

**INTERNAL ONLY**  
**ISLHD PROCEDURE**  
**COVER SHEET**



<b>NAME OF DOCUMENT</b>	Development and Study Leave Procedure
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<b>FUNCTIONAL GROUP OR HUB</b>	Workforce
<b>NSQHS STANDARD</b>	Standard One
<b>SUMMARY</b>	The process and methodology for applying for and approving learning and development leave

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS DOCUMENT IS MANDATORY**

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## 1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance to staff and managers regarding eligibility for and granting of study, learning and development leave as well as approval to attend conferences.

Leave for study, learning and development applies to external courses offered by educational institutions and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) in addition to conferences, seminars and short courses.

Development and Study Leave is not required for the following types of learning activities which are undertaken by staff on a routine basis, and at which staff are considered to be “on- duty”:

- “In-house” courses or learning activities
- Mandatory training and education.

There are a range of benefits relating to study, learning and development activities including but not limited to:

- Ensures ISLHD meets legislative, policy, or service delivery needs
- Meets an identified need for ISLHD
- Meets development need for employee in their role

For further information relating to the policy for leave relating to study, learning and development, refer to NSW Health Policy [PD2019\\_010 Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service](#).

NOTE: This procedure does not apply to staff covered by awards or determinations that specify study leave arrangements, ie, Visiting Medical Officers (VMOs), Senior Medical Practitioners or Department of Health employees. Refer to [PD2016\\_043 'Training, Education and Study Leave \(TESL\) for Staff Specialists'](#) for additional information.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Definitions:

**Educational institutions:** Those institutions accredited to provide undergraduate and/or postgraduate tertiary studies that culminate in a recognised academic and/or professional qualification including a degree, diploma or certificate.

**Learning activities:** Activities that enhance a staff member’s capacity to contribute to organisational goals. This includes tertiary study, conferences, seminars, workshops or short courses conducted by a relevant professional body or by the employer. Staff members may make use of learning and development leave to attend learning activities,

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or they may be attended on an 'on duty' basis.

**Development and Study Leave:** Leave granted to undertake tertiary studies at an accredited educational institution (including leave for examinations), or leave granted to attend external activities, such as conferences, seminars, and short courses.

This excludes lectures, tutorials, conferences and seminars that staff choose to attend on days when they are not rostered for duty, for which no payment is made.

**Mandatory training and education:** Learning activities that aim to develop those skills required by the ISLHD in response to legislative, policy and/or service delivery needs.

**Registered Training Organisations:** Those institutions that offer accredited training which lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

**Tertiary Education:** Comprising higher (university) education and Vocational Education and Training (VET).

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1 Employees will:**

- Discuss request to attend learning activity/program in the first instance to gain in principle approval
- Understand and follow the procedures when applying for learning and development leave;
- Understand and commit to the feedback mechanism in place for the dissemination of information acquired as a result of attending a Conference, Seminar or Short Course.

#### **3.2 Line Managers will:**

- Effectively promote, support, and apply the Development and Study Leave procedure within their area(s) of responsibility;
- Ensure employees understand the procedures to follow when applying for Development and Study leave;
- Ensure employees are aware of the feedback mechanism for the dissemination of information acquired as a result of attending a Conference Seminar or Short Course;
- Apply equity principles in decision making in relation to applications for Development and Study Leave;
- Ensure that all local and/or online training options have been explored and exhausted prior to approving training at an off-site course;
- Ensure that programs attended are related to the staff members development goals in their annual Personal Effectiveness and Development (PED);
- Ensure that all programs attended support the achievement of ISLHDs Strategic Directions as well as its Annual Priorities.

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- Advise employees of the review procedures relating to non-approval of Development and Study Leave.

### **3.3 General Managers/Service Directors will:**

- Ensure implementation of the Development and Study Leave procedure within Sites/Facilities and Services of ISLHD.

### **3.4 Chief Executive and the Executive of ISLHD will:**

- Ensure the implementation of the Development and Study Leave procedure across ISLHD.

## **4. PROCEDURE**

### **4.1 Principles**

Learning organisations have structures and processes in place to encourage and reward continuous learning. A learning organisation also recognises that its people are its most valuable asset, and every individual is encouraged and supported to locate and create his/her own learning opportunities.

The District aims to facilitate access for its employees to relevant learning opportunities by establishing structures and processes that enable staff to learn in the workplace. In this way the performance of all staff in their role, as well as contributing to the District meeting its strategic objectives will be improved.

Sponsored learning and development activities must provide benefits to the organisation as well as the individual, and be consistent with the District's strategic plan. As such priority will be given to those activities that facilitate the achievement of the District's strategic goals as well as providing high quality safe health care services.

Within ISLHD, there is both a corporate and personal responsibility for assessing, achieving and maintaining a high level of organisational, team and individual competence to ensure the safe and effective delivery of health care. Similarly, responsibility for learning, study and development needs to be shared between the organisation and the individual.

### **4.2 Eligibility**

Access to Development and Study Leave is at the discretion of the appropriate Department Manager and /or Delegated Authority. It is made available to promote the development of a highly trained, skilled and versatile workforce, which is responsive to the requirements of government and health service delivery.

Both permanent and temporary staff (whether full-time or part-time) are eligible to

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apply for leave. Part-time staff are granted leave on a pro-rata basis.

Casual staff are not eligible for this form of leave.

### **4.3 Priorities for Support of Development and Study Leave**

#### **4.3.1 Features of external learning, study and development activities with highest priority:**

- Activities that contribute to the achievement of the Districts Strategic Directions and Annual Priorities;
- Activities focusing on the development of knowledge and skills essential to the individual's role; and
- Activities that reflect a core component of an individual's professional development plan as identified in their annual PED.

#### **4.3.2 Guidelines for staff seeking support to attend external learning, study and development activities:**

- The staff member and their manager should develop a professional development plan as part of the employee's annual PED discussion;
- Ensure that the activities included in the professional development plan link with the District's strategic goals and specific service objectives
- Ensure that the staff member understands the requirement to participate in/contribute to in-service and continuing education of other staff within the relevant Unit or Service based on their learning.

### **4.4 Types of and Amount of Leave**

#### **4.4.1 Mandatory Training & In Service**

No leave is required to be taken for mandatory training and in service programs, staff are considered on duty.

#### **4.4.2 Seminars, conferences, and short courses**

The approval of leave and/or financial assistance for attendance at seminars, conferences, or short courses will be considered in light of the District's strategic plan.

Please note attendance at conferences is limited to one (1) employee per conference unless approved by Tier 2.

Where a new technical skills are being learnt, eg at a seminar or short course, the one (1) employee limit does not apply.

Staff may be granted learning and development leave, or may be considered 'on

duty' depending on the priority for the activity concerned. The amount of leave granted is at the discretion of the appropriate Manager and /or Delegated Authority, taking into consideration NSW Health Policy Directive PD2019\_010 Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service as well as other relevant policies and award entitlements.

Decisions in relation to financial assistance will be made in the context of budgetary constraints and the expected benefits to the District.

#### **4.4.3 Tertiary study**

Staff may undertake tertiary study for a number of reasons, Before determining whether ISLHD will support this study, the following must be considered:

- Whether the qualification or skill is an essential requirement for the person's role
- Whether the area of study is in an identified skill shortage
- Whether ISLHD can support the employee to apply the skill and knowledge within their role

Support arrangements should be agreed between the employee and relevant manager prior to the commencement of the course, including whether the employee can be released from rostered shifts to attend.

The maximum amount of tertiary study leave that can be approved is four hours per week, per semester or term. At the beginning of each semester or term the staff member must negotiate how tertiary study leave is to be taken, in accordance with the following guidelines.

Leave will not to be approved for failed or repeated subjects.

- Face-to-face Lectures

The amount of leave granted is at the discretion of the appropriate Manager and /or Delegated Authority.

In respect of attendance at an educational institution, staff may be granted 50 percent of compulsory attendance times, up to a maximum of four hours per week per semester or term.

The amount of leave granted to attend examinations will be based on the specific requirements of the individual course. Managers may grant pre-examination leave for staff where it is considered appropriate and where there is no direct impact on the provision of services. A staff member's request not to be rostered to work night shift on the day prior to a scheduled morning examination will, wherever practicable, be agreed to by the manager.

- Flexible, Online and Distance Education

The equivalent amount of learning and development leave available for face to face study is to be granted to employees completing an accredited course via alternative delivery options, such as online.

- Accrual of leave

Learning and development leave associated with tertiary studies may be accrued up to a maximum of five days per semester or term, and may be accrued until the last examination of the semester, or the last attendance day of the semester if there is no final examination.

- Residential study leave

The amount of leave to attend a compulsory residential program should be based on the specific requirements of the course and should be negotiated at the time of application for learning and development leave.

- Thesis/research or combination thesis/research/coursework

Periods of leave may also be granted to staff undertaking higher degrees by thesis, research, coursework, or a combination of these.

The amount of leave will be based on four hours per week for each academic year of study. An academic year for these purposes is considered to be a year of full-time study. Where a staff member is undertaking the study on a part-time basis the periods of leave should be granted on a pro rata basis. For example:

- If the higher degree takes one academic year and an academic year is 30 weeks, the entitlement for leave would be calculated as 30 weeks x 4 hours = 120 hours available over the year;
- If the higher degree takes two academic years, the entitlement would be 240 hours, available over two years;
- If the employee completes a two-year degree on a part-time basis over four years, the entitlement would be 240 hours, available over four years.

Rather than being taken on a week-to-week basis the leave is available over the course of study in amounts mutually agreeable between the staff member and their manager.

#### **4.5 Application and Approval Processes**

Application, approval and review processes must be communicated to all staff that apply for Development and Study leave.

