

Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Protocols

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## Equality Statement

Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust (SCHT) aims to design and implement policy documents that meet the diverse needs of our service, population, and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

It considers the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and promotes equal opportunities for all.

This document has been assessed to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment on the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex (gender), gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy, and maternity.

In carrying out its functions, SCHT must have due regard to the different needs of different protected equality groups in their area.

This applies to all the activities for which SCHT is responsible, including policy development and review.

## Due Regard

SCHT must have due regard to the aims of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality when policies are being developed. Information about due regard can be found in the Quality and Equality Impact Assessment Policy and on the Equality page on staff zone and/or by contacting the SCHT Equalities lead.

## Definitions that apply to this Policy

<b>Study leave</b>	This is a pre identified <b>time away from the work</b> area for the purposes of gaining new knowledge and skills. This includes informal learning, such as shadowing other services with the purpose of gaining new knowledge or time away from work to research evidence to support new/current practices.  It may or may not include the approval of funding for a course or approval of a course application.
<b>Mandatory Training</b>	Compulsory training identified by the organisation taking into consideration legal requirements, healthcare standards and local priorities.
<b>Couse Fees</b>	Refer to the explicit cost of the training and not the additional costs that can be incurred such as backfill, mileage or resources such as books

## 1. Purpose of the Policy

1.1. The aim of this policy is to set out the processes for identification of appropriate learning which will be supported by the Trust, the processes all staff must follow before and after receiving approved study, and the responsibilities of staff during and following a period of learning/study.

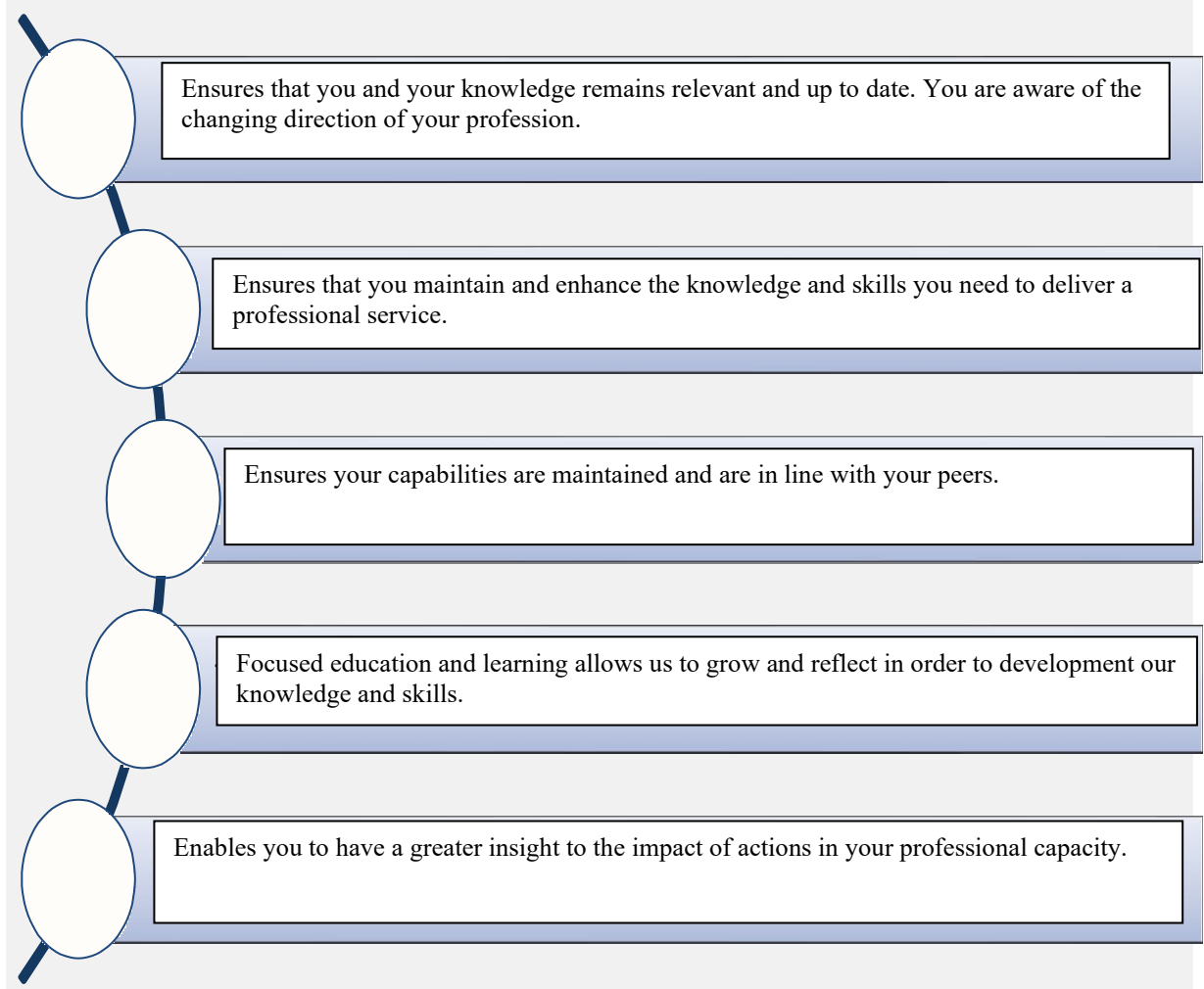
1.2 Other policies to consider when planning and approving study leave:

