

## **Study Leave Policy for GP School in Yorkshire and the Humber**

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### **Introduction**

This policy applies within all localities of the Yorkshire and Humber. It is guidance for GP and the primary policy remains the Health Education England working across Yorkshire and the Humber (HEE YH) document:

[http://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/pgmde/policies/curriculum\\_delivery/study\\_leave/curriculum\\_delivery](http://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/pgmde/policies/curriculum_delivery/study_leave/curriculum_delivery)

The Training Programmes will be responsible for managing the Study Leave budget through the whole of the training programme (including the Hospital posts) rather than post by post. Programmes should look at the cost of an individual's study leave over the 3 year whole time equivalent of their training, rather than looking at an annual budget for each individual. There should be an expectation that most course costs will be focussed in the end of ST2 and early ST3 so that support for the college exams is available. It is important in this process to continue to ensure equity of access to Study Leave funding for all trainees.

This policy describes how the available funding for study leave will be shared out and managed.

In those Training Programmes which under-spend their study leave budget, it is appropriate for the Programme to review which ST years the scheme is under-spending on (and by how much) and whether there is an appropriate amount of spending above the notional trainee average in other years.

### **Core Educational Principles**

1. Study Leave is intended to support the personal development plan of the trainee that has been agreed by the Educational Supervisor.
2. Study Leave that prepares the trainee for the requirements of the core curriculum defined by the RCGP and RCGP membership examination, is prioritised above any personal learning interest or development towards a potential role, as a GPSI even though this interest is included within the GP curriculum. (though where GPSTRs are assessed by the Training Programme as clearly making adequate progress in all areas and demonstrating high performance in their WPBA and where Programme budgets allow) other courses may be approved (though please refer to details below, i.e. some types of course).

### **School principles**

1. Courses that are run for the whole of the local Training Programme will take priority over courses for examinations or other courses.
2. Local courses get priority over more distant courses. Therefore Study Leave for courses in preparation for the membership will generally only be approved for locally run courses, unless there is not a suitable local course available in the relevant time frame.
3. Study Leave needed for day or half day release will take priority over other demands for study leave unless there is an explicit decision that the trainee does not (for a defined time frame) need to attend the release scheme (e.g. because has completed

all assessments and has identified a particular learning need, or has been part time on the scheme for a long period and the release course is repetitive). For all those attending the release course there is a clear expectation that they will achieve the Locality (or Programme) defined attendance expected. It should be clear from each Programme to all trainees on the Programme how many days per year are taken up by Programme organised release sessions and core courses.

4. Study Leave can only be taken from posts if there is agreement from the Clinical team (Consultant or Trainer) and the Rota Manager; Service needs must be fulfilled.
5. The Study Leave year runs concurrently with the ST year. Leave can be taken with consent slightly unevenly from different posts in the year but consent for this must be obtained from the CS and Rota Manager for the time when the leave will be taken (not necessarily therefore the current Clinical Supervisor and Rota Manager).
6. Flexible trainees (LTFT) should be treated equitably and will normally have access to Study Leave on a pro rata basis, and a Personal Development Plan etc conforming to exactly the same principles as other trainees
7. Study Leave is intended to support adult learning and development (COPMED statement 2006) and should be cost effectively managed
8. If study leave is approved then the national terms and conditions apply i.e. travel and associated costs must be included (see below)
9. If there is an expectation of the GPSTR returning to work immediately after the Study Leave (e.g. for an evening shift immediately after a day time course) then this does not qualify as Study Leave.

### **Amount of Leave**

The Study Leave entitlement is currently a maximum of 30 days per annum in total for all training grades, as defined within your national Terms and Conditions.

Education and training activity that occurs within the workplace, such as teaching ward rounds, regular weekly teaching/tutorial meetings, journal clubs and protected teaching time within the working week does not count against your Study Leave entitlement (i.e. if you leave work and are required to return to work from the activity this does not count as Study Leave).

Training activity that is ARRANGED AS an integral part of your School's local educational programme WILL be counted against your leave entitlement. You still need to apply for this leave to ensure that service delivery is not compromised. If you do not attend the number of sessions/days that are required by the School programme, your access to alternative leave activities may well be restricted.

