

# **A guide to implementing and funding advanced practice education and training in the Midlands – 2026/2027**

**NHS England Midlands Faculty for Advancing  
Practice**





# Foreword

This Midlands Advancing Practice Guidance has been developed to support organisations across the region to plan, develop, and sustain a high-quality Advanced Practice workforce. It outlines how Advanced Practitioners can strengthen service delivery, improve patient outcomes, and contribute to workforce transformation across community, primary, and secondary care.

The guidance aligns with national NHS priorities, including the NHS England Business Plan, the [NHS People Plan](#), and the [NHS 10 Year Health Plan](#). By embedding consistent standards and fostering a skilled multiprofessional workforce, we aim to ensure the Midlands has the right practitioners, with the right skills and behaviours, delivering high quality care where and when it is needed.

This document provides practical information for NHS employers, Advanced Practice Leads, supervisors, and trainees. It covers how to identify workforce need, establish, and support Advanced Practice roles, ensure high quality supervision and governance, and access funding for training in 2026/27. It also sets out the responsibilities of employers and trainees throughout the training journey.

Working in partnership with Integrated Care Systems, training hubs, education providers, and commissioning teams, we will continue to invest in advanced practice education and training, ensuring robust supervision and accredited, high-quality programmes. We thank all partners for their ongoing commitment to developing advanced practice across the Midlands and look forward to continuing our shared efforts to build a capable, sustainable workforce for the future.

For further queries before submitting a funding application, please contact: [england.apfac.midlands@nhs.net](mailto:england.apfac.midlands@nhs.net)

*Midlands Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice Team*

[Meet the team](#)



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## Understanding and Developing Advanced Practice Roles


An Advanced Practitioner is an experienced registered health or care professional who works with a high level of autonomy and undertakes complex decision-making. Their practice is supported by a master's level qualification (or equivalent) and incorporates the four pillars of advanced practice: clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research. Advanced Practitioners come from a range of professional backgrounds and are responsible for managing risk, exercising clinical reasoning, and taking full responsibility for complex episodes of care. The [Multiprofessional Framework for Advanced Practice in England](#) (NHS England, 2025) defines and sets the national standards for capability and consistency.

To determine whether an Advanced Practitioner role is needed, organisations should use structured workforce planning to identify where advanced practice could have the greatest impact within care pathways. Advanced Practitioners are ideally placed to strengthen newly emerging or fragile services, providing consistent, high quality clinical leadership. Workforce planning and modelling tools can help assess population needs and inform decisions about service demand. Involving commissioners, HR, finance, management, and clinicians in discussions ensures a comprehensive understanding of where advanced practice roles may add value. Further information is available from [NHS Employers](#).

Developing an Advanced Practitioner role requires collaboration with the organisation's Advanced Practice Lead, who can identify current advanced practice activity and advise on service needs. A business case should be developed based on population and system requirements, and job descriptions should be mapped to the national [Multiprofessional Framework](#), ensuring alignment with the four pillars of practice. Employers can use [Readiness Checklists](#) to assess their preparedness, and the [Governance Maturity Matrix](#) to strengthen governance for safe and effective integration of advanced practice roles. Additional resources, such as the South West Faculty's [Emerging Areas Resource](#), offer structured guidance for developing advanced practice roles in new or evolving service settings.

## Training, Support and Supervision for Advanced Practice

Trainee Advanced Practitioners are expected to balance university study, workplace-based learning, supervision, and independent study. This includes attending teaching days, practising clinical skills, completing capability assessments, and meeting regularly with a supervisor to plan progress. On average, trainees should expect around 100 hours of combined teaching and study for every 10 academic credits, though this may vary between individuals. Trainees also need to engage with regional faculty processes, including submitting trainee data, reporting any changes in circumstances, and completing the National Education and Training Survey (NETS) annually.



Time spent studying varies depending on the training route. Trainees typically spend 80% of their time in the workplace and 20% in off the job learning. Employers must provide protected study leave and adequate time for work-based learning, with universities advising on specific study day requirements. Trainees can expect support from both their employer and university, including supervision, protected learning time, and access to academic and workplace supervisors who meet national supervision standards.

Prospective trainees must understand the responsibilities and demands of advanced practice training. Readiness tools, such as the [Trainee Readiness Checklist](#), may help ensure applicants are fully prepared. Trainees generally need to work a minimum of 30 hours per week, whether via an apprenticeship or a fees-funded MSc. Those working fewer hours should seek guidance from the Advanced Practice Lead and education provider to determine suitability.

Trainees also require consistent, high-quality supervision, overseen by a Coordinating Educational Supervisor trained in multiprofessional supervision. Supervisors must have protected time for this role and be confident in the capability requirements for advanced practice. Tools such as the [Supervisor Readiness Checklist](#) and the [Advanced Practice Supervisor Capabilities framework](#) support individuals in assessing and developing their suitability to supervise.

## Funding Advanced Practice Education & Supervision

NHS England Midlands, subject to budgetary constraints, provides funding to support the development of Advanced Practice roles through three routes:

- **Advanced Clinical Practice Master of Science (MSc) Fees Funded Programme** – NHS England will pay the tuition fees to a maximum of £2666\* per year (totalling a maximum of £8,000\*) for the maximum period of 36 months. Currently, within region, the tuition fees are paid directly to the university.

**\*This is the maximum contribution from NHS England Midlands, any additional fees must be covered by the employer**



- **Advanced Clinical Practitioner Degree Apprenticeship** – funding for this route for 2026/27 will be via the NHS England national mitigation funding. NHS England will pay employing organisations a maximum of £4000 per year (totalling a maximum of £12,000 for the typical length of the apprenticeship e.g. 36 months). Payment will be via the Education Funding Agreement (EFA) and employing organisations will then need to pass this payment to the relevant university. During this time, trainees, universities, and employers will need to adhere to previous apprenticeship standards and conditions previously agreed within the apprenticeship levy.
- **Advanced Clinical Practice Top-up** - funding is available for those who have previously completed modules which are normally part of an advanced clinical practice MSc programme. The individual would undertake the additional modules to complete the full MSc mapped to the capabilities of Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Practice in England. The Midlands rate of funding is £42.50\* per credit, up to a maximum of 120 credits.

**\*This is the maximum contribution from NHS England Midlands, any additional fees must be covered by the employer**

All routes also include a supervision grant which is paid directly to employer or via the Training Hub once trainee enrolment is confirmed. This is intended solely to support high-quality supervision. Employers must ensure trainees receive appropriate study leave, workplace learning opportunities, and weekly supervised time, meeting the national supervision and governance standards in line with the Multiprofessional Framework for Advanced Practice in England.

The total amount for the supervision grant is to be confirmed for 2026/27, but for information, the 2025/26 supervision grant was £2758 per trainee per annum. This funding is also for a maximum period of 36 months and must be made available at service level to directly support the supervision of each trainee. The supervision grant must not be used for equipment or capital costs, and misuse of funding or inadequate supervision may lead to withdrawal of future funding.

Self-funding is discouraged, as Advanced Practice roles need organisational backing, appropriate supervision in the workplace, and an assured post on qualification. Only NHS organisations in the Midlands region, including Trusts, GP practices via Training Hubs, and other providers of NHS commissioned services, can apply for funding.



## Conditions of Funding

The decision by NHS England Midlands region to allocate advanced practice funding is based on confirmation of the following at Organisation, Trust, or Primary Care Training Hub level:

1. Funding is for MSc programmes of academic study in advanced clinical practice for staff who are already registered as nurses, midwives, pharmacists, or AHPs to train as an Advanced Practitioner via a MSc Advanced Practice course (including apprenticeship or top up route).
2. The trainee is employed substantively in an organisation that is commissioned to deliver NHS services.
3. An advanced practice training post is provided by the employer during advanced practice training with an appropriate job description working across all four pillars.
4. Assurance is provided to NHS England that a substantive advanced practice post will be made available to the trainee upon qualification, in line with organisational or system workforce planning.
5. A suitable learning environment is provided to the trainee, aligned to the domains within the [Education Quality Framework](#) (2021) and [Safe Learning Environment Charter](#) (2024).
6. An appropriately qualified coordinating educational supervisor, in line with [Minimum standards for supervision](#) (2020), is identified for the trainee prior to application for funding.
7. Supervision takes place in line with [Minimum standards for supervision](#) (2020).
8. The employer will provide the trainee with sufficient time for attending taught sessions at an education provider, time to meet their supervisor regularly and time for work-based learning each week. It should not be expected that the trainee takes unpaid or annual leave for dedicated training days.
9. Any trainee [changes of circumstance](#) (e.g. pauses, withdrawals, returns, change of education provider, changes of employer) must be reported to NHS England as soon as possible. Failure to report a change of circumstance in a timely manner may impact funding. In addition to these changes, any fitness to practice referrals should also be reported to the Regional Faculty.

10. Once funding has been approved, organisations must not alter start dates, funding route or change education providers without prior authorisation from the Regional Faculty. Any changes made without approval will result in the employer being responsible for any associated financial consequences.

11. Funding is provided for the trainee to undertake an advanced practice programme within the NHS England region in which they are employed. Exceptions will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and subject to case-by-case review.

12. Trainees are required to complete the NHS England Midlands Advancing Practice Trainee Data Collection Form.

Through accepting NHS England funding, you are confirming that the expectations outlined will be met for all trainees employed by your organisation / within your Training Hub area who are receiving such funding for advanced practice training. Where these conditions are not met, funding may be discontinued and where there is a pattern within an employer / Training Hub area of advanced practice trainees not being supported appropriately, advanced practice funding may be withdrawn from the employer. The provision of this funding for supporting advanced practice training will be evaluated and funded organisations will be asked for monitoring information as part of this planned evaluation process.

## Funding Timeline 2026/27

Midlands Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice Funding Timeline for expression of interests (EOI) applications:

Process	Owner	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Faculty issues funding communications & EOI file	NHS England	✓									
Advanced Practice Leads complete & submit EOI	Organisation	✓	✓	✓							
Faculty reviews EOIs & resolves queries	NHS England			✓							
Faculty communicates funding decisions	NHS England			✓	✓						
Autumn intake – trainees apply to university	Trainees	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Spring intake – trainees apply to university	Trainees					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advanced Practice Leads submit final trainee information	Organisation					✓				✓	
University validation of trainee places	All						✓				✓



## Midlands Regional Faculty for Advancing Practice Funding Timeline 2026/27:

- March: Faculty issues funding communications and EOI file
- March–May: Advanced Practice Leads complete and submit EOIs
- May: Faculty reviews EOIs and resolves queries
- May–June: Faculty communicates funding decisions
- March–July: Autumn intake trainees to apply to university
- July–December: Spring intake trainees to apply to university
- July and November: Advanced Practice Leads submit final trainee information
- August and December: University validates trainee places


## Applying for Advanced Practice Training Funding

EOIs for Midlands NHS England funding will open in March 2026, and each organisation or Training Hub must submit applications through a designated Advanced Practice Lead on the EOI application spreadsheet. This named individual is responsible for ensuring applications are accurate, aligned with workforce planning needs, and supported by appropriate organisational governance. Only employer submitted EOIs will be accepted; individuals cannot apply directly. Initial submissions must at a minimum outline the intended number of trainee places requested and preferred university. If required, full trainee information can be submitted later but prior to the later autumn or spring deadlines.

Funding is not guaranteed and is dependent on available budget, and submitting an EOI does not confirm a university place or funding approval. Employers should also complete both the [Readiness for Advanced Clinical Practice Checklists](#) and the [Governance Maturity Matrix](#) before submitting EOIs so that the Regional Faculty can be assured the organisation can support trainees effectively. We may ask for a copy of these if any issues arise.

