

Standards

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are Registered Nurse or Allied Health Professional Apprentices Supernumerary?

All Apprentices must have an [apprenticeship agreement](#). This sets out how long you'll employ them for, the training you'll give them, their working conditions, the qualifications they are working towards. The apprentice agreement covers all the hours they are employed and undertaking the training (both on and off the job) toward the competence in the named occupation. In the case of healthcare professional programmes such as nursing and allied health professions, the position can be slightly confusing because during the 'training' which includes the practice placements the apprentices must be supernumerary. This effectively means that when the individual is undertaking any practice learning hours as part of their apprenticeship agreement they must be supernumerary. Both the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) provide guidance on this matter:

For Nurses the NMC state:

"Programme providers must ensure that students are supernumerary during all practice learning. Supernumerary means that the student will not, as part of their programme of preparation, be contracted by any person or body to provide nursing care". (NMC 2010)

For Allied Health Professional the guidance from HCPC is as follows:

Although the term supernumerary is not specifically used within HCPC guidance due to the nature of AHP placements, however the HCPC standards for education and training specify: "There must be an adequate number of appropriately qualified and experienced staff at the practice placement setting" (HCPC 2009 5.2) and "the practice placement settings must provide a safe and supportive environment" (HCPC 2009 5.3). This ensures that learning, teaching and supervision are designed to encourage "safe and effective practice, independent learning and professional conduct" (HCPC 2009 5.4). By implication, AHP students are therefore extra to the established workforce in a specific placement location.

If an employer wishes to employ the apprentice nurse or AHP part time in some other role these hours are not supernumerary. However, these hours would be outside of the apprenticeship agreement and require a separate contract of employment e.g. as a Senior Healthcare Support Worker. These hours would not be counted toward practice learning hours required for programme (apprenticeship) completion.

What is happening to Health Apprenticeship Frameworks?

The Institute for Apprenticeships is gradually withdrawing Apprenticeship Frameworks. Some Health Frameworks are scheduled to be withdrawn during 2016 and 2017. An updated schedule can be found [here](#).

What is the difference between an Apprenticeship Framework and an Apprenticeship Standard?

The key differences are outlined below. These elements are non-negotiable:

Apprenticeship Frameworks	Apprenticeship Standards
Written by Sector Skills Councils (eg Skills for Health); informed by employer groups	Written by employers (sometimes supported by Sector Skills Councils or other stakeholders)
Statutory documents written in line with the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) and to a fixed template	Short concise 3-page documents, no fixed template
Issued and managed by Sector Skills Councils	Managed by employers. Approved by the Institute of Apprenticeships; become Crown Copyright
Qualifications-based approach	Qualifications can only be included if trailblazers can evidence that a qualification is required for registration, regulatory or license to practice purposes or if the Apprentice would be significantly disadvantaged in the job market without a qualification
Employee Rights and Responsibilities and Personal Learning and Thinking Skills	n/a
Maths and English If not already achieved prior to starting the apprenticeship Level 2 Apprentices: must achieve Level 1 English and maths Level 3 (and above) Apprentices: must achieve Level 2 English and maths	Maths and English If not already achieved prior to starting the apprenticeship Level 2 Apprentices: must achieve Level 1 (similar to D to G at GCSE) English and maths and take the test for Level 2 (similar to A* to C at GCSE) Level 3 (and above) Apprentices: must achieve Level 2 English and maths (similar to A* to C at GCSE)
n/a	End point assessment: The Institute for Apprenticeships requires that all apprenticeships contain an independent end-point assessment. This is a holistic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The requirements for this are set out in the assessment plan that is developed alongside the Standard. Read more in the guidance .
n/a	Grading: Apprentices receive an overall grade for their apprenticeship (eg pass, merit or distinction) based on their performance during the end point assessment.

When will the new Health Apprenticeships be ready?

Apprenticeship Standards and the Assessment Plans must be “approved for delivery” by the Institute for Apprenticeships. There is more work to be done following “approval for delivery” and before apprentices actually start. Employers need to work with training providers and end point assessment organisations to prepare for the delivery of training programmes and end point assessment. The rate at which this happens will vary according to local conditions.

Why do some Apprenticeships no longer require the apprentice to complete a qualification?

The new Apprenticeship Standards can only include a qualification where the qualification is required for registration, regulatory or license to practice purposes or if the apprentice would be significantly disadvantaged in the job market without a qualification. Even if a qualification is included in a standard it is considered part of ‘on-programme’ delivery and does not count towards the end point assessment. Apprenticeship standards are designed to deliver apprentices that are ‘work ready’ ie able to apply for a job. A-levels are designed to deliver students who are ‘progression ready’ ie able to apply to university or other academic courses. This means that an A-level student may need additional skills and training to become work ready and an apprentice may need additional skills and training to become progression ready. To be eligible to deliver apprenticeship training organisations must be listed on the register of apprenticeship training providers ([RoATP](#)).

Why have the requirements for English and Maths increased?

The Institute for Apprenticeships set the minimum requirements for all apprentices. The following is non-negotiable and applies to all apprentices using Apprenticeship Standards (unless they have already achieved these levels prior to starting their apprenticeship):

- For level 2 Apprenticeships, apprentices must achieve level 1 English and maths (similar to a GCSE at grade D to G) and take the test for level 2 (similar to a GCSE at grade A* to C) prior to taking their end-point assessment
- For level 3 to 7 apprenticeships, apprentices must achieve level 2 English and maths (similar to a GCSE at grade A* to C) prior to taking their end-point assessment

How many starts are expected on the new Health Apprenticeship Standards?

The government has committed to 3 million new apprenticeship starts by 2020 and is introducing public sector targets which will drive increased uptake in health. However, the targets relate to total uptake and are not applied to individual Apprenticeship Standards. Demand for Health Apprenticeships will be led locally by individual employers.

Who will manage the end-point assessment?

Employers will select an organisation from the [Register of Approved End Point Assessment Organisations](#). This register is managed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) creates assessments in-line with the requirements in the Apprenticeship Standard Assessment Plan written by the Trailblazer. The assessor involved in making end point assessment decisions is an employee of the EPAO and must not have been involved with any on-programme delivery for the apprentices being assessed.

How often will Apprenticeship Standards be reviewed?

Each standard must contain a review date. If there is a change of practice which means the standards is no longer fit for purpose then they should be updated. Employers would have to reconvene the relevant Healthcare Trailblazer group to do this. The Institute for Apprenticeships would need to approve any amendments.

How will end point assessments be standardised?

Every health apprentice must be assessed in line with the Assessment Plan which accompanies the Apprenticeship Standard. The Assessment Plan varies depending on which Healthcare Apprenticeship Standard the apprentice is following. Many standards are using Ofqual to provide external quality assurance of end point assessment of health apprentices. This means that end point assessment organisations must meet Ofqual standards which are described in the 'General Conditions of Recognition'. See more [here](#).

How are the funding bands determined?

Funding bands are allocated by the [Education and Skills Funding Agency](#). For more information on funding bands or the levy see [here](#). Please email funding enquiries to nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk