

**North West of England School of Foundation Training and Physician
Associates**

A guide to applying for Less Than Full Time (LTFT) Training in Foundation Training

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Introduction

All resident Foundation Doctors (FDs) in training including those on the Specialised Foundation Programme can apply for LTFT training.

This guide brings together process with policy, outlining the principles and expectations of applying and drawing upon the [Gold Guide \(10th edition\)](#), the NHS Employers document, [Doctors in flexible training - Principles underpinning the new arrangements for flexible training](#), and the [GMC LTFT Training position statement](#).

Eligibility for LTFT Training

All employees have a legal right to request flexible working – not just parents and carers. Therefore, all foundation doctors can apply with the only requirement being a well-founded individual reason.

All well-founded reasons will be considered, however support to progress the application may be dependent on the capacity of the programme and the effect the request may have on the training available to other doctors on the programme, and the ability of the department to maintain the service.

Overseas Sponsorship and LTFT Training

Those foundation doctors on a Skilled Worker visa must comply with the UK Visas and Immigration requirements for minimum salary. Full details of minimum salary requirements and LTFT sponsorship guidance can be found on [NHSE - Less than full time minimum salary requirements](#) or by contacting the National Overseas Sponsorship team on england.sponsorship@nhs.net

Applying for LTFT Training

For changes in working hours from 5th August 2026 foundation doctors may only apply to change to LTFT (any percentage) for a minimum of a training year, i.e. for the duration of the F1 or F2 year. Applications for requests for single placements (4/8 months) will only be considered by the school if there are exceptional circumstances related to ill health/disability or caring responsibilities, and this will be managed on a case-by-case basis. The approval of single placement requests will be expected to be the exception. All foundation doctors must contact their Foundation Programme Director (FPD) prior to applying to discuss their intent and to gain their approval to support their application.

Applications should be made to the NHS England North West School of Foundation Training at england.foundation.nw@nhs.net

The process and application form which accompanies this guide is unique to this region and to the training level of Foundation so applicants must ensure they complete the correct paperwork and complete all required sections. Incomplete or incorrectly completed applications will be returned and may risk falling outside of the 16-week period of notice for code of practice and delay the start in a change of hours.

The application form must include the FPDs signature and to provide assurances of the FPDs involvement the form must either be submitted by the foundation doctor, with evidence that discussion and approval has been given by the FPD (this maybe in the form of an email trail), or the application must come directly from the FPD themselves, or from a member of the postgraduate team, with a copy to the FPD.

Existing Foundation Doctors

Foundation doctors already in a training programme within the school will need to submit a completed application form along with any supporting documentation (as required), and signed FPD approval to the NHS England North West School of Foundation Training with at least 16 weeks' notice before the proposed start date for a change in working hours, or before the next rotation change. This is to allow notice to the employer of the proposed changes in line with code of practice.

New Foundation Doctors

New foundation doctors who will be starting their foundation training programme in the forthcoming August will not be able to comply with the 16 weeks' notice for code of practice due to the timelines of national recruitment. Applications for LTFT from the start of F1 training will therefore be considered as out of scope of code of practice.

New foundation doctors will need to seek the approval of their FPD and employing trust for their application and should do this within two weeks of receiving their match allocation to group/trust.

Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances apply to ill health and caring responsibilities where there is an unexpected change in a person's circumstances which may mean they need to adjust their working hours at short notice and with less than the required 16-week notice. To be considered under exceptional circumstances applicants must demonstrate that they have discussed their unexpected change with their FPD and where necessary should have evidence that they have consulted a medical practitioner or had an occupational health referral.

Exceptional circumstances will be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Processing and Approval of LTFT

The NHS England North West School of Foundation Training will assess the application for LTFT training and where necessary prioritise according to the provisions of the Equality Act relating to protected characteristics.

Approval of the LTFT request may be subject to the agreement of the trust employer and the programme capacity before the LTFT placement can commence. For example, where the demand for LTFT working exceeds the capacity of the placement to provide it. On occasion it may also be dependent on the criteria under which the foundation doctor has applied and whether the reason for requesting LTFT is applicable.

Correspondence will be sent to the foundation doctor and other stakeholders such as the FPD and/or postgraduate team from the employing trust to confirm the outcome of the LTFT application, in order that all parties are aware of the decision and can act accordingly in terms of rota planning. To comply with code of practice requirements, employers will require 16 weeks' notice of a change in status of working hours.

The NW School of Foundation Training will record the outcome of the application locally and on the Trainee Information System (TIS) record.
Employing trusts will be responsible for updating the doctors Horus e-portfolio rotations accordingly following approval so the WTE is accurately reflected.

Returning to 1 WTE

If a foundation doctor wishes to return to full time training, they must complete a new application using the relevant section(s) of the main application form. The same principles apply as above. Doctors must first discuss this with their FPD and obtain their consent before submitting the application to the school at england.foundation.nw@nhs.net. The same 16-week period of notice to comply with code of practice also applies and a return to full time would only be permissible after the minimum period of LTFT has been served, e.g. a change from LTFT F1 back to full time F2. This will take effect from the subsequent rotation changeover date.

