Less than Full-time Training

Health Education Wessex Process for Managing Less than Full-time Medical Training

Author: Associate Dean with responsibility for LTFT

Original publication date: March 2009

Updated: February 2010, May 2013, April 2014 in light of implementation issues being raised.

Next Review date: March 2016
1.0 Introduction

1.1 Less than Full-time Training (LTFTT) is an option for trainee doctors who are unable to train full-time and wish to train on a less than full-time basis. Any national guidance on hours worked during LTFTT will be implemented.

1.2 The Improving working lives (IWEL) initiative, NHS Policy 2002, aims to improve doctors working lives by improving their work/life balance and providing employment conditions which enable them to work and train in the NHS to their full potential. LTFTT is included as one of the Improving Working Lives (England) standards. The Department of Health has a target of a minimum of 20% flexible trainees by 2010; Health Education Wessex promotes opportunities for LTFTT in accordance with current GMC position statement on less than full-time training.

2.0 Scope

2.1 Category One

LTFTT is available to doctors in training who are unable to work full-time for "well founded individual reasons" (European Union Council Directive 93/16/EEC 1993), including General Practice (GP) trainees. Eligible applicants include those who are:

- Disabled or in ill-health
- Caring for an ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent:
- Personally providing care for young children

2.2 Category Two

A further category of trainee doctors may also be considered for LTFT training although those mentioned above will take priority ahead of those below:

- A unique opportunity for their own personal/professional development e.g. training for national/international sporting events
- Religious commitment - involving training for a particular role which required a specific time commitment
- Non-medical professional development such as management courses, law courses, fine arts courses etc.

3.0 Responsibilities and duties

3.1 Trainee Doctors
To qualify for LTFT training a doctor must secure a training post in open competition.

There is no automatic right to LTFT training and it is resource-limited.

There is no guarantee that the content of the LTFT training programme i.e. post or employing Trust will be the same as a previously full-time placement, although preferences will be considered. The final programme will have to meet curriculum requirements.

To avoid missing valuable educational opportunities, trainees are expected to be as flexible about their working pattern as possible. Trainees should recognise that they may need to change their sessions to fit in with mandatory Trust or Health Education Wessex events e.g. Trust induction, mandatory training, regional training days, where these only occur on a particular day of the week.

Trainees should discuss a potential application for LTFTT with their Educational Supervisor, Programme Director and Programme Manager to clarify the process and the implications of LTFTT.

Trainees must remain in regular contact with their relevant Programme Manager to notify any changes to their preferred start date for LTFTT during the application and approval stage.

Eligibility is reviewed on an annual basis and trainees in LFTT posts must contact the relevant Programme Manager at anytime their circumstances change and return an annual declaration to the LTFTT administration confirming continued eligibility.

The return to full-time training should, if possible, be planned to coincide with rotation dates.

Trainees must engage with the process and documentation must be returned within the stipulated time frame. If this is not adhered to trainees will either have to return to full time or delay the start date of LTFTT.

3.2 The Dean

All trainees who meet the criteria for LTFTT and comply with the procedural requirements will be considered.

All requests for LTFT training will be treated fairly but consideration will need to be given to the overall capacity of a training programme and service commitments.
The Dean is responsible for ensuring that all LTFT training of any kind is undertaken in posts and programmes that have been prospectively approved by the GMC and meet the statutory requirements of the General and Specialist Medical Practice (Education Training and Qualifications) Order 2003.

3.3 The Employer

Employers must complete the appropriate documentation, without which, funding cannot be released.

4.0 Less than full-time training options

In line with the GMC guidance you may, as a minimum, work at 50%. If in exceptional circumstances, you wish to work less than 50%, this would require the agreement of the postgraduate dean and would be permitted for a maximum of 12 months.

LTFT training can in theory be undertaken in one of three ways. The Dean will endeavour to accommodate agreed LTFTT placements using the options in the following priority order.

The programme for a trainee working LTFT should contain the same educational elements as that of a full-time trainee, i.e. access to departmental meetings, audit, research, teaching and ideally including out-of-hours work, which would be funded by the employing organisation.

4.1 Slot-sharing

- Slot-sharing works on the basis that two trainees share one full-time post and share any out-of-hours commitment between them.

- Each doctor may work up to 60% whole time equivalent (WTE) and is paid individually on the basis of actual working hours.

- Additional Dean's funding will be needed to meet the additional hours over and above the 100% of the full-time slot. The Trust will need to meet any additional out-of-hours pay and thus need to agree in writing any slot-share arrangements.

- Slot-sharing provides the most effective means of meeting the trainee's educational needs and supporting service delivery in the employing Trust.

- The trainee must complete the LTFTT Application form (see section 5).
4.2 LTFT in a Full Time post

- A trainee occupies an established full-time post but works reduced hours.
- The full-time post is funded from the Educational Contract so no additional funding is required from the Dean.
- The trainee must complete the LTFTT Application form (see section 5)
- The Trust in which the trainee is employed must give their written approval to support this arrangements.