Development and Study Leave is not required for learning activities undertaken by staff on a routine basis, and at which staff are considered to be “on-duty”. For example:

- “In-house” courses or learning activities
- Mandatory training and education.

#### **4.5.1 Applying for External Course Attendance and Leave**

To initiate the request for approval to attend an external course, seminar, conference, or tertiary education program, a request for external learning approval should be submitted to the appropriate manager/delegated authority.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the different types of learning, study and development activities, approvals and forms to be used.

#### **4.5.2 Decision Making Process**

Managers will respond to leave requests within 21 calendar days of receipt of an application for learning and development leave.

In instances where learning and development leave is not approved, Managers will ensure:

- The reason for non-approval is clear and stated in writing to the employee
- The employee is advised of the availability of a review process.

Where learning and development leave is not approved the review process should be completed within a further 14 calendar days.

### **4.6 Payment for Leave**

Leave approved for the purposes of learning, study and development activities will be paid on the basis of the staff member's ordinary rate of pay, ie, in accordance with the relevant award, agreement and/or determination in relation to the payment of ordinary hours, excluding penalty rates.

#### **4.6.1 Workers Compensation**

Given the variety of situations in which employees undertake study, specific advice regarding coverage of workers compensation will be provided by ISLHD Workforce Support teams.

#### **4.6.2 Financial Assistance**

ISLHD will meet costs associated with learning and development activities that are required by the District.

Staff will be responsible for meeting all fees/costs associated with tertiary studies or fees associated with other educational activities, unless learning and development scholarships or other forms of financial assistance are available.

### **4.7 Travel and Accommodation**

In instances where approval is sought to attend a conference or seminar, which involves overnight accommodation and / or long distance travel, staff must complete ISLHD

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Official Travel Form to apply for financial assistance.

The contents of the Official Travel form explain the requirements as set down by ISLHD, the Ministry of Health, and the Australian Taxation Office in relation to these issues.

**4.8 Data Collection**

In complying with NSW Health Policy, and where resources are available to do so, Managers will ensure that data relating to the granting of learning and development leave is entered into HealthRoster with the codes outlined above and in MyHealthLearning where practicable.

**4.9 Enquiries**

Any enquiries regarding this policy should be directed to local Workforce Support Team.

**5. DOCUMENTATION**

[ISLHD CORP F 255 – Application for Short Course, Seminar or Conference Leave](#)

[ISLHD OPS F 221 - Official Travel Application](#)

[ISLHD CORP F 256 – Tertiary Study Leave Application Form](#)

**6. AUDIT**

Nil

**7. REFERENCES**

NSW Health Policy Directive PD201\_010 Leave Matters for the NSW Health Service  
ISLHD Delegations Manual

**8. REVISION & APPROVAL HISTORY**

Date	Revision No.	Author and Approval / Date
June 2019	0	<b>Author:</b> Senior Manager Workforce Development
		<b>Approval / Date:</b> Corporate Policy Recommendation Committee – October 2019
		<b>Approval / Date:</b> Executive Director Strategic Improvement Programs – December 2019

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**APPENDIX 1**

STUDY AND DEVELOPMENT LEAVE APPROVALS AND FORMS

	<b>LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY</b>	<b>APPROVALS</b>	<b>FORM</b>	<b>LEAVE</b>
<b>INTERNAL TRAINING – including mandatory training</b>	Mandatory Training	Line Manager	Nil Required Applications and approvals are managed through My Health Learning	No Leave – normal hours
	In-service	Line Manager	Nil Required	No Leave – normal hours
	Short Courses and Internal Conferences	Line Manager	Nil Required Applications and approvals are managed through My Health Learning	No Leave – normal hours
<b>EXTERNAL TRAINING</b>	Short Courses – cost to the organisation	As per approval chain in <a href="#">ISLHD Delegations Manual</a> (Section 4.2)	ISLHD-CORP-F25 – <a href="#">OfficialTravelForm</a>	Healthroster: CourseExt
	Short Courses – no cost to the organisation		<a href="#">Short Course Form</a>	Healthroster: CourseExt

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	Conferences – cost to the organisation	As per approval chain in <a href="#">ISLHD Delegations Manual</a> (Section 4.2)	<a href="#">ISLHD-CORP-F25 – OfficialTravelForm</a>	Healthroster: ConfExt
	Conferences – no cost to the organisation	<i><b>Please note:</b> attendance at conferences is limited to one (1) employee per conference unless approved by Tier 2.</i>	<a href="#">ISLHD CORP F 255 – Application for Short Course Form, Seminar or Conference Leave</a>	Healthroster: ConfExt
	Tertiary Study	As per approval chain in <a href="#">ISLHD Delegations Manual</a> (Section 4.2)	<a href="#">ISLHD CORP F 256 – Tertiary Study Leave Application</a>	Healthroster: Tert Study

- **Note:** Applications for Tertiary Study must be submitted at the beginning of each semester.
- Completed leave request forms, together with the necessary supporting documentation, are then forwarded to, and retained by, the appropriate Manager.