### **Organisational Practicalities**

1. Study Leave will only be granted for learning needs which are on the PDP
2. Study Leave must be agreed by the Educational Supervisor
3. Study Leave must be approved by the responsible GP Training Programme Director.
4. Study Leave must also be signed for by the Clinical Supervisor and if appropriate the local Rota manager

(e mail confirmation of assent from the relevant people is acceptable but must be attached to applications).

5. Study Leave must be requested 8 weeks in advance of the course
6. Study Leave must be applied for on the approved GP Study leave application form

### **Reimbursable allowances.**

1. Reimbursements allowable for accommodation and travel will be in agreement with the HEE YH guidance. A maximum of £55 will be allowable per night for accommodation. It is advised that tickets for travel to courses/exams are booked AT THE SAME TIME as booking the course to keep costs to a minimum. First class travel will not be re-imbursed.
2. Charges: Some courses will still ask for an upfront payment by the trainee though this will later be fully reimbursed for those that attend but not for those who fail to attend.
3. Part funding of Study Leave is not accepted under current contracts. i.e. Programmes should pay all reasonable expenses that arise as a natural consequence of granting leave, that is, travelling and subsistence in accordance with prescribed rates, together with appropriate fees. **Requests for partial funding WILL NOT be supported.**

### **Exam Leave**

Trainees will be granted leave with pay and expenses (other than examination fees) for the purpose of sitting an examination for a higher qualification where it is necessary as part of an approved, structured training programme and meets curriculum requirements. Leave will be granted without expenses for second and subsequent attempts at the same examination. Where it is essential for doctors and dentists in training to obtain an appropriate higher qualification, financial support will not be provided to allow them to obtain the equivalent qualification of more than one College/Faculty.

### **Appeals**

Where there are appeals against the decision by the local Programme to agree Study Leave these should be made to the Training Programme office with an accompanying letter explaining why the GPSTR feels that the School of General Practice Policy in Yorkshire and the Humber has not been appropriately applied. The local Programme will pass the appeal to the School to be reviewed by the GP Locality Lead.

### **Diplomas (DRCOG, DCH, DGM)**

Although these are not necessary for the development of the core knowledge and skills for nMRCGP, they may be of interest to some GPStRs, especially those who may wish to pursue a special interest. If progress towards certification is satisfactory and there have been no concerns, Study Leave will be available to sit these exams. Leave will be granted without expenses. Funding will not be guaranteed for preparation courses for these diplomas but may be available at the Scheme's discretion.

## **GP Update/Refresher/Hot Topics Courses**

The School of GP would not usually approve or fund requests to attend the above courses. These are not considered to be the most effective way to prepare for AKT and if a trainee has already passed AKT, their knowledge has been assessed as up-to-date, evidence-based and of a standard required for independent GP Practice so attending a course would therefore not be useful or productive use of study leave.

Commercial “crammer” courses will not normally be funded.

## **College and other courses**

From time to time the local faculty of the RCGP arranges courses (usually one day) which whilst mainly targeted as CPD for GPs post GPSTP may be appropriate for GPStRs in the latter stages of training.

Other courses (Minor Surgery etc.) may also be appropriate for those who are assessed by the Programme as clearly making adequate progress in all areas and demonstrated high performance at their WPBA.

However, this Study Leave will have lower funding priority than courses for the core curriculum.

## **Private Study** (i.e. time approved for study without funding)

The authorisation of requests for private leave is discretionary and is subject to the support and formal approval of the local Deputy Director of GP Education, Educational Supervisor and Training Programme Directors. Private study leave **will** count towards the study leave entitlement and should only be awarded in exceptional circumstances e.g. immediately prior to examinations. No more than 2 days in preparation for an exam and no more than 3 days in total during one ST year.

## **GP Re-orientation Study Leave**

It is important for GPSTRs to be able to maintain a GP focus. This can be difficult to achieve during their time in Hospital posts. To allow periodic contact with GP and often with their GP Educational supervisor (and enable Educational Supervisor reviews based on recent experience of the GPSTR's work) the school supports use on days that can be suitably negotiated with the CS, rota organiser etc of re-orientation Study Leave.

This leave may include several or all of the following:

- Returning to the first training practice to re-orientate to GP, including undertaking a surgery and/or home visits and debriefing,
- Returning to first training practice to carry out or complete audit or change management project (as required for ARCP record of experience),
- Educational Supervision meetings as well as other activities during the day in GP.

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