The Regional Faculty will review all applications and indicative demand and may request further details or arrange meetings to clarify the information submitted. If necessary, we may ask to meet. Once an application is approved (subject to full trainee information being provided by the final deadline), the trainee must if not already done so, apply for and secure a place on their chosen course.

Funding confirmation will follow verification with universities during intake periods.



The Advanced Practice Lead must also complete the trainee EOI file, acting as the key coordinator for all follow up queries. Changes to an application after submission may be possible but are not guaranteed and must be discussed with the Regional Faculty. Unapproved changes may affect funding eligibility.

## Regional Universities

Advanced practice programmes are offered by a range of universities across the Midlands:

- Birmingham City University
- Coventry University
- De Montfort University
- Keele University
- Nottingham Trent University
- University of Birmingham
- University of Derby
- University of Lincoln
- University of Nottingham
- University of Northampton
- University of Staffordshire
- University of Wolverhampton

- University of Worcester

When submitting expressions of interest for funding, organisations should indicate their preferred university, however, this does not guarantee a place, and trainees must apply directly to universities on a first come, first served basis.

Trainees are expected to study at a university within the Midlands region. Requests to study outside the region will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and if the tuition fees for an out of region university exceed the Midlands funding contribution, the employer will be responsible for covering the additional costs.

Accreditation status for programmes can be checked via the Centre for Advancing Practice's [accredited programmes](#) page. Accreditation assures employers and trainees of programme quality, and those completing accredited programmes receive the Centre's digital 'Advanced' recognition badge. In-region courses undergoing or awaiting accreditation may still be funded where they are likely to meet framework requirements. If accreditation is not achieved, NHS England will work with the trainee, employer, and university to identify appropriate next steps.

Admission requirements vary by university, and applicants should check individual course websites. Entry requires current professional registration and usually, substantial post registration experience, evidence of working in or moving into an advanced level role, and academic achievement at level 6. During study, trainees receive academic and pastoral support from programme teams, including tutors, librarians, and student services, with additional support for those encountering difficulties.

Any changes in a trainee's circumstances must be reported promptly. Trainees should ideally submit the [Change of Circumstances form](#) themselves, but if unable, the Advanced Practice Lead must do so. If a trainee needs to pause their studies, for example due to illness or personal circumstances, funding may resume on return, subject to review and ability to complete within required timeframes. If a trainee permanently withdraws, tuition and supervision funding will cease, and NHS England must be informed immediately. If a trainee moves to another employer, funding does not automatically continue; decisions are made case-by-case and depend on workforce need. If the trainee stays within the Midlands, the new employer must meet all funding conditions. If trainees are moving between regions, the receiving region's faculty will determine whether funding can continue.



# FAQ for New and Aspiring Trainees and Their Managers

A practical guide to help you understand expectations, funding rules, supervision, for trainee Advanced Practitioners in the NHS.

## 1. What is an Advanced Practitioner?

Advanced practice is delivered by experienced, registered health and 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 practice, leadership and management, education, and research, with demonstration of area specific clinical competence.

Advanced Practitioner's come from a range of professional backgrounds. The [Multiprofessional Framework for Advanced Practice in England](#) provides a clear and consistent approach to the development of advanced practice across England.

Advanced practice is focused on those practitioners working in roles with designated authority, autonomy, and accountability for engaging in clinical reasoning, and managing risk and uncertainty for patients, vested with scope for end-point decision-making, with direct responsibility for high level complex decision making, including complete management of episodes of care.

## 2. Can I stay in my current role (e.g., ward manager, practice nurse, ambulance practitioner) while undertaking Advanced Practitioner training?


Usually, no. To receive NHS England funding, trainees must be substantively employed in an Advanced Practice training role with workplace-based learning opportunities, quality supervision and guaranteed an Advanced Practice post on completion. This usually requires moving from your current role into a designated Advanced Practitioner trainee post.

## 3. Do I need to work full time to train as an Advanced Practitioner?

Trainees generally need to work at least 30 hours per week to meet training requirements. If working fewer hours, you must discuss suitability with the organisational Advanced Practice Lead and the university.

## 4. How much study time do I get?

For trainees on MSc Advanced Practice Apprenticeship programme, generally, 80% of an apprentice's time will be training in the workplace with 20% off the job learning. For fees-funded trainees on the MSc Advanced Practice Programme, employers are expected to provide the trainee



with sufficient study leave and protected time for work-based learning per week. The University programme lead will provide information on the total amount of study days required. Trainees must not be expected to utilise annual leave or unpaid leave to attend mandatory university days.

## 5. What does the Advanced Practitioner training commitment include?

Trainees will need to commit to:

- University modules
- Workplace based learning
- Independent study
- Regular supervision meetings
- Capability assessments and portfolio completion
- Participation in regional processes (National Education and Training Survey, Trainee Monitoring)


## 6. What support should a trainee receive from the employer?

Employers are expected to:

- support the trainee(s) to meet the requirements of the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice programmes as per the university requirements
- provide the trainee with sufficient time for attending taught sessions at university, time to meet their supervisor regularly and time for work-based learning
- a suitable learning environment
- provide an appropriately qualified supervisor
- comply with the standards outlined in the NHS England Advanced Practice Workplace Supervision – [Minimum Standards for Supervision document](#)

## 7. What supervision is required?

Trainees require a supervisor in practice who will oversee and co-ordinate their work-based learning. This includes time to meet regularly and to plan and monitor progress.



Good supervision is a key factor for successful completion of the training. Trainees who are not well supervised can struggle and drop out. Each trainee Advanced Practitioner requires a Coordinating Educational Supervisor who has completed training in multi-professional supervision and is familiar with the requirements of advanced clinical practice training and working. Supervisors must be willing and have protected time (in their job plan) to support the trainee. NHS England Centre for Advancing Practice have published the (2025) [Workplace Supervision for Advanced Clinical Guidance](#) and (2022) [Minimum standards for supervision](#) document to support organisations and Supervisors.

## 8. I have been asked to supervise a trainee Advanced Practitioner. How do I know if I am the right person?

Supervision is an essential element of training to be an Advanced Practitioner. If you have been asked to supervise a trainee Advanced Practitioner, it is important to ensure you have the experience, knowledge, and expertise to provide good quality supervision. There are tools that can help you decide if you are ready to supervise your trainee or if you need further training to be able to undertake this role. The Centre for Advancing Practice (2022) [Minimum standards for supervision](#) document contains a [Supervisor Readiness Checklist](#) to help you self-assess your readiness to supervise a trainee Advanced Practitioner. The (2023) [Advanced Practice Supervisor Capabilities](#) document also contains further information about supervision in advanced practice and how to further support supervision develop supervisors within an organisation.

## 9. I understand Advanced Practitioner training can include a multi-professional prescribing element, what happens if I already have it or am not eligible to undertake this element?

If a trainee already has a multi-professional prescribing qualification or is from a profession that is not eligible to undertake prescribing education and training, the university is likely to provide a choice of either module(s) or recognition of prior learning as alternative options. We advise that the trainee discusses their options with their university and employer.

## 10. Can a trainee pause training (e.g., illness, parental leave)?

Yes. A trainee can pause training if required and potentially resume later, subject to review and within programme time limits. As pauses in training impacts funding, the Regional Faculty must be informed of any pauses in training via the [Trainee Change in Circumstances Form](#). Failure to inform the Regional Faculty in a timely manner can affect funding.

## 11. What happens if the trainee/employee discontinues their advanced practice programme before it is completed?

If a trainee is withdrawing or being discontinued from training, the [Trainee Change in Circumstances Form](#) must be completed and funding will be discontinued.



## 12. What happens if a trainee moves employer during their training period?

Funding is allocated to the organisation, not the individual and therefore funding does not automatically transfer. The Regional Faculty must be informed of any change of employer during the training period via the [Trainee Change in Circumstances Form](#). Each case is then reviewed individually and depends on governance and workforce planning in the new organisation.

