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Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Less than Full Time (LTFT) Pilot Policy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Less Than Full Time (LTFT) training is a scheme whereby trainee doctors and dentists of all grades can work on a part time basis.
- 1.2 **All** trainees can request to train less than full time. HEIW, along with our Heads of Schools and Training Programme Directors are committed to managing LTFT training in such a way that it is available to as many trainees as possible.
- 1.3 This handbook should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections of the most recent version of the [Gold Guide](#) which details the UK agreed purpose, reasons and applying for LTFT training.
- 1.4 Trainees and trainers should be aware that the details outlined in this handbook are currently a pilot to accommodate the recent changes to the [Gold Guide](#), related to categories of LTFT as well as the huge increase in demand for LTFT training. HEIW anticipate further changes by August 2023 whereby the whole system will have moved to an online application system. This will be in conjunction with application windows which we will pilot in February 2023. Thank you for your patience whilst these changes take place.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this Handbook is to expand upon the principles set out in the most recent version of the [Gold Guide](#) and provide trainees with details of how LTFT training works in Wales

3. Scope

- 3.1 This Handbook provides guidance to all trainees who are considering training or are training on an LTFT basis.
- 3.2 Any trainee wishing to continue to work full-time but compress their working days or rearrange their shift patterns should do so by contacting their employing organisation (NWSSP in the majority of cases) and the HR department in their host organisation.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1 All trainees have the legal right to apply for LTFT and employment legislation does not set a priority order around eligibility. The [Gold Guide](#) no longer categorises eligibility, the only requirement to train LTFT being a well-founded individual reason. New applications will be assigned one or more of the following broad categories:
 - Trainees with a disability or ill health
 - Trainees with caring responsibilities (children, partner, other relative)
 - Welfare and wellbeing
 - Unique opportunities
 - Religious commitment
 - Non-medical development
 - Flexibility in their training programme (by moving to less than full time training enables development of a broader career portfolio).
- 4.2 All requests to train LTFT will be treated positively by HEIW, Heads of Schools and Training Programme Directors and we will accommodate wherever possible. Trainees should be aware of the service implications for Host Organisations, the overall training capacity within a training programme, and funding available for slot shares which are

taken into consideration prior to agreement of their post. This may result in a delay to trainees being able to work LTFT, a requirement for flexibility or delay or change to preferred working arrangements.

- 4.3 Where demand for LTFT exceeds training capacity or resource, those with a disability/ill health or caring responsibility will be accommodated first.
- 4.4 All well founded reasons will be considered.
- 4.5 Trainees appointed to LAT posts may apply for LTFT training and must complete the process in the same way. However, a placement may not be available immediately. There is no entitlement to an extension of the fixed term period of training on a pro rata basis.

5. LTFT placements in Wales

- 5.1 There are 2 ways in which LTFT trainees are accommodated in HEIW training programmes; Slot sharing and reduced hours in a full time post.

5.2 **Slot Sharing***

Some examples of slot shares include:

- two trainees share one full-time post e.g. (2 x 0.6)**
- three trainees share two posts e.g. (3 x 0.6), (3 x 0.7)*, OR (2 x 0.6 + 0.8)
- four trainees share three posts (4 x 0.7)

*HEIW provides the host organisation with top-up funding for LTFT slot shares to a maximum of 20% of the basic salary. This funding is prospectively agreed with the Director of Secondary Care, prior to post approval.

The trainees in these posts would manage any out-of-hours arrangements for the Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) post(s) between them. In these instances, slot sharing trainees may work varying %WTE.

Host organisations require all days of the week to be covered on call. Flexibility will be required by trainees working LTFT around days of work to accommodate service need. This will vary between specialties and trainees should discuss this prior to their application, so expectation around out of hours working is transparent.

Slot sharing should not be confused with job sharing which normally restricts the post holders to work 50% of a full-time post.

