

POLICY ON TRAINING AND STUDY LEAVE

December 2006

Approved

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	OFC	
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1. INTRODUCTION

The Authority is committed to promoting an environment of training, learning and continuing professional development (CPD) for all employees. It recognises this is essential to providing a high quality service which meets the needs and expectations of our clients, stakeholders and members of the public.

In line with the corporate values of integrity, impartiality, fairness and best practice, this policy provides the guidelines on types of learning and training and criteria and process for applying for study leave and courses. In support of this policy, staff are also referred to the HFEA Policy on Equal Opportunities, Performance Management Guidelines and Induction and Probation Guidelines.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all HFEA employees are aware of the Authority's procedures for applying for training, to ensure that all statutory CPD requirements are met and that all employees have equal access to training and development opportunities.

3. SCOPE

The scope of this policy extends to all HFEA employees, both permanent and fixed term.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

The HR department is responsible for ensuring that all staff have access to this policy and for ensuring that managers understand their own role and responsibilities.

The HR department will commission training and development programmes in accordance with the needs of the organisation and individuals as highlighted through legislation, the Authority's corporate and business plans and the PDP process.

The HR department will run central induction programmes.

Managers are responsible for developing local induction processes for all new staff, which will include an analysis of the employee's initial learning needs to perform the duties of the role, and to ensure they receive essential training.

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Continued learning and development needs will be identified and highlighted through the performance and development procedure which managers must complete with their staff each year and review on a half yearly basis. PDPs must be sent to the HR department annually with new training or development needs brought to the attention of the HR department as arising. Managers are expected to know and apply the Training and Study Leave policy and to ensure that procedures for accessing training and development, either informally or formally are known by all.

In line with Investors in People (IiP) standards, Managers are responsible for evaluating the impact of learning and development interventions provided for their staff throughout the year, i.e. to discuss the learning, assess improvements to performance as a result of the intervention and ensure that learning is cascaded to colleagues. This will seek to ensure that opportunities are being identified appropriately and we can assess the added value of these interventions.

All staff are expected participate in all mandatory or corporate training programmes, including local or corporate induction sessions and to actively participate in the PDP process.

5. PRINCIPLES

Underpinning the Training and Study Leave Policy are a number of assumptions:

- The HFEA aims to be a learning organisation, which supports individual and team development, to achieve the results needed to take forward a changing and leading edge organisation.
- Through training and development, it can nurture new ways of thinking and behaviours which are flexible, adaptive and productive; supporting people to continually learn.
- Access to high quality training and development opportunities prepares staff for future roles and responsibilities and to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Training and development is a key tool in recruitment and retention and is integral to the Authority's HR strategy and the aim of becoming a model employer.
- That staff should have equal access to relevant training and development opportunities to promote diversity at all levels in the workforce and in accordance with the Authority's Policy on Equal Opportunity.

6. TYPES OF LEARNING/TRAINING

6.1 Mandatory Training

This is training for all staff within the organisation and includes:

- * Induction
- * Equality and diversity awareness
- * PDP
- * Health and safety

6.2 Core Training

This training builds on previous experience and learning and will be different for each group of staff, but may include:

- * IT skills
- * HFE Act and associate legislation
- * Risk management
- * Clinical or corporate Governance
- * Leadership skills
- * Managing staff
- * Assertion skills
- * Communication skills
- * Recruitment and Retention
- * Financial / budget management
- * Record keeping
- * Presentation skills

6.3 Professional or Technical training

Managers should identify with their staff any training or development which is specific to their role or responsibilities, including any professional CPD requirements.

7. CRITERIA FOR STUDY LEAVE

Learning priorities should be discussed between line manager and employee and specific learning objectives agreed as part of all PDP's. These may be highlighted through legislation, the Authority's corporate or business plans, professional requirements or personal development needs.

Priority will be given to learning activities (including courses) which are relevant to the work objectives of the applicant's current post, or to maintain

professional status.

Consideration will also be given to development opportunities to support promotion or succession planning, particularly where positive action initiatives will support the Authority's aim of promoting wider diversity within the organisation.

Applicants should identify key areas of knowledge they wish to gain, what they will do differently as a result of the learning and how the organisation will benefit.

Applicants must be willing to undertake evaluation of their learning activities and share knowledge and skills gained, where appropriate, with colleagues.

8. WHAT THE HFEA WILL PROVIDE

8.1 Time

Applicants which meet the above criteria will usually be supported by a full contribution to the time required for attendance at one off courses, workshops, seminars or development activity during working hours. Where the request is for a long term course (e.g. to gain a professional qualification), requests for time off will be negotiated on an individual basis. All requests for time off must be discussed with the line manager. Line managers must give due consideration to issues of equity and consistency when agreeing release.

