



Doncaster and Bassetlaw
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

DBTH Study Leave Policy

(All roles excluding medical colleagues)

This procedural document supersedes the section previously included in: CORP/EMP 61 v.1 – Leave Policy (including Annual, Study, Professional and Duty for all staff, including medical staff)



Did you print this document yourself?

The Trust discourages the retention of hard copies of policies and can only guarantee that the policy on the Trust website is the most up-to-date version. **If, for exceptional reasons, you need to print a policy off, it is only valid for 24 hours.**

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Amendment Form

Please record brief details of the changes made alongside the next version number. If the procedural document has been reviewed **without change**, this information will still need to be recorded although the version number will remain the same.

Version	Date Issued	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
Version 1	June 2023	New policy, please read throughout. This policy details the DBTH training framework, study leave principles and access to funding arrangements for all staff except for medical staff. There is a separate policy for medical staff.	L Caygill
Version 2	June 2023	Title change	L Caygill
Version 3	August 2025	- Change throughout from 'staff' to 'colleague/s' - Changes to introduction to align with DBTH current vision. - Title changes and updated links to national guidance documents. - Study leave and funding application form updated with electronic link. - Time allocation for study revised to align with SY ICB partner policies.	L Caygill
Version 3.1	November 2025	Amendment to section 4.3	L Caygill
Version 3.2	July 2026	Amendment to section 3.8 and 3.9	L Caygill

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1 INTRODUCTION

Our ambition is to improve the working lives and experiences of all our colleagues and to embed an inclusive and open organisational culture. As such, ensuring we have a workforce with the right skills and tools to do their job is fundamental to us achieving our organisational strategy, specifically being a leading centre for research and education “[Healthier together – Delivering exceptional care for all](#)”. We need a fair, transparent and consistent approach to study leave, allowing equal access to opportunities to support all colleagues to reach their potential ([DBTH People Strategy](#)).

2 PURPOSE

This policy describes resources available to all of our colleagues (except medical colleagues) subject to approval, both in terms of funding and time provision, and is linked to our appraisal process. [For Consultant and SAS colleagues, please use this guidance](#). For Post Graduate Doctors in Training please continue to follow the NHSE doctors study leave guidance ([view link here](#)). A learner on placement with us from a Higher Education Institute (HEI) or Further Education Institute (FEI) should continue to follow the appropriate HEI/FEI guidance. It should also be noted that any learner on a work experience placement with us should follow the work experience framework which can be viewed [here](#).

3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Individual duties & responsibilities are detailed below.

3.1 Chief People Officer (CPO)

As the executive lead, the CPO has the responsibility for ensuring that the organisation supports study leave and funding and that there is a fair, consistent and transparent funding application processes with clear procedures.

3.2 Director of Education and Research

Overall responsibility for the commissioning, monitoring, and reporting of the effective use and allocation of education resources to meet the organisational need, and in line local and regional policy detailed within the national education contract.

3.3 Deputy Director of Education/ Heads of Education

Responsible for the operational oversight and commissioning of funded courses, cross-referenced to the Trust’s Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) and individual/bespoke commissioning requirements.

3.4 Business Manager Education & Research

Responsible for the procurement, management and reporting of the financial resources and spending against an agreed education budget.

3.5 Widening Participation Lead (Head of Education)

Responsible for approving requests for apprenticeships and any wider funding available for the unregistered workforce. This includes oversight and governance of study leave for apprenticeships to support compliance with the Education Standards Funding Agency (ESFA) Apprenticeship Funding Rules (2025) [view here](#).

3.6 Education Leads

Responsible for:

- liaising with divisions and directorates/departments senior team to identify and record all learning requirements in a Learning Needs Analysis (LNA)
- assisting in the prioritisation, support and allocation of time and funding to support study
- supporting and recording approved study leave so that it is open to scrutiny and can be monitored for compliance and equality purposes
- supporting learners on programmes of study and escalating to the division and directorates/department senior team where there are areas of concern
- support the learning gained to be shared with others and embedded in practice

3.7 Divisional/Department Senior Team

Responsible for:

- oversight of Directorate LNAs to meet divisional, operational, and strategic objectives
- establishing fair, consistent and transparent ways of applying this policy to all our colleagues
- Applying a fair, consistent & transparent allocation of any divisional/departmental training budget
- supporting managers with the prioritisation and release of colleagues within their teams
- supporting individuals with their learning, whilst working in collaboration with Education Leads to agree action plans for individual people on learning programmes

