

AHP support worker apprenticeships

Employer guidance 2023



What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes which are designed to help employers train people for specific job roles. Apprentices are employed for the duration of their apprenticeship gaining valuable training whilst working towards a nationally recognised apprenticeship standard.

Apprenticeship qualifications or standards range from levels 2-7. This is the equivalent to GCSE level, up to master's degree level.

Anyone in England aged 16 years old and over, whether employed, unemployed or leaving school, can do an apprenticeship. Whilst there is no upper age limit to apprenticeships, a minimum age limit would apply where there is a statutory / professional body requirement for particular roles to be aged 18 or over.

What are the benefits?

Apprenticeships bring a number of tangible benefits to the NHS and other organisations. They can create skilled, motivated, and qualified employees and, if used properly, can help to address skill shortages across the workforce. Apprenticeships allow employers to diversify and freshen up their workforce. 86% of employers say apprenticeships develop skills relevant to their organisation and 78% reported improved productivity.



Allied Health Professions' support worker apprenticeships

The Allied Health Professions' (AHP) Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework allows employers, networks and systems to effectively plan, develop and deploy support workers within AHP services. It was developed collaboratively by King's College London, Health Education England / NHS England and AHP professional bodies.

The competency, education and career development framework aimed to maximise the contribution of the AHP support workforce to delivering safe and effective care. A key element to achieve this was the standardisation of the Level 3 Senior Healthcare Support Worker apprenticeship (pathways relevant to AHP support workers) and development of AHP profession specific Level 5 Assistant Practitioner apprenticeships for England. Alignment of these apprenticeships to the AHP Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework was paramount and was achieved by mapping the eight domains within the competency framework to the apprenticeship standards.

This employer guidance provides further details on these apprenticeships and quality assured training providers that can offer these programmes, after the completion of a robust national procurement and implementation process.

Apprenticeship funding

How to access funding for apprenticeships

There are three ways to access funding to pay for apprenticeship training. This funding does not cover the apprentice's salary costs.

- 1 Apprenticeship Levy** Employers with a pay bill over £3 million each year, pay the apprenticeship levy. Levy paying employers can spend their apprenticeship levy funding on apprenticeship training.
- 2 Reserve government co-investment** Employers that don't pay the apprenticeship levy can use reserve funding, where the government pays 95% of the training costs and the employer pays the remaining 5%.
- 3 Levy Transfers** Levy paying employers can transfer some of their annual levy to other employers. These transfers cover 100% of the training costs of the apprenticeship (excluding the apprentices salary).

Apprenticeship levy explained

The apprenticeship levy was introduced as a government scheme to fund apprenticeships. Employers with a payroll of more than £3 million must pay a 0.5% levy on their total payroll. The levy is paid monthly through PAYE alongside income tax and national insurance contributions.

Levy contributions appear in a digital account which can be used by the employer to arrange and pay for apprenticeship training. The funds can only be spent on apprenticeship training.

After 24 months any unused levy funds expire and return to the government.

Organisations who don't pay apprenticeship levy

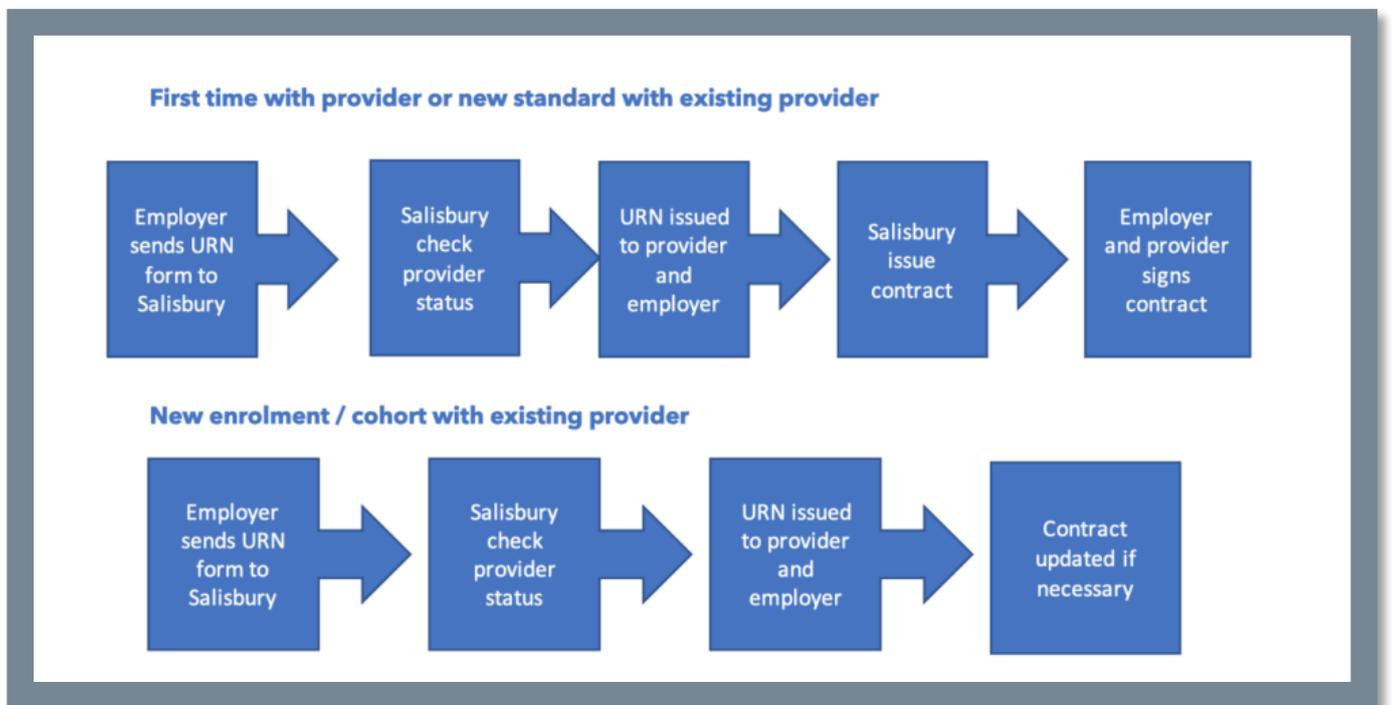
Employers with a payroll under £3 million don't pay the apprenticeship levy, they are called "non-levy paying employers". They can still access apprenticeship funding and can pay 5% of the apprenticeship course cost, whilst the government will cover the remaining 95% through the process of 'co-investment'.

Procurement

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust's Managed Procurement Services, in partnership with Health Education England (now NHS England), conducted a national procurement and implementation process to secure quality assured training providers able to deliver Level 3 and Level 5 apprenticeships that were fit for purpose for the AHP support workforce, aligned to the [AHP Support Worker Competency, Education and Career Development Framework](#). Training providers can be accessed by direct award (by sending a completed URN form to Salisbury) or request a further competition against local criteria run through Salisbury's team.

Employers wishing to access providers should request provider contact details and original bid packs from Salisbury by emailing simon.dennis@nhs.net or sft.commercial@nhs.net

Salisbury will issue a URN Request form – this acts as the Order Form which the employer should complete and return to Salisbury, who will then issue the appropriate contract to the Provider. It is important that employers follow this process in order to be fully protected by NHS Contracts which include the Providers' bid responses and commitments, and to ensure compliance with both their internal procurement requirements and PCR2015.



Course details

Senior Healthcare Support Worker Level 3 apprenticeship

(Apprenticeship Standard ST0217, full details found [here](#)).

- Educational Level: 3
- Typical duration: 24 months
- Maximum levy funding band: £5,000
- Mandatory qualification: Level 3 Diploma in Healthcare Support

The broad purpose of the occupation is to support registered healthcare professionals in the delivery of high quality and compassionate health and care services. A Senior Healthcare Support Worker will provide clinical, therapeutic, or diagnostic care under the direct or indirect supervision of a registered healthcare professional. The relevant pathways that have been standardised for the AHP support workforce are:

Theatre Support: Providing care and support for individuals before, during and after operations as part of the multi-disciplinary theatre team. They will support individuals as they are preparing to go into theatre, reassuring them if they are anxious, and helping them move them back to recovery following their procedure. The perioperative healthcare assistant will support the operating team by checking individuals into the theatre department, preparing equipment, counting swabs or other instruments, and measuring fluids. They may be involved in routine, traumatic and emergency surgery.