- Maintaining high standards of Performance Policy – [Approved Documents Policy \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Mandatory Training Policy and Procedures - [10461.pdf \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Personal Development review and Pay Progression Policy - [Managers Guide to Appraisal at Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Trust Management of and Accreditation for Medical Staff Policy - [12435.pdf \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Professional Registration Policy - [Approved Documents Policy \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)
- Managing Attendance at work Policy - [Short Term Absence \(shropcom.nhs.uk\)](#)

## 2. Introduction

2.1. SCHAT recognises that the continuing development, education, and training of staff is essential if it is to achieve its vision and business objectives.

2.2 Your continuing self-development, education, and training:



2.3 Through the application of this policy a consistent approach to study leave and identification of development opportunities will occur, which will ensure that all staff are supported appropriately, and our services continue to improve because of their new knowledge and understanding.

2.4 Where leave from work for study has not followed this policy it will not be honoured, and individuals could be reviewed in line with the Maintaining high standards of Performance Policy.

2.5 Whilst the Trust recognises the value of continuing development, education and training it is important that any planned time away from practice is appropriate and in line with trust requirements.

### **3. Summary of Study Leave Principles**

1. All study must be discussed, identified, and approved as part of the staff members Appraisal or manager supervision/contact meetings.
2. Learning objectives must benefit the staff members practice and work service.
3. Prior to undertaking study leave a plan should be in place about how the staff member will share their new knowledge.
4. Training must be included on the Annual Training Needs Analysis (TNA) as part of the yearly process or as soon as it has been identified.
5. Completion of the study leave process must be concluded before the study leave is required.

#### **Approval can only be granted if the staff member:**

- Has a completed Appraisal with the last year recorded on ESR.
- Has no outstanding or incomplete learning or training objectives from previous study leave
- Has completed all Trust Mandatory Training
- Has no performance concerns unless the training is related to improving performance.

### **4. Learning opportunities**

4.1 Learning can be formal or informal such as through organised courses or objective led self-directed study. Below are some suggestions of where informal learning can occur and where the implementation of this policy is required.

- Informal learning:
  - Work shadowing – time out of normal work area observing other practices and can be internal or in external organisations
  - Workshops, conferences, and forums – out of the work area to share good practices and learn from peers/colleagues
  - Self-directed – time out of work which has clear learning objectives e.g., for research
- Formal learning:
  - University courses

- Distance learning programmes
- E-learning

4.2 It is expected that a study leave application form (Appendix 1) will be submitted for both informal and formal learning that require time out of work/practice to undertake with the exception of mandatory training.

## 5. Categories of Study

### Mandatory / Statutory

is on the Mandatory Training Register and is approved and planned by Trust.

Booked and recorded on ESR.

**100% study leave pre-approved, and Trust funded.**

### Role Essential/Specific

is required in order that staff can fulfil the requirements of their job role and is pre-approved and planned by Heads of Division and Associate Director for Education

**100% study leave pre-approved and Trust funded**

### Desirable

is a development that will enhance the performance of staff within their current role or support an employee's career or professional development?

study leave form required, recorded in personal file.