## 13. Can GP practices apply for Advanced Practitioner funding?

Yes. GP practices can apply via Training Hubs, provided they meet all governance and supervision criteria required for funding. Please also refer to the conditions of funding.

## 14. Can a trainee study at a university outside the Midlands?

Funding is provided for the trainee to undertake an advanced practice programme within the NHS England region in which they are employed. Exceptions will only be considered under exceptional circumstances and subject to case-by-case review. Where an exception is granted, under these circumstances, if tuition fees exceed the Midlands maximum funding contribution, then any additional fees must be covered by the employer.

## 15. Is self-funding allowed?

For most trainees, self-funding a master's level advanced practice programme is not recommended. Advanced practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as a strategic plan, linked to an advanced practitioner job role on completion of training, rather than individuals self-funding their own personal and professional development. Also, people who self-fund advanced practice education at a university cannot be assured of being able to access appropriate supervision and will not receive any financial support for enabling their supervision and assessment as they are not designated as completing advanced practice training within their employing organisation.

## 16. If an opportunity for an Advanced Practice trainee position becomes available after EOI deadline dates, can I still request funding?

If your organisation has missed the funding application window, please contact the [Midlands Faculty by email](#) as soon as possible to discuss your situation. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## 17. What governance must be in place before employing a trainee Advanced Practitioner?

Before submitting expressions of interest for funding, the employers should complete:

- 
- [Readiness for Advanced Practice Checklists](#)
  - [Governance Maturity Matrix.](#)

We may ask for a copy of these. Organisations must also agree to the conditions of funding.

### 18. What happens if supervision or study time is inadequate?

If you have concerns about any aspect of your training, in the first instance, this should be raised with the university programme lead, your line manager, supervisor and/or your Advanced Practice Lead. If concerns remain unresolved, they can also be reported to the Regional Faculty. Where concerns are raised, the Regional Faculty will work with their existing frameworks to support. Next steps may include sharing information with other teams such as employers, training hubs, quality, and/or commissioning teams. Where conditions of funding are not met, or other significant concerns arise, funding can be withdrawn for the trainee and/or future funding could be affected.

### 19. What is the supervision grant and what can it be used for?

The supervision grant is available to support trainees on an advanced practice pathway, to contribute to organisational costs of supporting an Advanced Practitioner. The expectations of employers in return for the supervision grant are:

- Sufficient study leave for university education. It is not acceptable for trainees to be taking unpaid or annual leave for dedicated university days.
- Supervision provided by an appropriately trained supervisor. The expectation is that trainees will have a minimum of 1 hour of supervision per week over the course of their training.
- Sufficient work-based learning opportunities to gain clinical competence at an advanced level.
- Appropriate governance in place in line with the Multi-professional framework for advanced practice in England.

The supervision funding should be made available at service level to support individual supervision of the trainee. The supervision grant must not be used for equipment or capital costs.

### 20. Do trainees automatically get a university place once funding is approved?

No. Trainees must apply directly to the university, usually on a first come first served basis. Funding approval does not guarantee course acceptance. Please check university entry requirements via their website.



21. Our workforce strategy is still evolving. Do I have to commit to providing a substantive Advanced Practitioner post at the end of the three-year training period?

Yes. As part of the funding conditions, a substantive advanced practice post needs to be made available to the trainee upon qualification, in line with organisational or system workforce planning. This requirement ensures that trainees can consolidate their skills in a role aligned to all four pillars of advanced practice and that organisations benefit from the investment made in training.

The [10 Year Health Plan for England](#) identifies Advanced Practitioners as a critical part of the future workforce, supporting the national strategic shift from analogue to digital, from treatment to prevention, and from hospital based to community focused care. Their development is therefore central to meeting long term system transformation goals.

NHS England  
Midlands Faculty for Advancing Practice (Midlands)

Version 4 – February 2026

Please use [england.apfac.midlands@nhs.net](mailto:england.apfac.midlands@nhs.net) for all enquiries relating to advanced practice in the Midlands