Allied Health Profession Therapy Support: Providing care and support for individuals through therapeutic activities as part of a multi-disciplinary team. Illness, disability or a change in life circumstances often means that individuals have to learn or be supported to do things in new and different ways. This can change the pattern of a life-course, but individuals can often expect to regain and enjoy a quality of life with support and rehabilitation. Some individuals may have short-term needs, others may have long-term physical and/or mental ill health or a learning disability that affects their independence, function or way of living. The therapy support worker will be required to work with the individual either on their own or within a group setting. They may also work with others to support the individual e.g., training carers or working with families.

Assistant Practitioner Level 5 (AHP contextualised) apprenticeship

(Apprenticeship Standard ST0215, full details found [here](#)).

- Educational Level: 5
- Typical duration: 24 months
- Maximum levy funding band: £14,000
- Mandatory qualification: Foundation Degree Assistant Practitioner (a specialism may be indicated e.g., mental health, imaging, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, primary care etc).

The broad purpose of the occupation is to work alongside registered healthcare professionals in providing high quality and person-centred compassionate healthcare and support to individuals. Assistant practitioners assist registered healthcare professionals in holistic patient assessment, and in the coordination of care (including referrals to other practitioners) as well as undertaking clinical, diagnostic, and therapeutic activities according to local population and service needs. For example, assistant practitioners working in rehabilitation services work autonomously to order, fit and review equipment, and would fit and review more complex equipment prescribed by the physiotherapist or occupational therapist. A further example is of assistant practitioners working in radiography who take diagnostic images and provide support to help diagnose or treat a patient's illness.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with

- Patients, service users and carers.
- Registered healthcare professionals, for example AHPs, doctors, registered nurses, nursing associates, and healthcare support workers.

- Social care staff including managers, care workers and social workers.
- Administration, management, and other non-clinical staff, such as porters, cleaners, and receptionists.

National Implementation

As part of the national implementation of the Level 5 Assistant Practitioner apprenticeship for the AHP support workforce, nine working groups were formed to develop a 'Assistant Practitioner Skills Framework' for Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Diagnostic Radiography, Therapeutic Radiography, Combined Therapy/Rehab, Dietetics, Theatres and Speech and Language Therapy. Working groups consisted of employers, training providers, support worker and professional bodies.

Training providers will use the relevant 'Assistant Practitioner Skills Framework' to support with their contextualised Assistant Practitioner apprenticeship. The skills frameworks will only be made available to the training providers who were successful during procurement and are listed within this guide.

Course providers

The following providers were awarded as part of a national procurements for AHP support worker apprenticeship standards. These providers have been quality assured by Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust and an expert panel.

Provider	Delivery areas	NHSE Apprenticeship Relationship Manager Region	L3 Delivery	L5 Delivery	Specialisms	L5 Delivery From
Birmingham City	Midlands	Midlands	No	Yes	L5 Dietetics, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, S<, DRAD, TRAD, Theatres	From Sept 23 - Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, TRAD and Theatres From Sept 24 - Dietetics, S<, Physiotherapy
Bournemouth & Poole College	South-West	South-West	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
Bridgewater & Taunton	South-West	South-West	Yes	Yes	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres. L5 OT, Physiotherapy, DRAD, TRAD	From Sept 24 – OT, Physiotherapy, DRAD, TRAD
Chichester College	South-East	South-East	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A

Coventry University	NE&Y, Midlands, London, South-East	Midlands	No	Yes	L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab /Combined therapy, , DRAD, TRAD, S<, Theatres,	Currently offer AP programme with AHP module specific content.
Derby College	Midlands	Midlands	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
Dynamic Training	National L3, For L5 – All regions except SW and NW	National	Yes	Yes	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres. L5 OT, S< and Theatres	From Sept - 24 L5 OT, S< and Theatres
Education Partnership	NE & Yorkshire	NE & Yorkshire	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
Exeter College	South-West	South-West	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
HCRG Care Services	NW, SW, SE and National	National	Yes	No	L3 Therapy route	N/A
Lincolnshire Community Health Services	East of England	Midlands	Yes	No		N/A
Luminate Education/University Centre Leeds	L3 & L5 National	National	Yes	Yes	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres. L5 OT, S<	From Sept 23 – L5 OT, S<