**up to 100% of study leave inc. any funding to be negotiated with line manager.**

### Developmental

is not directly linked specifically to an individual's career/job role but may benefit the organisation longer term

Study leave form required, recorded in personal file and Education Team Channel

**Up to 100% of study leave inc. any funding, not guaranteed and must be approved by Service Lead**

## 6. Duties and Responsibilities

The Trust Board has a legal responsibility for Trust policies and for ensuring that they are carried out effectively.

Trust Board Sub-committees have the responsibility for ratifying policies and protocols.

### 6.1 Directors and Divisional Heads of Service are responsible for:

- Dissemination of this policy throughout their area of responsibility.
- To share the Trust and Services vision and workforce plan to help line managers make decisions about study leave.
- Provide appropriate support for the development of staff within their service.
- Ensuring staff complete all mandatory training requirements and annual Appraisal
- Approving Role Essential training requirements for service in conjunction with subject matter experts as appropriate.

## **6.2 Managers and Team leaders are responsible for:**

1. Approving study leave based on principles outlined in policy. If refusing study leave a clear explanation must be given to the individual and an indication of whether it could be approved in the future e.g., Mandatory training not in date and will approve once completed.
2. Ensuring equality of access to staff development and training opportunities.
3. Managing performance and identifying individual training needs through Appraisal and regular one-to-ones with their team members and feeding these into TNA data.
4. Compliance with Mandatory requirements and role essential/specific training where required.
5. Ensuring/ creating opportunities for new skills and knowledge to be applied in the workplace.
6. Creating learning opportunities for individuals whenever possible (this includes the whole range of staff development opportunities, for example coaching and mentoring as well as more formal training).
7. Ensuring that outcomes of study are disseminated to other staff /team members where appropriate, and feedback/learning is linked back into practice.
8. Ensuring that individual needs such as dyslexia, disability and sensory impairment are identified, and appropriate learning support needs met.
9. Ensuring study leave applications are considered in the context of service delivery, staff provision including backfill (if required) and budgetary realities.
10. Ensuring study leave application form is completed fully in partnership with applicant and financial and leave requirements are appropriately authorised prior to approval of study leave and submission of form.
11. Managing sickness and absence during any study leave in accordance with Trust policy.
12. Ensuring all learning and development documentation is recorded in staffs personal file including the financial agreement.
13. Where a staff member undertakes an external course that is additional to the need of their Job role, they may be required to sign an agreement that if they leave the organisation within a specified period the cost of the course will be recouped. section (12)

