

A Trainee's Guide to Less than Full Time Working

Yorkshire and the Humber

There are lots of reasons for deciding to train and work on a less than full time (LTFT) basis and you may choose to do so either at the start of your training, after a period of time out of training (for example, after maternity leave) or any point during your training for different reasons.

This guide is designed to give you an overview of the process of applying for LTFT training. It should give you a starting point for the application process and tell you where to find more information if you require it.

Reasons for LTFT Training

At present when you apply for LTFT training you need to apply under one of the following categories:

- Category 1 – ill health or disability, or caring responsibilities (for children, partner or other relatives)
- Category 2 – other significant or unique commitments. These may include national committees, high level research (such as a PhD), study in a non-medical subject or religious or sporting commitments.
- Category 3 – Category 3 allows trainees to train LTFT as a personal choice that meets their professional or lifestyle needs with no judgment on eligibility. It may be limited by service considerations. There will be communications on the roll out from HEE.

What to expect as a LTFT trainee

LTFT training is a great opportunity to improve your work life balance, to focus on your life outside of medicine and to have more time to spend doing other things that you enjoy or want to do.

LTFT training should offer you the same opportunities as your full-time colleagues. However, you should be aware that your training will take longer to complete and you will need to be organised when planning your commitments along with your work life and teaching/training opportunities.

Remember that if you choose to work 60%, for example, you will be paid approximately 60% of what your full-time colleagues earn.

Each speciality will approach LTFT training differently, but in most instances you will rotate in line with your full time colleagues (ie/ every 6 or 12 months). This is not the case in the foundation programme (please see the separate Foundation LTFT guide).

What hours do LTFT trainees work?

Full time training equates to 100%.

When you apply to train LTFT, you will be asked what percentage you wish to work (you cannot train at less than 50% except in very exceptional circumstances, which would be discussed on an individual basis). 70% is also only an option in some schools.

Percentage	Working Equivalent	Time	Hours Worked (per week)
100%	1		40 to 48
80%	0.8		32 to 38.4
70%	0.7		28 to 33.6
60%	0.6		24 to 28.8
50%	0.5		20 to 24

The variability in your hours worked depends upon the contracted number of hours that your full-time colleagues are working on each rota and also on your individual work schedule (see more about this below).

How to apply

Choosing to be LTFT is not as simple as deciding that you meet either category 1, 2 or 3 as above. You need to apply through a formal process and there are a number of people who need to be made aware. At present there are still significantly more full-time trainees across the region than LTFT trainees and therefore some of the onus for arranging your work pattern will fall on you as the trainee.

Steps in application:

1. You should give as much notice as possible that you are thinking of training LTFT. We know that sometimes situations change rapidly, but please try to give notice whenever you can. In the first instance you should speak to your TPD and to your Educational Supervisor. Please also be aware that unless in very exceptional circumstances you need to give a notice period of **at least 16 weeks**. This remains the case if you are planning to return from maternity leave or other time out of training on a LTFT basis having previously been a full time trainee. Do not expect to be able to return from maternity leave LTFT if you have not applied with the full notice period.
2. You need to complete the Health Education England Yorkshire and the Humber paperwork as soon as possible. This can be found at: https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/learner_support/policies/less_than_full_time

There is also a flowchart available which guides you through the LTFT application process.

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

3. Once your LTFT training has been approved you need to inform:
 - Your TPD and Educational Supervisor (they should already be aware from the initial discussions that you have had with them)
 - HEE and your school –
 - Email - LTFTEast.yh@hee.nhs.uk – ALL foundation trainees, North/East Yorkshire Trainees
 - LTFTWest.yh@hee.nhs.uk – West Yorkshire Trainees
 - LTFTSouth.yh@hee.nhs.uk – South Yorkshire Trainees
 - Your Trust HR and Medical Workforce/Education teams. They will be responsible for organisation of your work schedule and rota.
4. If you apply to train LTFT for health reasons or you submit a category 2 request, you will normally meet with one of the Associate Deans to ensure you are supported, to ensure that your proposal is realistic and to look at short, medium and long term plans.

You are NOT eligible to begin LTFT training until you have received formal notification from HEE, your TPD and Educational Supervisor are aware and you have informed your employer/trust.