Refusal of LTFT application

Where a request to work LTFT is rejected by the employing trust, the FPD or postgraduate faculty team will be required to justify the reason. Where a request to work LTFT is rejected by NHS England North West School of Foundation Training, the school will write to the foundation doctor to explain the reasons for the decision. In both cases, the reason should align to the business reasons set out in governments current legislation
<https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working/after-the-application>

If there is new information, it may be possible to review the application again and accept the request with modifications. This may include working a different WTE or a change to the proposed start date.

Progressing in a LTFT Placement

All foundation doctors, full-time or LTFT, need to meet the requirements for progression in training as set out in the relevant approved curriculum and will be assessed in accordance with the ARCP process. Where an extension to training is required, doctors on a Skilled Worker visa will be able to have their sponsorship extended. They must contact the National Overseas Sponsorship team (england.sponsorship@nhs.net) approximately 4 months before the expiry of their visa to request an extension.

Key points relating to foundation doctors training LTFT: -

- Foundation doctors will remain at the approved percentage of LTFT until such time that they make a subsequent application to change the percentage or an application to revert to full time.
- The minimum period that a foundation doctor can work LTFT is one training year, e.g. the duration of F1 or F2, with the exception of exceptional circumstances where there are unexpected changes. The LTFT will remain in place until the end of the foundation programme unless a further application is made to revert to full time.
- Doctors should have an ARCP during the annual summer ARCP period but may need an additional ARCP at a critical progression point in their training, e.g. when completing F1 and progressing to F2.
- LTFT doctors are expected to demonstrate the capabilities relevant to their fulfilment of Foundation Programme competences and curriculum.
- Any training extensions required after the award of an outcome 3 will be pro-rata.
- Day time working, on-call and out of hours duties will be undertaken on a pro-rata basis to that worked by full time doctors in the same grade and specialty.
- LTFT doctors may either complete each four-month rotation in line with the LTFT percentage, with the employing trust mobilising placement capacity and ensure any bespoke posts are funded appropriately, or they will rotate every four-months on the same basis as a full-time doctor. Rota planning will be the responsibility of the employing trust, and the foundation faculty will be required to assure the doctor receives a coherent programme of training that is educationally comparable with full time doctors.

Funding of LTFT

Foundation doctors working LTFT in full time training posts will not attract any additional funding. The funding is attached to the post and is subject to the funding type on the contract, e.g. tariff funded, NHSE non-tariff funded or trust funded. There will be no change to the contract. The expectation is that most LTFT doctors will work part time in a full-time post.

Salary adjustments for LTFT

Foundation doctors should note that any adjustments to their WTE will impact their salary and take-home pay, and they may wish to take this into consideration when making an application.

Completion of Foundation Training

Foundation doctors should note that any adjustments to their WTE will automatically recalculate a new F1 / F2 completion date. As an example, a person working at 80% in a programme which is 12 clinical training months full time, will take 15 calendar months to complete.

Appeal

The foundation doctor has the right to appeal any decision. They should follow the school's complaints appeal process <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/foundation-policies-and-processes>

Related Documents

- Gold Guide 10th Edition: A Reference Guide for Postgraduate Foundation and Specialty Training in the UK:
<https://www.copmed.org.uk/publications/gold-guide>
- GMC Position Statement: Conditions for Less Than Full Time Training updated December 2024: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-andcurricula/position-statements/less-than-full-time-training>
- NHS Employers – Doctors in flexible training:
<https://www.nhsemployers.org/system/files/2021-06/doctorstraining-flexible-principles.pdf>
- NHSE Less Than Full Time minimum salary requirements;
<https://medical.hee.nhs.uk/medical-training-recruitment/medical-specialty-training/overseas-applicants/overseas-sponsorship-guidance/less-than-full-time-ltft-minimum-salary-requirements>
- Gov.UK Contracts of employment and working hours – flexible working
<https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working/after-the-application>

APPENDIX A – NATIONAL DATA SET

The eligibility application process should include the following data set:

Personal Details

- Surname (used in training)
- First Name
- Other Surname (if different from surname used in training)
- GMC/GDC Number
- Email Address
- Phone Number
- Are you a Tier 2 / Skilled Worker Visa Holder?

LTFT Eligibility

- i. Resident Doctors with a disability or ill health
- ii. Resident Doctors with caring responsibilities
- iii. Welfare and wellbeing
- iv. Unique opportunities
- v. Religious commitment
- vi. Non-medical development
- vii. Flexibility for training and career development

Other Application Details

- Proposed LTFT Placement and Training Plan
- Level you will be working at
- Name of Training Programme
- LTFT Start date
- LTFT End date (if known)
- Proposed Percentage
- Applicant Declaration