Support for Development Policy

NHS Blood and Transplant

Frequently asked questions

These are provided for guidance or quick reference guide only, so always refer to the policy

1. General Definitions

1. 1 What types of development activity does this policy allow me to do?

This policy offers you the opportunity to apply for funding support for formal academic qualifications as well as informal skills training courses and conferences. Examples of development activities that have been supported previously include:

- Apprenticeships (refer to the Apprenticeship Sharepoint site for application process and information)
- Entry level qualifications
- Courses and Conferences
- Foundation degrees
- Bachelors degrees
- Postgraduate qualifications
- Masters degrees
- Taught Doctorates
- Study for primary qualifications relevant for professional membership or leading to registration e.g. Charted Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Graduate status, Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) registration
- Study for professional certificates and diplomas awarded by a recognised professional body
- Professional training portfolios.

1.2 Can I request support for any development activity?

Before applying for funding, you should first explore whether an apprenticeship is available that could meet this need.   If you can't find what you are looking for you can also contact the Apprenticeship Team via HR Direct. Once it is established that a suitable apprenticeship is not available, you should then complete the Support for Development Application form.

Your request must be linked to the personal and/or professional development required for delivering your day-to-day job role or an aspiring job role agreed with your manager. Examples of activities include those that:

- are considered vital for your role
- are Essential or desirable for your job role as indicated within your Person Specification or recruitment profile
- are identified as part of your Personal Development Plan (PDP) to support development of your job-specific knowledge, skills and/or behaviours
- are identified with your manager, outside the Personal Development and Performance Review (PDPR) process, to support development of your job-specific knowledge, skills, and/or behaviours
- fulfil your Continuing Personal and Professional Development (CPPD) commitment

- enhance your knowledge, skills and behaviours in an area relevant to your job role or an aspiring job role
- meet the strategic objectives of the organisation
- develop your knowledge, skills, and behaviours to find an alternative job role where you are put at risk as part of a formal change programme

1.3 What does locally supported mean?
The training budget within your department/directorate supports your activity. Local support will include time to explore opportunities for development.

1.4 What does centrally supported mean?
The central training budget is held corporately to support any activity that cannot be funded locally by your department / directorate budget.

1.5 What is the Senior Management Team (SMT)?
These are the Senior Managers within your directorate, who meet regularly as a team.

1.6 Who should I contact if I have a query regarding my development activity?
You should contact your manager or HR Direct

1.7 Who maintains records for Medical Study leave and approved activities?
Records of your study leave and entitlements are kept by the Chief Medical Officer's Office and are available on request. You should email: medicalbusinesscoordinator@nhsbt.nhs.uk with details of your request.

1.8 What is the definition of 'vital'?
Vital development is the personal and/or professional development required for delivering your day-to-day job role. Specifically, it is the development which is necessary for you to effectively perform your existing job role e.g. essential based on your person specification. Vital development therefore relates to the development that you need to:

- gain job-specific knowledge vital to carry on your role
- gain job-specific skills vital to carry on your role
- carry out your job role within our legal and/or regulatory frameworks

Vital means that you will be unable to carry out your job due to changes in legal or regulatory frameworks or because of a significant change in an area related to your role.

The definition of vital will require the support of your senior management team who will make the final decision on whether 100% funding is approved or not and may require further documentation/business case if this is not clear with the application.

1.9 What is the definition of 'non-vital'?
Non-vital development is education outside the vital requirements needed to meet the desirable expectations of your main role.

2. Apprenticeships
2.1 Where can I find details of the best route for my development?
Before applying for funding, you should first explore with your manager whether an apprenticeship is available that could meet this need. If you can't find what you are looking for you can also contact the Apprenticeship Team via HR Direct.

2.2 How are apprenticeships funded?
Apprenticeships are funded by the Apprenticeship Levy. This levy is paid to the Government by all large organisations where their staffing pay bill is above £3m and remains in the levy account

for a maximum of two years before it expires. The levy can be used to pay for the apprenticeship training programme and end point assessment for an individual only. It cannot pay for expenses or salaries.

