

Category 3 Less than full time training (LTFT)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Category 3 LTFT?

Category 3 LTFT is an initiative supported by the Department of Health, HEE, NHS Employers, NHS Improvement, the General Medical Council, the British Medical Association Junior Doctors Committee.

The Category 3 LTFT model is designed to improve wellbeing, reduce attrition and improve the working lives of trainees by offering an opportunity for improved work-life balance over a specific period of time to support trainees post COVID.

Trainees will be able to choose to work LTFT as part of their 'life-style' choice whilst pursuing a productive career in medicine.

It is currently only available to trainees in Emergency Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Paediatrics but will be available to all trainees after full implementation.

Q: What are the features of Category 3 LTFT National model implementation?

Core Features of the Category 3 model implementation are:

1. A 'lead-in' 12 months which allows trainees to undertake a 4-month period at 0.8 WTE (whole time equivalent). This allows 3 possible periods to undertake a 4-month LTFT period. As an example, if rotations occur in August 2021, then the 3 periods will be August to November, December to March and April to July.
2. Following the completion of the 'lead in' year, all specialties will then transition the following year into the full Category 3 whereby trainees can undertake an unspecified period of time as LTFT Category 3 and at percentages of 60% or greater.
3. Trainees accepted to undertake LTFT Category 3 may only do so when there is capacity and agreement by the Training Programme Director or Head of School. Changes should usually align with the rotation date, but this may not be immediately available. Changes should respect Code of Practice requirements.

Q: Why is the Midlands Deviating from the National Model?

Uptake in eligible specialities for Category 3 was low due to a number of factors. In order to avoid similar problems, HEE Midlands has decided to implement Category 3 LTFT for rotations starting in January / February 2022.

To reduce administrative burden on trainees and providers, HEE Midlands is allowing successful applicants to continue in Category 3 from that date onwards (rather than for 4 months) but still at 0.8 wte.

For rotations from August 2022, all eligible and successful trainees can apply for 0.6 or more wte for Category 3.

Q: What % of Whole Time Equivalent (wte) can I apply for?

You can apply to work 80% (0.8) wte for rotation commencing in January / February 2022. All subsequent applicant windows, you can apply for any % above 60 (0.6 wte)

Q: How are applications being managed?

HEE Midlands is using a process to manage capacity and demand for places. There will be a biannual application window to ensure equity for all.

Rotation Date	Application Window
1 st August to 31 st January	Winter / Spring
1 st February to 31 st July	Summer / Autumn

The timelines for each window are determined in advance and updated on the website. Communication to trainees and TPDs will also occur in advance

Q: I am a trainee in Emergency Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology or Paediatrics, will I have to apply for Category 3 LTFT during these application windows.

Yes.

During the implementation phase, you can continue to apply for LTFT as currently that starts before 31st July 2022.

For applications from 1st August 2022 onwards, you will need to follow the biannual application process.

Q: How are the number of spaces for Category 3 LTFT determined?

Your Training Programme Director will examine the overall training programme numbers and training needs to determine how many spaces are available. It is hoped that in the future, the approximate number of Category 3 places will be available for each programme when the application window opens.

Q: I was unsuccessful in my application for Category 3 LTFT for the 'lead-in' year, will I have to apply again.

Yes.

You will have to apply after each unsuccessful application for a substantive Category 3 application.

Q: If unsuccessful in my application for Category 3 LTFT, will my application be ranked higher than other applications.

Yes.

All applications are considered equally according to how many times you have applied. For example, if you have applied 3 times all applications in that category are ranked in that cohort and take precedence over other who have applied only once or twice.

Q: I am on a Tier 2 visa, I am eligible to apply for Category 3 LTFT?

Yes.

You should check that you still meet the requirements for your Tier 2 visa as your income will drop in line with the %wte you work.

Q: If I am successful in my Category 3 LTFT for starting in January / February, can I stay LTFT?

Yes.

HEE Midlands is deviating from National guidance. If you wish to change your % wte, then you will need to apply of a change in %LTFT once agreed by your ES and TPD

Q: If I am unsuccessful in my Category 3 LTFT for starting in January / February, can I reapply in the next window?

Yes.

Q: My circumstances have changed; do I have to wait for the next application window to apply for LTFT?

No.

If your circumstances change so that you are now eligible for Category 1 or 2 LTFT than you may apply for that category at any time.

Q: Are applications for Category 1 and 2 LTFT training affected by these changes.

No.

You may apply as currently.

Q: How are LTFT applications are prioritised for spaces?

Category 1 applications are prioritised above other applications. Category 2 applications are then considered followed by Category 3 in determining training programme capacity for LTFT.

Category 3 LTFT FAQ

All LTFT applications are validated to ensure that they meet the correct criteria and category. Any Category 3 application that appears to fulfil Category 1 or 2 is reviewed by an Associate Dean and confirmed with a trainee and training programme prior to confirmation of eligibility for LTFT.

Q: I have been successful in my Category 3 LTFT application, can I choose when I start and which days to work?

No.

You must agree you're the details of your placement with your employer and Training Programme director to ensure you meet the required training needs and share of clinical duties in and out of hours. This is the same for all LTFT trainees unless there are exceptional reasons, such a health-related issues.

Q: Will applications of Category 3 LTFT be accepted outside of the biannual application windows?

No.

Late applications will not be accepted. If you are struggling to get an ES or TPD signature, please send in any supporting documents from them that are dated within the application window.

Q: I'm not currently in a speciality training programme, can I apply for LTFT?

Yes.

When you apply for a Core or Speciality Training post, you should mark that you wish to start in post as LTFT. All applications, including Category 3, will be assessed should you be successful in obtaining a post. You will have to complete a LTFT application form once you have accepted a post and will need to have your new TPD support the application.