



Health Education England

Name of Guidance	Less than Full-time Training (LTFT): Postgraduate Medical and Dental Training
Category	Less Than Full-Time Training
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Document Author	Deputy Dean (Jon Hossain) and Business Managers Group

Version	Date	Author	Notes Reason for Change, what has changed, etc
0.1	April 2013	Business Managers	First draft
1.0	April 2014	Business Managers	Amendments made in line with organisational change
2.0	November 2014	Deputy Dean and Business Managers	Amendments made in line with the introduction of a new national policy and local administrative based changes
3.0	April 2015	Deputy Dean and Business Managers	Amendments made in line with the introduction of a new national policy and local administrative based changes
4.0	March 2016	Jill Hanson	Amendments in line with new HEE branding guidelines
5.0	March 2017	Jon Hossain	Amended to allow 80%
6.0	July 2018	Jon Hossain & Nick Sowerby	Amended to allow 80% Slot shares and implementation of new changes introduced by national policy
7.0	January 2020	LTFT Team	Updated in line with new HEE national guidance
8.0	December 2021	LTFT Team	Updated to capture implementation of LTFT Category 3

Introduction

Health Education England, working across Yorkshire and the Humber (HEEYH) offers support to all trainees who, for well-founded individual reasons, wish to be considered for Less than Full-time Training (LTFT). The intention is to keep doctors within the NHS who might otherwise leave due to an inability to work on a full-time basis. LTFT is available to all training grades within HEEYH.

All LTFT training of any kind must take place in posts and programmes prospectively approved by the GMC for training purposes. LTFT training is subject to eligibility, the identification of a suitable placement and availability of resources.

The key aims of LTFT training are:

- To retain doctors within the NHS workforce who are unable to train on a full-time basis
- To promote career development and work/life balance for doctors training within the NHS
- To ensure continued training in programmes on a time-equivalent (pro rata) basis
- To maintain a balance in LTFT arrangements with regards to educational needs and those of the service

In general, as clearly there are some extenuating circumstances and emergency situations, new LTFT training applications must be submitted a minimum of 16 weeks in advance of the trainees planned start date. This also includes proposed changes to current percentages. (increase or decrease)

Newly appointed trainees should be aware that training posts are offered on a full-time basis and a request for LTFT training does not guarantee that they will be in place for the placement rotation start date, or that they will be able to commence their training on a LTFT basis immediately. This will be dependent on the availability of an appropriate training placement. They may have to consider the option of starting full-time or waiting until a suitable placement is available.

Trainees who are training LTFT must rotate through placements designated by the HEEYH training programme.

Trainees who have received approval to train on a LTFT basis in HEEYH will need to re-apply, via the standard process, if they are moving from Foundation to Core or Core to Higher training programmes.

Trainees who wish to train LTFT after maternity leave must be aware that whilst every effort will be made to allow them to return at their planned point and to the employing organisation prior to maternity leave, a LTFT placement may not always be immediately available.

If or when a trainee rotates, the training and educational opportunities occur on different days, the trainee must make personal arrangements to access training. Trainees must bear in mind that this may mean changing days of attendance for children at nursery or making new childcare arrangements. It is the trainee's responsibility to make these arrangements, as trainers and supervisors are not expected to revise their working timetable to suit LTFT training.

Trainees wishing to return to full-time training should generally give 3 months' notice of their intention to their TPD. The TPD should then notify the local LTFT office. Returning to full-time training will be at the discretion of the TPD and subject to the programme being able to accommodate the trainee in a full-time capacity. If a Trainee has returned to full-time training but then finds that they need to recommence LTFT, they will have to re-apply following the standard process.

HEEYH will offer regular workshops to inform trainees how best to work in LTFT roles. Workshops will be advertised on the LTFT website pages:

[LTFT Workshops and Events | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](https://yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk)

All relevant paperwork and guidance can be found on the HEE website:

[Policy and Documents | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/policy-and-documents)

[FAQs | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/faqs)

Eligibility for Less than Full-time Training

Those wishing to apply for LTFT must demonstrate that training on a full-time basis would not be practicable for them. The following categories have been described by consensus to serve as guidelines for prioritisation of LTFT requests. The needs of category 1 will take priority

Category 1 - Those doctors in training with:

- Disability
- Ill health
- Responsibility caring for children (men and women)
- Responsibility caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent

Category 2 - Those doctors in training with:

- Unique opportunities: A doctor in training is offered a unique opportunity for their own personal/professional
- development and this will affect their ability to train full-time (e.g. training for national/international sporting events or a short-term extraordinary responsibility such as membership of a national committee or continuing medical research as a bridge to progression in integrated academic training).
- Religious commitment: A doctor in training has a religious commitment that involves training for a particular role and requires a specific time commitment resulting in the need to work less than full-time.
- Non-medical development: A doctor in training is offered non-medical professional development (e.g. management courses, law courses or fine arts courses) that requires a specific time commitment resulting in the need to work less than full-time.
- Other well-founded reasons may be considered by the Postgraduate Dean in consultation with the GMC, but support will be dependent on the capacity of the programme and available resources as well as compliance with European legislation relating to CCT requirements.

Category 3: Available to all in 2022 (excluding Foundation)

Doctors in participating training programmes who choose to train LTFT as a personal choice that meets their individual professional or lifestyle needs. Whilst that choice (and the reasons for it) are not subject to the judgement of anyone else it is dependent upon and might be limited by service considerations. Please see the following page for more detailed information on Category 3:

[FAQs | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/faqs)

Applying for Less than Full-time training

Trainee doctors should complete the LTFT application form and specify which category they are applying under. This should normally be submitted along with any relevant supporting documentation (as required) to the Postgraduate Dean or nominated deputy, to ensure the local office receives the application with at least **16 weeks' notice**.

This allows time for the application to be processed and at least 12 weeks' notice to be given to the Trust before the commencement of the proposed changes to working patterns.

Trainees that wish to work LTFT should download the HEEYH LTFT training application form: -

http://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/pgmde/policies/less_than_full_time/

This should be submitted via either email or post to the relevant HEEYH LTFT Administrator (LTFT East / West or South as appropriate), as detailed on the application form. The application form should be accompanied by appropriate supporting evidence, where required.

Trainee's should note that the LTFT Administrator may not work in the relevant Programme Support Team responsible for the day to day running of the trainee's specialty.

Once eligibility has been confirmed, the relevant LTFT Administrator will notify the trainee's Training Programme Director (TPD), in writing, of the trainee's wish to train LTFT.

Form A - Confirmation of Placement will be sent to the TPD and which must be completed and returned to the LTFT Administrator. The LTFT Administrator will also confirm in writing to the trainee their eligibility status. The TPD should look for the most suitable placement for the trainee, asking for advice from the ADs for LTFT training, where required.

When a placement has been identified and confirmed by the TPD, the trainee will receive a correspondence from HEEYH confirming their placement. The trainee should then plan to discuss an appropriate timetable with their Clinical and/or Educational Supervisor. It is also advisable that trainees in slot-shares meet with their slot-share partner prior to commencing their placement. Once a timetable (including out of hours work where necessary) has been agreed the trainee must contact Human Resources/Medical Personnel at the Trust in which they will be working to discuss and agree their working arrangements, which will include a discussion with regards to pay banding.

Please note banding arrangements are the responsibility of the Trust, not HEEYH.

Appeal of decision

If a doctor in training has had their application to train LTFT declined, they may appeal by following the appeals process ([Policy and Documents | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](#)) within their HEE local office. The Postgraduate Dean's / Deputy Dean decision will be final.

Category 1 Applications

For the purpose of LTFT applications, HEEYH defines a "child" as being less than 16 years old. An interview with an Associate Dean (AD) is not normally required in childcare LTFT requests but is available on request. For all other Category 1 applications a meeting with an AD would normally be arranged.

For requests relating to health and/or disability, an Occupational Health appointment may be requested (if this has not already been performed or requested by an employer) Alternatively a letter from a GP/Consultant or hospital can be provided. This can include an assessment, letter and/or report. This may give advice relating to a suitable pattern of work or suggest reasonable adjustments that can be made. (e.g. only day-time work, restricted out of hours etc.) The final decision however rests with HEEYH. Trainees approved for LTFT training on health grounds may be subject to periodic reviews.

Trainees who are caring for others will be asked to provide HEEYH with confirmation from their dependant's General Practitioner briefly outlining the nature of the condition. Whilst HEEYH appreciates the sensitivity of this issue, medical confirmation of the need of a carer's role is required to satisfy the LTFT eligibility criteria.

Category 2 Applications

All applications under Category 2 will require approval by an AD responsible for LTFT training. Applicants should provide written details of the unique opportunity being considered, together with relevant letters of support. All Category 2 applicants will also be offered an interview with an AD.

Category 3:

Doctors in participating training programmes who choose to train LTFT as a personal choice that meets their individual professional or lifestyle needs. Whilst that choice (and the reasons for it) are not subject to the judgement of anyone else it is dependent upon and might be limited by service considerations.

Placements for Less than Full-time Training (Percentages)

LTFT training in HEEYH is normally supported in placements at 50%, 60%, 70% or 80% of full-time contracts. Day time working, on call and out of hours work should be undertaken on a basis pro rata to full-time trainees in the same grade and specialty. Trainees will be encouraged to slot share or occupy a full-time slot dependant on the capacity of the programme.

In the exceptional cases where less time is requested, 20% is the absolute minimum. It is expected that trainees would only work less than 50% for a maximum of 12 months, as per the Gold Guide.

Rotation changes

It may not possible to guarantee that the rotation initially offered to a trainee at recruitment will be replicated in the LTFT training rotation.

Research and Academic Trainees

Research should be accommodated within the standard training programme. By working with TPDs nearly all trainees should be able to pursue research as part of this programme, whether they are working full-time or LTFT. It is not the purpose of LTFT training to subsidise trainees doing research. Academic trainees should refer the [GMC](#) position statement on academic training when designing their pattern of work.

Slot-Share Placements

If possible, LTFT training should be accommodated within slot-shares. This may include out of hours work where appropriate. Both halves of the slot share will be required to attend the appropriate number of teaching programmes, department meetings, etc. during their placement. This will require flexibility and co-operation by both halves of the slot share. It is essential that the whole of the post is covered, and this must be agreed mutually by both trainees.

If one of the pair leaves the rotation and a new partner is not available, HEEYH may consider limited support with the provision of supernumerary funds. Alternately the trainee may continue in the slot-share with the other half of the clinical workload covered by the Local Education Provider (LEP). or left vacant.

Whenever there is a change of slot-share partner, both halves of the slot-share must re-visit their timetable to ensure that new arrangements are appropriately reflected.

It is the responsibility of the Trainee to contact the TPD for information on who the slot-share partner is.

Occupying a Full-Time Slot

If a slot-share is not available, the option of the trainee remaining in their own placement but working reduced hours should be considered. It is essential that the trainee's timetable encompasses all necessary components of the training programme.

LTFT Supernumerary Placement

In some instances, a supernumerary placement may be required, particularly in cases relating to health. All LTFT supernumerary placements require approval from the Deputy Dean for LTFT training. The LTFT Administrator will prepare a Form B document for the DD to review and sign. The funding covers the basic trainee salary only. Out of hours is requested from the employing LEP, although it is at their sole discretion

as to whether it is provided.

LTFT Supernumerary funding sits outside tariff arrangements.

If a trainee who is approved for Supernumerary funding undertakes a period of leave (Maternity or Sick) then the arrangements could be subject to review by the TPD upon their return to work and training, to ensure that either personal or training circumstances (availability of slot-share, etc.) haven't now changed.

Supernumerary funding should generally be reviewed by the TPD in liaison with the AD every 6-9 months following the commencement of LTFT for each trainee.

Foundation Programme Trainees

Foundation Trainees who express a wish to train LTFT prior to the Foundation Programme selection process should apply for their Foundation placements in the same way as other graduates, but should complete an application form for LTFT as soon as they have been allocated to either Yorkshire and Humber Foundation School as their Unit of Application, or at the very latest when they have been allocated to a training programme. Just ticking the box on the Oriel application form is not enough and does not guarantee LTFT.

Applying early helps to give the LEP's as much notice as possible of the trainees' request to work LTFT. Every effort will be made to then accommodate a Foundation trainee to train on a LTFT basis within their appointed placement, however, at the discretion of the Foundation Training Programme Director (FTPD) and relevant Deputy Foundation School Director, appropriate programmes may be created in order to accommodate Foundation trainees.