8.2 Financial Support

Funding will be identified each year for a Training and Development budget, managed through the HR department.

- * Mandatory training costs will be met in full
- * Core training fees will be met in full
- * Funding for professional courses will be agreed with individuals at time of application, see section 10
- * Other training fees will be at the discretion of the Assistant Director – HR & OD
- * Travel and subsistence expenses will be covered by the departmental budgets
- * Professional membership fees, where a requirement of the post, will be met in full

All costs must be agreed in advance by the appropriate budget holder.

Arranging training and development programmes is costly in terms of time and provision. Managers are encouraged to ensure that staff attend

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agreed training (including internal training), particularly mandatory or core training, and have adequate cover systems in place to allow release.

Where managers have agreed staff release and subsequently withdraw permission to attend a course, workshop or other development sessions, unless there are exceptional circumstances, or staff just do not attend, costs may be vired from Departmental budgets to the training budget.

Non attendance or cancellation of a training event resulting in a cost to the Authority may result in a recharge to the applicant, subject to reasons given.

Final attendance lists and cancellations will be circulated to Directors and Heads.

9. APPLYING FOR STUDY LEAVE

A study leave form is required for any course, event or period of study, regardless of whether a fee is to be paid. Staff are encouraged to source appropriate courses and identify proposed costs, but may ask for assistance from HR. The form should be completed in full and forwarded to the HR department.

Application forms should be received in HR at least 4 weeks before commencement of external courses.

The course request will be considered against the criteria and where approved will be booked by HR with staff receiving confirmation of booking. If the course is not approved this will be feedback to staff with reasons.

The Finance department will pay the organisers direct.

Where internal courses are run, an e-mail will be sent to Heads and Directors outlining the subject that the course will cover and targeted staff

Staff must discuss and agree dates of any planned attendance at internal courses with their line managers first.

10. APPLYING FOR PROFESSIONAL COURSES

This is to support staff who wish to study at a higher degree of post graduate level or those who wish to obtain an occupational qualification, e.g. finance or management qualifications. The course should be relevant to the work objectives of the applicant's current post and career aspirations and should contribute to the delivery of a service.

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The course request will be agreed between HR and the line manager at the point of PDP submission. A study leave form along with details of the course or programme syllabus must be sent to HR. Requests received outside of the PDP submission time period may have to be deferred to a future year, dependent on allocated monies available.

Where support for a professional course is agreed the Authority will fund 100% of the course fee up front. Staff may be asked to contribute a percentage of the fee, dependent on annual monies agreed and the number and cost of applications.

Where financial support above the value of £1,500 pa on any course is agreed, the employee will be asked to enter into a Study Sponsorship Contract (see appendix 3). This requires the employee to remain in employment for at least one year post completion of the course, or agree to repay some of the monies, on a sliding scale.

Continued financial support for this training is also dependent on remaining an employee of the HFEA. If the applicant does not complete the course they may have to repay the fee contribution dependent on the reason for non completion. Employees who do not complete the course due to maternity or adoption leave, illness, disability or redundancy will be exempt from repaying fees.

11 STUDY LEAVE FOR EXAMINATIONS

Where attendance at a professional course has been agreed and there are examinations at the end, paid leave will be allowed as follows:

- 1 study day per examination
- 1 day attendance per examination

12 EVALUATION

The employee and their manager should evaluate the training, assess whether it met the identified need and discuss and review the PDP. A post course evaluation form should be sent to the HR department.

Formal feedback from courses will be circulated to Directors and Heads on a regular basis.

13 APPEALS

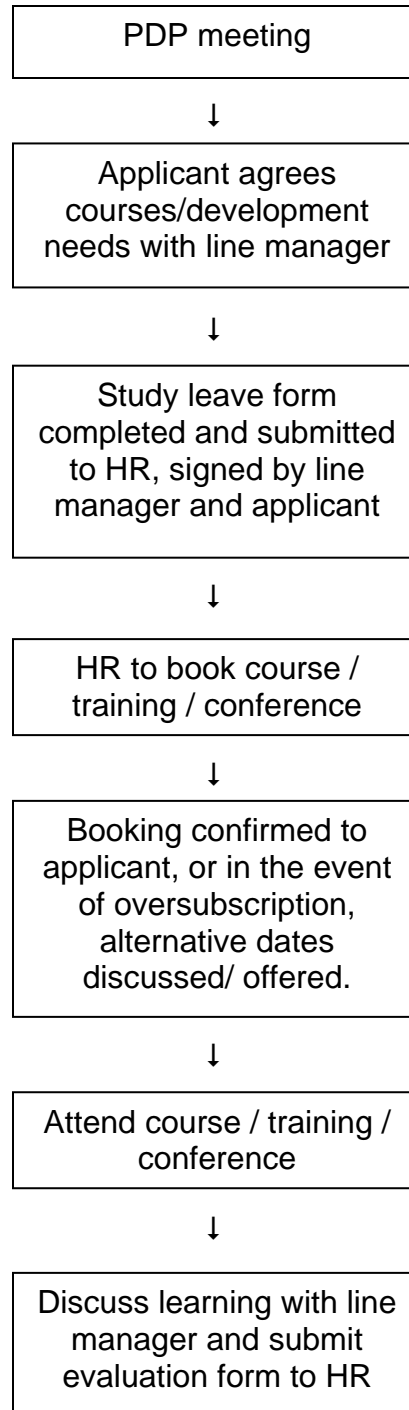
Where an employee feels they have been unjustly denied access to training or development support they should seek local resolution in the first instance and may wish to consult with HR as part of this. Where this is not possible they should refer to the Authority's Grievance Policy.

