The UKFPO have introduced a national policy on Taster Sessions for Foundation Trainees. F1 trainees can transfer 5 days of F2 study leave during F1 for the purposes of a Taster Session. It is imperative that trainees ensure they seek approval from the Trust and that this transfer is recorded by both the Trust and trainee.

Guide to study leave in F2

1. Study leave is discretionary and not an entitlement. It will only be granted if it is consistent with maintaining essential services.

2. A proportion of study leave is allocated to support the formal educational programme in generic training and other aspects of F2 training. This will vary by Trust, but generally leaves about 5 days study leave per four month post.

3. Some examples of how study leave could be used are:
   a) To explore career options, for example, by spending a week in a specialty to gain some experience before recruitment to run through training
   b) To attend specific training such as ALS or ATLS courses, if attendance at such courses is deemed necessary by the FTPD, for the trainee in terms of educational development.
   c) To undertake research or audit linked to their current post or hospital service or which will support future applications into higher training programmes

4. Although leave is not strictly permitted for the purposes of studying for or sitting post graduate examinations at a recent FTPDs meeting it was agreed that up to 5 days could be agreed for F2 trainees sitting exams. There would need to be evidence that the trainee is sitting an exam and this, like all other study leave, is discretionary.

5. Trainees may be required to provide evidence to the FTPD about how they have utilised their study leave. As an example, trainees conducting an audit using study leave may be asked to present a report of their findings.

Funding

6. Funding for study leave is delegated to Clinical Tutors by the Deanery. Trust may also provide funding to support study leave for F2 posts which
are not directly funded by the Deanery. From this budget, Clinical Tutors must support formal foundation training programmes, which in practice leaves very little to support individual trainee requests. Trainees may need to identify projects which can be achieved at a low cost or at no cost, or they may need to be prepared to find their own funding.

7. Trusts (Clinical Tutors) are required to provide an annual report to the Foundation School Board on how the expenditure has been used to support generic educational programmes and individual trainee study leave.

How to apply

8. All applications must be submitted on the appropriate Trust form available from the Foundation Training Programme Director or Clinical Tutor. Forms should be submitted at least 6 weeks before the leave is required; retrospective applications cannot be considered.

9. Applications must be approved first by the Clinical Supervisor who will consider whether service commitments can accommodate study leave, and then secondly by the FTPD.

10. The decision to approve or not, and degree of financial support, rests with the local Clinical Tutor, advised as appropriate by the Foundation Training Programme Director. The proposed use of study leave must be relevant to the individual's educational needs, and appropriate to his or her experience, and the costs (if any) must be reasonable.

11. For further information and local guidelines please contact your local FTPD.