

## Pharmacy Department Study Leave Policy

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### **REVIEW DATES AND DETAILS OF CHANGES MADE DURING THE REVIEW**

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Routine review including the addition of personal and service development time.

### **KEY WORDS**

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Pharmacy, study leave, training, funding, travel, accommodation, subsistence.

## **1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

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1.1 This document sets out the University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) NHS Trust Pharmacy Department's policies and procedures for the consideration of study leave for pharmacy staff. It should be read in conjunction with the Trust Study Leave and Funding Support for Non-Medical Staff Policy and Procedures (Trust Ref: B32/2004).

1.2 The policy includes the following aspects:

- (i) consideration of course suitability and funding availability,
- (ii) personal and service development time,
- (iii) completion of relevant paperwork,
- (iv) requesting and granting of study leave within UHL's e-rostering system,
- (v) payment of course fees,
- (vi) payment of travel, accommodation and subsistence,
- (vii) disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest,
- (viii) post-attendance feedback and dissemination of learning,
- (ix) extended programmes of study.

1.3 Note that for simplicity the word 'course' is used throughout to encompass study days, courses, conferences and other training and meetings; each event must be considered on its own merit as described below.

## **2 POLICY SCOPE**

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2.1 This policy applies to all UHL pharmacy staff regardless of job role or band.

2.2 This policy is intended to relate to external training courses, including those attended during allocated personal and service development time. It does not apply to internal UHL courses, e.g. appraisal, recruitment and selection, sickness management training; for these, attendance needs to be agreed with the individual's line manager but an application for study leave is not required.

2.3 This policy also does not apply to apprentices attending college, trainee pharmacists attending seminars and regional study days, and designated supervisor/pharmacy diploma tutor training; this training is seen as an integral part of the roles of these staff groups. Study leave forms are not required but absence from work in order to attend must be managed in the usual way.

2.4 It is recognised that some members of pharmacy staff also have close links with services outside of pharmacy which may allow them to access funding via alternative routes, e.g. from another CMG in which pharmacy services are delivered or R&I in the case of the pharmacy clinical trials team. In these circumstances, the individual is expected to follow the relevant local processes around funding of training. They must though still comply with all other aspects of this policy, particularly in terms of assessing course suitability and ensuring completion of necessary paperwork and requesting of study leave. The source of funding must be clearly stated in these cases. This includes cost centres that relate to pharmacy staff but which are held separately, e.g. for Medicines Information and Clinical Trials.

## **3 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

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CMG	Clinical Management Group
GPhC	General Pharmaceutical Council
WTED NHSE	Workforce Training and Education Directorate for NHSE
HEI	Higher Education Institute
IP	Independent Prescribing
PP-PDCA	Principal Pharmacist – Professional Development & Clinical Assurance
R&I	Research & Innovation department

## **4 ROLES**

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### **4.1 Responsibilities of Principal Pharmacist – Professional Development & Clinical Assurance**

- (a) To identify potential funding sources and seek investment in training and development of pharmacy staff.
- (b) To consider current and future training needs of the department both in preparing annual requests for training monies and in considering individual ad hoc requests. To ensure available funds are allocated fairly in keeping with above.
- (c) Where courses have a financial cost, to review completed study leave forms and inform applicant and line manager of the outcome in a timely manner (usually within 10 working days).
- (d) Additionally, the PP-PDCA is responsible for recording study leave forms received on a departmental spreadsheet. This record together with study leave forms, feedback forms, and disclosures of potential conflicts of interest are kept in the 'pharmacy training' network drive.

### **4.2 Responsibilities of line managers**

- (a) Wherever possible, to identify courses in advance for the following financial year in order to maximise the chance that they can be financially supported. Events which would potentially be useful for a member of the department to attend must be discussed with the relevant CMG Lead Pharmacist, Principal Pharmacist, Principal Pharmacy Technician, Chief Pharmacy Technician or other senior manager. Following their agreement, these events must then be highlighted to the PP-PDCA for inclusion in training plan for the following year.
- (b) To review individual course suitability together with staff.
- (c) To complete manager sections of pre-course application forms, feedback forms and any course-specific paperwork as appropriate.
- (d) To support disclosure of potential conflicts of interest, referring to section 5.6.
- (e) To encourage and facilitate the staff member in dissemination of their learning after course attendance.