14 MONITORING

The HFEA will monitor access to training and development opportunities and attendance on courses at least annually to ensure the policy is operating fairly, consistently and effectively.

Appendix 1

Application Process Flowchart



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Appendix 2

Training and Study Leave Form

Full Name _____ Mr/Ms/Mrs/Miss/Dr

Work Address

_____ Tel No _____
_____ Fax No _____
_____ Email _____

Post _____ Department _____

Male/Female (please circle)

Ethnicity code
(see separate sheet)

Special requirements e.g. Hearing, Access, Dietary etc _____

Course Details

Course title _____

Period of
study leave

Address of venue

Hours	1/2 days	Days	Week

Accommodation £ _____

Course Fees £ _____

Travel £ _____

Subsistence £ _____

Signature of Applicant _____ **Date** _____

Signature of Manager _____ **Date** _____

Signature of HR _____ **Date** _____

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Please complete this section with your manager
(it should relate to your Personal Development Plan).**

What are the key areas of knowledge and skills that you want to learn from this course?

What do you want to be able to do differently as a result of this course?

How will the organisation benefit from this course?

Form should be returned to:
HR Department

ETHNIC MONITORING

(a) White

British	A1
Irish	A2
Other European	A3a
Any other White background	A3b

(b) Mixed

White and Black Caribbean	B1
White and Black African	B2
White and Asian	B3
Any other mixed background	B4

(c) Asian or Asian British

Indian	C1
Pakistani	C2
Bangladeshi	C3
Any other Asian background	C4

(d) Black or Black British

Caribbean	D1
African	D2
Any other Black background	D3

(e) Other ethnic groups

Chinese	E1
North African	E2a
Arab	E2b
Middle Eastern	E2c
Any other ethnic group	E2d

Not stated	F1
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The HFEA is obliged to collect information on Ethnic Monitoring data, to demonstrate equality in access and provision of training and development.

Appendix 3

Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority

Study Sponsorship Contract

1. In consideration of the financial and training assistance provided by the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority (the HFEA) in respect of my study towards **(insert course)**, I undertake as follows:
 - a. To complete the course of study to the satisfaction of the HFEA;
 - b. To remain in the HFEA's service for a minimum period **of 1 year** (the Loyalty Period) from the date on which the qualification is obtained.
2. In the event of my failing, without good reason, to complete the course of study:
 - a. I undertake to refund the HFEA in full the financial assistance paid to me in relation to study sponsorship. This will include course fees, registration fees, exam costs, book allowance and any other costs relating to the qualification in (1).
 - b. I agree to such sums being deducted from my salary on a monthly basis until all monies have been repaid.
3. In the event I leave the HFEA before completing the course of study
 - a. If I leave the HFEA before full repayment has been made, I undertake to repay the balance to the HFEA from my final salary.
 - b. If my final salary is insufficient to cover the repayment, I undertake to repay the balance in cash or by banker's draft before my final day of employment.
 - c. The HFEA reserves the right to retain the P45 or reference until the money is repaid in full.
4. In the event of my voluntarily leaving the HFEA's service, or my being dismissed for misconduct before the expiry of the period in (1) above:
 - a. I undertake to refund to the HFEA an amount proportionate to the remaining months of the loyalty period. The calculation of the repayment amount will be calculated as follows:

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Full financial assistance received _____ X Unexpired Loyalty Period

Full Loyalty Period

- b. Payment will be in full and final settlement and I agree to such sums being deducted from my final salary.
 - c. If my final salary is insufficient to cover repayment, I undertake to repay the balance to the HFEA by cash or banker's draft before my final day of employment.
5. In the event that your employment with the HFEA is terminated for reasons other than voluntary resignation or dismissal for misconduct i.e. redundancy or ill health you will not be required to pay back the full or partial repayment of the financial assistance received.

Staff Signature _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Witness Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____