3.8 Managers

Responsible for:

- ensuring that colleagues are compliant with individual SET requirements (90% or has future enrolments within 6 months of the application if required). This can be checked via the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) compliance portlet (topics under SET have the prefix CSTF except for level 4 resuscitation, which is identified separately).
- undertaking annual appraisals to identify and agree learning requirements (aligned to the DBTH Training framework) and work in collaboration with the named Education Lead and senior management team to agree the LNA to meet divisional, operational, and strategic objectives
- supporting the study leave requirement where appropriate including e-roster management and pre-agreement of any additional educational activity outside of normal process (see 4.2)

- completing the relevant sections of the [study leave and funding applications](#) ensuring adequate service provision cover has been provided as necessary e.g. backfill
- monitoring and reporting learner non-attendance and progress and where appropriate escalate to the Education Lead
- following up on an individual's learning to ensure that learning is embedded in future practice and evaluating the value of the course/training being undertaken

3.9 Applicants/ Individuals on a learning programme

Responsible for:

- evidencing their SET compliance (90% or has future enrolments within 6 months of the application if required). This can be checked via the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) compliance portlet (topics under SET have the prefix CSTF except for level 4 resuscitation, which is identified separately).
- fully participating in the annual appraisal process to identify development needs including where study leave, and funding may be required which aligns with divisional, operational, and strategic objectives
- accurate completion of all [study leave and funding applications](#)
- payment to the course provider of any balance of fees where courses are part-funded
- notifying all relevant personnel of impending study leave absence at least 6 weeks before as per e-roster rules (where applicable)
- ensuring that they attend all study that they have committed to unless there are exceptional circumstances
- fully participating in the learning opportunity whilst demonstrating trust values and behaviours for both internal and external study
- notifying line manager and the course provider if they are unable to attend course/activity in advance of the study day wherever possible or as soon as reasonably practicable (including late attendance)
- notifying their manager and Education Lead of examination results and course evaluation
- notifying their manager and Education Lead if they require any additional support
- maintaining their learning record and that all evidence of learning is up to date
- providing feedback on the course and where appropriate share learning as an educator to develop as an individual and for the benefit of our patients & people

4 APPLICATION PROCESS

Through a fair, consistent and transparent application of this policy, equality of access to opportunities for the development of our colleagues is applied irrespective of the number of hours worked e.g., part-time employees should receive the same entitlements on a pro-rata basis as full-time colleagues. Creating an inclusive culture where everyone can thrive, whatever their background.

4.1 Eligibility to access study leave & funding

All applications must have been identified through the appraisal process, or be employer led linking to service development or service redesign. This should be identified in the department/divisional Learning Needs Analysis.

4.2 Time off for study

This must be agreed within the application process and be approved by the ward/department manager. All leave should be supported in a fair, consistent & transparent manner. Where an educational activity requires attendance, time will be discussed and agreed with the individual applying and their line manager. The amount of time supported will vary and will be recorded on the [study leave & funding agreement form](#). It should be noted that for taught modules (specifically over an academic year), time will only be supported during semester times and will be stopped over annual leave and during academic holidays unless this is a requirement of the course (where it will need documenting on the study leave application). Guidance for when to complete a study leave application is outlined in Appendix 1, and a Study Leave Time Allocation calculator is detailed in Appendix 2.

Guidance

For all daily learning events, including conferences study leave will be aligned to the 'normal' working day for the individual attending.

For any eLearning or distance learning educational activity, this should be undertaken during contractual employment hours but can be flexible to meet service and individual need. This should be detailed in the application process and approved by the line manager.

It should also be noted that the time supported (for the duration of the educational programme) will be reflective of the individual's working pattern i.e., may be reduced according to whole-time equivalence depending on the activity undertaken (See Appendix 2).

If the training requires the individual to commute, the time to do this will be discussed and agreed as part of the leave request. It should be noted that study leave will be aligned to the 'normal' working day for the individual attending.