2.3 Will I get a qualification by studying for an apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship standards are qualifications in their own right and the quality assurance is Ofsted for all training providers and the majority of End Point Assessment Organisations. Some standards have certificates/diplomas/other qualifications embedded, and some do not. The Government and the Institute of Apprentices and Technical Education is currently reviewing/updating standards which the proposal of having all with a qualification embedded, [a change from the initial idea of no qualifications within apprenticeship standards when they were first launched].

Different industries have different requirements, so while the construction industry have their standards others have their own.

3. Funding

3. Will the funding support approval process differ for part-time and full-time employees?

No difference will be made between part-time and full-time staff applications. All staff, part-time or full-time, will be given equal access to the funding support.

3.2 How much funding support will I receive and when can I submit my application?

The funding approved will be subject to funds being available. The amount supported is dependent upon the cost of the development activity and whether or not it is vital / non vital for your role.

Applications <u>under</u> £1000 can be submitted at any time. They will be considered locally by your manager / senior manager / budget holder throughout the year.
Funding support for development activities costing under £1000 will be approved *up to* 100%.

Applications <u>over</u> £1000 can be submitted at any time. They will be considered by your Senior Management Team and if approved, funded from your department / directorate budget (where funds are available). If funding is not available from your department / directorate your application may be funded by the corporate budget (if funds are available).
Funding support for development activities costing over £1000 are dependent upon whether the development activity is vital to your role

<u>Vital development</u>
100% funding will be approved for all development activities that are considered **vital** for you to carry out your day-to-day job role.

<u>Non-vital development</u>
For other development activities, a personal percentage contribution of 25% will apply.

The funding approved represents the total funding allocated to you by NHSBT. Your department is therefore not permitted to 'top-up' your percentage funding using their own departmental training budget.

3.3 What costs does the final approval decision support?

Your final approval decision will fund the activities registration fee, examination fees.

Travel and accommodation costs / dissertation costs e.g. testing kits should be funded by your department budget with prior approval.

Fees that are excluded from your final funding support are:

- Travel and accommodation costs
- student union membership fees
- fees relating to membership of a professional body or society
- fees relating to development resources e.g. books
- fees and costs associated with graduation ceremonies or award presentations
- dissertation costs e.g. testing kits

4. Criteria used by manager
4.1 What criteria are used by my manager to agree to endorse my application?
Your manager must endorse your application. Your manager should consider the following points when discussing the application with you: -

	Questions
1	Confirmation that performance has satisfactorily met organisational standard
2	Have you completed your Mandatory Training (MT)
3	If you are a manager, your employees should have completed their MT and have a current PDPR
4	Is the development activity captured in your PDPR/PDP
5	Is the development required for personal or departmental development and has consideration been given to how the development will help you to do your job role better i.e. what skill, knowledge, and/or behaviour gap will be filled by the development activity
6	Is the development based on workplace adjustment
7	Is the development appropriate to your job role or an aspiring job role in NHSBT/NHS
8	Have travel and accommodation costs been planned for
9	Have alternative, more cost-effective development opportunities been considered with costs and types of study and compared (benefit vs. risk). Have you considered an Apprenticeship?
10	Has the sharing of learning, following the development activity, been agreed
11	Does the development meet local workforce/succession arrangements as discussed with a senior manager

4.2 What criteria are used to approve applications under £1000?
Development support activities under £1000 will be funded locally and your manager and appropriate budget holder are responsible for authorising and funding this support. Your manager and budget holder will use the following criteria when approving your application.

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Has the application been completed fully	Continue to question 2	• Return to applicant for completion
2	Has the application been endorsed	Continue to question 3	• Return to applicant for completion
3	Has an initial development assessment been completed with application	Continue to question 4	• Return to applicant for completion
4	Has the applicant completed their MT and PDPR	Continue to question 5	• Funding denied. Application will need resubmitting when training complete
5	Where applicant is a manager, have their direct reports completed their MT and PDPR	Continue to question 6	• Funding denied. Application will need resubmitting when training complete
6	Is the development appropriate to the applicant's role (see role profile)	Continue to question 7	• Funding denied. Follow-up questions may be appropriate
7	Does the development activity meet an identified skill, knowledge and/or	Continue to question 8	• Funding denied. Follow-up questions may be appropriate

	behavioural gap within the organisation		
8	Is there evidence of how the learning will be shared within the team/organisation	Funding approved up to 100%	• Funding denied. Follow-up questions may be appropriate

4.3 What criteria are used by my Directorate's Senior Management Team to approve applications over £1000?

Development support activities over £1000 will be funded either by your department /directorate or by the corporate budget (where funds are available. Your senior management team will use the following criteria when approving your application.

	Questions	Yes	No
1	Does application show signs of manager discussion against the approval criteria	Continue to question 2	• application declined • Follow-up discussion required with endorsing manager
2	Has senior/budgetary manager endorsed application	Continue to question 3	• application declined • Follow-up discussion required with endorsing senior manager
3	Is the development appropriate to the applicant's role (see role profile)	Continue to question 4	• application declined • Alternative development recommended to applicant
4	Has the development been linked to the strategic objectives	Continue to question 5	• application declined • Alternative development recommended to applicant
5	Does the applicant meet national workforce planning/succession arrangements	Approved and application passed to SDP. Percentage allocation set.	• application declined • Alternative development recommended to applicant

4.4 What criteria are used by my manager to endorse my overseas application?

Your Budget manager must endorse all overseas applications. Your manager should consider the following points when discussing the overseas application with you (at least two of the following criteria must apply): -

	Questions
1	External funding is provided in substantial part, or in full
2	You are an invited speaker
3	You are the lead author on an abstract that has NHSBT Line manager approval and has been accepted by the conference organisers
4	The event is a planned part of your Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme/Personal Development Plan (PDP), and there is an auditable link to that PDP
5	You are a member of the Organising Committee, or a member of an International Working Party that is meeting at or presenting at the event and has manager's approval to act in this capacity
6	You are a member of Joint United Kingdom (UK) Blood Transfusion and Tissue Transplantation Services Professional Advisory Committee (JPAC) or a UK Standing Advisory Committees (UK SAC) and is attending a meeting of direct relevance to the work of that committee and will be feeding back to the SAC/JPAC on one or more specific topics
7	You are using the opportunity to participate in other **relevant** international meetings whilst at the event

8	The applicant will be disseminating the knowledge gained at the event through: i) Articles; ii) Presentations to NHSBT colleagues (lunchtime or other); iii) Other media
9	You have not been to another international event for **at least 36 months** (or you are a scientist or clinician with a regular requirement for attendance at overseas conferences identified in your Job Description, **at 12 months**
10	For doctors, not in a research role: one international meeting every two years and one national meeting in the intervening year as a minimum
11	For doctors in a research role: at least one international meeting/year. Such doctors should include provision for conference travel in grant applications.

4.5 What assurance is available regarding the equity of funding decisions?

The Grievance Policy should be referred to if any colleague feels that their application has been viewed unfavourably. A record will be kept of all funding requests, acceptances and refusals and this record will be available for check and audit by the People Directorate, senior management and trade union representatives.

5. Overseas Travel

5.1 What should I consider when travelling outside of the UK?

Information about overseas travel can be found in People First and by referring to the Travel and Expenses Policy.

5.2 When should I submit my application for overseas course/conference or study related travel?

Applications for attendance at overseas events should be submitted no later than 3 months prior to the event.

6.0 Course fees / expenses

6.1 How are course fees paid?

Once your application has been approved you will receive a terms and conditions agreement which will include a letter to your college/university advising payment arrangements.

A purchase order will be raised either by your department / directorate or by the Leadership, Performance and Culture department depending on where funding is being provided.

If your funding is for less than 100% it is your responsibility to make arrangements to pay your contribution. Options include paying the provider directly or payment through deductions from salary.

6.2 Who will fund my examination re-sit or associated costs?

You are responsible for any repeat attendance or examination re-sits costs unless you have evidence of mitigating circumstances.

6.3 Will I be able to claim expenses for travel and accommodation for my development activity?

Expenses associated with approved development activity should be discussed and agreed with your manager at the time you complete your application. Agreed expenses will be paid subject to the Travel and Expenses Policy.