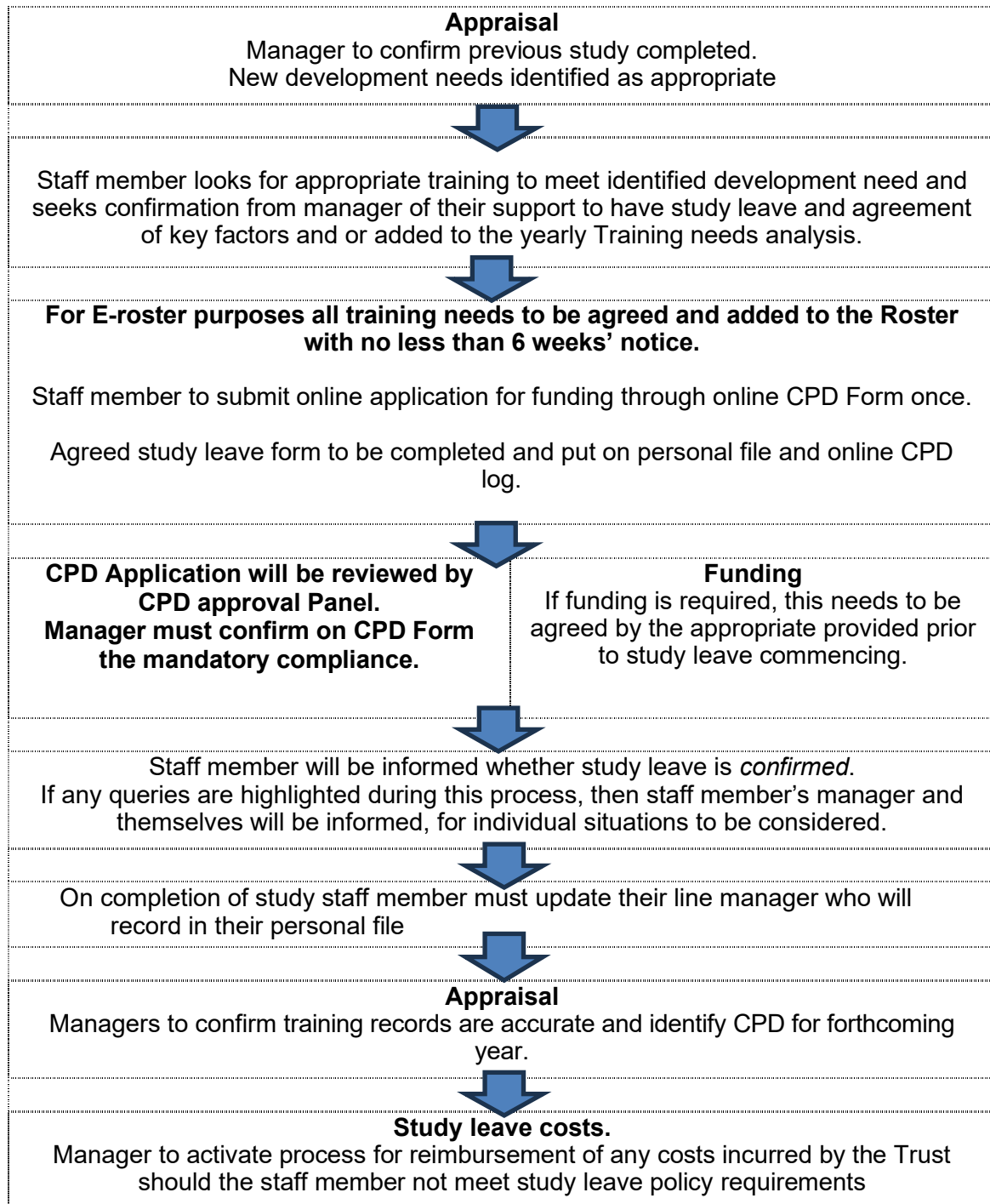
## **6.3 Responsibility of Staff**

1. Maintaining compliance with mandatory and role essential training requirements.
2. Identifying own learning and training requirements in order to carry out their role and duties effectively and ensure they are discussed and recorded as part of their appraisal.
3. Requesting and sourcing funding and study leave in a timely manner, using the correct Trust processes (CPD online application).



4. Working collaboratively with their managers and colleagues in the identification and meeting of their learning needs.
5. Evaluating what they have learnt, providing appropriate feedback, and sharing their learning with colleagues.
6. Individuals should highlight learning needs such as dyslexia, disability, and sensory impairment when they apply for study leave to ensure additional support requirements are agreed.
7. Be responsible for their own application to education providers and ensuring they are appropriately booked on courses and are aware of pre-course requirements.
8. Ensure they attend all study and complete assessments as required by education provider.
9. If unable to attend training prior to its start staff are responsible for informing their line manager, the education provider and updating trust records.
10. To report sickness and absence which occurs on any approved study leave in accordance with Trust policy and services processes.
11. Reporting completion, interruption, failure, and withdrawal from any internal/external training onto ESR.
12. Have considered different funding options such as charitable funds, service development funds, self-funding and charities and sought agreement from most appropriate source.
13. To be responsible for ensuring that any funding requirements are in place prior to attending the course/programme.
14. Complete financial agreement prior to undertaking study leave.
15. On completion of course knowledge and or skills will be shared with the wider Trust and or professional peer group as deemed appropriate by the team leader.

## 7. Flowchart



## **8. Study Leave outside of working hours**

- 8.1. With prior agreement from their manager, if a part-time employee has study leave outside of their normal working hours, time off in lieu will be given up to a maximum of their normal daily contracted hours.
- 8.2. With prior agreement from their manager, where full time employees are required to attend a study event that falls on a day they would not normally work, including weekends, time off in lieu will be given up to a maximum of their normal daily contracted hours.
- 8.3. Where staff who normally work, nights are required to attend training activity during the day and consequently miss a night shift, they will receive the same enhancements they would have received for night work.
- 8.4. If it is a requirement for part time employees to attend a full-time event, or work above their normal contracted weekly hours, a discussion must be facilitated in conjunction with Human Resources to determine whether time off in lieu should be granted, equivalent to additional hours worked. The objective of this is to ensure no detriment to part time workers.
- 8.5. If further leave is required, an individual has the option to take annual leave, or apply for unpaid leave as appropriate.