Here is an outline of different methods of delivery that are being used:

Face to face learning – learning that takes place in a classroom at a specified time and place

Virtual learning – learning that takes place virtually (Zoom/Microsoft Teams/other online platforms) at a specified time

E-learning – learning that takes place using an online platform but can be done at anytime

4.3 Training Framework:

All training topics are determined at either a national, local, or organisation level; therefore, understanding the governance behind the topics we are expecting our people to complete and the order in which these should be classified is essential to avoid confusion. A training framework has been developed and agreed for use within DBTH and can be found [here](#).

5 FUNDING PROCESS & AVAILABILITY

DBTH has identified funding for study leave. This could be from a variety of routes including local and national funding along with bespoke funding opportunities aligned to workforce priorities. This next section describes the different funding streams. All applications, regardless of the funding source, should be considered using the guidance identified within the scope of this policy. All requested costs MUST be agreed and signed off before commencement of training. Any study that extends over one financial year (usually HEI academic programmes) will only be approved for one financial year at a time and funding cannot be guaranteed for subsequent years of study.

[A study leave & funding application form](#) must be completed for role development study including internally delivered courses/study). It is essential that the time agreed to support the application is included in the study leave and funding application and signed by the appropriate manager prior to study commencing. Applicants will be required to apply each financial year.

5.1 National/ Regional Funding:

Each year DBTH receives national funding for the Nursing, Midwifery & Allied Health professions to support workforce transformation and professional development through education and training to meet our educational contract requirements. This is to enable colleagues to apply for a wide range of professional development education. To access this funding, the training requirements should be identified at the individual's annual appraisal and be included in the divisional/departmental LNA to support prioritisation and funding allocation.

If a colleague is supported to access education provision via a funding route the individual will also need to complete the appropriate HEI (University) application form (additional to the DBTH study leave application form) and can seek advice via their nominated Education Lead.

It should also be noted that for those colleagues who are supported to apply to undertake the Non-Medical Prescribing (NMP) course, the applications must be supported by the NMP divisional lead in addition. Please refer to [PAT/MM 11 Non-Medical Prescribing Policy](#) for further guidance.

5.2 Growth and Skills Levy (formerly Apprenticeship levy):

DBTH has access to a digital financial account to support the funding of apprenticeship programmes. This is managed through the Vocational Education Team. Apprenticeships are suitable for both new

and existing colleagues with their development. Any queries should be directed to the Vocational Education Team dbth.apprentices@nhs.net

- Apprenticeship course fees delivered via an apprenticeship standard will be funded via the Apprenticeship Levy for new and existing colleagues. The apprenticeship levy cannot be used to fund salary or backfill costs. Levy funding can only be used for costs included in the funding cap, this may not include professional membership costs, academic qualifications, exam resits – all costs covered via the levy will be confirmed prior to the start of the apprenticeship by the Education Lead (Widening Participation)/Head of Education (Widening Participation) as per contractual and ESFA agreements (2025).
- Any colleagues completing an apprenticeship are required to have 6 hours as a minimum of their working hours per week for off –the- job training (OTJT) -this may be higher for some apprenticeships. The 6 hours OTJT training is based on a minimum of 30 hours contracted employment per week pro rata – anything less would be subject to an individual calculation undertaken by the provider who will confirm in advance of the start date.
- An evidence log detailing this would be required as part of completion of the training course.
- Apprenticeships can be undertaken by anyone aged 16 and over with the approval of their line manager. Additional approval from the Education Lead (Widening Participation) must also be obtained before applying for a study place – please see Appendix 4 in the [Apprenticeship Framework](#).

5.3 DBTH local training budgets:

Divisions and corporate directorates may have local training budgets for which they are responsible for managing. These budgets are available to support training and education and will be prioritised against role specific and role development provision. Funding attendance at a conference for example could be considered using these funds.

All requests for study leave/funding should be made by completing the [DBTH study leave and funding application form](#) alongside any specific conference, course specific application forms and/ or Academic partner application forms. Only study leave that is approved via the DBTH study application process will be supported. Most training which is to be funded in this way will need to be purchased through the Trust Procurement Department, following normal procedures.

There may be occasions where payment is made from local training budgets which can then be reimbursed from the funding lead later. This is on a case-by-case basis and will be pre agreed with the funding lead.

5.4 Charitable/ Trust funds:

Divisions and corporate directorates are responsible for managing their own charitable and local trust funds for study leave (including course fees, expenses and any subsistence). Divisions and corporate directorates are responsible for seeking alternative sources of funding to support education. Further

guidance can be found in the Charitable Funds Policy which includes central charitable funding options for study application see [CORP/FIN 8 Charitable Funds Policy](#).