4.3 Supernumerary placements

- If neither of the above options is possible, the Dean will consider funding trainees in supernumerary placements subject to funding availability for no more than six months.
- Such a post will need GMC approval and agreements by the Trust.
- Supernumerary placements will not automatically attract out-of-hours working requirements.
- The trainee must complete the LTFTT Application form (see section 5).
- The substantive post on the rotation can be re-filled by the employing Trust using the Educational Contract Funding.

5. Application procedure

- If trainees have a general enquiry regarding LTFTT they can email wessexLTFT@wessex.hee.nhs.uk or if they wish to discuss their needs and eligibility they should contact their relevant Programme Manager for whom individual contact email addresses and telephone numbers are available through the Health Education Wessex website.

- To apply for LTFTT, trainees must complete an application form which is available at: http://www.wessexdeanery.nhs.uk/support/support/less_than_full_time_training.aspx
The completed form should then be sent to: PA/Administrator - Specialty, Health Education Wessex, Southern House, Otterbourne, SO21 2RU.

The completed form is then assessed by the Programme Manager and Associate Dean. Where appropriate an appointment will be made with the Associate Dean or Programme Director to establish eligibility and to discuss training needs. The eligibility is then confirmed to the trainee in writing and to the Training Programme Director, and options for training LTFT are discussed.

Slot shares and supernumerary LTFT posts are subject to funding availability form the relevant employing Trust.

Written funding approval is required from the Dean before these placements can go ahead together with confirmation from the employing Trust if additional financial support for any out of hours work is required.

The funding will only be available for maximum period of six months from the trainees specified preferred start date. If the trainee does not commence LTFT training within this time i.e. the time of being notified that funding is available, they will need to apply again.

Please note that trainees who wish to undertake their LTFT training may also need to apply to individual Trusts for funding. The Head of School or DME will advise on this.

6.0 Salary

6.1 National guidance from NHS Employers was published in June 2005 with the aim of improving access to LTFT training [Equitable pay for flexible medical training, 2005]. The system for paying LTFT trainees is one where the basic salary is determined by the actual hours of work, as derived initially from the rota and confirmed by monitoring.

6.2 A division into four-hour bands based on hours of actual work enables some averaging to take place, and the pay for each band is based on the lower hours limit.

Thus:

F5 is 20 or more and less than 24 hours of actual work a week and attracts 0.5 \( \frac{\text{full}}{\text{basic}} \) time
F6 is 24 or more and less than 28 hours of actual work a week and attracts 0.6 \( \frac{\text{full}}{\text{basic}} \) time
F7 is 28 or more and less than 32 hours of actual work a week and attracts 0.7 \( \frac{\text{full}}{\text{basic}} \) time
F8 is 32 or more and less than 36 hours of actual work a week and attracts 0.8 \( \frac{\text{full}}{\text{basic}} \) time
F9 is 36 or more and less than 40 hours of actual work a week and attracts 0.9 x salary

Added to this is a supplement, paid as a proportion of the basic salary identified above, to reflect the intensity of the duties.

The system has the advantage of proportionality and benefits from being based on hours of actual work.

Supplements will be applied on the basis set out below:

- **Band FA** - trainees working at high intensity and at the most unsocial times.
- **Band FB** - trainees working at less intensity at less unsocial times.
- **Band FC** - all other trainees with duties outside the period 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Monday to Friday.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band</th>
<th>Supplement payable as a proportion of the calculated basic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FC</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.0 Additional guidance

7.1 Statutory Leave

Trainees becoming pregnant during training should notify the relevant programme manager of anticipated start and end dates of maternity leave as well as informing other relevant bodies, e.g. employing Trust/Foundation School. If there is a change to the originally approved LTFT training end date, trainees must request a LTFT training extension using the LTFTT application form.

LTFTT trainees returning from maternity leave are not guaranteed to be placed in the post they occupied prior to the maternity leave or guaranteed a post with out-of-hours commitment.

7.2 Study Leave
LTFTT are entitled to periods of study leave pro-rata to their sessional commitments. The funding provided to the employing Trust for the trainees is the same as the full-time trainees (i.e. not pro-rata). Appropriateness of and eligibility for study leave will be subject to the same criteria as for full-time trainees.

7.3 Annual Leave

Annual leave and public holidays for LTFT trainees are calculated on a pro-rata basis.

8.0 Change to personal circumstances

Where there is a change in the trainee's personal circumstances, e.g. contact Manager as soon as reasonably practicable.

9.0 Changes to Post

- Any proposed changes to a post, including working hours, should be agreed with the Programme Director to ensure that the educational approval is not affected.
- No change in working hours requiring a change in funding can occur without approval by the Postgraduate Dean or their representative.
- Any changes to your LTFT status will necessitate a new funding form to be completed i.e. if your slot share partner leaves and not replaced with the same %, if you change your % hours, maternity leave.

10.0 Appeals

10.1 The Dean will attempt to resolve any issues informally in discussion with the trainee.

10.2 Should informal resolution not be possible the trainee is referred to the Wessex website.

http://www.wessexanery.nhs.uk/quality_management_policies/policies_and-procedures