### **4.3 Responsibilities of individual staff members**

- (a) To ensure completion of the appropriate pre-course application forms and feedback forms as detailed in section 5; this includes passing to line manager for completion and submission of the completed form to the PP-PDCA before course booking or attendance.
- (b) To make the course booking with the course provider once approval is given, referring to section 5.4 where there is a cost of attendance.
- (c) To make reasonable attempts to minimise cost when booking travel tickets or incurring other costs which are to be partly or fully met by the department / Trust, referring to section 5.5.
- (d) To meet the cost of individual membership of organisations where this is a pre-requisite of attending a course. Where a reduced attendance cost is available based on membership of an organisation, the department will only pay the discounted fee. Staff not wishing to join the relevant organisation will be expected to pay the difference in attendance cost.
- (e) To ensure disclosure of potential conflicts of interest, referring to section 5.7.
- (f) To disseminate their learning after course attendance, e.g. via a team or departmental meeting, or through sharing of teaching materials or resources.
- (g) In the event of leaving the Trust during the course of study or within 24 months of the cost of training being incurred, to make required repayments for all or part of the course fees in line with the learning contract and finance declaration (contained within appendix 2 of the [UHL Study Leave Policy B32/2004](#)).

## **5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

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N.B. A flowchart summarising the below processes can be found at appendix 1.

### **5.1 Consideration of course suitability and funding availability**

- (a) Courses should usually be identified at appraisal but it is recognised that this will not always be possible, e.g. where the course only becomes available after appraisal. There will also be times where a strategic departmental objective will identify course attendance for individuals or a group of staff which may not have been included within specific staff appraisals, e.g. pharmacist independent prescribing (IP) which is centrally co-ordinated.
- (b) In the first instance, discussions about course attendance must be between the individual and their line manager, with escalation to CMG Lead Pharmacist, Principal Pharmacist, Principal Pharmacy Technician, Chief Pharmacy Technician or another senior manager as appropriate. These discussions must consider the likely benefits of attendance, suitability for the individual, whether other attendees should also be considered, and the ability to support attendance in terms of likely impact on core services.
- (c) *If attendance is not supported by the line manager*, the reasons for this must be explained to the individual. This may require escalation to those outlined in 5.1(b) above, particularly where the individual is not satisfied with the explanation given.
- (d) *If attendance is supported by the line manager and there is no associated cost or the individual is self-funding*, the processes described in 5.2, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.8 must be completed.

- (e) *If attendance is supported by the line manager and there is an associated cost, the study leave form must be completed as in section 5.2 and submitted to the PP-PDCA for review. Requests will be reviewed and the applicant and their line manager informed of the outcome, usually within 10 working days. If approved, the processes in sections 5.2 – 5.8 must be completed as appropriate. If declined, the reasons for this will be communicated to the individual and their line manager and a record of this included within the departmental study leave spread sheet.*

## 5.2 Personal and Service Development time

All pharmacy staff have protected learning time for professional development (3.75 hours per fortnight for full time staff, adjusted for part time staff as below). Managers and staff should work together to agree how this is best arranged. **If staff are using this time to access external courses, then this policy needs to be followed.**

<b>Contracted weekly hours</b>	<b>Amount of 'personal &amp; service development time'</b>
< 9.5 hours	3.75 hours every eight weeks
9.5 to 18.75 hours	3.75 hours every four weeks
18.76 to 28 hours	3.75 hours every three weeks
> 28 hours	3.75 hours every two weeks

Individual staff and managers should agree how this time is used based on appraisal objectives, personal development plan and other ad-hoc discussions.

Examples could include the following, noting that not all of these will need a study leave application. If in doubt, please discuss with your line manager or the PDCA team.

- Statutory and mandatory training
- Other in-house training
- Formal courses, e.g. diploma, independent prescribing, leadership & management courses
- Progressing with recognised competency frameworks, e.g. advanced practice, designated prescribing practitioner
- Clinical audit or quality improvement work, including preparing work for submission to conferences or for presentation / publication
- Guideline and SOP development
- Webinars, online training or directed reading
- Informal learning opportunities, e.g. shadowing colleagues or meetings
- Work to improve processes in staff member's area of work, i.e. protected time to deliver parts of their role that are not directly related to delivering operational services or patient care.

### 5.3 Completion of relevant paperwork

- (a) Once line manager and PP-PDCA support has been obtained, the individual must complete the Trust study leave form which can be found at appendix 2 of the [UHL Study Leave Policy B32/2004](#) available on INSite. Forms must be completed by the individual and line manager and include those external courses that are attended during personal and service development time.
- (b) *Where there is no associated cost or the individual is self-funding*, completed forms must be sent to the PP-PDCA. Forms will be saved and an addition made to the departmental study leave spreadsheet. The individual can then go ahead and book their course place without waiting for further approvals.
- (c) *Where there is a cost to course attendance*, completed forms must be sent before course booking or attendance to the PP-PDCA as in 5.1 (e). Only on confirmation of their approval can the individual go ahead and book their course place. Staff should take particular note of the learning contract and finance declaration contained with the Trust study leave form, including the requirement to repay some or all financial costs in the event they leave the Trust during the course of study or within 2 years of the cost of the course being incurred. Again, forms will be saved and an addition made to the departmental study leave spreadsheet.