Work Schedules, Contracts and Rotas

Your work schedule should explain where you will be working, your general working hours and the requirements for on-call shifts, weekends and night shifts. It will also have details of your Educational and/or Clinical Supervisor and the Trust Rota Co-ordinator. The work schedule also includes a summary of your pay for that job and the teaching and training opportunities that will be available to you.

Your contract is separate to the work schedule and should include information about your pension and your annual leave and study leave entitlements. It will also have information about trust/hospital induction, any necessary pre-employment checks and any expenses that you are able to claim for (travel and relocation are the most common examples).

All LTFT trainees should be issued with a personalised (bespoke) work schedule. You are likely to have some input into the design. You will need a copy of the full-time rota in order to do this.

As a starting point:

- Expect to work a percentage of each type of shift – for example a trainee who works 60% should work **approximately** 60% of the number of night shifts, weekends and standard day shifts that a full time colleague would work. This is the case unless you have a health reasons not to work some shifts (such as long days or night shifts) in which case this will be incorporated into the design of your personalised work schedule.

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

- If you have to attend mandatory training or a study day on a non-working day, you should ensure that your study leave is approved in advance (usually minimum 6 weeks notice). You will then be able to take time off in lieu for this, or to claim pay for the extra day worked.
- Your working days may not always be able to be same when moving between departments or hospitals. This is because educational opportunities and other pressures of work will vary in different jobs. Make sure that you get in contact with your new department as far in advance as you can. You will need to discuss working patterns and negotiate a plan with your clinical supervisor and the rota co-ordinator(s) for that job. This will be true when moving between hospital departments, as well as when moving to a new Hospital/GP Practice.
- Historically, some LTFT trainees in Yorkshire and the Humber were made supernumerary (that is, not included in the trainee numbers), which made these negotiations easier. However this is now very rarely the case. Remember that you are a professional and have a duty of care to your patients and colleagues as well as yourself.
- In many specialities LTFT trainees “slot share” – that is there will be two LTFT trainees working in one rota slot; and you will be expected to cover all of the requirements for that rota slot between you. It may be that you work a combined percentage of more than full time (ie/ 60% + 60%) so will have some overlap, but that is not a problem. This is NOT the same “job share” where you would both work 50%.

Work schedules and rotas are complex. For more information see:

- www.nhsemployers.org – work scheduling templates and guidance
- The BMA also have some excellent information on work schedules and rota design
- The BMA and NHS employers have published “The Good Rostering Guide” <https://www.nhsemployers.org/case-studies-and-resources/2018/05/good-rostering-guide>
There is a section that gives good advice of LTFT
- Every trust will have a Flexible Working Champion. Their job is to support all employees who work flexibly/asynchronously or less than full time. The HR department of your hospital should be able to give you their details if you need further support, and a list of Flexible Working Champions for trusts in Yorkshire and the Humber is available below (up to date as of March 2021).

Trust	LTFT/Flexible Working Champion	Email Contact
Airedale NHS Foundation Trust	INFORMATION NOT YET AVAILABLE	
Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Shoba Sivaramakrishnan	Shoba.sivaramakrishnan@nhs.net
Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Shafi Khan	shafi.khan@bthft.nhs.uk

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust	Shalini Nandish	shalini.nandish@cht.nhs.uk
Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust - 2nd contact	Pamela Ohadike (SuppoRT)	pamela.ohadike@cht.nhs.uk
Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Ann Harris	ann.harris6@nhs.net
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust	Ipshita Scarrott	ipshita.scarrott@nhs.net
Hull University Teaching Hospitals	Helen Cattermole	helen.cattermole@hey.nhs.uk
Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust	Doug Ma	doug.ma@nhs.net
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	Fiona Campbell	fiona.campbell26@nhs.net
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust - 2nd contact	Cath Tandy	catherinetandy@nhs.net
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust - 3rd contact	Julie Sutcliffe (head of HR)	juliesutcliffe@nhs.net
Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Claire Thompson	claire.thompson4@nhs.net
Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust	UNFILLED POST	
Sheffield Children's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Carrie Mackenzie	carrie.mackenzie1@nhs.net
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Olufunso Olarinde	olufunso.olarinde1@nhs.net
Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust	Jon Clark	jon.clark4@nhs.net
Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust - 2nd contact	Chelsea Goodwin (medical workforce advisor LTFT)	chelsea.goodwin@nhs.net
York Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Alison Corlett	Alison.j.corlett@york.nhs.uk