5.5 Reclaiming payment:

There may be occasions where staff pay for a course and then reclaim the cost from the agreed funding lead (see section 10). In this circumstance, this must be pre-agreed before payment is made and documented on the study leave application.

6 ALLOWANCES & EXPENSES

Travel expenses will only be considered for single/time-limited periods of study and will NOT be supported for annual academic courses. Travel expenses for the educational activity should be discussed and agreed locally (and reflected in the study leave application). Travel expenses of any kind can ONLY be funded and authorised by local budget holders.

Other personal expenditure, such as accommodation, must be discussed and agreed with the individual applying and their line manager. The amount of support (funding and time) agreed will be recorded on the study leave form and will vary depending on the circumstances. Personal expenditure should be reclaimed via e-expenses using the appropriate 'training' category.

Reimbursement of expenses will be subject to staff adhering to the requirements detailed within the trust [CORP/EMP 33 Employee Expenses & Subsistence Policy](#).

7 REPAYMENT OF COURSE FEES

All colleagues should be aware that under certain circumstances, the trust may request part or full repayment of fees depending on the reasons for non-completion/leaving employment at DBTH.

Colleagues are reminded that failure to attend a course (without prior agreement) or submit the required study attributes without discussing this with their line manager is a disciplinary offence and may prompt an investigation for fraud, see [CORP/FIN 1 \(D\) Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Response Plan](#).

8 PAYMENT OF RESUBMISSION OR EXAMINATION

It is the individual's responsibility to discuss the payment of resubmission or examination with their immediate line manager to determine whether the individual or DBTH local training budgets can be used. DBTH funding for resits/resubmissions should be by exception and will be determined on an individual case by case basis. It is best practice that the individual notifies the training provider, Education Lead and line manager prior to the above requirement e.g., extension request.

9 FRAUD

All colleagues are reminded that any abuse of study leave i.e., deliberately not attending or completing courses and working elsewhere during authorised study time may be considered fraudulent activity. In addition, any claims for expenses or course funding associated with such activity may be recovered by the Trust from the applicant. Any concerns of this nature may result in disciplinary action and will be referred to the Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS) in accordance with the [CORP/FIN 1 \(D\) Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and Response Plan](#).

10 APPEAL PROCESS

Where an individual feels they have been unfairly treated in any aspect covered by this policy in relation to their application for study leave, they should in the first instance raise this with their immediate line manager to try and resolve the matter informally. If this cannot be achieved, the matter may be escalated to the Director of Education and Research for further consideration. Individuals and line managers can seek guidance and advice from their Education Lead who will escalate accordingly to the appropriate senior leadership team within the Education & Research Directorate.

It should be noted that apprentices must also refer to their training plan as part of the tri-partite agreement that forms an addendum to their employment contract [click here to view](#) the escalation of concerns process for all vocational learners.

If an individual feels they have been unfairly treated, they can exercise the right of appeal through the Trust's Grievance Procedure [CORP/EMP 2 Disciplinary Procedure](#), however, it is hoped that local agreement can be reached.

11 TRAINING/SUPPORT

For support in the use and application of this policy please contact your divisional or corporate Education Lead.

12 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROCEDURAL DOCUMENT

All supported study leave applications will be scrutinised for transparency, fairness, equity of access, consistency of approach, completion of study and wider return on investment e.g., dissemination of knowledge, learning outcomes. Reports will be regularly produced and reviewed with an annual report being presented to the People Committee (PC).

Additionally, Divisions will annually provide oversight of study leave spend from their local budgets.

13 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population, and workforce, ensuring that none are disadvantaged over others. Our objectives and responsibilities relating to equality and diversity are outlined within our equality schemes. When considering the needs and assessing the impact of a procedural document any discriminatory factors must be identified.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted on this procedural document in line with the principles of the Equality Analysis Policy (CORP/EMP 27), the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy (CORP/EMP 59) and the Civility, Respect and Resolution Policy (CORP/EMP 58).