### 5.4 Requesting and granting of study leave within UHL's e-rostering system

- (a) In addition to the study leave paperwork, the individual requesting study leave also needs to submit a study leave request via EmployeeOnline for approval by their line manager / leave approver. Guidance on using the system to make such requests is available from the Electronic Rostering pages of INSite.
- (b) Request and approval within e-rostering does not constitute approval for course attendance (that is achieved through completion of the Trust study leave form as in section 5.3) but is necessary to ensure agreed attendance is considered when reviewing other leave requests within teams and the wider department.

### 5.5 Payment of course fees

- (a) The process for payment of course fees may differ depending on the funding source and any training provider requirements. Broadly, there are three possible processes:
  - (i) The individual pays for the course themselves with or without later reimbursement
  - (ii) The department pays for the course directly with or without subsequent recharge to other training budgets
  - (iii) The course is paid for directly from a cost centre outside pharmacy (either within the Trust or externally, e.g. direct from WTED NHSE).
- (b) With the exception of self-funding, generally options (ii) or (iii) from 5.5(a) are preferred; staff must therefore discuss with the PP-PDCA or PA to senior pharmacy team before course booking or attendance.
- (c) Staff must note that the Trust will only pay invoices with a purchase order which has to be obtained through the Trust e-procurement system. This can take several working days / weeks to obtain so staff must allow sufficient time for these processes to be completed when planning course booking or attendance.

## 5.6 Payment of travel, accommodation and subsistence

(a) It is recognised that there are occasions where the cost of travel can prevent attendance at an otherwise worthwhile course; this includes courses which are free to attend and would likely have been supported even if there was a cost to attendance. To address this, the following will apply:

- (i) Where the department is already meeting the cost of course attendance, the individual is expected to meet the cost of travel. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the relevant budget holder in advance of the cost being incurred.
- (ii) Where course attendance is externally funded (e.g. sponsorship from pharmaceutical companies, prizes and awards, from UHL cost centres outside pharmacy), the pharmacy department will not meet the cost of travel. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the relevant budget holder in advance of the cost being incurred.
- (iii) Where the course is free to attend, the department will meet 50% of the cost of travel. Staff must make every possible attempt to minimise cost when booking travel tickets including through booking travel in advance to take advantage of discounted fares. Payment must be agreed in advance with the PP-PDCA before any bookings are made.

Payment of travel costs for use of own vehicle is only payable for journeys where the distance is  $\geq 30$  miles further than the distance between the staff member's home and usual place of work.

Payment of travel is limited to UK travel.

Note that there may be some situations where travel costs cannot be paid as described above (e.g. due to the Trust or departmental financial position). In such cases, the department will still consider the request for study leave which must be reviewed on its own merits as described in 5.1 above.

- (iv) Where the individual has elected to self-fund, it is assumed that this includes travel, accommodation and subsistence as well as registration for the event itself.
- (b) Accommodation costs will not routinely be paid. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the relevant budget holder in advance of the cost being incurred.
  - (c) Subsistence costs will not routinely be paid. Any exceptions to this must be agreed by the relevant budget holder in advance of the cost being incurred.
  - (d) Details for claiming payment of travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses can be found in the [UHL Expenses Policy B23/2011](#).

## 5.7 Disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest

(a) Where course attendance, travel, accommodation or subsistence is being supported by, for example, a pharmaceutical company there is a need for the person to disclose this potential conflict of interest. Staff are encouraged to refer to [UHL's Managing Conflicts of Interest in the NHS policy A1/2017](#) for further information.



- (b) Staff with a potential or actual conflict of interest are required to declare these as they arise and within a maximum of 28 days, and to inform their line manager of any such interests.
- (c) Staff can make a declaration by accessing the electronic MES Declare system. Staff should note that this is a publicly-accessible register. Arrangements for senior (Trust-level) review of declarations are described in the above policy. If any concerns are identified then the staff member / line manager will be contacted to resolve the concerns.
- (d) Note that there is no need to declare occasional hospitality where the value is estimated as being < £25, e.g. provision of a sponsored buffet lunch at a course does not require declaration, but dinner, accommodation, travel and course attendance itself must be declared as above. Individuals are expected to use their own judgement in estimating value of gifts and hospitality and whether the frequency of receipt can be considered to be occasional.
- (e) Where person A earns money from an activity such as teaching or an advisory board and this is used for person B to attend a course, it is person A (and not B) who must declare as this will then match the pharmaceutical companies declaration which is also available in the public domain.

## **5.8 Post-attendance feedback and dissemination of learning**

- (a) Following attendance at a course, the individual must complete the relevant feedback form in appendix 3 of [UHL Study Leave Policy B32/2004](#).  
Completion of feedback forms is important in informing decisions about future attendance of others at the same or similar courses, and can be a condition of the department securing future training funding.
- (b) Completed forms must be sent to the PDCA administrator for addition to departmental records. Staff must also send the completed form to any other parties as detailed on the specific form being used.
- (c) To maximise the value to the department, course attendees are expected to disseminate their learning after course attendance, e.g. via a team or departmental meeting, or through sharing of teaching materials or resources. Where appropriate, this can be arranged through the individuals responsible for arranging teaching sessions on each site or through the PP-PDCA.

## **5.9 Extended programmes of learning**

- (a) Extended programmes of learning include, but are not limited to, apprenticeships, trainee pharmacist training, postgraduate pharmacy diplomas, pharmacist IP training, leadership courses and other postgraduate qualifications.
- (b) As detailed in section 2.3 above, study leave forms are not required for apprenticeships or foundation training which are seen as a core part of an individual's job role. For staff undertaking a postgraduate diploma, and for all other extended programmes of learning, a study leave form is required. A single form can be used to capture all dates for the entire duration of the programme of learning. This form includes a learning contract which lays out the obligations of the individual to the Trust in return for their attendance being supported.

- (c) Pharmacists may sometimes choose to undertake a postgraduate diploma with a higher education institute (HEI) other than UHL's preferred provider (De Montfort University at present). For example, they may have enrolled on an alternative programme prior to working at UHL, or are in a role where the department would not routinely provide support for completion of a post-graduate diploma. Consideration as to whether the department can support study leave for diplomas with an alternative HEI must be based on the following:
- The time commitment is less than or equal to the currently preferred programme.
  - The individual is in a role where a diploma would currently be supported.
  - The programme of study meets our departmental needs; for example it allows the option of IP as an integral part of the diploma. Note that this also applies to proposed start date of diplomas as an immediate start following foundation training may preclude the IP option as the individual will not meet the GPhC requirement of being two years qualified on commencement of IP training.

Individual cases must be discussed with the Advanced Specialist Pharmacist – Professional Development / Lead Diploma Tutor.

- (d) Decisions about the amount of study leave permitted for extended programmes of study must take consideration of appendix 1 of [UHL Study Leave Policy B32/2004](#). Independent prescribing is viewed as being at 'level B' meaning that 75% of the total formal components (taught study days plus 90 hours practice) may be taken as study leave. The remaining 25% must be undertaken in the candidate's own time, e.g. through the booking of annual leave or lieu time. To assist line managers with oversight of this, it is suggested that the *first* 25% of the time is booked as annual leave or lieu time.

## **6 EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

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There are no training requirements or required competencies needed to implement this policy.

## **7 PROCESS FOR MONITORING COMPLIANCE**

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The process for monitoring compliance with this policy is set out in the Policy Monitoring table below.

## **8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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- 8.1 The Trust recognises the diversity of the local community it serves. Our aim therefore is to provide a safe environment free from discrimination and treat all individuals fairly with dignity and appropriately according to their needs.
- 8.2 As part of its development, this policy and its impact on equality have been reviewed and no detriment was identified.

## **9 SUPPORTING REFERENCES, EVIDENCE BASE AND RELATED POLICIES**

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Trust Guideline for Study Leave for Continuing Professional Development Funding and Workforce Development Funding (Trust Ref: B27/2015)

Study Leave and Funding Support for Non-Medical Staff Policy and Procedures (Trust Ref: B32/2004)

Managing Conflicts of Interest in the NHS [Trust Ref: A1/2017]

Expenses Policy [Trust Ref: B23/2011]

## **10 PROCESS FOR VERSION CONTROL, DOCUMENT ARCHIVING AND REVIEW**

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Review details must be described in the Policy and must give details of timescale and who will be responsible for review and updating of the document.

The updated version of the Policy will then be uploaded and available through INSite Documents and the Trust's externally-accessible Freedom of Information publication scheme. It will be archived through the Trusts PAGL system.

## POLICY MONITORING TABLE

Element to be monitored	Lead	Tool	Frequency	Reporting arrangements Who or what committee will the completed report go to.
Proportion of course requests being approved / declined	Principal Pharmacist – Professional Development & Clinical Assurance	Departmental study leave spreadsheet	Ongoing monitoring. Reported annually.	Annual report to Pharmacy Improvement Board (PIB) including agreement of any identified actions; documented in PIB minutes.
Review of funding sources used to support course attendance				
Disclosure of any potential conflicts of interest				
Completion of individual feedback forms				

## Appendix 1: Flowchart for study leave requests