Pier Technology	National	National	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
Plymouth Marjon	South-West	South-West	No	Yes	L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, TRAD, Podiatry, S<, Theatres	From Sept 23 - L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, TRAD, Podiatry, S<, Theatres
Riverside College	North-West	North-West	Yes	No	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres	N/A
Sheffield Hallam	NE & Yorkshire	NE & Yorkshire	No	Yes	L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, Theatres	From Sept -24 L5 OT, Physiotherapy, DRAD, Theatres
South Devon College	South-West	South-West	Yes	Yes	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres. L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, S<, Podiatry, Theatres	From Sept 23 – L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, S<, Podiatry, Theatres
Teesside University	National /NE & Yorkshire	NE & Yorkshire	No	Yes	L5 Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, Theatres.	From Sept 23 – L5 Rehab/Combined

						therapy, DRAD, Theatres.
The Child Care Company	National	National	Yes	No	L3 Adult Nursing and Therapies.	N/A
University of Bedfordshire	Midlands, EOE, London & South-East	East of England	Yes	Yes	L3 Adult, Therapies, Theatres. L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Theatres, Rehab/Combined therapy	From Sept 24 – L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Theatres, Rehab/Combined therapy
University of Bolton	National/North-West	North-West	No	Yes	L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, S<, Theatres.	From Sept 23 – L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, Rehab/Combined therapy, S<, Theatres.
University of Central Lancashire	NE & Y, Midlands, North-West	North-West	No	Yes	L5 OT, Rehab/Combined therapy, Physiotherapy, Theatres	From Sept 23 - L5 OT, Rehab/Combined therapy, Physiotherapy, Theatres
University of Derby	National	Midlands	No	Yes	L5 OT, Rehab/Combined therapy, DRAD, Theatres	Sept 23 & Jan 24

University of Essex	East of England	East of England	No	Yes	L5 OT & S<	From Sept 23 – L5 OT & S<
University of West London	London South/South-East	London & South-East	No	Yes	L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Theatres, Rehab/Combined therapy	From Sept 23 – L5 OT, Physiotherapy, Theatres, Rehab/Combined therapy
University of Worcester	Midlands, South-west	Midlands	No	Yes	L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, DRAD	From Sept 24 – L5 Dietetics, OT, Physiotherapy, DRAD
Weston College	South-West	South-West	Yes	Yes	L5 OT, Physiotherapy	From Sept 24 – L5 OT, Physiotherapy

Frequently asked questions

Can part time staff undertake the apprenticeship?

Yes, part time staff can undertake the apprenticeship. If an apprentice works less than 30 hours per week the apprenticeship duration will be extended accordingly.

Can I use apprenticeship funding to pay for my apprentices' salary?

Apprenticeship levy, reservations and transfers do not cover salary costs your organisation will need to fund the apprentice's salary.

What does "off the job training" mean?

20% off the job training is the minimum amount of time that should be spent on occupational off-the-job training during an apprenticeship. Off-the-job training is a statutory requirement for an apprenticeship. It is training, which is received by the apprentice, during the apprentice's normal working hours for the purpose of achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the approved apprenticeship referenced in the apprenticeship agreement.

Links and resources

- [Allied Health Profession's Support Worker Competency, Education, and Career Development Framework.](#)
- [AHP support workforce apprenticeship webpage](#)
- [Healthcare Apprenticeship Standards online \(HASO\)](#)
- [How to have Apprenticeship conversations with your board](#)
- [Apprenticeship FAQ's](#)
- [What apprenticeships are and how to use them](#)
- [RPL / APEL guidance](#)
- [Small employers – how to reserve funding](#)
- [Skills for Life](#)
- [English and maths functional skills guidance for employers](#)
- [What is 20% off the job training](#)
- [AHP Job Families](#)