

Less Than Full Time (LTFT) Training for London and KSS



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1. Introduction

Health Education England, London and KSS is committed to helping doctors reach their full potential and to helping those with child-caring or other responsibilities, or health problems, to continue training.

LTFT trainees must meet the same requirements in specialty and general practice training as full-time trainees. The only difference is the possibility of limiting participation of medical activities due to the number of hours worked per week. HEE fully endorse the principles set out in the [Gold Guide](#). Essentially, LTFT and full-time trainees follow the same curriculum and will have the same requirements for completion of training. The purpose of this guide is to make clear the new LTFT application process, including notice periods and supporting documentation required. Please ensure you have read this guide alongside the FAQs before you submit a LTFT application.

2. Why Work LTFT?

- To retain, within the medical workforce, doctors who are unable to continue their training on a full-time basis.
- To promote career development and work/life balance for doctors training within the NHS.
- To ensure continuing training in programmes on a pro-rata basis.

Pros and Cons of LTFT:

Pros of LTFT:	Cons of LTFT:
Time to do other important things – childcare, pursue development opportunities, look after yourself or others.	Extended length of training.
Allow time for reflection, e-portfolio, revise while pursuing interests outside of medicine.	May miss out on opportunities within placement due to days/hours worked
Reduced childcare costs	Reduced pay.
Can be longer placements which allows more time for establishing relationships with staff and patients.	Sometimes takes longer “to get into the swing of things” on a placement.
Need to be organised and proactive about organising LTFT training.	Can Improve leadership, management and negotiation skills.

Views of LTFT trainees:

Why they chose to work less than full-time:

“I have always been a LTFT GP trainee. I came back from maternity leave after my first son into GP training. I now have a second son and still enjoying LTFT training and the work-life balance I can achieve with it.”

“I needed to have IVF treatment and I didn’t feel that it was feasible to do this whilst working full-time. I was supported by the Deanery in being allowed to train LTFT. I was lucky enough to become pregnant and continued working part-time then, and after the birth.”

Why they think it is an advantage:

“More time to think about cases on non-working days and more enthusiasm to offer my patients as I am seeing fewer of them”

“One of the big positives for LTFT has been the variation in hospital specialties, which I have covered. I have covered many of the topics which a full-time trainee would not be able to do in 18 months in the hospital setting.”

3. Eligibility Criteria

1. Trainees with a disability or ill health – This may include ongoing medical procedures such as fertility treatment.
2. Trainees (men and women) with caring responsibilities (e.g., for children, or for an ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependant)

3. Welfare and wellbeing – There may be reasons not directly related to disability or ill health where trainees may benefit from a reduced working pattern. This could have a beneficial effect on their health and wellbeing (e.g., reducing potential burnout).
4. Unique opportunities – A trainee 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).
5. Religious commitment – A trainee 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.
6. Non-medical development – A trainee 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.
7. Flexibility for training and career development with the option to train less than full time with flexibility that might enable development of a broad career portfolio

4. Application Process

The Healthcare Education team process applications for trainees working across London and Kent Surrey and Sussex (KSS) Before applying for LTFT you **MUST** contact the following to make them aware of your intention to train LTFT:

Type	Contact
Foundation Trainees	Please contact your Foundation Training Programme Director (FTPD)
Specialty Trainees	Please contact your Training Programme Director (TPD)

Your Scheme Director/Training Programme Director **MUST** be aware of your request to train LTFT as it will affect rotation planning. This does not mean your rotations will change but the colleagues listed above need to know so they are aware when they are rotation planning.

Application Process at point of entry to Training Programme:

Should you wish to train LTFT on point of entry to the training programme and are unaware of who your Training Programme Director/ or Scheme Director, please check your ePortfolio to ascertain who this is. It is YOUR responsibility to make your Training Programme Director or Scheme Director aware of your intentions.

Application Process Step-by-Step:

1. Discuss your intention to work LTFT with your Training Programme Director/GP Scheme Manager/Foundation School Manager. You should try to do this as early as possible.
You must provide at least 16 weeks' notice to apply to train LTFT.
2. **Child Care/ Health/Disability/ Caring Responsibilities:** Complete and submit your LTFT application form which is available via the PGMDE Support Portal. You must submit your application form as early as possible, no later than 16 weeks before starting your placement. If you are unable to provide 16 weeks' notice this will be reviewed on an individual basis. You must also provide written confirmation for your employing Trust that they can accommodate this.
3. **Welfare/Wellbeing/Unique Opportunities/Religious Commitment/Non-medical development/Training and Career Development:** Applications must be submitted during the HET LTFT application window. Windows are determined by rotation months and can be found in the Portal FAQs and application form.
4. Your eligibility will be assessed, and you will be notified of the outcome:
5. We will assume you wish to continue training LTFT at the same WTE (whole time equivalent) until you tell us otherwise. Only submit a new application if you wish to change your working hours or return to full-time work. This application must be submitted within HET LTFT application windows/ at least 16 weeks prior to your rotation. If you are not eligible and wish to appeal the decision, you should arrange to meet with your Head of School or Foundation programme director.
6. If your application is unsuccessful you can appeal by submitting a ticket to the portal. This will be reviewed by your Head of School and Deputy Dean.

For details about how to apply in these specialities, please refer to the FAQ [here](#)

4. LTFT in Foundation

While the application and other processes are similar in foundation to specialty training, there are additional considerations.

Reduction in choice of placements

Currently students are allocated two-year foundation programmes. If someone decides to train LTFT, their programme will obviously need to be extended. Salary is reduced accordingly.

Usually, extensions are for one or more full 4-month placements, as this provides a better educational experience.