Due to limits on the funding available to support LTFT training, there may not be sufficient funds for a trainee to slot share. Where this occurs, alternative options will be explored with the trainee concerned and if applicable the trainee will be placed on a waiting list maintained by HEIW.

It is recognised that LTFT trainee slot share partners will change throughout the course of the training programme and start/finish at different times during a placement depending upon their own circumstances. Reasonable steps will be undertaken by HEIW, and the Host Organisation, to accommodate the needs of the remaining slot share partner, whilst trying to fill the vacant proportion of the training slot. Where it is not possible for the two trainees to commence on the same date i.e. due to rotation dates and trainees returning from maternity leave, a brief gap where the trainees are not concurrently in post may be feasible, if the service is able to accommodate this.

****Slot sharing arrangements do not apply to GPs in practice posts but only apply to them when they are working in secondary care posts. On occasion, GP trainees slot share with secondary care trainees within hospital placements, slot shares between primary and secondary care trainees should be maximised wherever possible.**

Reduced Sessions in a Full-Time Post

A trainee occupies an established full-time post but works reduced hours

5.3 Specialty specific LTFT information

Due to curriculum and programme requirements, there may be certain times during a training programme where restrictions on the %WTE may be in place. Trainees must discuss potential requests with their TPD to support their decision-making process.

6. Applying for LTFT Training – New applications and application windows

HEIW are currently revising the application process with a view to a sustainable digital solution. This will be available on the HEIW website from February 2023. Applicants prior to February 2023 should apply on the old paperwork and timeframes.

All trainees can apply for LTFT training. From February 2023 there will be 3 ways in which trainees can apply depending on their current circumstances which are:

- Trainees with a National Training Number (NTN) in Wales
- Trainees appointed to Wales in a current National Recruitment Round
- Exceptional circumstances applications

Trainees with a Wales NTN will be asked to apply in application windows. The application windows for 2023 will be as follows:

For trainees wishing to start LTFT between 1st August 2023 and 31st January 2024 applications must be submitted between 1st February 2023 and 28th February 2023.

For trainees wishing to start LTFT between 1st February 2024 and 31st July 2024 applications must be submitted between 1st August 2023 and 31st August 2023.

LTFT Commencing	Application Window
Prior to August 2023 (old process)	16 weeks before your start date or no later than 31 st January 2023.
August 2023 – January 2024	1 st February – 28 th February 2023
February 2024 – July 2024	1 st August – 31 st August 2023

Trainees can apply for LTFT in any of the windows if they know in advance their anticipated start date. E.g. a trainee starts maternity leave on Jan 1st 2023 and estimates their return date of Jan 2024 can apply in either the February or the August window. Their request would not however be processed/ agreed until after the closest application window to the start date.

Trainees wishing to commence LTFT training prior to February 2023 must submit their application at least 16 weeks prior to their proposed start date. Trainees should complete their application on the application form which mimics our ‘new’ online application form.

Applications will not be accepted after 31st January 2023 on the old system.

Trainees new to Wales in a national recruitment window will receive a welcome letter once they have accepted their offer from Wales. This letter will outline how they apply for LTFT. There will be a set timeline of 2 weeks (10 working days) for trainees to apply. This is to give appropriate notice to host organisations and the single lead employer. Trainees should be aware that if their choice of placement is not able to accommodate them working LTFT, we may contact them with an alternative placement that is able to accommodate their request.

- 6.1 Prior to application, trainees are required to discuss their plans with their Training Programme Director (TPD) to ascertain the impact this will have upon their future training and how it extends time on the training programme
- 6.2 Details of the process for applying for LTFT training, the steps required, and associated timelines are contained in Appendix 1.
- 6.3 Only trainees demonstrating exceptional circumstances or are applying within a given national recruitment window will be considered outside of these timeframes. Exceptional circumstances include personal significant health issue or significant health issue of someone they care for. Examples of the supporting documentation required can be found in the appendices.