## **9. Online Learning (e-learning)**

- 9.1 Appropriate study leave must be given to staff undertaking e-learning or distance learning programmes. This should normally be the same as for equivalent face to face based programmes if time is not specifically stated for the programme. Staff must negotiate with their line manager prior to commencing the programme.

## **10. Study leave costs and reimbursement**

- 10.1 Apart from in exceptional circumstances e.g., redundancy, if applicants leave the Trust's employment during the course of their study, they may be required to repay all, or part of the costs incurred by the Trust e.g., course fees and study time away from work area. This applies to extended study programmes, and it is not intended to recover fees for one/two-day study programmes. Staff should contact their line manager or HR adviser for further clarification.
- 10.2 Payment of any examination fees should be included in the initial Study Leave request.
- 10.3 Where there is an additional cost to re-take, due to a failure of the assessment of a programme, then this will be incurred by the member of staff/student unless otherwise agreed by their line manager. If further study leave and/or funding is agreed, then a new study leave application is required.
- 10.4 Where staff are required to pay a percentage of the training costs, this is to be arranged directly with the training provider.

10.5 Failure to attend any supported learning and development activity, without discussion/notification and agreement from line manager may result in action being taken under the disciplinary policy.

10.6 Managers must ensure the Financial Agreement is completed by the applicant and a copy retained in their personal file.

10.7 Notice to payroll of the amount to reclaim must be given on the termination notification form.

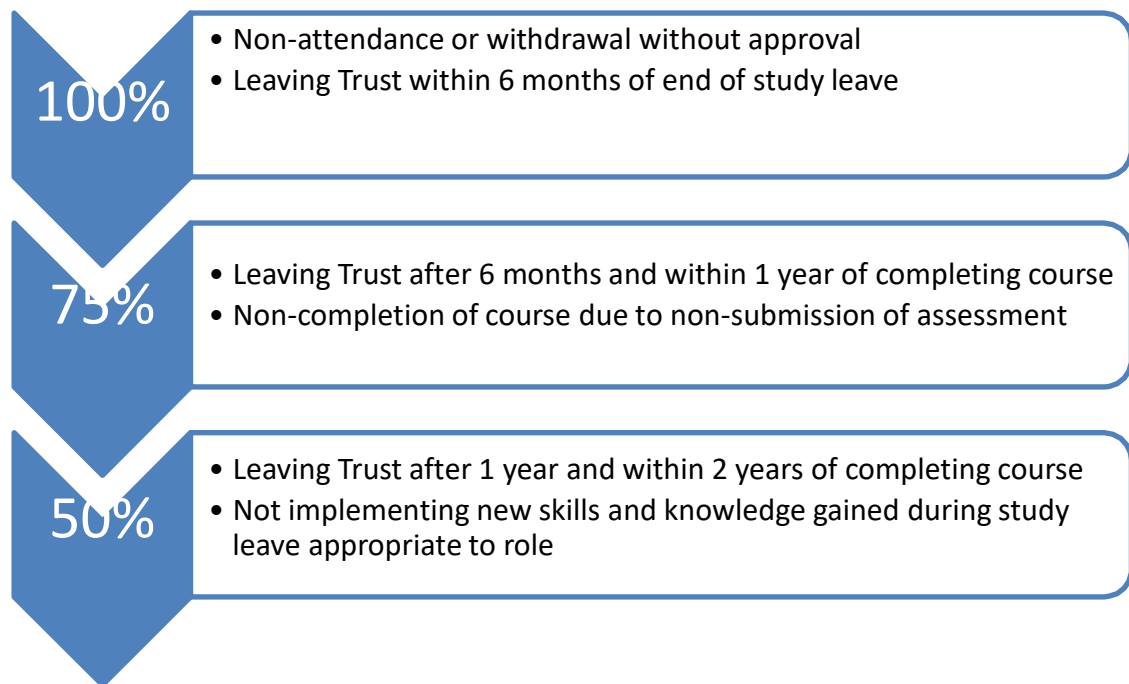
10.8 In all circumstances individual cases will be considered.

## **12. Repayment of study leave costs**

12.1 The Trust may reclaim funding for external courses from individuals through payroll or after staff have left the organisation if an agreement was signed prior to the course commencing and the agreement was breached.

12.2 Staff who do not complete the financial declaration form could have any funding requested refused.

12.3 Amount of repayment due to the Trust is dependent on the rational below and the following percentages have been agreed. There is no lower or upper limit of funding that can be reclaimed by the Trust. However, each case will be considered individually.