7 Starting the activity

7.1 When can I register on my development activity?

Once you have received your final approval decision in writing, you will then be able to register and confirm your place with the development provider. You will be liable for any booking costs incurred that you have made prior to receiving confirmation of funding approval.

7.2 Will I be able to gain funding support after I have started or completed my development activity?

Funding support will not be approved outside the Support for Development Policy. Should you wish to enrol with a provider prior to gaining your approval, you should do so on the understanding that this does not commit us to funding the development activity and therefore you will be responsible for any costs you incur.

8. Changes to Personal Circumstances

8.1 Who should I notify if I have a change in personal circumstances?

It is your responsibility if you are leaving NHSBT, withdrawing or deferring from your studies or have failed to complete / pass the course you must notify HR Direct. You should also discuss any change in personal circumstances with your manager.

8.2 How much will I have to repay if I leave the organisation?

Should you leave the organisation within 24 months of completing your development programme, the following repayment criteria will be used regarding funding costs provided:

- If you leave the organisation within 12 months of completing your development programme then the full funding costs must be repaid.
- If you leave the organisation within 24 months, 50% of the funding costs must be repaid

The repayment costs apply whether you leave to join another NHS organisation or a non-NHS organisation.

8.3 How will I make repayments if I leave?

If you are leaving NHSBT, any outstanding balance will become repayable immediately. A plan for repayment will be dependent on your personal circumstances and context. You would initially discuss this with your manager who will submit a notification of leaving (ESR-FRM-097) to NHSBT Pay Support identifying that you have been in receipt of funding and that repayment terms apply. Pay Support and/or Financial Services will liaise with you to agree how the monies are to be re-paid back to us in a formally agreed payment plan.

You are also responsible for notifying HR Direct if you are leaving and have received funding.

Should you not adhere to the agreed payment plan or you do not respond or acknowledge the request for payment by Financial Services, then your case will be passed to our Solicitors for further action.

NB: This will also include tracing you if you have moved away from the listed address held in our employment records.

If no agreement is made, then the case will be referred to the local County Court for further action.

This will provide you an opportunity to offer a defence to the County Court and for us to respond.

Should you ignore or defaults any contract or agreements made through the County Court, then full legal proceedings will commence leading to County Court Judgements (CCJ'S) being placed on your credit file and will remain there along with any court fees incurred until the debt is paid in full.

8.4 What happens if I am made redundant?

This will be looked at on a case-by-case basis depending on the cycle of the course e.g. the length of the course, your progress. This will be discussed with you as part of your consultation. Refer to the Frequently asked Questions in the Organisational Change Policy.

8.5 What happens with my funding support if I fail or withdraw from my approved development activity?

Should you fail or withdraw early from the approved development activity, you will be required to repay any or part of the sum we have invested in your development activity. The amount you must repay will be based on the last year of study fees that we have funded.

8.6 What happens if I have mitigating circumstances that have impacted on my capacity to complete my studies?

Mitigating circumstances are those events which are unforeseen or unpreventable. Examples may include becoming a parent, ill-health or bereavement however, this may be dependant on the terms and conditions of your study provider. In these instances you should discuss with your manager and notify HR Direct.

8.7 What happens if I wish to defer my studies?

This may be dependent on the terms and conditions of your study provider. If you wish to defer your studies you should first discuss this with your manager who will arrange for funding for your continued study which may need to be included in the directorates budget forecast in the future. You should inform the college / university know and make arrangements with them to defer your studies. Once you have agreed with your manager you should notify HR Direct and the appropriate plan will be put into place.

8.8 What happens if I am on Long Term Sickness absence?

This may be dependent on the terms and conditions of your study provider and in the first instance you should discuss this with your manager. NHSBT takes its responsibility for the welfare of its colleagues seriously. This will be considered in line with point 8.6 above.

8.9 What happens if I am planning on moving to a new role?

As part of the interview process you should inform the recruiting manager that you are receiving funding support for a development activity and discuss the impact that this might have on funding and time off to study.

9. Time off Work
9.1 What time off can I have to attend my development activity?

Any time off required for your development activity must be agreed upfront with your manager at the time of application to ensure a fair balance is given to your needs and that of your department and colleagues. This time may be agreed as paid or unpaid, in line with the options in the Time Off Work Policy. It is anticipated that all face-to-face development activities be approved as paid time-off work and that it meets European Time Directive standards for rest periods. To ensure this is the case, you should discuss with your manager in advance where your working hours need to be rearranged e.g. if you are a shift or night worker requiring attendance at a daytime activity. Where the development activity is distance learning, it is recommended that one day per module be agreed as paid time-off work.

It is also expected that you commit personal time to your studies in addition to work time; a 50:50 ratio is a reasonable proportion of study time allocation in most cases and is a good base for consideration when discussing your application with your manager.

Should there be an occasion where assigned work time out is not practical, it may be a requirement that annual leave is utilised.

9.2 What if I am unable to attend my approved development activity?

You are expected to attend the development activity that you have been funded for.
If the funding is for a certificated / qualification based course (i.e. over £1000), your manager should discuss with you whether it would be suitable to defer your funding or if you are withdrawing from the activity. Consideration of the repayment costs should be made during your discussions.
Your manager must inform HRDirect@nhsbt.nhs.uk of any changes to the application to clarify funding commitment / options.
If the funding is for an activity i.e. under £1000 you must inform your manager immediately. Your manager should establish whether the type of funded activity and whether it would be appropriate to send a substitute to attend the event or if the booking should be cancelled.

Any charges for non-attendance or cancellation of the development activity will be charged to your manager's budget.

9.3 What additional support will I receive during my development?

Once funding approval is confirmed, you are expected to transfer your learning back into the organisation with the support from your manager during regular reviews of your learning. The support should take place before, during, and after your development. To help you prepare for these support sessions, you should reflect using the questions below.

- Pre-programme one to one session –
  1. What do you hope to learn from your chosen development activity?
  2. How will the learning help you to do your job better?
  3. How do you plan to share your learning with others?

- Mid-programme one to one session *(if programme is over more than 5 days)* –
  1. What have you learned on your development programme to date?
  2. How have you/do you plan to use your new learning within your job role?
  3. What support do you need to help you apply your learning?

- Post-programme one to one session –
  1. What were the main learning points from your development programme?
  2. 2. How have you/do you plan to use your new learning within your job role?
  3. What support do you need to help you apply your learning?
  4. How can you share your learning with others in the department?
  5. What additional personal development, if any, have you identified since completing the development programme?

10. Research and Development (R&D) Students

10.1 When should I apply for Research and Development approval?

We recommend that you contact the Research Governance Office as soon as you have identified that you will be doing a project. Although Research and Development approval is the last approval that will be granted, starting the process early will ensure that once all other approvals are in place, approval can be given promptly.

10.2 Is my project classed as research?

To work out what approvals will be required, you must first ascertain if your project is categorised as 'research'. The Health Research Authority (HRA) has an online tool for defining whether a project is research.

If your project is defined as research, then it may be necessary to obtain ethical approval. The Research Governance Office can support the completion of the toolkit and will be able to guide students appropriately on the local approvals required for their project. Projects not classed as 'research', such as service evaluations, will still require R&D Approval from the research governance office.

10.3 Do I need ethical approval?

Depending on the research, this could be either University or NHS Ethics. Your supervisor and higher education institution will be able to guide you as to which is more appropriate. There are also an online guides to assess the approvals required for student work specifically and NHS Ethics. If it is determined that your project requires NHS Ethics approval, this must be sought through the Integrated Research Application System (IRAS). The Research Governance Office (Research.office@nhsbt.nhs.uk) can guide applicants through the IRAS form if required and can provide key information for Research and Development Contacts.

If your project requires NHS Ethical approval, you may have to attend a Research Ethics Committee (REC) meeting. These committees are based regionally and some specialise in certain topics. Approval from a REC is given on a national basis; therefore, although you may need to seek local approval to carry out your project, you will only need to seek ethical approval once. Many meetings are now online since the COVID 19 pandemic. It is a good idea to attend the meeting virtually with a supervisor to answer any immediate questions to save the to and fro of email conversations.

