Advancing Practice Handbook

2021/22

 HEE SW

This pack is for Advanced Practitioner trainees, educational supervisors, AP Leads, and anyone interested in implementing AP in their organisation.

The following is a set of frequently asked questions and answers to assist employers in South West to complete the 2021/22 AP Demand Survey and put forward their expressions of interest for Advanced Practitioner (AP) funding in 2021/22.

If you have other questions not included in this document and need an answer prior to submitting an application, please contact advancingpractice.sw@hee.nhs.uk

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Section 1 - Advanced Practitioners and Trainees

**Q1. What is an Advanced Practitioner (AP)?**

**Answer:** Advanced Practice (AP) is delivered by experienced, registered health care practitioners. It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This is underpinned by a master’s level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education and research, with demonstration of area specific clinical competence. APs come from a range of professional backgrounds such as Nursing, Pharmacy, Paramedics and Occupational Therapy. The [AP Multi-Professional Framework](http://news.hee.nhs.uk/_act/link.php?mId=AT910048471681451098933716313711&tId=309995815) provides a clear and consistent approach to the development of advanced practice across England.

**Q2. Is an AP a specialist practitioner?**

**Answer:** No, Advanced Practice is quite different from specialist practice. Specialists are experts in their chosen clinical area, for example in diabetes or asthma care and have a **depth** of knowledge in that specific area. APs have a **breadth** of knowledge and work across traditional professional boundaries. Services may need both specialist clinicians and Advanced Practitioners to provide good care to patients.

**Q3. What is a trainee AP?**

**Answer:** A trainee AP is an experienced healthcare professional employed in a funded training post specifically to undertake the required training to work at the level of Advanced Practice. The training comprises study at master’s level (level 7) and work-based learning to develop competence across all four pillars of the AP Multi-professional Framework.

**Q4. What learning can a trainee AP expect to receive?**

**Answer:** The timetables and study time required will vary according to the training route and the specific Higher Education Institution (HEI) but all trainees will need periods of study leave to attend university and will be required to produce course work, undertake work-based assessments and produce a portfolio of evidence. Trainees may also benefit from rotations or placements in other areas within the organisation to gain the required breadth of experience.

**Q5. What commitment is expected of the trainee AP whilst studying?**

**Answer:** Trainees are required to attend university teaching days, practise clinical skills in their workplace and complete work-place based assessments of competencies. They will also need time to meet their supervisor regularly to plan their individual educational needs and monitor their progress. The requirements of supervisors are explained in more detail in the [HEE AP Toolkit](https://cs1.e-learningforhealthcare.org.uk/public/ACP/ACP_01_001/index.html#/). It is expected that each trainee will dedicate many hours to independent study in order to become successful in achieving the qualification. The notional number of hours of study and teaching expected is approximately 100 hours per 10 academic credits (which includes both contact hours and independent study hours) however, the actual time spent may be more, or less, dependent on individual learners. It is therefore important for AP trainees have sufficient work-based learning time to develop their advanced skills.

**Q6. How much time will the trainee AP be away from their job studying?**

**Answer:** For trainees on the apprenticeship programme, generally, 80% of an apprentice’s time will be training in the workplace with 20% at the education provider. For trainees on the PGDip Advanced Practice Programme, employers are expected to provide the trainee with sufficient study leave and protected time for work-based learning per week. The education provider programme lead will provide information on the total amount of study days required. For trainees who are not registered on a full programme and only require top-up modules, the time required for study leave will vary according to individual need.

**Q7. I understand AP training can include a Non-Medical Prescribing (NMP) element, what happens if I already have it or I don’t need it?**

**Answer:** If a student already has the NMP qualification or doesn't need it the training provider is likely to provide a choice of module(s) that the student can undertake instead and agree this with their employer.

**Q8. What supervision is required?**

**Answer:** Good supervision is a key factor for successful completion of training and trainees who are not well supervised can struggle and some have dropped out. Each trainee AP requires a named supervisor who has completed training in multi-professional supervision and is familiar with the requirements of advanced clinical practice. Supervisors must be willing and have protected time (in their job plan) to support the trainee. National guidance on supervision in AP was launched in 2020 and can be accessed here: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/advanced-practice/reports-publications/workplace-supervision-advanced-clinical-practice>

Section 2 – HEE Funding and Support

**Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee AP, what is HEE SW funding offer ?**

**Answer:** HEE is supporting the development of AP roles and aims to offer a package of funding and support for AP trainees. There are three AP training pathways and employers are invited to complete our demand scoping exercise to support us in developing Regional commissioning post 2021/22 to support delivery of this.

In 2021/22 as an interim and, subject to budget signoff, this scoping will also be used to provide funding as detailed.

1. **AP MSc Qualification** – Funding for tuition fees for a period of up to three years for an Advanced Practice Programme. HEE will pay the full tuition costs plus a supervision fee equivalent to £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer.
2. **AP Apprenticeship** – Funding for a national Level 7 Advanced Practice Apprenticeship programme that has a typical length of 36 months is paid via the apprenticeship route. HEE will provide a supervision fee equivalent to £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer. If an education provider is charging a top up fee to the levy funding, organisations should contact HEE and this will be dealt with on an individual basis.
3. **AP Top Up Modules - Part Qualified Staff** – There is the possibility of funding for completion of up to 2 top up Level 7 modules associated with the MSc Advanced Practice programme to achieve the full AP framework. Top-up modules must be completed within the academic year, no further funding will be committed. HEE will fund tuition costs directly to the education provider post 2021/22 (to employer 2021/22) for staff that have existing academic and workplace capabilities and that can be further supported to achieve the full AP requirements (up to Master’s level). This is in recognition that a number of students do not need to embark on the full apprenticeship or Master’s programme to achieve all the learning they need to operate as an AP.

Funding for single modules will not be provided unless it is clearly demonstrated that such completes an AP pathway. Top-up modules must be completed within the academic year, no further funding will be committed. **Alternative CPD funding must be used to support standalone modules for individuals who are not completing a full AP pathway**.

**Q10. I am considering employing a trainee AP, why would I choose the Apprenticeship route rather than the existing MSc Advanced Practice Programme?**

**Answer:** HEE funding for Advanced Practice programmes is limited and therefore levy paying employers are encouraged to adopt the apprenticeship programme and consider apprenticeships as their primary option. This will enable support to be provided for an increased number of applicants. To view the Apprenticeship Standard for an Advanced Practitioner, click [here](https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017.11.14-Advanced-Clinical-Practice-Apprenticeship-Standard-Final.pdf). Employers should ensure that individuals put on to an apprenticeship route are committed to completing the full programme.

HEE will provide a Training Grant to employers which will include a supervision fee to support employers with the delivery of the AP programme where this is agreed through the commissioning process. If undertaking a ‘top-up’ route there will be no education supervision fee.

**Overview of funding**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training Pathway** | **Training Grant (Including ES Fee)** | **Tuition Fees** | **Education Supervision Fee****(ES Fee)** |
| AP MSc Qualification | Yes | Full tuition fees paid to the education provider for a period of up to 3 years practice to be deducted from the Training Grant. | £2,500 per annum |
| AP Apprenticeship | Yes | Paid through the apprenticeship levy | £2,500 per annum |
| AP Top-up modules | No | Tuition fees employer reimbursed (2021/22)/paid to education provider (2022/23) for named modules agreed between HEE and the employer. Modules must be completed within a single academic year and must enable the trainee to fully meet the AP/MSc Multi-Professional AP Framework | No |

**Q11. What is the supervision fee and what is the responsibility of the employer on receiving this?**

**Answer:** A £2,500 supervision fee is available to support trainees on a full AP pathway, to contribute to organisational costs of supporting an AP. It is based on the equivalent cost of 0.25PA at consultant level per week.

A lack of support often results either in individuals withdrawing from the programme or seeking alternative employment; employers should consider whether they can fully support individuals before seeking funding for training.

The supervision fee should be used to support the employer in relation to the associated costs in helping the employee achieve their qualification. A data validation exercise will take place between education providers and HEE to confirm enrolled students.

* Trusts: The fee will be paid directly to the employer after an individual has enrolled and started the programme, based on the validation exercise.
* Primary Care: Training Hubs should invoice HEE for the supervision fees for their geographical footprint, and then reimburse the employing practice for each AP trainee.

The expectations of employers in return for the supervision fee are:

* Principles of the [HEE Quality Framework](https://www.hee.nhs.uk/our-work/quality) should be in place for all learners.
* Sufficient study leave for university training. It is not acceptable for AP trainees to be taking unpaid or annual leave for dedicated training days.
* Supervision provided by an appropriately trained supervisor. The expectation is that AP trainees will have 0.25PA (1 hour) of supervision per week over the course of their training.
* Inclusion of postgraduate medical education department in discussion of supervision where appropriate to enable suitable job-planning.
* Sufficient work-based learning opportunities to gain clinical competence at an advanced level.
* Appropriate governance in place in line with the Multi-Professional Advanced Practice Framework.
* Learners should be encouraged to complete NETS survey.
* Ensure that the supervision funding reporting form 2020/21 is fully completed and returned to HEE (this is to be sent later in the year).

The supervision fee must not be used for equipment or capital costs.

At the end of the year, employers will be required to report on their use of the supervision fee in meeting these expectations. Where the expectations are not met, funding may be discontinued and where there is a pattern within an employer of AP trainees not being supported appropriately, future funding for AP may be fully withdrawn from the employer.

**Q12. How is the supervision fee calculated for part time staff?**

**Answer:** All employers receive the same amount of supervision fee per learner irrespective of whether the student is working full time or part time. This is because both the apprenticeship and MSc programmes, generally require the student to work for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

**Q13.** **Can a trainee fund their own AP programme?**

**Answer:** For most trainees, self-funding a Masters level AP programme is not recommended for several reasons. Advanced practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as a strategic plan, rather than individuals self-funding their own development. In addition, the availability of places on AP programmes is co-ordinated by universities in conjunction with HEE and it cannot be guaranteed that places will be available for applicants who are self-funding.

**Q14. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee AP?**

**Answer:** For the apprenticeship programme it is a minimum of 30 hours per week. For the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Programme, this will differ at each University but again, this will generally be a minimum of 30 hours. If the employer is recruiting a new person as a trainee AP, then it is suggested they are recruited on a minimum contract of 30 hours. For existing employees, if they work less than 30 hours per week, please contact the relevant programme lead at the education provider to discuss their suitability for the programme.

**Q15. Which organisations can apply for funding?**

**Answer:** NHS organisations such as Trusts and GP Practices (via their Training Hub or PCN) in the HEE SW region are invited to submit their expressions of interest for AP training for new learners.

**Q16. Is this funding for new or existing employees and does HEE have a preference?**

**Answer:** The funding offer is for both new and existing NHS staff and HEE welcome applications for both. However, for employers who are planning on recruiting a new member of staff, it is recommended financial commitment for the recruitment is obtained as soon as possible and with plenty of time prior to the education providers admissions process.

The employer should provide assurance that there will be an AP post on completion of training, demonstrated in the service/division establishment by way of a job description or job plan, to avoid investing in the upskilling of staff who cannot then put their advanced skills into practice. Organisations are asked to confirm if a job description or job plan is in place when submitting their expressions of interest.

Section 3 – Education Provider’s and Student Support

**Q17. What education provider’s in the SW region can individuals’ study at?**

**Answer:** A list of education provider’s that provide AP MSc programmes in the SW region is shown below and in the embedded document in Q19. Please note it is not a list of recommended education providers and is not an exhaustive list of education providers offering AP programmes. It is possible for learners to study at other education providers not included in the list if this is the preference.

* Bournemouth University
* University of Exeter
* University of Gloucestershire
* University of Plymouth

University West of England (UWE)

When completing the expressions of interest application, organisations are asked to indicate their preferred education provider for delivery of training. Please note that this does not guarantee placements with education providers. It provides HEE with an indication of demand for education provider courses across the SW.

