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Nicky is the owner of HR Support Consultancy. She has a BA(Hons) in Business Studies, is a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and has been a practising HR manager for more than 20 years. HR Support Consultancy has provided the BVNA Members Advisory Service (formerly known as the Industrial Relations Service) since it began in 2002.

# I want to leave my practice; they want to charge me for my training

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When your employer pays for a training course for you, they are investing in your development and would normally expect you to bring benefits to them in terms of having more knowledge and skills that you can offer the practice.

You can understand that your employer would not be overjoyed if having paid for your training you then leave and take your new skills elsewhere.

Having an agreement in place is a generally accepted way of protecting this investment and is common practice that will allow your employer to claim back either all or some of the amount they have paid.

For it to be legal, this agreement must be made in advance and it must be documented.

It might be in the employment contract you have agreed with your employer, or it might be a separate agreement. It might be for just training courses or it might include other fees your employer may pay on your behalf (for example your RCVS enrolment or your City and Guilds

registration) so check this carefully when you are signing the agreement so you are fully aware of what is included. You must have signed this agreement for it to be enforced.

It is common practice for there to be a sliding scale of what you are required to repay, for example you *might* have to repay 100% if you leave within one year and 50% if you leave within two years.

Your employer cannot add extras to the amount you must repay. It is possible that they could charge you for internal training, it is not common and would need to be 'reasonable' but again you need to check what has been agreed.

So: the moral is – read what you are signing so you are fully prepared and you don't get a nasty shock should you choose to leave your employer who has paid for some training for you.

For further support with this or any other HR issue, BVNA members can call the BVNA Advisory Service Helpline on 01822 870270 or email [nickyackerley@support-consultancy.co.uk](mailto:nickyackerley@support-consultancy.co.uk).

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