Annual Leave and Bank Holidays

Annual leave is calculated based on duration of NHS service:

- Less than 5 years = 27 days annual leave + 8 bank holidays (if you work full time)
- 5 years or more = 32 days annual leave + 8 bank holidays (if you work full time)
This is 5 calendar years NOT 5 full time equivalent working years

LTFT leave is calculated as per the following examples:

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

- Working LTFT 60% with less than 5 years in the NHS = $(27 + 8) \times 0.6 = 21$ days TOTAL (this includes bank holiday allowance)
- Working LTFT 80% with more than 5 years in the NHS = $(32 + 8) \times 0.8 = 32$ days TOTAL (this includes bank holiday allowance)

If the bank holiday falls on a day you are scheduled to work a standard day (i.e./ not an on call or out of hours shift) you will usually not be expected to work. You DO subtract this from your total leave allowance.

If the bank holiday falls on a zero day/non-working day then you do NOT subtract it from your leave allowance.

If you work any part of a bank holiday (this would include long days, a night either starting or finishing on a bank holiday, short days when you are expected to provide cover etc..) then you do NOT subtract it from your leave allowance, but you do NOT get an extra day in lieu for going to work.

In summary – your annual leave and bank holidays are combined to give your total leave allowance. If you work a bank holiday you DO NOT subtract a day from your total leave allowance but you DO NOT get a day in lieu. If you do not work on a bank holiday you DO subtract it from your total leave allowance.

This is slightly different to how full time trainees calculate their annual leave and bank holidays.

Teaching and Training

Every school will have specific requirements for teaching and training. These will enable you to meet some of your core/mandatory/portfolio requirements. Study leave can be used for activities including – organised teaching days, courses, examinations, conferences etc..

As a guide for LTFT trainees:

- You will be expected to attend all of your mandatory teaching/requirements for progression. If these exceed your pro rata entitlement to study leave then your employer is required to make arrangements to allow you take the study leave, so long as there is safe cover available in your place of work. The more notice you give, the more likely you are to be successful in arranging this.
- Your study leave entitlement is calculated pro-rata based on your working percentage.
 - Full time FY1 doctors are entitled to 15 days study leave per annum (ie/ an FY1 working 60% is entitled to = $15 \times 0.6 = 9$ days per annum)
 - All other doctors in training are entitled to 30 days study leave per annum (ie/ an ST3 working 80% is entitled to = $30 \times 0.8 = 24$ days per annum)
- It is probable that at some stage during your training there will be a study day which falls on a day when you are not working (for example, the study day may be on a Friday and you work Mon, Tues, Weds). If that is the case, you have 2 options:

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

- If you are able to arrange your commitments to enable you to attend the study day on the Friday, then ensure your study leave is authorised in advance (minimum 6 weeks notice) and you will be able to take time off in lieu or receive payment for that day.
- If you cannot arrange your commitments to attend on the Friday, then you should look at other options for the study day but be aware of the mandatory requirements for your ARCP. It may be that you have to travel further in order to attend a course (although virtual learning means this may now not be the case).
- Some departments will have weekly teaching rotas (for example every Thursday morning). It may be that this teaching always falls on a day which you do not work. Again, there are a number of ways to approach this:
 - If you are aware of the teaching schedule before starting work in a department (this can usually be found out from colleagues already working in a department, or from Consultants in the department) it may be worth trying to plan your working days to match the days when teaching is planned. (ie/ if teaching is always on a Thursday and you work 60%, you may plan to have your working days as Monday, Tuesday and Thursday).
 - If you are in a slot share with another LTFT trainee and you work a combined percentage of over 100% (ie/ one or both of you work more than 50%) you may choose that the day you are both at work is the day on which teaching is planned.
 - In some cases it will not be possible to have your working days on the same day as teaching (either because of commitments outside of work, because of lack of information about teaching prior to starting in a department or because of other commitments). In that case you SHOULD NOT be expected to attend teaching on your non-working day. If you are expected to do so, this should be with sufficient notice and either pay for the hours attended or TOIL (time off in lieu). It may be that you are able to access recorded teaching sessions or slides at a later date when you are at work, or that you catch up another way. You should not be discriminated against for working LTFT.

Pay, Pensions, Tax deductions and Subscriptions

Remember that the GMC, defence organisations (such as MDU or MPS) and trade unions (such as the BMA) may have reduced rates for LTFT trainees. It is always worth informing them that you are LTFT and asking if there is a reduced rate available.

Any hours worked up to 40 hours per week is pensionable. This includes any extra work (such as locums) that you do on top of your standard working hours, if the total is under 40 hours per week on average.

A Trainee's Guide to LTFT Working

Doctors are also entitled to tax deductions on a number of items, including subscriptions to the above organisations and other expenses such as royal college examinations and courses that you have paid for yourself.

For more guidance on this, please see:

- <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/professional-fees-and-subscriptions>
- <https://www.medicsmoney.co.uk>
- <https://www.bma.org.uk/pay-and-contracts/pensions/how-we-represent-you/the-bma-pensions-department>

Trainees with Disabilities

Trainees with disabilities must be considered alongside all other applicants to medical training. Your employer (usually the Trust) must make reasonable adjustments to enable you to perform your duties and the need for these reasonable adjustments is not a reason for not offering an otherwise suitable placement for you.

Reasonable adjustments will also be made to your mandatory competencies if required. This is something to discuss with your school, your Educational Supervisor and your TPD as early as possible in your training programme.

Extra work and locum shifts

Extra work and locum shifts are allowed as an LTFT trainee. However, there are a few things to be aware of:

- All work undertaken should comply with the UK Working Time Regulations (WTR). If you choose to opt-out of WTR, then the rest requirements and requirements on hours, rest and locum work will still apply.
- Additional work must not be undertaken during periods of absence for study or sickness.
- You may choose to do extra work or locums, but should never be pressurised into doing so against your wishes.
- If you are LTFT for health reasons, then it may not be appropriate to undertake extra work and you should consider this carefully prior to agreeing to do so.

More guidance and information on this can be found at:

- https://www.copmed.org.uk/images/docs/publications/Guidance_on_Undertaking_Additional_Work_.pdf - Guidance for Trainees and Trainers on Undertaking Additional Work Whilst in a Postgraduate Medical Education Training Programme.

And Finally...

Enjoy being LTFT!

LTFT training is an excellent way to train and often has significant advantages to both you and your departments/trusts. Lots of trainees and Consultants are LTFT for a wide variety of reasons. It can often feel that being LTFT means that you are progressing more slowly than your full time colleagues, but remember that you will gain the same competencies as everyone else. You should never be discriminated against for being LTFT, and if you do have any problems you should speak to someone about this (your trust's flexible working champion, your educational supervisor or TPD or your school should all be able to support you).

Further Help and Advice

This is only a brief overview of LTFT training and it is normal to have a lot of questions about what to expect and what to do next.

There is lots of support and advice available, so please do not sit in silence!

- https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/learner_support/policies/less_than_full_time
This is the Yorkshire and the Humber guideline for LTFT in the region. It has all the relevant forms and documents at the bottom of the page
- <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/doctors/career-opportunities-doctors/less-full-time-training-doctors>

This is another excellent website with further guidance and information about LTFT training.

- The BMA produces fantastic advice on lots of topics, including LTFT training, on their website. Yorkshire and the Humber also has a fantastic regional LTFT representative.
- The Yorkshire and Humber Trainee Forum are keen to hear from all trainees, and have a LTFT lead. They will support you with any issues you encounter, and be able to signpost you for further help as required.
- It is always worth looking at the information provided by your school
- There is a brilliant LTFT trainees whatsapp group for all LTFT trainees in Yorkshire and the Humber. There is normally someone who knows the answer to most questions!
- There is an active and helpful Facebook group for LTFT trainees across the UK. Search for "LTFT Trainees Forum". Many of your questions will already have been answered here.
- There are training reps for each speciality/hospital/region. Don't be afraid to use them if you want to raise any issues that way.
- Each Trust has a Flexible Working Champion, who will be able to support you with issues surrounding work schedules, rotas and contracts. The list is above.

Author

Dr Alexandra Damazer, Future Leaders Programme Leadership Fellow, Yorkshire and the Humber (2020-2021). adamazer@doctors.org.uk

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Dr Jon Hossain for his work on LTFT regionally and nationally, and for promoting trainee welfare across the country.

Thank you to Dr Maddy Hover for her generosity and help around all things LTFT. She is exceptionally knowledgeable, and is the brains behind the LTFT whatsapp group and many other LTFT support systems.

Thank you both for your help and guidance in developing this document.