

Study Leave – Process for Discretionary Study Leave

***Please note, any resident doctors who are currently employed in a KSS trust should follow the NHSE KSS guidance and study leave application process on the KSS webpage [here](#).**

What is a discretionary course?

A discretionary course is any course which does not appear on the Essential or Supporting approved [study leave lists](#) specific to the school that the resident doctor's training programme belongs to. **All international courses will be considered for funding via the discretionary process, as there are no international events on the approved course lists.**

There is an approval cap on the level of support for discretionary events of **£1000** per application, which is subject to available NHSE funds. For courses in the UK, the £1000 cap includes course costs and any accommodation, travel, and subsistence costs. Accommodation, travel, and subsistence claims must be within our [agreed limits](#).

For courses taking place at an international location, NHSE will reimburse the **lower** amount of either the course fee **or** the travel and accommodation expenses. The nightly maximum for accommodation in international locations is **£150**. No subsistence expenses can be reimbursed for international courses. Travel and accommodation expenses should be within the [limits specified on our website](#). If the course fee has been waived by the event organisers, NHSE will consider funding travel and accommodation expenses up to an absolute maximum of **£1000**.

Please note that study leave funding **cannot** be used for 'joining'/membership costs for a conference or course, even if this is advertised to provide a reduced attendance fee.

All applications to consider discretionary funding must be made **prior** to attending the event or course. No retrospective discretionary claims will be processed.

Application Process:

- 1) If a resident doctor wishes to apply for a study leave course they must check the [London Study Leave lists](#) on the PGMDE support portal.**

If the course is on the [London Study Leave lists](#), then the resident doctor should follow the process for mandatory or optional courses specific to their employing trust's procedure, ensuring they quote the relevant course code on their application.

- 2) If the course is not on the lists or is international, the resident doctor should first discuss with their Educational Supervisor. If agreed to be appropriate, the resident doctor should contact their TPD to request**

approval. If they do not know who their TPD is, they should [contact the Specialty School team](#) at NHSE for advice.

Their request to their TPD is made via email, and must include the following information:

- Name of course
- Course location
- Course dates
- Course fees
- Travel/accommodation expenses
- Justification for attending the course, linked to resident doctor's PDP and learning objectives and confirmation that the resident doctor has not already received funding for an international event during the current period of training (i.e. Foundation or core or higher training programmes, resident doctors in run through or dual programmes can apply for international events every 3 years as a maximum)
- Justification for attending a course located outside of the London region

If helpful, please use [this template form](#) to ensure all the correct information is included in order for the TPD to make a decision.

3) The TPD then reviews the resident doctor's application:

If they decline the request, they will respond to the resident doctor informing them why it was not approved. If insufficient or unclear information has been provided, the TPD will request more information from the resident doctor before making a decision.

If the TPD approves the request, they will inform the resident doctor of this and will forward to the Head of School on the resident doctor's behalf for approval (for those on Dental training programmes, this will be sent to the Associate Dental Dean, and for Foundation doctors, to the Deputy Foundation School Director).

The expected turnaround for a response from both TPD and HoS is 2 weeks. If you are not receiving a response to your request please submit a ticket on the PGMDE support portal [here](#).

4) The HoS/Associate Dental Dean/Deputy Foundation School Director then reviews the request:

If they approve, the HoS/ADD/DFSD will email the NHSE study leave mailbox (with the above details provided by the resident doctor).

If they decline the request, the HoS/ADD/DFSD will inform the resident doctor and TPD to provide justification. This step is required to ensure overall requests fit within the available budget.

- 5) **Once HoS approval has been received, the resident doctor then fills out a short form on the PGMDE support portal with all the details of their course. This form can be accessed using the link [here](#).**

For international courses, please attach evidence of your course fee/booking receipt, travel and accommodation expenses to your application so that we are able to determine which is the lower amount. Evidence of estimated amounts will not suffice – all evidence must include your name and check in/out dates on the travel and accommodation.

- 6) **The NHSE Study Leave team reviews the information on the form and assigns an approval number and allocates the approved amount of funding towards the claim.**

The resident doctor will receive an auto response from the PGMDE support portal once their approval code has been generated. Please ensure you check your spam/junk mail folders to ensure responses from the PGMDE support portal are not misdirected.

- 7) **The resident doctor applies via their Employing Trust's local process for Study Leave expenses (or their Lead Employer if undertaking a London GP/Public Health training programme, or via NHSE for Palliative Medicine resident doctors only).**
- 8) **The resident doctor attends the course/event.**
- 9) **The resident doctor claims reimbursement via their Trust/LEO using their approval code issued by NHSE, and the Employing Trust pays the resident doctor via monthly payroll. Please note the maximum amount for accommodation available in the [PGMDE support portal FAQs](#).**
- 10) **The Trust includes this cost in their monthly return to NHSE (including the approval number provided by the Study Leave team) to claim reimbursement from NHSE.**
- 11) **Should the resident doctor rotate ahead of attending the course, they can provide the email and respective approval code to their new Trust where this will still be honoured subject to their having obtained the relevant agreement to study leave at the new Trust and claims being submitted within THREE months/90 days of the event (60 days for resident doctors based at the Royal Free).**

The expected time for the issuing of a discretionary code (including responses from TPD/HoS plus the processing of the application form by the HET team on the

PGMDE Support Portal) is 3 weeks. If you are not receiving a response to your request please submit a ticket on the PGMDE support portal [here](#).