



**THE ASSOCIATION OF ANAESTHETISTS**  
*of Great Britain & Ireland*

Professor Elisabeth Paice  
Dean Director  
The London Deanery  
Stewart House  
32 Russell Square  
London  
WC1B 5DN

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2007

Dear Professor Paice,

I am writing on behalf of the Group of Anaesthetists in Training (GAT) Committee, part of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland. GAT represents the interests of over 95% of trainee anaesthetists in the UK. We have recently become aware from our members of reductions in Study Leave budgets. This has significantly affected attendance at national courses and conferences, including the Royal College of Anaesthetists' Fellowship exam revision courses. In fact, the College is developing an eLearning package which it is envisaged will replace its formal lecture courses. With this in mind, we are concerned it may be generally accepted that the current Study Leave time allowance for trainees is no longer necessary. We feel we must strongly stress the importance of Study Leave for attending courses other than those associated with exams. These allow trainees to develop and enhance their competencies, specialist interests and learn new and valuable practical skills. At a time when some members of the profession are worried about the loss of trainee time as an apprentice, these courses become even more essential.

As you are aware, under paragraph 251 of the Terms and Conditions of Service for junior doctors working in the NHS, it is required that the employing authority grant a Study Leave allowance and associated budget.

In view of this we are writing to ask for your reassurance that Study Leave time granted to trainees will be protected.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Hearn  
GAT Committee