The purpose of the EIA is to minimise and if possible, remove any disproportionate impact on employees on the grounds of race, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or religious belief. No detriment was identified. (See Appendix 4)

14 ASSOCIATED TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Appraisal Policy CORP/EMP 32
 Civility, Respect and Resolution Policy CORP/EMP 58
 Employee Expenses and Subsistence Policy CORP/EMP 33
 Equality Analysis Policy – CORP/EMP 27
 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy CORP/EMP 59
 Flexible Working Policy CORP/EMP 48
 Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy & Response Plan CORP/FIN 1(D)
 Grievance and Dispute Procedure (including Staff Copy) CORP/EMP 3
 Statutory and Essential Training (SET) Policy CORP/EMP 29

15 DATA PROTECTION

Any personal data processing associated with this policy will be carried out under 'Current data protection legislation' as in the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2021. This responsibility lies with all colleagues involved in the application and approval process.

Training records pertaining to educational activity will be recorded on the Oracle Learning Management (OLM) system and link to the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) where functionality allows.

For further information on data processing carried out by the trust, please refer to our Privacy Notices and other information which you can find on the trust website: <https://www.dbth.nhs.uk/about-us/our-publications/information-governance/>

16 REFERENCES

Apprenticeship Funding Rules (2025) <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules> last accessed online 11.6.25

Health Education England (HEE) Study Leave (2022) <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Health%20Education%20England%20%28HEE%29%20Study%20Leave%20-%20An%20overview%20of%20the%20HEE-wide%20approach.pdf> last accessed 10.6.235

NHS People Promise (2022); <https://www.england.nhs.uk/our-nhs-people/online-version/lfaop/our-nhs-people-promise/> last accessed online 16.3.23

Skills for Health Core Skills Training Framework (2023) <https://www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/core-skills-training-framework/> last accessed online 11.6.25