7. **Renewal of LTFT status and change of placement**

- 7.1 The [Gold Guide](#) states that a trainees' LTFT training plan is subject to an annual review. **From Feb 2023 trainees will not be required to complete a LTFT application renewal form to renew their LTFT status.** We will confirm with trainees in Winter 2022 their wish to continue in a LTFT post at the same percentage with the same working days. By confirming their status, the LTFT % will not change between placements and they **will not be required to complete a renewal form.** Please note, trainees will be asked to preference their preferred days of work but this cannot be guaranteed by the host organisation. Flexibility may be required and host organisations will contact trainees if these preferences cannot be accommodated in the rotating organisation. Trainees who do not complete their confirmation of LTFT status via the census will be expected to submit a new application each year. Changes to days of work but not percentage can be agreed with the rotating host organisation. Trainees should email the TPD and host organisation with their change of days information.
- 7.2 For each rotation there must be agreement of the following (information in brackets denotes those responsible for agreement):
 - Appropriate training is possible, and this will not impact on the training of others within the department (TPD and programme manager in HEIW and rota organiser in host organisation).
 - The service needs of the department can be met. This means full agreement with the host organisation must be reached to ensure the proposed LTFT arrangement can be accommodated without affecting patient care/rotas, etc. (Clinical Director or nominated deputy in Host organisation/ practice manager for GP trainees).
 - Adequate funding exists for slot sharing arrangements (HEIW LTFT officer)

7.3 To deliver this, the following process will be implemented:

- i. The TPD will confirm the rotation and slot shares for the next rotation based on the confirmed number of LTFT's they have in programmes. This will be in line with HEIW programme planning principles.
- ii. HEIW will confirm whether funding is available to support all required slot sharing arrangements, including those for 'new' LTFT placements.
- iii. HEIW will inform Host organisations of trainees rotating to them 14 weeks prior to the changeover date to provide the host organisation with the necessary information to make a decision as to whether the service needs can be met. The timeframe is set out in Appendix 1.
- iv. Once agreed, HEIW will confirm the finalised placement allocation with the employing organisation (NWSSP) and the host organisation.
- v. Trainees will be notified of their slot share partners in their 'new' placement by logging onto Intrepid. The HEIW LTFT office will instruct trainees to logon to Intrepid once all host placements have been agreed. Only when the majority of placements are agreed will trainees receive the notification of their next placement and whether their LTFT request is agreed (see timeline Appendix 1) If a specialty or host organisation requires that a trainee is needed to work alternate days to meet education, training or service requirements this will be highlighted to the trainee. If parties cannot reach agreement, the TPD and NWSSP will be contacted to mediate a solution between them.

7.5 Trainees who wish to change their working percentage or go back to full time should discuss their plans with their TPD and submit an application. This should be done on a new LTFT application form in the application windows.

7.6 Trainees will maintain their current WTE or LTFT status until all aspects of the LTFT application or change process have been completed and they have received confirmation from the HEIW administration team. LTFT applications cannot be made retrospectively. We anticipate employers will take 10 days to process the placement information. In specialties where there are high volumes of applications this may take longer to agree the slot shares with the host

8. Requirements for LTFT Placements

8.1 The training programme for LTFT trainees should contain the same educational opportunities as a full-time trainee. LTFT trainees are expected to work pro rata of what the full time trainees work, including evening, night and weekend shifts of their full-time colleagues in the same department.

8.2 Working patterns may differ between host organisations and specialties and may, where applicable, depend on reasonable adjustment recommendations from occupational health. Trainees' preferences of working days cannot be guaranteed by the host organisation. Flexibility may be required and host organisations will contact trainees where preferences cannot be accommodated.

8.3 Trainees in Wales are required to undertake no less than 50% of full-time training in line with the [GMC's recommendation](#). Trainees can therefore work 50%, 60%, 70% or 80% of the WTE and nothing outside of this (working at 65, 75 or 85% are not workable with rota designs).

