This would include allowing study leave time to access recorded or online teaching resources. There is a huge range of learning opportunities being made available through the EoE digital learning platforms, Panopto and Bridge, and via other educational platforms.

Guidance for Programmes:

When organising virtual teaching, we would recommend that programmes aim to arrange their sessions at times that are most accessible for trainees, so that they are least likely to conflict with service and other departmental commitments. The advice from our trainees and DMEs is to run your sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, avoiding times when clinics, theatre and procedure lists, ward rounds and in-house teaching most commonly occur. Late morning and early afternoon (but not lunchtimes) seem the best options. Ideally sessions should be arranged so that they do not coincide with other scheduled teaching such as GPST half day release and Foundation hub days. We would ask that these guidelines are approached with flexibility and where scheduled teaching is already in place, you may choose to continue with your current plan, given this works well for both the faculty and trainees.