More information on RECs, and seeking NHS ethical approval can be found here:
http://www.hra.nhs.uk/

10.4 How do I gain ethics approval for my dissertation?

If your application is for a development activity which requires a research project or dissertation you must ensure that you complete a Research Project Proposal Form before starting the project. You must allow sufficient time for any research proposal to be reviewed and approved by the Research Governance Office at research.office@nhsbt.nhs.uk. **It is important to factor in the time it can take (up to three months) to obtain all the necessary approvals into your project timelines.**

10.5 How do I obtain Research and Development approval?

The following documents must be submitted to the Research Governance inbox (research.office@nhsbt.nhs.uk):
- A Research Project Proposal Form (FRM7265)
- Your signed Development Activity Support Approval Form
- A project outline, or draft protocol
- The outcome page of the 'is my project research' questionnaire, and where necessary the outcome from the 'do I need ethical approval' questionnaire

The Research Governance Office will assess your application to confirm whether it is categorised as 'research' or 'service evaluation' or 'audit'. This will be based on the information that you submit.

To gain approval, you will require appropriate operational approval from your head of department / laboratory manager that your project is aligned to. If your project could have an impact on patients or donors, you may also require approval from the relevant Clinical Audit, Risk and Effectiveness (CARE) group.

If you are unsure who to contact for operational approval that your project is aligned, the Research Governance Office can offer assistance, and will inform the relevant personnel of your project.

If your proposal is expected to impact on the donation, retrieval and/ or transplantation process, you may require approval from the Research, Innovation and Novel Technologies Advisory Group (RINTAG). Approval should be sought by prospective applicants wishing to obtain access to organ donors and/or "relevant material" for research purposes. It is also required for proposals impacting Specialist Nurse – Organ Donation (SNODs) or National Organ Retrieval Service

(NORS) teams.

If using donor and/or patient samples, operational approval must also be sought from the Non-Clinical Issue Team (NCI).

All students should first check with their department lead/head of laboratory to determine if relevant NCI permissions are already in place, if any doubt exists contact NCI admin (nciadmin@nhsbt.nhs.uk).

The NCI Team enables governance of use of donor and/or patient's samples for additional purposes other than that originally planned. This is called the 'intended purpose'. To ensure you have permission to use samples or data, students should contact NCI. Samples cannot be issued unless supported by an approved NCI account and active customer code in the ordering and fulfilment system. NCI accounts are established on a project basis by organisation/ department. Requests for a new account or to update an existing account cannot be progressed unless supported by either the output from the HRA decision tool determining if the work is not research or National REC approval stating REC approval has been given for the intended project

10.6 When should I apply for Research and Development approval?

We recommend that you contact the Research Governance Office as soon as you have identified that you will be doing a project. Although Research and Development approval is the last approval that will be granted, starting the process early will ensure that once all other approvals are in place, approval can be given promptly.

10.7 When will I get Research and Development Approval?

You will receive approval once the Research Governance Office is assured that you have all necessary approvals for your project. By seeking reassurance that your project is strategically aligned and in line with NHSBT's objectives, approval will be granted knowing that the project will not have a negative impact on the wider organisation.

10.8 What do I do when I have finished my project?

Ensure that you inform the Research Governance Office when you have finished your project or, if you anticipate delays in completing your project once you have reached your expected end date. If your project has produced results which may lead to a change in policy or practise, or if you intend to publish the results of your project it is important that you inform the Research Governance Office.

11. Policy Approval and Review

Policy version	Related document to UCD/People/Development/030v3.0
Title	UCD/People/Development/030v3.0/FAQsv3.0
Approved by SPC	18th May 2023
Equality Impact Assessment completed	10 July 2023
Counter Fraud check	24th May 2023
This document replaces	UCD/People/Development/030v2.4/FAQsv2.3
Effective Release Date	May 2023
Review Date	May 2025
Author	Iain Hastings
Filepath	G/HR/HR/Everyone/Policies
Distribution	Available on People First