

# Advanced Practice in the South West Region

A guide to implementing advanced  
practice and funding offer 2026-2027

NHS England South West Faculty for Advanced Practice.

# About the South West Faculty

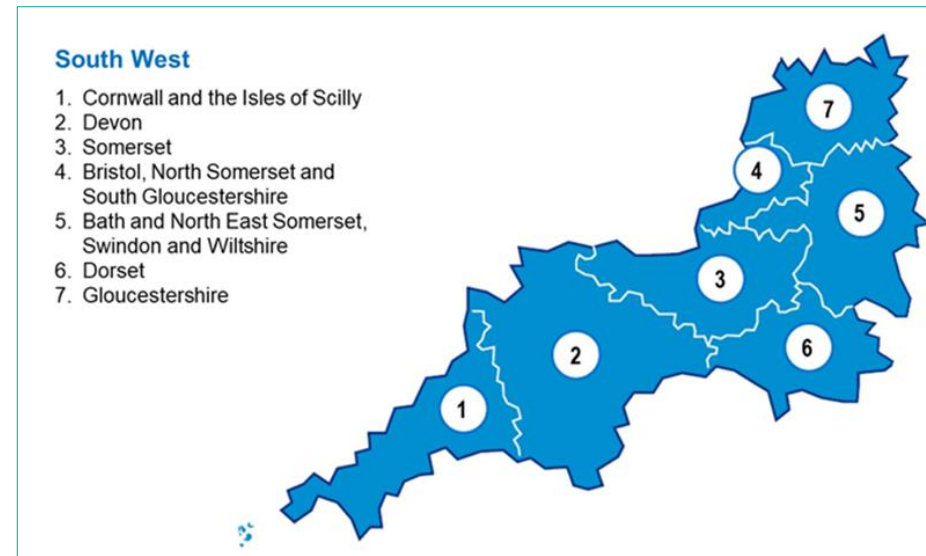
The South West Faculty for Advanced Practice was established in August 2020, with the aim of providing support and guidance to aspiring, trainee and current advanced practitioners, their supervisors and employing organisations, as well as Integrated Care Boards. We recognise the impact that advanced practice can have on workforce transformation, providing highly skilled staff that can drive service redesign, deliver high-quality patient care, and improve outcomes. The function of our Faculty is to lead and promote advanced practice as part of national and regional workforce solutions and to support delivery of employer demand for AP training.

[You can find out more about the South West Faculty, listen to our podcasts and read our advanced practice case studies and find out about our latest news and upcoming events via our webpage:](#)



This handbook is a live document that is updated regularly. If you have queries about anything in this document, you can get in touch with the South West Faculty via this email address: [england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net](mailto:england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net)

The South West region includes Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (CloS), Devon, Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSG), Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW), Dorset, Gloucestershire.



# Foreword

**This South West Advanced Practice guidance is to support organisations in our region to develop Advanced Practice across services and to help build the South West Advanced Practice workforce of the future.**

Since its establishment in August 2020/21, the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice has made significant progress in highlighting the value of developing Advanced Practice roles within all our South West systems and providers. To date we have supported over 250 trainees to complete their NHSE accredited Advanced Practice MSc to become qualified Advanced Practitioners within our SW workforce, as well as currently supporting a further over 600 SW AP trainees.

Our investment is aligned with National and Regional Delivery and Workforce Planning to ensure that across the South West this development is responsive to system and provider needs and will deliver the right numbers of staff, with the right skills, values and behaviours, at the right time and in the right place to deliver high quality care to our South West population. To this end, we will continue to work in collaboration with our Integrated Care Systems and provider organisations, alongside other NHSE teams to identify workforce demand, enable the transformation of patient care and invest wisely in workforce, training and education.

Central to all this will be assuring the quality of advanced practice training and education by supporting the development of accredited advanced practice programmes and pathways, highlighting the supervisory needs of



learners, supporting supervisors and ensuring that quality and governance standards are embedded in all we do.

The NHS 10 Year Health Plan has outlined the need to embrace multidisciplinary models of care, as well as the necessity to do things differently to meet population health needs in a sustainable manner. Advanced Practitioners are a key element in this transformation, their growth within the workforce being quality assured going forward will benefit services across community, primary and secondary care and wider, across all scopes of practice.

We thank all our external and internal partners for their engagement in this ongoing development and we look forward to continuing to work with all on building the workforce of the future delivering a shared vision of better care and better careers for all.

**Lisa Munro-Davies MD FRCS FRCM**

Clinical Lead NHSE South West Faculty of Advanced Practice



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**The following is a set of frequently asked questions and information that may help support development of Advanced Practice in the South West region.**

**This includes completion of the 2026/2027 Faculty for Advanced Practice Annual Demand Survey which allows organisations to express their interest in funding for training Advanced Practitioners in 2026/2027.**

If you have a question that is not included in, or about this document please contact the South West Faculty here;  
[england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net](mailto:england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net)

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# Section 1 – Introducing Advanced Practice



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## What is Advanced Practice?

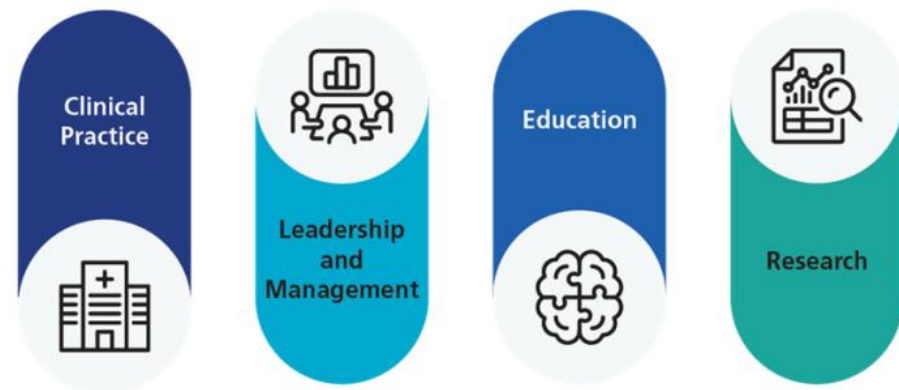
**Answer:** Advanced practice is delivered by accomplished registered health and care professionals. It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and designated responsibility for complex decision making. This is underpinned by a post-registration master's level award or equivalent undertaken by an experienced practitioner that encompasses all four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research.

Advanced practice embodies the ability to manage care in partnership with individuals, families, and carers. It includes the analysis and synthesis of complex problems, and management of clinical risk and uncertainty across a range of settings, enabling innovative solutions to expedite access to care, optimise people's experiences, and improve outcomes



## What is an NHS England recognised Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** An NHS England recognised Advanced Practitioner is a statutory registered healthcare professional whose role is characterised by a high degree of autonomy, complex decision making, analysis and synthesis of complex problems, and the ability to complete whole episodes of care. They work at level 7 across all 4 pillars of Advanced Practice, meeting the capabilities outlined in the [Multi-Professional Framework](#), in line with their service requirements and local population needs.



NHS England recognised advanced practitioners will have completed either an [NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice accredited MSc Advanced Practice programme](#) or achieved educational equivalence recognition via the [NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice ePortfolio \(supported Route\)](#) gaining their [Digital Badge](#). Digital badges standardise recognition of the quality assurance of advanced practice education, training, and experience, in line with the [Multi-Professional Framework](#).

## Which Professions are eligible to train as an Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** There are 9 statutory regulators of health and care professionals in England overseen by the Professional Standards Authority for Healthcare and Social Care (PSA). Some other professions are not regulated by law, but registered by 'accredited registers' also overseen by the PSA.

The advanced practice development activities of the Centre for Advancing Practice and the regional faculties focus on the statutory regulated professions and the delivery of NHS-funded and other publicly funded services.

Advanced practice training does not relate to all groups that come under statutory regulation (for example, pharmacy technicians, and nursing associates and other associate professions).

The statutory regulators that oversee professional backgrounds who can train as advanced practitioners are:

- Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- General Optical Council (GOC)
- The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
- General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC)
- Social Work England

## Is an Advanced Practitioner a Specialist or Enhanced-Level Practitioner?

**Answer:** Advanced Practice is different from Specialist/Enhanced Level Practice. Specialist/Enhanced Level Practitioners are experts in their chosen clinical area and work predominantly within the clinical pillar, they have a depth of knowledge in that specific area. Advanced practitioners have a breadth of knowledge that extends across the four pillars at level 7 (clinical, research, education and leadership). Services need both Specialist/Enhanced-Level Practitioners, alongside Advanced Practitioners to provide optimum care to patients.

Specialist/Enhanced and Advanced Practitioners are all essential members of the workforce and both roles are a career destination in their own right. As represented in Figure 1 from the 2019 Health Education England workforce modelling project, this is approximately the proportion of each level of practice required in the workforce.

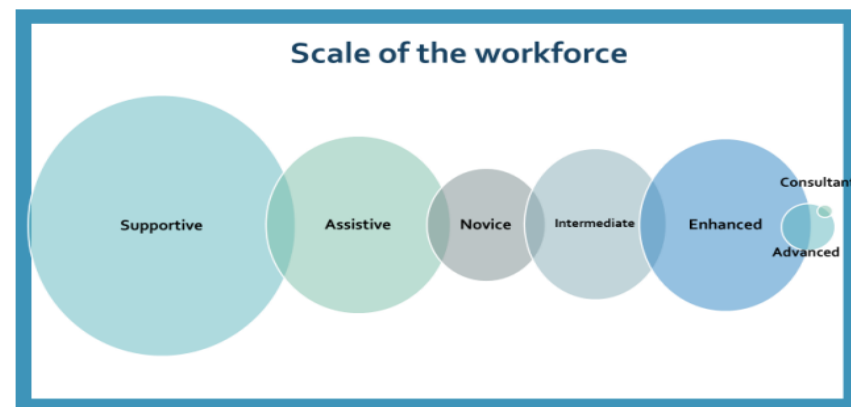


Figure 1 Leary A. (2019) *Enhanced Practice – A Workforce Modelling Project for Health Education England*

## What are NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice Area specific capabilities Frameworks?

**Answer:** These frameworks outline the essential knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed for advanced practice in specific areas of healthcare. They help ensure that practitioners are well-prepared to deliver high-quality, safe, and effective care.

Each framework includes:

- Clearly defined capabilities tailored to clinical or professional areas
- Guidance for education providers, supervisors, and employers on supporting learning and assessment
- Alignment with national standards and the Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Practice (2025)
- Support for both individual development and workforce planning
- These frameworks are openly available and designed for use by education providers.

[For more information and to access the frameworks please see the Centre for Advancing Practice website.](#)

## What resources are available to support employers who are developing advanced practice roles?

**Answer:** The [Centre for Advancing Practice website](#) and the [South West regional webpage](#) both have useful links and resources for organisations looking to develop advanced practice roles.

The Faculty has developed the South-West [Emerging Areas Resource](#), which is designed to be implemented locally by employer organisations. It aims to support and standardise the approach to workforce transformation for advanced practice in new and emerging areas. The resource will guide teams through workforce transformation principles that will support development of advanced practice roles, which are planned and designed to address local service needs.

Each organisation, or primary care training hub will have an advanced practice lead or nominated individual leading on advanced practice. They should be the first point of contact when considering developing advanced practice roles in any organisation/practice.

The NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice recognises that credible governance is central to the safe, effective, and successful employment of advanced practitioners. The Centre's [Governance Maturity Matrix](#) aims to support organisations to evaluate and develop advanced practice governance processes through self-assessment. More information on advanced practice governance can be found on the [Governance section of the Centre's website](#) and our series on the [Governance Maturity Matrix](#) is available on our regional web pages.

## Section 2 – NHS England South West Faculty for Advanced Practice Funding



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## What is the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice funding offer for 2026-2027?

**Answer:** NHS England is aiming to support the development of Advanced Practice roles in line with the [NHS 10 Year Plan](#) and in response to employer identified demand whilst maintaining quality assured standards. We support trainees across a maximum of three years to complete an [NHS England accredited Advanced Practice programme](#) delivered in the South West region. This enables organisations to develop staff based on workforce plans and service need.

In 2026/27 our Annual Demand Scoping exercise, which is subject to budget sign off, will be used to provide funding as detailed below. Funding is currently offered on an employer reimbursement basis to support a named trainee and their named supervisor to complete the programme. Employers are responsible for the cost of the MSc Advanced Practice programme, and ensuring the trainee secures a place on an accredited Advanced Practice programme.

For each year of funding the South West Faculty will provide a training grant of £8,600 per trainee. A minimum of £2,600 from this grant is to be used to provide direct Educational Supervision and also support supervisor development in line with the NHSE [Minimum Standards for Supervision](#) guidance.

NHS England South West Faculty for Advanced Practice funding is provided per academic year, based on the trainee completing 60 credits per academic year, for a maximum of 3 years. The duration of funding will be dependent on the number of credits the trainee may have previously completed that contribute to

their accredited MSc Advanced Practice programme, as advised by the relevant education provider.

- **Trainees with 0-59 credits previously completed and recognised will receive 3 years of funding**
- **Trainees with 60-119 credits previously completed and recognised will receive 2 years funding**
- **Trainees with 120+ credits previously completed and recognised will receive 1 year of funding**

In exceptional circumstances the South West Faculty may provide funding for accredited advanced practice programmes that are delivered outside of the region. This is most often where an accredited specialist programme that is not currently available within the region is required. However, this is not guaranteed and needs to be proactively discussed with your advanced practice lead and the South West Faculty at the earliest opportunity for consideration of such a request to be undertaken.

In a small number of circumstances, and with prospective agreement, there may be the option to pause funding for up to one year, for example parental leave. However, non-prospectively approved extensions will not be funded, neither is extended course time due to failure of modules.

## Is there funding available to support apprenticeship programmes following the change to Apprenticeship Levy use for Level 7 apprenticeships?

NHS England National Apprenticeship team has agreed a Level 7 mitigation fund that will apply to five eligible programmes of which Advanced Practice is one of the five. This funding is time-limited for 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29 cohorts only and there is a finite number of available funded places across England. The current proposed level of funding is £4,000 per year of training, per trainee. Funds are to be utilised to cover tuition fees. This funding remains subject to annual funding approval via the comprehensive spending review.

Organisations whose trainees who will be undertaking apprenticeship accredited advanced practice programmes will have opportunity to register their interest in this mitigation funding through the standard scoping processes of the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice. The Faculty's existing eligibility criteria for funding will apply to expressions of interest. Further additional eligibility criteria aligning to the 10 Year Plan aspirations may also be applied should demand exceed the available funding.

## Which organisations can apply for the South West Faculty Advanced Practice funding?

**Answer:** NHS organisations such as Trusts, GP Practices & PCNs (via their Training Hub) in the NHS England South West region are eligible to submit their expressions of interest for this funding.

Not-for profit organisations providing NHS services, that meet our eligibility criteria are encouraged to contact South West Faculty for Advanced Practice using the email [england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net](mailto:england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net)

**Profit based private providers are currently not automatically eligible for this funding regardless of any NHS commissioned work undertaken.**

## Who should complete the South West Faculty Advanced Practice funding application?

**Answer:** Individual South West organisational/Training Hub Advanced Practice Leads (or agreed nominated lead) are required to complete the application via the NHS England South West Faculty for Advanced Practice annual demand scoping survey. Service/line managers who have eligible individuals for this funding need to contact their organisation/training hub advanced practice lead (or agreed nominated lead) in the first instance.

Trainees who are identified for this funding must be supported by their employer, and their development as an AP must form part of the wider organisational plans for workforce development and transformation. This is to ensure appropriate governance is applied to the application including agreement for recruitment

(where needed), alignment with organisational workforce development needs and eligibility criteria are met.

**Applications from individuals seeking non employer supported/stand alone funding will not be considered.**

If you are unsure of who the Advanced Practice Lead is within your organisation/training hub email the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice at [england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net](mailto:england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net)

## What are the eligibility criteria for South West Faculty Advanced Practice Funding?

**Answer:** Applications for this funding must meet the criteria outlined below:

- A named trainee with an identified educational coordinating supervisor (who must meet the [minimum standards](#) for supervision), of which neither are under investigation or subject to restrictions on their practice (both names must be supplied at the point of application).
- An appropriate advanced practice role and job plan during and upon completion of training, which meets the multi-professional framework and is in line with organisational workforce development needs (evidence of this may be required).
- Appropriate remuneration for both the training post and the Advanced Practice post upon qualification, in line with national recommendations - Agenda for Change Band 7 (or financial equivalence) for trainee Advanced Practitioners and Band 8A (or financial equivalence) for qualified Advanced Practitioners.

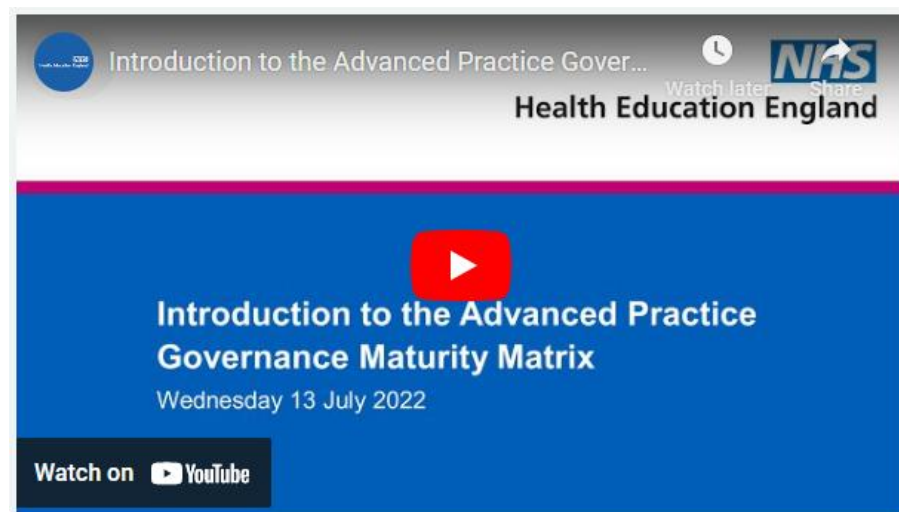
- The trainee must also be undertaking an Advanced Practice MSc that has been accredited by the NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice. [Please follow this link for a list of South West programmes.](#) In exceptional circumstances the South West Faculty may provide funding for accredited advanced practice programmes that are delivered outside of the region – this is usually a specialist programme that is not currently available within the region. However, this is not guaranteed and needs to be proactively discussed with your advanced practice lead and the South West Faculty at the earliest opportunity.

Employing organisations are required to complete the [Centre for Advancing Practice's Governance Maturity Matrix](#) (one per organisation) before submitting an application, to ensure the trainee can be fully supported. If support is needed to complete the Governance Maturity Matrix then please see our [Governance Maturity Matrix webinar series](#) and email [england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net](mailto:england.advancingpractice.sw@nhs.net)

Completion of the advanced practice governance maturity matrix on an annual basis whilst funding is being received is a mandatory requirement to ensure continued funding.

### [Find out more about the NHS England Advanced Practice Governance Matrix](#)





## When does the scoping process run?

**Answer:** The annual scoping process will run from February to March for 2026/27. [The funding timeline can be found on our website.](#)

## What happens after an application is submitted?

**Answer:** Following submission, the South West Faculty will review the application against the eligibility criteria outlined in this document to identify potential demand for funding. If an application contains missing or incomplete information the request may not be considered further. In some instances, it may be necessary to directly contact organisational/training hub advanced practice leads (or nominated individuals) or any other

individual named in the application if there is any ambiguity. It is therefore important that individuals are aware NHS England may contact them whilst their application is under consideration and that such contact does not automatically confirm funding has been approved.

Following eligibility screening, where successful, the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice will contact the Advanced Practice lead for the organisation/training hub with a provisional offer of funding for named trainees. Funding allocations will be dependent upon the allocated budget within the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The following documentation will need to be provided from the trainee, supervisor and organisation/training hub lead:

- The **trainee will need to apply to the education provider** and programme detailed in their application if not already done so. If these details change, please contact your advanced practice lead.
- A **Commitment Statement**, filled in and signed by the trainee, their supervisor and the organisation/Training Hub Advanced Practice lead. Trainees in primary care will also need a signature from their employer confirming support.
- The trainee will need to complete their **Trainee Data Collection Form** – via the link on the commitment statement.
- **Confirmation of secured place** from the Education Provider for commencement of the MSc Advanced Practice programme applied for, before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2027.

If the above documentation is not received by the South West Faculty by the specified deadlines, the provisional offer of funding will be withdrawn.

## What is the Training Grant and what is the responsibility of the employer on receiving this?

**Answer:** The faculty currently provides a total training grant of £8,600 per year, per trainee up to a maximum of 3 years of study. The funding provided is to support the education and development of trainees in completion of an NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice accredited Advanced Practice MSc programme **only**. The funding must only be used towards the agreed programme of study as specified in the application.

A minimum of £2,600 of this total funding must be used to provide educational supervision delivery and development, ensuring that the [minimum standards for advanced practice supervision](#) are met for each named trainee. All Educational Supervisors must meet the requirements set out in the [Advanced Practice Supervisor Capabilities Framework](#).

Any remaining training grant should be used to support the wider educational and developmental needs of the trainee advanced practitioners. Examples of such use would include but are not restricted to: additional short non-credit bearing courses related to scope of practice but not mandated within the MSc Advanced Practice programme, attendance at relevant professional meetings/conferences especially where trainees may submit posters or abstracts to such. N.B. all such funding can only be utilised for the duration of the training period and cannot be

carried over for use thereafter in any Continued Professional Development activities.

Specifically, this funding may not be used for equipment, capital costs or individual organisation salary support for educator roles other than direct individual educational supervision.

Should there be any queries regarding appropriate utilisation of funding which are not clarified above please direct your organisational/training hub advanced practice lead who submitted your application for funding. Inappropriate use of funding may place future funding at risk and may result in a reclaim of funding provided.

## The expectations of employers in return for the funding provided are:

- All Supervisors understand and adhere to the requirements laid out in the NHS England Advanced Practice Workplace Supervision – [Minimum Standards for Supervision document](#).
- Co-ordinating Educational Supervisors must meet the requirements outlined in the [Advanced Practice Supervisor Capabilities Framework](#).
- Advanced Practice trainees will have a minimum of 1 hour of educational supervision per week over the course of their training. Supervisors should be job planned appropriately to deliver this supervision, and this can be enabled through utilisation of the training grant (as in line with the [NHSE Educator Workforce Strategy](#)).
- When required, Educational Supervisors must engage with the faculty in undertaking quality assurance reviews of workplace supervision and training.

- The principles of the [NHS England Quality Framework](#) and [Safe Learning Environment Charter](#) should be in place for all learners.
- Sufficient release time must be allocated for university training for all trainees. It is not acceptable for Advanced Practice trainees to be taking time unpaid or using annual leave for advanced practice training.
- Postgraduate education departments should be included in discussions regarding supervisor job-planning to ensure parity across professions in educational supervision.
- Trainees must be able to access sufficient work-based learning opportunities to achieve the capabilities set out in the [NHS England Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Practice in England](#).
- Appropriate organisational governance must be in place, including annual completion of the NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice [Governance Maturity Matrix](#).
- Learners must be supported to complete the annual [National Education and Training Survey](#) (NETS) and participate in all quality assurance processes.

Employers will be required to be accountable for their use of training grant funds provided. Through the NHS England South West WT&E Multiprofessional Education Quality Review (MEQR) meetings. Failure to adequately meet expectations and accountability for funding utilisation will risk the continuation of existing and/or future funding.



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## Is the funding different for less than full-time staff?

**Answer:** All employers receive the same amount of funding per learner irrespective of whether the student is working full time or less than full-time. Most MSc advanced practice programmes, require the student to work a minimum of 30 hours per week. Where this is less than 30 hours per week, NHS England must have written acknowledgement from the education provider and employer that the trainee can undertake study and be supported to successfully complete the programme.

The funding is offered with the expectation that trainees will complete approximately 60 academic credits for each year of study, up to three years. If a trainee is unable to complete the programme within the funding timeframe, the employer and education provider are required to continue to provide support until the MSc advanced practice programme is completed.

## Can an individual apply for funding to undertake an Advanced Practice programme?

**Answer:** We do not accept individual applications for MSc Advanced Practice programme funding. Advanced practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as part of a strategic workforce plan.

## Is this funding for existing employees only?

**Answer:** The funding is offered on a named basis only for either: existing employees, or those who have been appointed and will be commencing in post before the start date of the chosen MSc Advanced Practice programme.

In all funding applications the employer must provide assurance that there will be an appropriately job planned Advanced Practice post on completion of training for the named trainee to commence in.

This may be evidenced by way of either a confirmed, supported business case from the service which includes the advanced practice role or a relevant approved advanced practitioner job description and job plan with confirmed commencement date.

This is to avoid investing in the development of staff who cannot then put their advanced skills into practice, and therefore little to no benefit can be realised to patients and/or services from the investment made in training.

Organisations are asked to confirm if this is in place when submitting their expressions of interest and if funding is offered, this must then be reaffirmed by signing the commitment statement to this effect.



## Section 3 – Advanced Practice Training



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## What commitment is expected of the trainee Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** Trainees are required to attend education provider teaching days, practise clinical skills in their workplace and complete work-place based assessments of capabilities against the [NHS England Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Practice in England](#).

They are also required to meet their supervisor regularly to plan their individual educational needs and monitor their progress. 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 taught hours and independent study hours). However, the actual time spent may be more, or less, dependent on individual learners.

If there is any change to their programme, supervisor, employer or anticipated completion date trainees are required to **immediately** inform the South West Faculty via the [change of circumstances form](#). If you are unsure about whether you should do that, please err on the side of caution and submit the information.

The trainee will be required to complete an **annual trainee survey** in late spring and a **confirmation of programme start or continuation** in autumn. Trainees who have completed their programme will be sent a **completion of training survey** in late autumn.

Trainees are also required to participate in quality assurance processes for example, to complete the **National Education and Training Survey (NETS)** on an annual basis, and if invited to take part in the quality panel process for their area of practice.

## What is the National Education and Training Survey (NETS)?

**Answer:** The [National Education and Training Survey \(NETS\)](#) is open to all health and care trainees and students across all clinical learning environments. The survey will offer Advanced Practice trainees the opportunity to provide feedback on their clinical placements, supervision, induction, support and training.

It is managed by NHS England and is conducted once a year and you will be invited to join via email. The survey is anonymous, and the results are analysed by NHS England Quality teams to ensure all concerns are identified, reviewed and where appropriate, acted upon. The information forms part of NHS England's approach to the monitoring of clinical placements and will be used to develop remedial action plans in partnership with education and placement providers. All trainees who receive NHS England funding are expected to complete the National Education and Training Survey (NETS).



## What is the Change of Circumstances Form?

**Answer:** The South West Faculty for Advanced Practice is required to keep up to date records of all current trainee Advanced Practitioners in receipt of funding from NHSE as due diligence in financial governance.

It is therefore vital that trainees **promptly** inform both their organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) **and** the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice about any changes to their personal and /or training situation by filling in and submitting the [change of circumstance form](#) immediately that changes occur.

Changes of circumstances refers to **any changes** that involve:

- Personal Details (i.e. change of surname, email address, phone number)
- University and / or University Programme
- Employer
- Educational Supervisor
- Interruption of Training (e.g. parental leave, long term sickness, maternity leave etc.)
- Withdrawal from training
- Delay to start or end date of training programme

Once submitted the faculty team will update its records and may need to discuss the changes with relevant parties such as: Employer, Advancing Practice Lead, Educational Supervisor, University, etc.

**Please note that changes in circumstances may lead to cessation of funding +/- reclaim of previous funding where notification of the change is delayed.**

Moving between employers and or Regions for those continuing in training will necessitate a new application for funding to be submitted.

## What support can trainee Advanced Practitioners expect during their study?

**Answer:** Education provider programmes will be taught by lecturers and expert practitioners in their field who will offer dedicated academic support and guidance, and students will be allocated a named academic tutor. The education provider also



offers support through a dedicated library and a comprehensive student support service. Trainees also find their cohort of colleagues of immeasurable value as a support network. If a trainee is having trouble with their programme the matter should be discussed with their academic tutor and co-ordinating educational supervisor in the first instance, and follow the processes as outlined by their Education Provider.

In the workplace, the trainee Advanced Practitioner will be supported by their co-ordinating education supervisor and any additional associate workplace supervisors as outlined in the [NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice Supervision Resources](#). If a trainee is having trouble within their workplace the matter should be discussed with their co-ordinating educational supervisor in the first instance, or if they do not feel able to discuss with the co-ordinating educational supervisor, then their organisational/Training Hub advanced practice lead would be the alternative.

Trainee Advanced Practitioners are also supported by their employing organisation, including but not limited to their line manager, colleagues, organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) or their local Freedom to Speak up Guardian. Many organisations have advanced practice forums/groups that trainees may find beneficial, organisational and training hub Leads will be able to sign-post where these exist.

There are also Regional [advanced practice networks of practice](#) hosted by advanced practitioners working within specific scopes of practice.



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## How much time will the trainee Advanced Practitioner require for the MSc programme?

**Answer:** The education provider programme lead will provide information on the total amount of university days required.

For trainees on an apprenticeship programme, most of the apprentice's time will be training in the workplace with 6 hours off-the-job training including, but not exclusively, at the education provider.

For trainees on a non-apprenticeship programme, employers are also expected to provide the trainee with sufficient educational opportunities and protected time for work-based learning, we would recommend this is in line with the requirements of the apprenticeship programme. Failure to do so may prevent an employer being eligible for funding in the future.

Trainees should be aware of the commitment and time that is required to complete the MSc advanced practice programme, and the self-directed study is a key component of success. As the advanced practice journey will vary by individual, the trainee must be proactive in agreeing the learning needs and time requirements, throughout the programme.

## Advanced Practitioner programmes can include a Non-Medical Prescribing element, what happens if an individual already has this or is from a professional background which is currently not eligible to undertake this element?

**Answer:** If a trainee advanced practitioner already has the Non-Medical Prescribing qualification or is from a profession that is currently not eligible to undertake non-medical prescribing, the education provider is likely to provide a choice of module(s) as an alternative option. We advise that trainees discuss their options with their education provider and employer.

## What happens if a trainee discontinues or needs to pause their Advanced Practice programme?

**Answer:** In all circumstances, NHS England should be informed immediately by completing the online [change of circumstances form](#). Please inform your organisational/training hub advanced practice lead as soon as any issues arise, so they can liaise with the South West Faculty.

It is understandable that sometimes trainees may have to prospectively suspend their study e.g. for long term sickness, personal reasons etc. Where this occurs and a return to programme is able to occur within 12 months, the South West Faculty will consider resuming funding once the trainee is confirmed to have returned to their programme of study. Prospective pausing and recommencement of funding is reviewed on a case by case basis.

Where a trainee cannot return to their programme of study or chooses to withdraw from the programme, the South West Faculty will discontinue the funding at the point they leave the programme, and any residual funding will be reclaimed

## Section 4 – MSc Advanced Practice Programmes



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## Which education providers in the South West region offer accredited MSc Advanced Practice Programmes?

**Answer:** The current list of South West supported education providers that provide accredited MSc Advanced Practice programmes is available [on the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice website](#). Please note that **only** programmes that have successfully undergone accreditation will guarantee the trainee is eligible for both funding and an [NHS England digital badge](#).

Programmes that are undergoing, or have committed to undergo accreditation, carry a risk of not being accredited. If a programme does not achieve accreditation trainees would need to complete the [NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice ePortfolio \(supported\) route](#) where such is appropriate to obtain an [NHS England digital badge](#).

The employer and the trainee can jointly decide which South West education provider and accredited programme best meet their learning needs. **Please note, it is the responsibility of the employer and trainee to apply directly to the education provider of their choice.**

In exceptional circumstances, the South West Faculty may provide funding for accredited advanced practice programmes that are delivered outside of the region – this is usually a specialist programme that is not currently available within the region. However, this is not guaranteed and needs to be proactively discussed with your advanced practice lead and the South West Faculty at the earliest opportunity.

A full list of accredited programmes across England can be found at the Centre for Advancing Practice's [website](#).

If the programme the employer and trainee plan to undertake is not accredited and is not intending to undertake the NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice accreditation process, then it will not be eligible for South West Faculty for Advanced Practice funding.

## What is an NHS England advanced practice accredited programme?

**Answer:** By accrediting advanced level programmes, the Centre for Advancing Practice consistently assures educational quality and standards for those who attain an NHSE AP Digital Badge. So, establishing the benchmark for recognition of Advanced Practitioners and ensuring a consistent level of quality in practice across England.

The Centre for Advancing Practice has a programme accreditation process. Programmes must demonstrate they meet the capabilities laid out in the [Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Practice in England](#) and meet the Standards of Education and Training set by NHS England. Each advanced practice programme is accredited separately rather than an institution being accredited

Further details of the accreditation process can be found on [The Centre Website](#)





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## What is a Centre for Advancing Practice digital badge and how do I claim it?

**Answer:** NHSE AP Centre Digital badges provide standardised recognition of the quality assurance of advancing practice education, training, and experience. Practitioners who have either successfully completed a Centre for Advancing Practice [accredited programme](#) OR gained recognition of equivalence through the [ePortfolio \(supported\) Route](#) are eligible for an [NHS England digital badge](#).

The Centre for Advancing Practice portal allows users to claim badges that they have earned. Directions on how to claim/download your badge can be found by scrolling down to [the bottom of this web page](#).

You can also watch a short video which explains how to [claim your digital badge](#) and our video on how to [claim your digital certificate](#).

## If a trainee has previously undertaken study at Level 7 can this be included in the MSc Advanced Practice?

**Answer:** Some education providers will allow trainees to Accredited Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) in credits for modules they have already undertaken. As this is at the discretion of the education provider, the trainee would need to prospectively discuss this and gain agreement from their chosen education provider prior to starting the programme.

## Section 5 – Advanced Practice Supervision



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## Why is supervision important for the education and development of advanced practitioners?

**Answer:** High-quality workplace supervision is crucial for both professional and public safety. It is an integral part of healthcare for all levels of practice and supports continuous professional learning across the healthcare workforce.

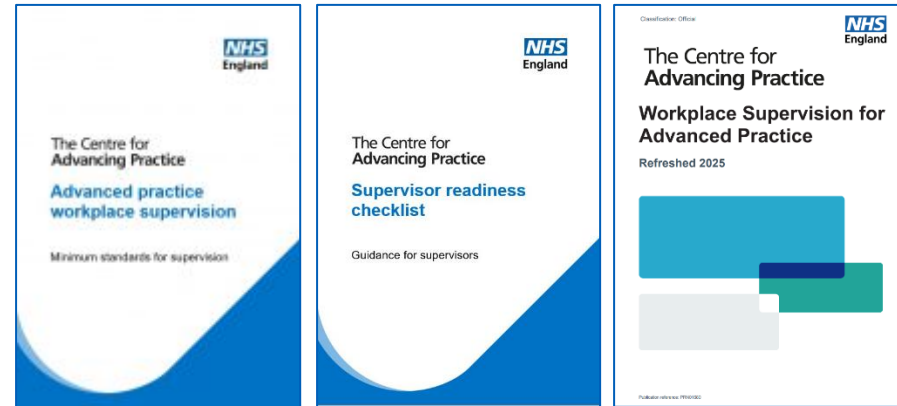
There is an expectation that registered health professionals understand the purpose of and engage in supervision and continuous professional development. Employers also have responsibilities for ensuring adequate supervision and training for their employees ([Health and Social Care Act 2008](#)). The development of supervisors should be part of wider [educator workforce strategy \(EWS\)](#).

Advanced practice development requires an integrated, multi-professional approach to supervision.

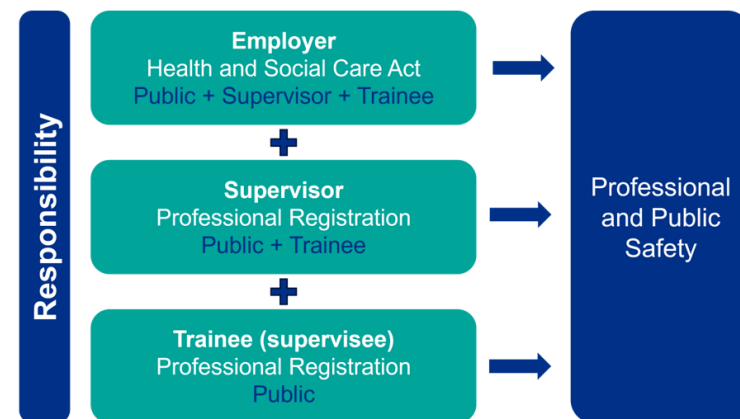
The shift from experienced professional to trainee Advanced Practitioner and then to qualified Advanced Practitioner can be difficult. This is characterised by periods of disconnectedness, lack of familiarity with the new situation and arrival of a new set of unfamiliar expectations.

The practitioner progressing to advanced level practice requires workplace supervision which is responsive to individual learning and development needs. Each developing advanced practitioner should have a nominated 'Coordinating Education Supervisor' to support them throughout the period of development. They should also have access to a variety of 'Associate Workplace Supervisors'. Associate supervisors are matched to specific learning or developmental needs across the four pillars of advanced practice.

The South West Faculty have collated a [list of resources](#) and links to national documents relating to advanced practice supervision.



Future resources as they are developed, are available as part of the [NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice Supervision Resources](#).







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## When should supervision take place?

**Answer:** The amount of supervision needed by a trainee Advanced Practitioner will vary dependent on the stage they are at and their personal learning needs.

The funding provided by the South West Faculty for Advanced Practice includes a minimum £2,600 per annum to be utilised specifically to support supervision in line with the expectations set out by the [Centre for Advancing Practice in the Minimum Standards for Workforce Supervision](#).

## Can the co-ordinating educational supervisor change during training?

**Answer:** Although it is recommended that the same co-ordinating educational supervisor supports a trainee throughout their journey, this is sometimes not possible. As soon as a change in supervisor is proposed, the organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) must be informed to ensure support to the trainee and the new co-ordinating educational supervisor. The trainee must complete a [Change of Circumstances form](#) to inform the South West Faculty.

Once a new co-ordinating educational supervisor has been identified, a new **commitment statement** will need to be completed and signed by the trainee, the supervisor and the advanced practice lead. If this is not received, or where a trainee is without a co-ordinating educational supervision funding will be stopped.

## Section 6 – Trainee Queries and Support



## What happens if a trainee needs to move to less than full time?

**Answer:** In the first instance, the trainee should approach their coordinating educational supervisor, line manager, organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) and their education provider as soon as possible to discuss the options available.

Whether a course can be studied part time will be at the discretion of the education provider.

Once the trainee has found out about the options available and made a decision from these the trainee must then ensure their organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) is aware and inform the South West Faculty by completing the online [change of circumstances form](#).

## What happens to the funding if the trainee Advanced Practitioner moves to another employer?

**Answer:** Funding is not solely trainee based and is **not transferrable between employers**. If a trainee changes employer during an academic year, the trainee will be required to inform their organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) and the South West Faculty Team as soon as possible by completing the online [change of circumstances form](#). The South West Faculty will discontinue the funding at the point they leave their employer and will reclaim any residual funding.

The trainee is advised to liaise with their new employer to ensure they include them into the subsequent year's scoping survey to enable them to re-apply for funding. It may be prudent to ask at point of offer for the new position whether the new employer will support the trainee's continuing advanced practice education.

## What happens if a trainee fails an academic component of their Advanced Practice programme?

**Answer:** Although this may feel overwhelming at the time, this is not uncommon and there may be options available to move forwards based on individual circumstances. For this reason, the trainee must approach their education provider academic mentor or programme lead as well as their Coordinating Educational Supervisor and Advanced Practice Lead, so they are able to provide support, as soon as possible.

The South West Faculty should also be informed immediately by the organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) if the trainee is unable to complete their programme, unable to progress until compulsory elements of the programme are successfully completed, or there is a change to the planned programme end date. Depending on the circumstances there may be funding implications. The faculty will not offer additional funding for trainees to retake failed modules. Nor will they provide further funding if the trainee does not complete the course within the stated timescale.

## What support is available to a trainee who is being bullied?

**Answer:** All individuals should be treated with dignity and respect at work and in academic environments. Bullying and harassment in the workplace is unacceptable. Both employers and education providers have a duty of care to provide a safe working, training and learning environments for all their employees. Bullying and harassment can involve arguments and rudeness, but it can also be more subtle. Other forms of bullying include:

- excluding and ignoring people and their contribution
- overloading people with work
- spreading malicious rumours
- unfair treatment
- picking on or regularly undermining someone
- denying someone training or promotion opportunities

Trainees should not be ashamed to tell someone. Bullying is serious, and it is important that they let people know what's happening so support can be provided.

Employers and education providers will have a policy regarding bullying and harassment including where to go to for help. The trainee can talk to any of their supervisors and/or their Line Manager to raise the issue. If a trainee does not feel comfortable speaking with any of their supervisors or their line manager, they must find someone else in their organisation or education provider that they feel comfortable talking to. This could include the organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) or the local Freedom to Speak up Guardian. They will be able to provide support in following the employer or education provider's policy whilst offering guidance

on the actions that can be taken to enable resolution of the situation.

Additional support can also be found in some organisations who have specialist trained members of staff, for example fair treatment ambassadors, mental health first aiders or health and wellbeing representatives. It is also possible that a trainee's workplace may have an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) that can be used.

## If a trainee is having difficulty with a supervisor what can they do?

**Answer:** The trainee should approach their Line Manager and organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) to make them aware of the issue. If the supervisor is an associate workplace supervisor, the trainee can also approach their co-ordinating educational supervisor for support. They will be able to help the trainee manage the situation, offer support, guidance, and escalate where needed. If the issue cannot be resolved an alternative supervisor will need to be provided by the employer.

If the trainee is to be provided with a different Coordinating Educational Supervisor please inform the South West Faculty of Advanced Practice immediately by completing the online [change of circumstances form](#).



## If a trainee is concerned with regards to the quality of their learning opportunities, what can they do?

**Answer:** If there is a concern with regards to the Education Provider programme, the trainee should raise the issue with their Coordinating Educational Supervisor, Advanced Practice Lead and the Education Programme lead.

If there are concerns around the educational opportunities within their workplace, the trainee should inform their organisational/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) and their co-ordinating educational supervisor, who can work together to try and resolve the concerns.

Trainees are required to fill in the NHS England [National Education and Training Survey](#) (NETS) which is open to all health and care trainees and students across all clinical learning environments. The survey will offer Advanced Practice trainees the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on their clinical placements, supervision, induction, support and training.

## What does the South West Faculty of Advanced Practice recommend be included in a trainee's workplace induction?

**Answer:** It is recommended that at the start of their training

journey the employing organisation should provide the trainee with an induction to their advanced practice training role. This should be done with existing employees beginning their advanced practice programme as well as new to the organisation starters.

Induction programs help trainees to adjust to their new role, it is a chance to give them the information they will need to succeed, reduce any anxiety and eliminate confusion.

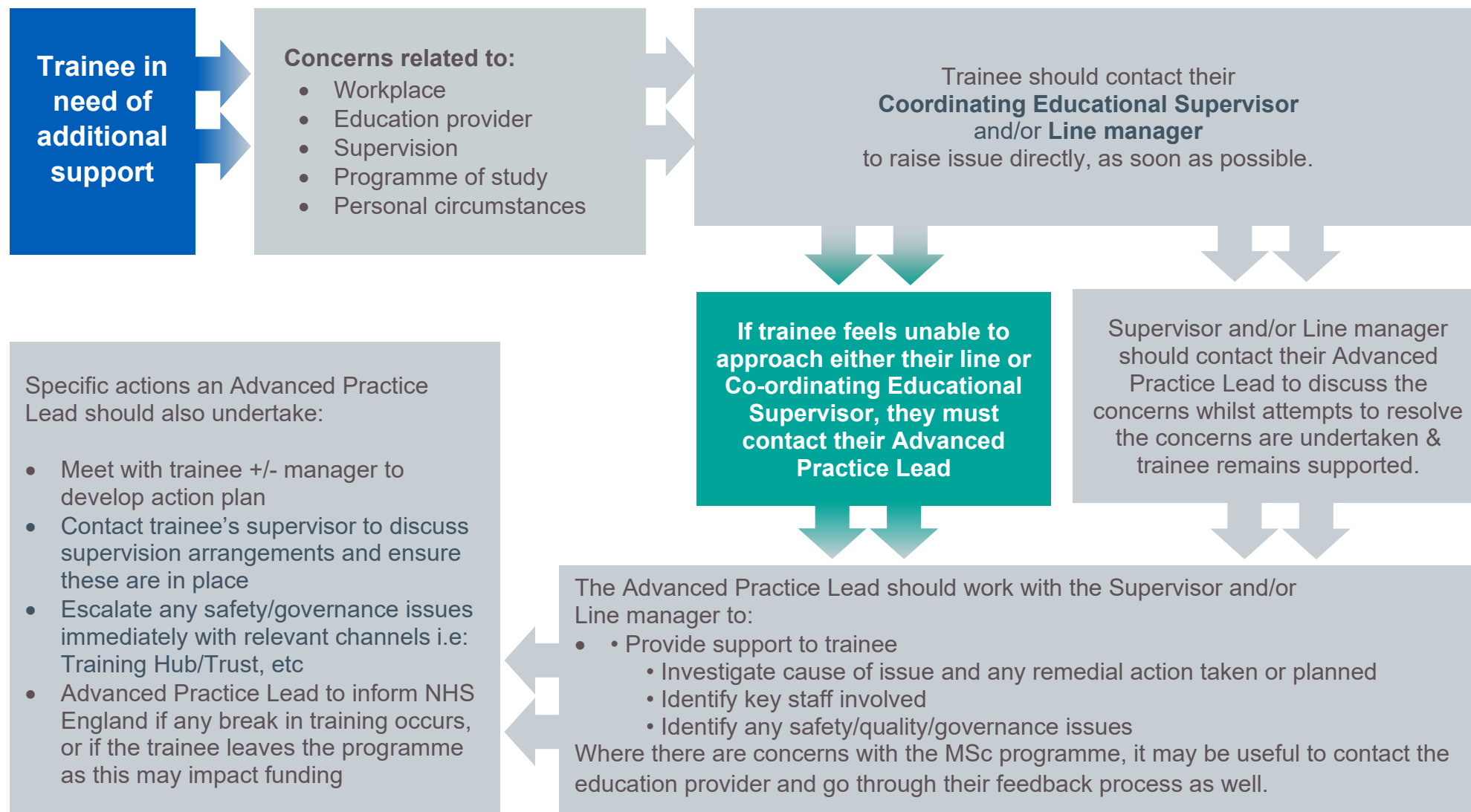
In their induction trainees can expect to cover:

- Role specific information and expectations
- Terms and conditions of the employment contract
- Meeting other key employees (supervisor/manager/HR team/other trainees)
- Learning and development plan
- Physical orientation of working environment
- Organisational policies and benefits
- Health and Safety / Mandatory training
- Facilities and IT
- Incident reporting
- Wellbeing and Freedom to Speak Up

The South West Faculty have developed induction resources:

- [Example advanced practice workplace induction checklist](#)
- [Example advanced practice trainee induction pack](#)

# Appendix 1 (Trainee in need of additional support)



## Appendix 2 (Freedom to Speak Up)

Freedom to speak up is a policy for raising concerns (whistleblowing) for the NHS. Recommended by Sir Robert Francis in his [Freedom to Speak Up review](#), this policy contributes to the need to develop a more open and supportive culture that encourages staff to raise any concerns about patient care or the working environment. It is expected that this policy (produced by NHS Improvement and NHS England) will be adopted by all NHS organisations in England as a minimum standard.

Speaking up about any concern you have at work is really important. In fact, it's vital because it will help us to keep improving our services for all patients and the working environment for our staff. You may feel worried about raising a concern, and we understand this, but please don't be put off. When things go wrong, we need to make sure lessons are learnt and improvements made. If you think something might go wrong, you should feel able to speak up so that any potential harm is prevented.

### What concerns can I raise?

**Answer:** You can raise any concern about risk, malpractice, or wrongdoing you think is harming the service. Just a few examples of this might include (but are by no means restricted to):

- unsafe patient care
- unsafe working conditions
- inadequate induction or training for staff
- lack of, or poor, response to a reported patient safety incident
- suspicions of fraud
- bullying and harassment (across a team or organisation rather than individual instances of bullying)

For further examples, please see the [NHS England video](#).

Remember that if you are a healthcare professional you may have a professional duty to report a concern. If in doubt, please raise it. Don't wait for proof, we would like you to raise the matter while it is still a concern. It doesn't matter if you turn out to be if you have a concern please report it.

### What is a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian?

**Answer:** Freedom to Speak Up Guardians support workers to speak up when they feel that they are unable to do so by other routes. They ensure that people who speak up are thanked, that the issues they raise are responded to, and make sure that the person speaking up receives feedback on the actions taken.

1. [Watch a NHS England video about the role of Freedom to Speak Up Guardian](#)
2. [Find out more from the National Freedom to Speak Up Guardian's Office](#)

How can I find my local Freedom to Speak Up Guardian?

**Answer:** Your organisations Freedom to Speak Up guardian should be listed on your organisation's intranet. Alternatively you can [use this map to search for your Freedom to Speak Up Guardian](#)



# Appendix 3 (Trainee Wellbeing Resources)

## Mental Health

- [Find information and support for your mental health](#)
- [Get urgent help for mental health](#)
- [NHS staff have been given free access to a number of wellbeing apps to support with their mental health and wellbeing.](#)

## Physical Health

- [Fitness Studio Exercise Videos](#)
- [Eat Well](#)
- [Healthy Body](#)
- [Sleep and Tiredness](#)

## General

- [Support available for our NHS people](#)
- [Financial wellbeing](#)

## Support for healthcare staff

- <https://resolution.nhs.uk/>

## More charities and organisations where trainees can find help and support.

- [Student Minds](#)
- [Mind](#)
- [Samaritans](#)
- [Hospice UK](#)
- [Frank](#)
- [Gamcare](#)

# Appendix 4 (Advanced Practice in Emerging Areas Workforce Transformation Resource)

Our resource has been created to support organisations and services to develop advanced practice roles in new areas.

[The resource](#) consists of a series of workshops and supporting materials, that provide guidance through a set of workforce transformation principles. It enables identification and prioritisations of areas with potential for advanced practice roles and help create bespoke advance practice plans, designed to fit your service, and address local healthcare challenges. It is best practice for the organisation/training hub advanced practice lead (or nominated individual) to facilitate this process.



The process goes through three stages:

1. Understanding advanced practice
2. Understanding the service as is
3. Designing an advanced practice solution (if appropriate)

The framework aims to be supportive rather than prescriptive; services may choose to adapt the resource, taking the core principles as required.

[You can learn more about the resource here.](#)