Trainees who apply for LTFT between FY1 and FY2 may have to change programme dependent on local availability. YHFS have now implemented a process for accommodating Foundation trainees into their allocated placements using amended placement dates, depending on the LTFT working % requested. Please see the documents on the following page for more specific information:

[Policy and Documents | Health Education Yorkshire and Humber \(yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk\)](https://www.yorksandhumberdeanery.nhs.uk/policy-and-documents)

Due to the nature of the Foundation programme with short placements in multiple specialties, matching trainees within LEP's to facilitate slot shares is difficult for both trusts and trainees. Many trainees therefore occupy a full-time slot at 50%, 60%, 70% or 80% but have different placement dates, depending on their working % and some of their training may also be supported with LTFT supernumerary funding.

A Foundation trainee **must** complete the equivalent of a year's training at both FY1 and FY2, regardless of their LTFT working %.

If a trainee is returning to the training programme after a period of Sickness or Maternity Leave then there must be clarification from their FTPD as to how much time they are required to do to complete training and gain their necessary competencies.

Specialty Trainees

Trainees who have received approval to train on a LTFT basis in HEEYH will need to re-apply, via the standard process, if they are moving from Foundation to Core or Core to Higher training programmes.

It cannot be guaranteed that a trainee will be able to immediately commence their training on a LTFT basis and subsequently may have to consider the option of starting full-time or waiting until a suitable placement is available.

In cases relating to health, all attempts will be made to facilitate a smooth transition.

Period of Grace

The purpose of the period of grace is to provide specialty doctors in training (excluding those in General Practice) time to secure a Consultant or other post following attainment of their CCT / CESR.

The maximum duration of the period of grace is generally 6 months whether the doctor in training is full-time or less than full-time.

Inter-Deanery Transfers

Inter-Deanery transfers who are accepted by HEEYH who are already training LTFT in their existing post will need to re-apply. Every effort will be made to accommodate them in a timely fashion. They should contact the TPD of their specialty as well as HEEYH in relation to LTFT training as soon as the transfer is confirmed, to ensure they follow the appropriate application process.

Inter-Deanery transfers who are currently training full-time but would wish to apply for LTFT on transfer to HEEYH, should apply for LTFT training following the standard process, and giving as much notice as is possible after transfer has been confirmed.

It may not be possible to accommodate them immediately into a LTFT placement. Trainees may subsequently have to consider the options of starting full-time or waiting until a placement is available.

Out of Hours Work & Locum Work

Doctors in training on LTFT placements are not precluded from undertaking other work although they should ensure that in undertaking this work, they practise according to the GMC's standards in Good Medical Practice and that this does not impact negatively on their training. By utilisation of their annual Form R submission, they should ensure that the Postgraduate Dean as their designated RO is aware of all additional work undertaken within their remit of holding a licence to practise.

Examinations

Trainees working LTFT will still be subject to the same maximum number of attempts at any examinations as full-time trainees.

ARCPs

LTFT trainees must still adhere to the ARCP process. The expectation at the ARCP review will be that the LTFT trainee has completed a pro rata amount of the curriculum, assessments etc.

Please note that LTFT trainees will have an annual review and may also require an additional review at the point of FY/CT and ST transition.

It is recommended that less than full-time trainees speak to their Educational Supervisor at the start of their placement to discuss any difficulties they may anticipate experiencing with unexpected work commitments/clinical emergencies.

Useful links & Related Documents

Gold Guide Version 8

[Gold Guide - 8th Edition - Conference Of Postgraduate Medical Deans \(copmed.org.uk\)](https://www.copmed.org.uk/)

GMC Position Statement: Conditions for Less Than Full-Time Training November 2017

https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/Less_than_full_time_training_position_statement_Nov_17.pdf_72374278.pdf

NHS Employers Guidance (2005): Principles Underpinning the New Arrangements for Flexible Training

[Doctors in flexible training - Principles underpinning the new arrangements for flexible training \(nhsemployers.org\)](https://www.nhsemployers.org/Doctors_in_flexible_training_-_Principles_underpinning_the_new_arrangements_for_flexible_training)