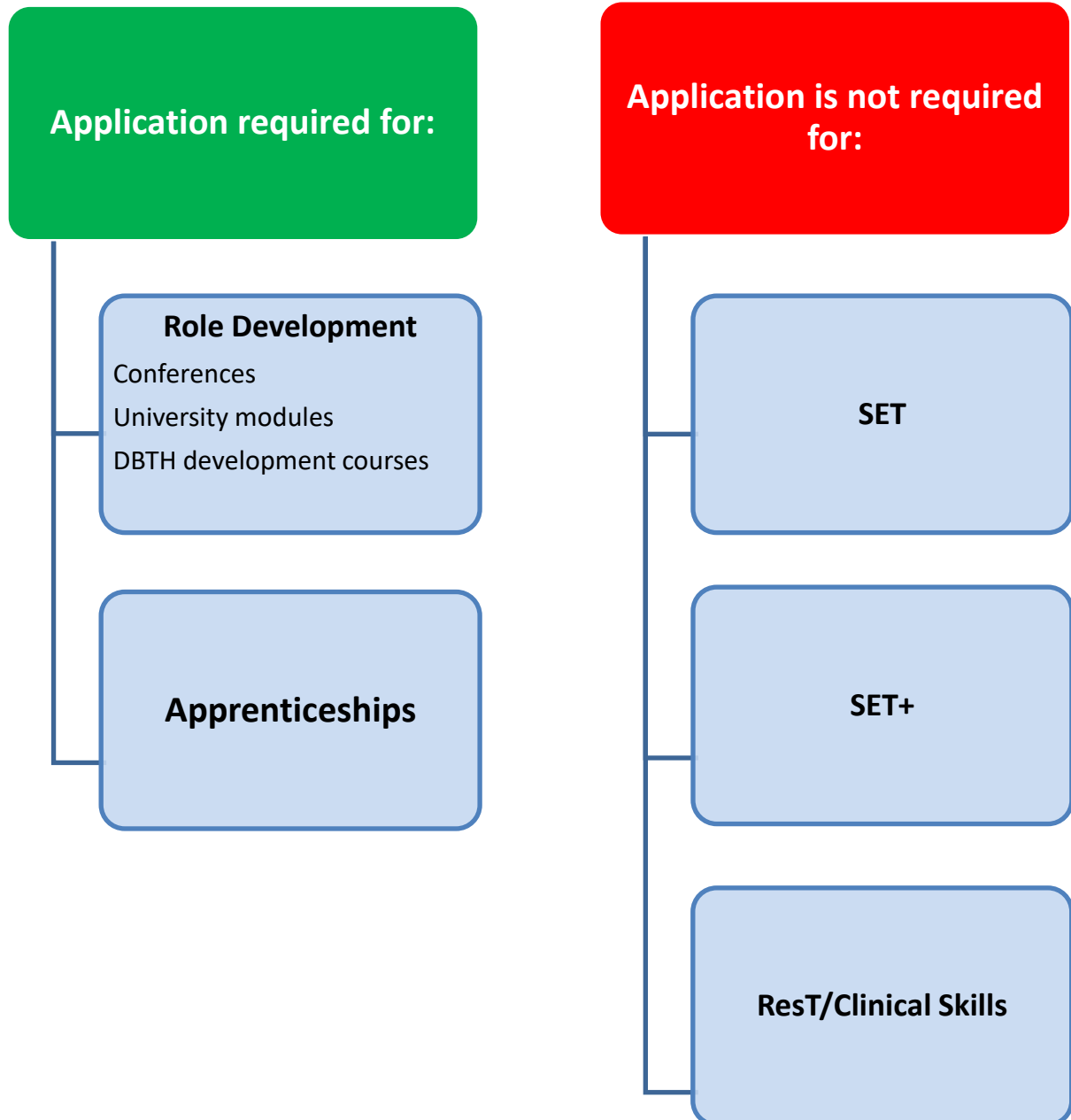
17 DBTH STRATEGIES/Frameworks

[DBTH People Strategy](#)

[DBTH Apprenticeship Framework](#)

[DBTH Work Experience Framework](#)

[DBTH Training Framework](#)

APPENDIX 1 WHEN TO COMPLETE A STUDY LEAVE & FUNDING APPLICATION

APPENDIX 2 STUDY LEAVE TIME ALLOCATION

Time for study will be allocated where the education programme is deemed essential to service and meets the role development criteria in the training framework. Time allocated is at the discretion of the division (with the exception of apprenticeships). Time will be allocated pro rata depending on the applicant's working hours. A general rule would be to allocate the number of required taught hours (face-to-face or virtual), along with 20% of any additional hours if required to undertake any self-directed study or other related learning activity that is required by the programme.

See the example below, which relates to a level 7 module:

If a colleague applies for a level 7 module that is 15 credits, generally 150 hours of study is required (number of credits x 10) to meet the requirements of the programme, which includes 20 hours of taught hours (face-to-face or virtual). Where the total hours are 150, the colleague should be allocated the taught 20 hours, plus 20% of the remaining 130 hours (20 hours + 26 hours = 46 hours in total). The above example is based on a colleague working full-time (37.5 hours per week); for colleagues working part-time, the calculation should be adjusted pro rata.

APPENDIX 3 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT PART 1 INITIAL SCREENING

DBTH Study Leave Policy	Division-Education & Research	Assessor (s)Lisette Caygill	New or Existing Service or Policy? Existing	Date of Assessment 24.9.25
1) Who is responsible for this policy? Name of Division/Directorate: Education & Research				
2) Describe the purpose of the service / function / policy / project/ strategy? Who is it intended to benefit? What are the intended outcomes? Fair & transparent policy to support applications for study leave & funding				
3) Are there any associated objectives? Legislation, targets national expectation, standards: Financial management, people development (People Plan & People Strategy)				
4) What factors contribute or detract from achieving intended outcomes? – fair treatment for all, clear inclusion and direction for allocation of resources. Individual needs may be met as per policy.				
5) Does the policy have an impact in terms of age, race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy and religion/belief? Details: [see Equality Impact Assessment Guidance] - No				
If yes, please describe current or planned activities to address the impact [e.g. Monitoring, consultation] –				
6) Is there any scope for new measures which would promote equality? [any actions to be taken] Meets standards				
7) Are any of the following groups adversely affected by the policy?				
Protected Characteristics	Affected?	Impact		
a) Age	No			
b) Disability	No			
c) Gender	No			
d) Gender Reassignment	No			
e) Marriage/Civil Partnership	No			
f) Maternity/Pregnancy	No			
g) Race	No			
h) Religion/Belief	No			
i) Sexual Orientation	No			
8) Provide the Equality Rating of the service / function /policy / project / strategy – tick (✓) outcome box				
Outcome 1 ✓	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	
<i>*If you have rated the policy as having an outcome of 2, 3 or 4, it is necessary to carry out a detailed assessment and complete a Detailed Equality Analysis form – see CORP/EMP 27.</i>				
Date for next review: September 2028				
Checked by:		Adam Evans	Date:	25/09/2025