9. Trainee responsibilities

- 9.1 The trainee is responsible for initiating the request to train LTFT, change of status and updating the LTFT office of their contact details including correspondence email.
- 9.2 Trainees should contact their TPD at the earliest opportunity to discuss their intention to train LTFT. The TPD will outline to the trainee the placement, and the impact LTFT training has on their completion of training date.
- 9.3 Trainees should submit their new LTFT application in accordance with the requirements and timescales as detailed in Appendix 1 or the table in Section 6.
- 9.4 Trainees must complete the census surveys as required to avoid the need to renew their LTFT status on each change of placement.
- 9.5 Once the trainee has been notified that their LTFT request has been accommodated, trainees should liaise with the rota coordinator and slot share partner, where applicable, to agree rota and working arrangements.
- 9.6 The trainee must notify the College Faculty/ Training department, their TPD and (for GP) GP HEIW team of their new arrangements.
- 9.7 The trainee must inform their TPD and HEIW of any changes in circumstances as soon as possible and complete a **new LTFT application form** if they wish to change their WTE as per the timelines in Appendix 1.
- 9.8 Trainees must understand that the process for agreeing LTFT training involves negotiation between all relevant parties ensuring the requirements of the relevant curricular are met by the agreed pro-rata basis and that services can be delivered and maintained.

10. HEIW Responsibilities

- 10.1. HEIW is committed to promoting LTFT and enabling access to LTFT to as many applicants as possible.
- 10.2. HEIW is responsible for ensuring that all LTFT training is undertaken in posts and programmes that have been prospectively approved by the GMC.
- 10.3. HEIW will manage the LTFT process in such a way that information pertaining to an LTFT trainee flows between all relevant parties (i.e. the trainee, TPD, Medical Staffing, GP Practice Manager, Finance and HEIW teams). HEIW will work with the TPDs, NWSSP and Host organisations to confirm arrangements for LTFT placements.
- 10.4. HEIW will receive, consider and review all LTFT appeals where trainees consider that their LTFT request has been unreasonably refused at any stage of the process.

11. TPD responsibilities

- 11.1. TPDs are responsible for promoting a positive culture and approach to LTFT across the specialty.

- 11.2. TPDs are required to consider all applications and requirements to train and remain LTFT alongside the request of all other trainees on the programme. They are committed to identifying the most appropriate configuration of people and posts to maximise the training opportunities available and where possible minimise the impact on service delivery.
- 11.3. TPDs are required to liaise with the programme manager at the end of the LTFT application window to review and consider all applications and how they can be placed. The programme manager will liaise with the HEIW LTFT officer to look at whether these proposals fit with the allocated budget. Applications after this will be considered if for exceptional circumstances.
- 11.4. Secondary care trainees should use the 3 monthly ES appraisal to feedback on the LTFT educational requirements and training plan and where the trainee is in relation to whole time equivalent training. The ESSR should contain a paragraph outlining that the placement has met the educational needs of the trainee. Any concerns should be fed back to the TPD.
GP trainees should follow their usual requirements for educational review.

12. Host/Employing Organisation responsibilities

- 12.1. Host organisations are expected to treat LTFT trainees no differently from full-time trainees and in accordance with the policies and procedures of the employer.
- 12.2. Host organisations will review requests for LTFT training per specialty en masse and confirm to HEIW within the agreed timeframe (as detailed in Appendix 1) as to whether the requests can be accommodated. Existing LTFT trainees will be agreed prior to new applicant requests. This information will be sent to the host at the end of the LTFT application window along with the allocated trainee posts to that organisation (see Appendix 1 for stages of application).

13. LTFT and ARCP requirements

- 13.1. All trainees need to meet the requirements for progression in training as set out by GMC-approved curricula for training.
- 13.2. LTFT trainees should have an ARCP not less than annually but at intervals of no more than 15 months*. LTFT trainees may need an ARCP at a transition point where decisions relating to progression in training are required. i.e move to the next training year. LTFTs have more ARCPs than their fulltime colleagues. All LTFT trainees should use a LTFT calculator to keep track on their training time and expected training completion date. This should be presented at every ARCP.

* GP trainees should follow the LTFT ARCP guidance outlined by the [RCGP](#).

- 13.3. LTFT trainees are expected to undertake the requirements for assessment as set in their relevant curricula on a pro rata basis and to spread the balance of workplace-based assessments evenly.
- 13.4. For LTFT trainees, should an extension to training be required following the award of an ARCP Outcome 3, this will be calculated pro rata on the equivalent basis of a full-time trainee. If the outcome 3 is for exam failure, as with all trainees, a **fixed-term extension** until the next exam sitting will be issued. This date should be entered on the ARCP outcome form.

14. LTFT, Study Leave & Educational Development Time

- 14.1. LTFT trainees have a pro-rata entitlement to the number of study leave days per year for their specialty.
- 14.2. LTFT trainees can access the full study leave funding allocation for their specialty per year in line with their peers. The study leave funding allocation is not pro-rata in line with the trainees %WTE.
- 14.3. LTFT trainees have a pro-rata entitlement to educational development time

15. LTFT, Acting Up as a Consultant and the Period of Grace (does not apply to GP trainees)

- 15.1. As for all trainees, LTFT trainees may apply for a consultant post and can be interviewed up to six months prior to their anticipated CCT date; this is on a fixed-term basis and not pro rata.
- 15.2. The purpose of the Period of Grace is to provide doctors in training (excluding those in General Practice) time to secure a Consultant or other post following attainment of their CCT.
- 15.3. The maximum duration of the period of grace is 6 months. This is on a fixed term basis and not pro rata.
- 15.4. LTFT trainees may apply for a period of acting up as a consultant. For LTFT trainees, the period of acting up will be equivalent, pro rata, to the three months available to full time trainees. This requires completion of HEIW's [Acting Up](#) as a Consultant form.

16. Tier 2 VISA Holders

- 16.1. One of the eligibility points for a Tier 2 Visa application is that the salary is paid at or above 'the appropriate rate for the job' as set out by the UK Visa and Immigration ('Immigration Rules Appendix J: codes of practice for skilled work.'). This threshold must be met throughout the duration of the sponsorship in order for the visa to remain valid. For this reason Tier 2 VISA holders should select 80 % on their application form.
- 16.2. It is the responsibility of the trainee to ensure the LTFT hours of work the trainee is requesting meets this threshold. Any changes in contracted hours and salary must be reported to the trainee's Sponsor as soon as they have been approved.

17. Locum work

LTFT doctors are able to work locums shifts in the same way as full time workers. They should inform their TPD of their intention to work locum shifts and record these on their Form R at ARCP, as these shifts are outside of their agreed LTFT working pattern, GP trainees should inform their GP ES.

- 17.1. As detailed in the [COPMED Guidance for Undertaking Additional Work](#) as an LTFT trainee, 'repetitive additional work should lead to a review of the LTFT training schedule'. LTFT for health reasons and burnout/wellbeing is unlikely to support additional working.

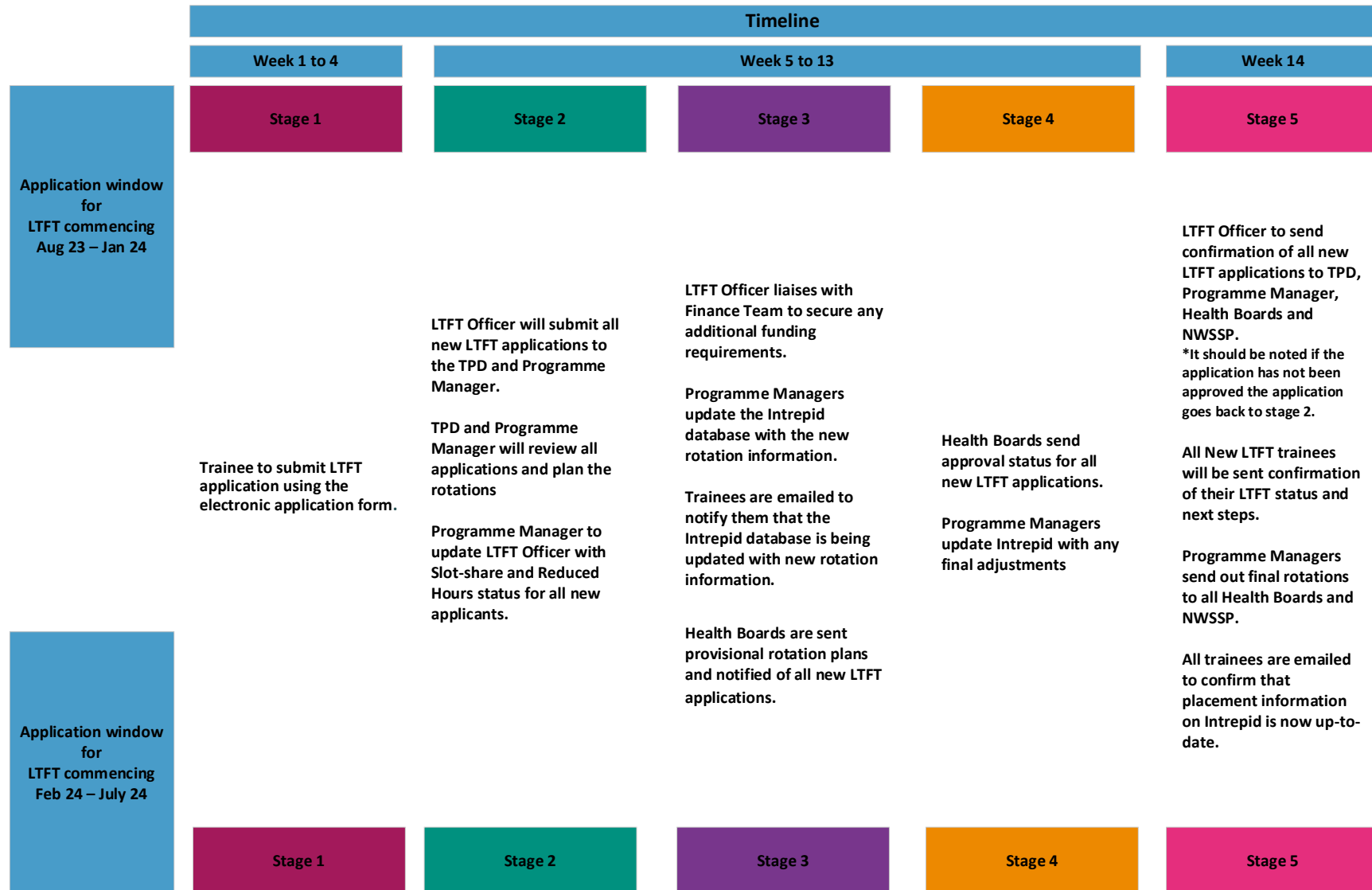
- 17.2. All additional work that requires a licence to practice including locum shifts must be declared to the Responsible Officer and should be declared on the Form R. This includes any extra periods of duty in the normal place of work beyond contracted hours. This is outlined in The Gold Guide section 3.117.

18 Appeals

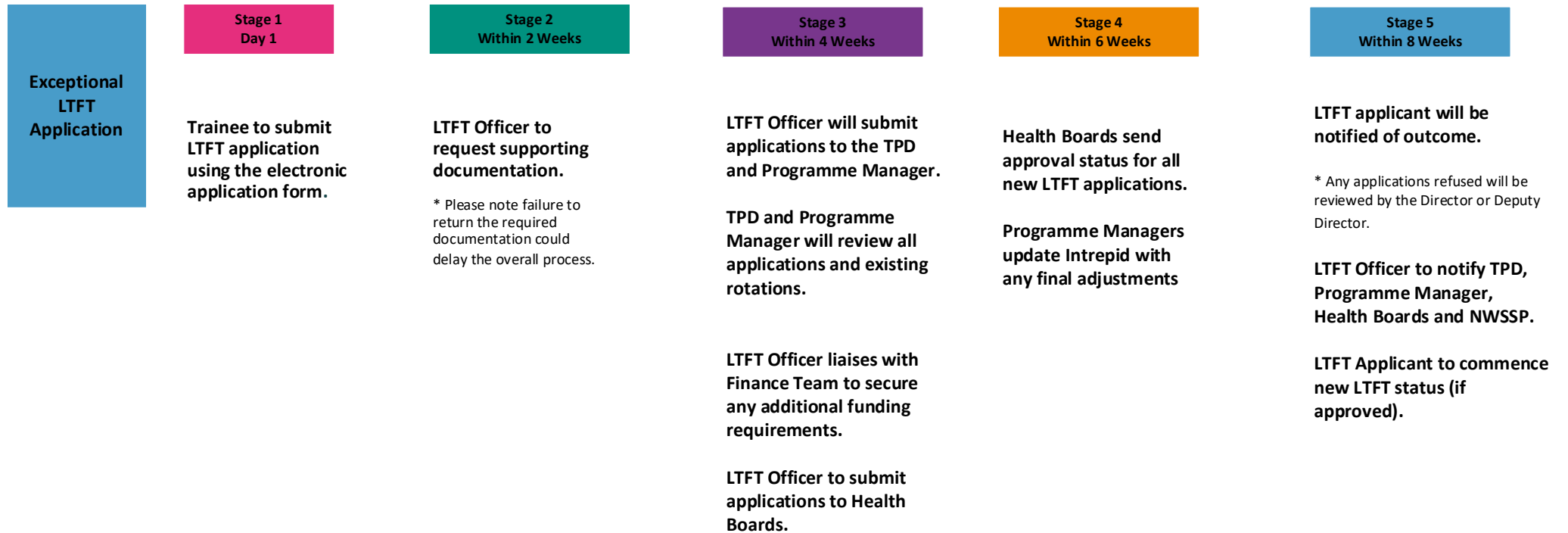
Doctors may wish to appeal the refusal to train LTFT. HEIW will take all reasonable measures to accommodate wishes to train LTFT as outlined in this policy. HEIW are not accountable for host organisations' refusal to accommodate a LTFT Doctor. We will look at alternative solutions (moving placement) to accommodate the request for host refusal. Any trainee who wishes to appeal should contact the HEIW LTFT officer by email. The trainee will be contacted by the Director for Secondary Care or deputy to review the appeal and find a solution.

APPENDIX 1

LTFT Application Window for New Applicants



LTFT Application for Exceptional Applicants



APPENDIX 3

Supporting documentation required for Exceptional Circumstances LTFT requests

Circumstance	Supporting Documentation	Expiry Date of Eligibility
Sudden ill health of applicant	<p>A letter from your GP/ Occupational Health Consultant/ Medical Specialist which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nature of disability/health requirements for LTFT Training <p>It must be on letter-header paper or be from an official email address which can be validated. The letter should be dated within the past 3 months.</p>	Until end of programme
Sudden need to care for ill/disabled partner, relative or other dependent(child)	<p>A letter from your GP or Medical Specialist involved in the care of your partner/relative/dependent which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of care anticipated that you will need to provide. <p>It must be on letter-header paper or be from an official email address which can be validated, dated within the last three months.</p>	Until end of programme

All applications applied for under exceptional circumstances will be reviewed on a yearly basis to assess need to continue in LTFT slot.