

A Trainee's Guide to Less than Full Time Working

There are lots of reasons for deciding to train and work on a less than full time (LTFT) basis and you may choose to do so either at the start of your training, after a period of time out of training (for example, after maternity leave) or any point during your training for different reasons. This guide is designed to give you an overview of the process of applying for LTFT training. It should give you a starting point for the application process and tell you where to find more information if you require it.

What to expect as a LTFT trainee

LTFT training is a great opportunity to improve your work life balance, to focus on your life outside of medicine and to have more time to spend doing other things that you enjoy or want to do. LTFT training should offer you the same opportunities as your full-time colleagues. However, you should be aware that your training will take longer to complete, and you will need to be organised when planning your commitments along with your work life and teaching/training opportunities. Remember that if you choose to work 60%, for example, you will be paid approximately 60% of what your full-time colleagues earn.

What hours do LTFT trainees work?

Full time training equates to 100%. When you apply to train LTFT, you will be asked what percentage you wish to work (you cannot train at less than 50% except in very exceptional circumstances, which would be discussed on an individual basis). 70% is also only an option in some schools.

Percentage	Working Time Equivalent	Hours Worked (per week)
100%	1	40 to 48
80%	0.8	32 to 38.4
70%	0.7	28 to 33.6
60%	0.6	24 to 28.8
50%	0.5	20 to 24

The variability in your hours worked depends upon the contracted number of hours that your fulltime colleagues are working on each rota and on your individual work schedule. Total average weekly hours should not exceed 40 as a LTFT trainee.

How to apply

All trainees are eligible to apply for LTFT however you need to apply through a formal process and there are several people who need to be made aware. At present there are still significantly more full-time trainees across the region than LTFT trainees and therefore some of the onus for arranging your work pattern will fall on you as the trainee.

Steps in application:

You should give as much notice as possible that you are thinking of training LTFT. We know that sometimes situations change rapidly, but please try to give notice whenever you can. In the first instance you should speak to your TPD (list of TPD; s can be found [here](#)) and to your Educational Supervisor. Please also be aware that unless in very exceptional circumstances you need to give a notice period of at least 16 weeks. This remains the case if you are planning to return from maternity leave or other time out of training on a LTFT basis having previously been a full-time trainee. Do not expect to be able to return from maternity leave LTFT if you have not applied with the full notice period.

You need to complete the Health Education England paperwork as soon as possible. This can be found at: <https://www.nwpgmd.nhs.uk/content/less-full-time-training>

There is also a flowchart available which guides you through the LTFT application process.

As a starting point:

- Expect to work a percentage of each type of shift – for example a trainee who works 60% should work approximately 60% of the number of night shifts, weekends and standard day shifts that a full-time colleague would work. This is the case unless you have a health reasons not to work some shifts (such as long days or night shifts) in which case this will be incorporated into the design of your personalised work schedule.
- If you have to attend mandatory training or a study day on a non-working day, you should ensure that your study leave is approved in advance (usually minimum 6 weeks' notice). You will then be able to take time off in lieu for this, or to claim pay for the extra day worked.
- Your working days may not always be able to be same when moving between departments or hospitals. This is because educational opportunities and other pressures of work will vary in different jobs. Make sure that you get in contact with your new department as far in advance as you can. You will need to discuss working patterns and negotiate a plan with your clinical supervisor and the rota co-ordinator(s) for that job. This will be true when moving between hospital departments, as well as when moving to a new Hospital/GP Practice.
- In some specialities LTFT trainees “slot share” – that is there will be two LTFT trainees working in one rota slot; and you will be expected to cover all the requirements for that rota slot between you. It may be that you work a combined percentage of more than full time (i.e., / 60% + 60%) so will have some overlap, but that is not a problem. This is NOT the same “job share” where you would both work 50%.

Work schedules and rotas are complex. For more information see:

- www.nhsemployers.org – work scheduling templates and guidance
- The BMA also have some excellent information on work schedules and rota design

- The BMA and NHS employers have published “The Good Rostering Guide”
<https://www.nhsemployers.org/case-studies-and-resources/2018/05/good-rostering-guide> There is a section that gives good advice of LTFT

- The trust has Flexible Working Champion’s. Their job is to support all employees who work flexibly/asynchronously or less than full time. The Champions can be contacted as follows,

Aintree Site

Gurinder Tack - gurinder.tack@aintree.nhs.uk

Leanne Callaghan - leanne.callaghan@liverpoolft.nhs.uk

RLH/BGH Site

Julia Henderson - Julia.Henderson@liverpoolft.nhs.uk

Anna Stewart – anna.stewart@liverpoolft.nhs.uk

Annual Leave and Bank Holidays

Annual leave is calculated based on duration of NHS service:

- Less than 5 years = 27 days annual leave + 8 bank holidays (if you work full time)
- 5 years or more = 32 days annual leave + 8 bank holidays (if you work full time)

This is 5 calendar years NOT 5 full time equivalent working years

LTFT leave is calculated as per the following examples:

Working LTFT 60% with less than 5 years in the NHS = $(27 + 8) \times 0.6 = 21$ days TOTAL (this includes bank holiday allowance) • Working LTFT 80% with more than 5 years in the NHS = $(32 + 8) \times 0.8 = 32$ days TOTAL (this includes bank holiday allowance)

Extra work and locum shifts

Extra work and locum shifts are allowed as an LTFT trainee. However, there are a few things to be aware of:

- All work undertaken should comply with the UK Working Time Regulations (WTR). If you choose to opt-out of WTR, then the rest requirements and requirements on hours, rest and locum work will still apply.
- Additional work must not be undertaken during periods of absence for study or sickness.
- You may choose to do extra work or locums, but should never be pressurised into doing so against your wishes.
- If you are LTFT for health reasons, then it may not be appropriate to undertake extra work and you should consider this carefully prior to agreeing to do so.

FAQ's

How much notice do I need to provide if I want to return to full time training?

If you are working in a slot share and there are no gaps available at the trust, you will need to wait till the next rotation date before you can return to full time training. You should make your training programme director 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, as long as the department is happy for you to do so you can return to full time with 4 weeks' notice.

Can LTFT trainees insist on doing on-call?

In general, a LTFT training programme should be equivalent, pro rata, to a full-time programme, and this applies to on-call. Thus, if you are working 60% of full-time, you can be asked to do 60% of the on-call.

Would I be entitled to TOIL if my zero day falls on a non-working day?

- Zero days are the absence of a shift rather than a type of shift; hence they do not qualify for TOIL if a zero day falls on a NWD.
- Zero days are built into rotas to ensure contractual hours, rest and safety limits are met.
- If you are doing the correct pro rata number of each shift type +/- average weekly hours this will result in the correct number of zero days.
- Extra zero days may need to be inbuilt into a bespoke LTFT rota if you are working over your % allocation or average weekly hours when your rota schedule is finalised.

Is it possible to be exempted from on-call?

The rules on this apply equally to full and part-timers, and vary between Colleges. European legislation allows exemption from on-call if breast-feeding, and you should be able to obtain exemption, or other modification of working hours, if you are pregnant. If there are good reasons for not doing on-call, it may be possible to obtain educational approval for emergency work that is done within the working hours of 8.00 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. Most Colleges will treat applications for exemption on an individual basis, and you should contact them directly.

How much study leave do I get?

This is a contractual obligation with your employer and you should refer to the Current Terms and Conditions of Service. This currently states that "Where a doctor working less than full time is required to undertake a specific training course required by the curriculum, which exceeds the pro rata entitlement to study and/or professional leave, the employer will make arrangements for

additional study leave to be taken, provided that this can be done while ensuring safe delivery of services.” The current limit for full-time trainees is 30 days per annum (15 days for F1 doctors).

You should be able to access funding in the same way as a full time trainee, providing the study leave event appears on the approved study leave lists.

Will my training be extended because I am working LTFT?

Yes, your training will be extended as a result of you training LTFT. The table below is a rough guide for how long your training will be extended by based on the percentage you are working at.

Whole Time Equivalent (WTE)

%	Sessions	6 Months	12 Months	18 Months	24 Months	30 Months	36 Months
50%	5 sessions a week = 6 months per year	12	24	36	48	30	72
60%	6 sessions a week = 7.2 months in each year	10	20	30	40	50	60
70%	7 sessions a week = 8.4 months in a year	8.5	17	25.5	34	42.5	51
80%	8 sessions a week = 9.6 months in each year	7.5	15	22.5	30	37.5	45

What will my pay be?

Pay is determined by the % of working against the WTE rota and therefore has multiple variations which would be difficult to set out here. The BMA has produced a guide explaining pay and the link can be found [here](#).

Useful Links

GMC <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/position-statements/less-than-full-time-training>

NHS Employers <https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/pay-and-conditions-circulars-medical-and-dental-staff>

BMA <https://www.bma.org.uk/pay-and-contracts/pay/ltft/less-than-full-time-trainees-pay-explained>

NHS England have also recorded some useful video guides which can be found at the following links,

LTFT Training – [Applying](#)

LTFT Training – [Pay](#)



Liverpool University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust