

Advanced Clinical Practice Programme Handbook 2022/23



HEE London

This information is for Advanced Practitioner trainees, 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 London to put forward their expressions of interest for Advanced Practitioner (AP) funding in 2022/23.

If you have other questions not included in this document and need an answer prior to applying, please contact ACPenquirieslondon@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, Midwifery, Pharmacy, and the Allied Health Professions. The [ACP Multi-Professional Framework](#) provides a clear and consistent approach to the development of advanced clinical 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 competencies in that specific area. APs have a **breadth** of competencies and capabilities that extend across the four pillars of advanced practice (clinical practice, leadership & management, education, research). It should however be noted that APs may work in either generalist or specialist areas of practice and the two roles are therefore not mutually exclusive.

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 (academic level 7) and work-based learning to develop competence across all four pillars of the ACP Multi-professional Framework.

Q4. What learning can a trainee ACP 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 workplace-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 ACP Toolkit](#). It is expected that each trainee will dedicate many hours to independent study 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 HEI. For trainees on an MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Programme, employers are expected to provide the trainee with sufficient study leave for university-based modules and protected time for work-based learning each week. The HEI 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 ACP 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 workplace-based supervision is a key factor for successful completion of ACP training. Trainees who are not well supervised can struggle and some have failed to complete their programmes. Each trainee AP requires a named workplace supervisor who can undertake multi-professional supervision and is familiar with the learning requirements of advanced practice. Supervisors must have protected time in their job plan to support the trainee. National guidelines on Advanced Practice supervision were published in 2020 and can be accessed here: [National Guidance](#)

The expectation is that AP trainees will have supervision over the course of their training adhering to the principles of the [HEE Quality Framework](#), [Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework](#) and [Minimum standards for supervision](#) for all learners.

Section 2 – HEE Funding and Support

Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee AP, what is HEE London's funding offer in 22/23?

Answer: HEE is supporting the development of AP roles in 22/23 by offering a package of funding and support for trainees. There are three ACP training pathways and employers are invited to put forward requests for funding under the training pathways outlined below. There is the intention, subject to budget signoff, to provide funding as detailed:

- **ACP MSc Qualification** – Funding for tuition fees for a period of up to three years for an Advanced Clinical Practice Programme. HEE will pay the full tuition costs directly to the HEI. In addition, HEE offer a supervision grant of £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer. The purpose of the grant is to support APs with workplace-based supervision and assessment.
- **ACP Apprenticeship** – For organisations who utilise the apprenticeship levy for funding of programme fees, HEE's contribution to workplace supervision will be increased to £6,000. This is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2022/23 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled.
- **ACP Top-Up Modules** Only top-up module requests for conversion of HEE-funded PGDip's to the full MSc will be funded by HEE London. Any requests for stand-alone modules that could complete established ACPs' mapping of capabilities against the domains of the Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice would be directed to the national e-Portfolio (Supported) Route process to receive recognition by the Centre of Advancing Practice.
- **Speciality Advanced Practice Programmes:** This funding is available where is it clearly demonstrated that the completion of a speciality MSc programme will meet a specific workforce need that cannot be met by current generic ACP pathways.
- In order to provide this assurance, the employer, supported by the ICS, will be required to submit a business case outlining the workforce development plan, the speciality training need of the AP workforce as well as outlines of job descriptions confirming the roles available to trainees on completion of their speciality programme that fully map to the domains of the Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice. The employer will also be required to attend one of the drop-in sessions that will be made available during the demand process, to discuss the request with the faculty.

The requests for funded training places will be prioritised in the following order (please see table below), with each subsequent level of prioritisation only supported where budgetary capacity can support demand:

| Priority | Description |
|----------|---|
| 1 | places on Centre-accredited ACP programmes (MSc or apprenticeship) |
| 2 | places on non-accredited legacy ACP programmes (MSc or apprenticeship) |
| 3 | top-up modules required to convert a HEE-funded ACP PGDip to a full MSc |
| 4 | places on non-standard HEI programmes that fulfil a specific ACP workforce development need and whose curricula can be mapped against the four pillars of advanced practice |

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

Answer: HEE funding for Advanced Clinical Practice programmes is limited and therefore levy paying employers are encouraged to utilise apprenticeship programmes where available and consider this training pathway as their primary option. This will enable support to be provided for an increased number of applicants, and access to a higher supervision fee of £6,000 a year. **This supervision fee is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2022/23 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled.** To view the Apprenticeship Standard for an Advanced Practitioner, click [here](#). Employers should ensure that individuals put on to an apprenticeship route are committed to completing the full programme.

Where it has been agreed through the commissioning process, HEE will provide a supervision fee as outlined in Q9 to support employers with the delivery of the ACP programme.

Overview of 2022/23 funding

| Training pathway | Tuition fees | Supervision fee |
|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| ACP MSc Qualification | Full tuition fees paid to the HEI for a period of up to 3 years practice. | £2,500 |
| ACP Apprenticeship | N/A (paid by the employer through the apprenticeship levy) | £6000 |
| ACP Portfolio Route: Top-up modules | Tuition fees paid to the HEI for named modules as agreed between HEE and the employer. Modules must be completed within the academic year and must upskill the individual to fully meet the Multi-Professional ACP Framework | N/A |

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

Answer: A £2,500 per annum, per trainee supervision fee is available for those on a full ACP MSc that is funded by HEE. This offer is to support organisational costs of supporting an ACP with workplace-based supervision and assessment. For organisations who utilise the apprenticeship levy for funding of programme fees, HEE’s contribution to workplace supervision will be increased to £6,000. This is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2022/23 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled. A data validation exercise will take place between HEIs and HEE to confirm enrolled students. Where a student expects their programme to be undertaken for a longer period of time, the student and employer are advised to contact the Faculty to discuss this further, as we cannot guarantee the payment of a supervision fee for longer than a three-year period.

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 HEIs 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:

- Should be able to articulate a *clear case for the AP role*, demonstrating that it is an organisational priority in line with their workforce transformation plans and service requirements.
- Should, wherever possible, be able to articulate how new AP numbers connect to system level recovery priorities
- Should be able to provide assurance that there will be *an AP post on completion of training*. This is necessary to avoid investing in the upskilling of staff who cannot then put their advanced skills into practice.
- Must *identify an appropriately trained supervisor* who will be able to apply the [Principles of Workplace Supervision](#) and the [Minimum standards for supervision](#)
- The expectation is that AP trainees will have supervision over the course of their training adhering to the principles of the [HEE Quality Framework](#), Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework and The [Minimum standards for supervision](#) for all learners. This should include provision of a suitable workplace-based learning environment and opportunities to gain competence across the 4 pillars of advanced practice (clinical practice, leadership/management, research, and education).
- Provide sufficient study leave for university training. It should not be expected that AP trainees take unpaid or annual leave for dedicated training days.
- Encourage trainees to complete HEE's [National Education and Training Survey \(NETS\)](#)
- Ensure that the supervision funding reporting form 2022/23 is fully completed and returned to HEE (this will 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 ACP programme?

Answer: For most trainees, self-funding a Master's level ACP programme is not recommended for several reasons. Advanced clinical practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as part of a strategic plan, rather than individuals self-funding their own professional development. In addition, the availability of places on ACP 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 ACP?

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 HEI 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) in the HEE London region are invited to submit their expressions of interest for ACP 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 HEI 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.

Q17. What about continuing AP trainees?

Answer: Due to the changes in the commissioning process in 2021/22 academic year, continuing students who were previously funded to PGDip level will be given the option to transfer onto the Master's pathway, with an option of taking a 12 month deferral. Continuing students will be reviewed separately through our monitoring process with HEIs, who will confirm which students are still on their programmes. The supervision fee will be made available to students for up to 3 years only, until the completion of the ACP MSc.

Section 3 – HEI's and Student Support

Q18. At which HEIs in the London region can individual's study?

Answer: A prospectus of HEI's providing ACP programmes in the London region is **included in the email you will have received inviting your expression of interest**. This should be viewed prior to making an application. Please note it is not a list of recommended HEIs and is not an exhaustive list of HEIs offering ACP programmes. It is possible for learners to study at other HEIs not included in the list if this is the preference.

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

If funding is agreed by HEE, individuals are responsible for successfully applying to the HEI programmes on a first come first served basis. Funding will then be paid from HEE to HEIs directly unless there are exceptional circumstances or if the HEI out of the London region.

Q19. What are the HEIs' admission requirements for a trainee ACP?

Answer: Basic entry requirements for HEI courses can be found in the **ACP Prospectus 2022/23**. We would also recommend checking with the HEI directly on their specific requirements, which can often be found on their website. Entry requirements will likely consider previous academic qualifications, 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.

Q20. What support can trainee APs expect during their study?

Answer: All HEI 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 HEIs also offer 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.

Q21. What happens if the employee discontinues their ACP 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, change of employment, personal reasons etc. Where a student discontinues their studies but will be returning to complete them and have indicated the timescales to the HEI, 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 ACPenquirieslondon@hee.nhs.uk.

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

Q22. 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

Q23. How do I submit an expression of interest?

Answer: All expressions of interest are required to be submitted via the template that HEE will share directly with organisations. Templates which are not completed fully will not be accepted.

Applications open on **Thursday 10th March 2022** and the deadline for submissions is **Friday 15th April 2022**.

In order to support organisations with their workforce planning, HEE have developed the Readiness Checklist to assist you in considering the infrastructure needed to fully support ACP trainees.

The funding application processes is outlined in Appendix 1.

Q24. 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 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's AP lead.

Q25. 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 within two weeks of the submission deadline, depending on the allocated budget for the current financial year. It may not be possible to provide funding for all applications received and where you are not successful, you will be notified. Successful applications must include the student names and professions so that a validation exercise can take place with the HEIs.

Q26. 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.

Appendix 1 – HEE Funding Application Process



| Contact | Role | Contact details |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| Nora Ponnusamy | Advancing Practice Project Manager | ACPenquirieslondon@hee.nhs.uk |
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