If funding is agreed by HEE, individuals are responsible for successfully applying to the education provider programmes on a first come first served basis. Funding will then be paid from HEE to the employer for 21/22 and from 22/23 directly to the education providers unless there are exceptional circumstances.

**Q18. What are the education provider’s admission requirements for a trainee AP?**

**Answer:** We would recommend checking with the education provider directly on their specific entry requirements, which can often be found on their website. A list of courses in the South West with an indication of entry requirements can also be found in the embedded document below, however this is subject to change, so please check with the education provider before applying. Entry requirements will likely consider; current professional registration, significant post-registration experience of professional practice, evidence the employee is / will be operating in a role that will offer the opportunity to practice at an advanced level within their profession and evidence of professional and academic development, including any international qualifications and levels of English and Maths.



**Q19. What support can trainee APs expect during their study?**

**Answer:** All education provider programmes will be taught by lecturers and expert clinical practitioners in their field who will offer dedicated academic support and guidance and students will be allocated a named personal tutor. The education provider also offers support through a dedicated librarian and a comprehensive student support service. Students also find their cohort of colleagues of immeasurable value as a support network. In the case of failing students, the matter would be discussed with the student in the first instance.

A standardised e-portfolio for AP trainees is currently in a feasibility study phase and is not available to access as yet. This is being looked at in the first instance for equivalence route entry.

**Q20. What happens if the employee discontinues their AP programme before it is completed?**

**Answer:** It is recognised, from time to time, some students may have to suspend their study e.g. for long term sickness, personal reasons etc. Where a student is discontinuing their studying but will be returning to complete this and have indicated the timescales to the education provider, this is called ‘stepping off’ and HEE will consider resuming funding when the student returns to study. However, these are reviewed on a case-by-case basis as it is dependent on whether the student is able to complete the course within the timescales available on their return.

Where a student is not returning to study, HEE will discontinue the clinical supervision fee at the point they leave the programme. In all circumstances HEE should be informed immediately by contacting advancingpractice.sw@hee.nhs.uk.

There are implications on the use of levy funding for not continuing an apprenticeship programme and these should be discussed on a case by case basis.

**Q21. What happens if the trainee AP leaves the employer that HEE is currently funding, for another employer?**

**Answer:** All such instances will be looked at on a case by case basis and no guarantee of continued funding can be provided to either the employer or employee. However, in reviewing the situation, HEE would first consider how it can continue funding the current employer who was granted the funding for a trainee AP and where that is not possible look to see how the trainee AP can continue to be supported.

Section 4 – HEE Funding Application Process

**Q22. How do I submit an expression of interest (EOI)?**

**Answer:** Please complete the EOI survey via this [link](https://healtheducationyh.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/ap-demand-survey-copy) by Friday 18th June 2021. The template must be fully completed; and in order of priority. Where information is missing requests may not be further considered. Following submission HEE will review the indicative demand against the criteria outlined in this letter and within the form.

You will be contacted separately with confirmation of any new 2021/22 funding and continuing students.

We will in 2022/23 undertake a similar survey in March / April to establish the demand at that time and seek EOI for funding support in 2022/23.

**Q23. Who should complete the application?**

**Answer:** HEE requires a single AP lead (or an individual responsible for AP with an organisation) contact for each employer (or PCN) to submit applications for this funding. This person will act as the key liaison for all enquiries relating to the applications for funding being applied for. This is to ensure there has been appropriate scrutiny applied to the application including agreement for recruitment (where needed) and alignment with organisational workforce development needs. Applications from individuals seeking funding will not be accepted, if not submitted through the organisation AP lead.

**Q24. What happens after I have submitted my application?**

**Answer:** HEE will review all expressions of interest and the indicative demand. Funding will be confirmed where possible, depending on the allocated budget. It may not be possible to provide funding for all applications received. Successful applications must include the student names and professions so that a validation exercise can take place with the education providers.

**Q25. What if I am successful in obtaining funding but then unable to employ the trainee AP in time?**

**Answer:** You must inform HEE as soon as possible so that the funding place can be reallocated to another employer.