### 13. Overseas Study Leave

All applications for overseas training/study leave will be considered in accordance with the normal procedure and process as above. However, the Divisional Director /Enabling Service will be required to approve the study leave and the costs. The Chief Executive must approve overseas study leave requests for Directors and the Chairman must approve overseas study leave for the Chief Executive and Non-Executive Directors.

### 14. Travel Expenses:

- When the study leave will incur travel or subsistence expenses, then the level of reimbursement to be claimed must be approved by the line manager prior to the approval of the study leave application.
- See NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook (Annex 12 and 14) for details of travel and subsistence. [NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook | NHS Employers](#)
- Staff should indicate the mileage on their study leave forms and get approval prior to course starting.

### 15. Appeals Procedure

15.1Funding for training and development is ultimately restricted by the finances available. Study leave/Time off with/without pay is subject to the demands of the service.

15.2Failure to obtain funding/approval for time off can be discussed with the line manager in the first instance, who will discuss the outcome with the designated budget

holder as necessary, in order to seek clarification as to the decision made.

15.3 It is hoped that any disagreements will be resolved as quickly as possible. Where individuals are unhappy with the outcome, they do have the right to formalise their complaint.

## 16. Training Needs

There is no training requirement identified within this policy.

## 17. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

Ref	Minimum Requirements	Evidence for Self-assessment	Process for Monitoring	Responsible Individual / Group	Frequency of monitoring
7.3	Completion of online study leave form	Application form	ESR reports and Staff personal files	Individual managers	6 monthly

## 18. Standards/Performance Indicators

**Staffing** – Qualified, competent, and experienced staff must be in place, ensuring that fundamental standards are met. Staff must receive the support, training, and supervision that they need to help them do their job (CQC)

TARGET/STANDARDS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Staff to submit study leave for all non-mandatory training	Training needs analysis
Staff to have opportunities to development and education	85% of staff to have completed some form of education and training each year.

## 19. References and Bibliography

Policy was drafted with reference to the following:

University Hospitals of Leicester: Study Leave for Non-Medical Staff – Policy and Procedure

Shropshire Community NHS Health Trust. Learning development and study leave policy.

## Study Leave Application Form

Please note that signing this form constitutes your agreement to arrangements for fees, travel, accommodation and time away. Completed forms should be signed by your line manager and kept in your personal file. Submission via e-form link [Study Leave application form .docx](#)

<b>Your Details</b>	
<b>Employee Number</b>	
<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Division</b>	
<b>Department</b>	
<b>Band</b>	

Do you have a known date of leaving the trust? YES/NO

If so what is the expected date of leaving?

### Your Training Event

Title of Training Event  
& Venue

Provider Name

Location

Training/Conference Delegate YES/NO?

University Application YES/NO?

Date from:

Date to:

Days/time away:

Cost of Training Event      £

Cost of Travel      £

Cost of Accommodation      £

Total Costs      £

Alternative Funding Source			
<b>Sponsorship YES/NO</b>		<b>Cost Centre Code</b>	
Sponsorship Body			
Authorised Signatory Name			
<b>Research YES/NO</b>		<b>Cost Centre Code</b>	
Authorised Signatory Name			
<b>Departmental YES/NO</b>		<b>Cost Centre Code</b>	
Authorised Signatory Name			
<b>CPD Funded YES/NO</b>		Please include details below.	
<b>Other Funding Source</b>			
<b>Personal Contribution</b>		£	

Mandatory Training Declaration	
All mandatory training must be up to date at the date study leave funding is requested or your request will be denied. By signing this section, you are confirming that all mandatory training is complete and up to date.	
<b>Line Managers Signature</b>	

Authorisation - to be completed by Line Manager		Please Tick
<b>Level 1 - Critical To Role:</b> 100% of costs are met through the Trust.		
<b>Level 2 - Significant To Role:</b> 50% of costs are met by the Trust and the rest by the individual.		
<b>Level 3 - Minimal Relevance:</b> The individual is granted time away from the Trust only.		
<b>Application Declined</b>		
<b>Additional Comments:</b>		
<b>HEE Funded Courses:</b> Give Details		
<b>Line Manager Signature</b>		
<b>Name/Designation</b>		

<b>Applicant's Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
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