For example, a one-year F1 or F2 programme would need to be extended as follows:

- At 0.8 WTE to 16 months (4 x 4-month placements)
- At 0.6 % WTE 20 months (5 x 4-month placements)

- At 0.5 WTE 24 months (6 x 4-month placements)

In practice this means that later placements will need to be changed.

For example, below is a typical 2-year full-time foundation programme.

F1	General Medicine	General Surgery	Paediatrics
F2	Emergency Medicine	General Practice	Acute Medicine

If a doctor decided to do this instead at 60% for both F1 and F2, then this would take 2 x 20 months i.e., 40 months instead of 24 months

F1	General Medicine	General Surgery	Paediatrics
	Geriatrics	General Medicine	F2 Acute Medicine
F2	Psychiatry	Emergency Medicine	Geriatrics
F2	Old age psychiatry		

While there would be no change to the initially allocated F1 programme, apart from this being LTFT, additional placements would need to be found to complete the F1 year as emergency medicine and general practice are usually only suitable for doctors with full registration.

The third placement in the original F2 year could still be utilised, as the doctor has achieved full registration, but the subsequent placements will need to be found from those which are vacant. This is because the planned F2 year will have already been allocated to another doctor in the following year as part of their two-year programme.

Local vacancies are often rare, meaning that the priority is given to ensuring a balanced programme including community exposure, but that there is little choice for the doctor concerned.

In addition, the usual programme balance rules may not apply as each placement is less than full-time, and so in the example above the doctor is repeating psychiatry as in two 4-month placements they will only have done an equivalent of 4.8 months full-time.

6. Notice Periods

If you intend to apply for LTFT training under disability, ill health or caring responsibilities, you should submit your application no later 16 weeks before the commencement of your post to ensure that all the necessary approvals and funding arrangements are in place before you begin your placement. All other criteria MUST submit their requests within the timeframe of LTFT application window. If insufficient notice is given, your request may be denied.

7. Supporting Documentation

In order to confirm your eligibility to train LTFT, you will be requested to provide additional evidence based on the category that you have applied under, please review the guidance in the table below. The application form will also prompt you for this information.

	Circumstance	Supporting documentation	Expiry Date of
	Disability/ill health	<p>A letter from your GP/ Occupational Health Consultant/ Medical Specialist which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of disability/health requirements for LTFT Training <p>It must be on letter-header paper or be from an official email address which can be validated. The letter should be dated within the past 3 months.</p>	Until end of training
	Responsibility for caring for children	<p>You will need to confirm the anticipated or actual date of birth of your youngest child on the online application form. (Please note you do not need to continue to re-apply upon each period of maternity leave, eligibility is automatic until your youngest child is 18 years</p>	Until youngest child is 18 years old
	Responsibility for caring for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent	<p>A letter from your GP or Medical Specialist involved in the care of your partner/relative/dependent which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of care anticipated that you will need to provide <p>It must be on letter-header paper or be from an official email address which can be validated, dated within the last three months.</p>	Until end of training
	All circumstances	<p>Complete the free text boxes on the online application form detailing the nature of your request. You can attach letters of support and job descriptions to the application form should you wish.</p>	Until end of training

Applications received without supporting evidence:

Please note, we are unable to proceed with LTFT applications without the supporting evidence requested.

8. Online Application Form

All LTFT applications are now managed through the PGDME Support Portal. Please ensure you only submit the application form once you have the requested evidence.

When completing the application form you will need to select if you are submitting a new application or notifying us of a change in your working pattern.

Submitting a new LTFT Application

If you are applying for the first time, you should submit the form with at least **16 weeks' notice (Child Care/Health/Disability/Caring Responsibility)** or within the LTFT Application Window (**Wellbeing/Welfare/Unique Opportunities/Religious Commitment/Non-medical Development/Training and Career Development**). You should ensure you have the required evidence to support your request to train LTFT.

Childcare Responsibilities

You will be asked to submit the date of birth of your youngest child/expected date of birth of your youngest child. The form will automatically give an expiry date in 18 years' time. For most trainees this will mean you can continue to train LTFT until your CCT date (plus grace period). You do not need to include a birth certificate with your application. Please note you do not need to re-apply upon each period of maternity leave you only need to re-apply to renew your eligibility under childcare if your first child is now over 18 years old.

Disabled or Health Reasons

You will be asked to submit a supporting statement from your GP or Occupational Medicine at your current workplace supporting your request to train LTFT.

Caring Responsibilities

You will be asked to submit a supporting statement from your GP or Occupational Medicine at your current workplace supporting your request to train LTFT.

9. Notification of Change in Status for LTFT Applications

Should you wish to notify us that you wish to increase or decrease the number of sessions you are working, you will need to complete an application form and select the option to inform us if you wish to notify us of a change in your working pattern. This application must be submitted during the OOP application window.

If you are working in a slot share and there are no gaps available at the Trust, you will need to wait until the next rotation date before you can return to full-time training. You should make your Training Programme Director/Scheme Director or Foundation School Manager aware as soon as possible of your intention to return to full-time training, so they can plan accordingly before rotations are confirmed. If you are working reduced sessions in a full-time post, if the department is happy for you to do so you can return to full-time with 4 weeks' notice.

10. Confirming LTFT Status

Once we receive and assess your application form you will receive an email response to confirm whether you are eligible.

11. Appeals Process

If your application for LTFT is turned down and you wish to appeal the decision the first step is submit an appeal via the Portal. This will be reviewed by your Head of School or Foundation School Director and if necessary, escalated to the Deputy Dean.

12. Submitting queries about training LTFT

Application Forms and FAQs are available at our website:
<https://lasepgmdesupport.hee.nhs.uk/support/home#2>

You can submit an enquiry by clicking on any of the FAQs