

NURSING ASSOCIATE STANDARD – APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING POSITION

This guidance provides additional information to the health sector around the clinical placement activity in this apprenticeship standard. It is for information only and does not replace the requirement to follow the Apprenticeship Funding Rules.

Queries should be directed as follows:

Main Providers: Provider Manager / Service Desk (0370 2640001)
Employer-Providers / Employers: Employer Account Manager / NAS Helpdesk (08000 150 600)

Eligibility

An individual can become a nursing associate, if they meet the entry requirements for the programme as [set out in the standard](#), their employer believes they are capable of the academic learning required and they possess the values/behaviours required. If required, employers can [advertise apprentice vacancies](#) to attract new candidates.

Funding a nursing associate apprenticeship

Apprenticeship funding will cover the cost of the training and assessment (including end-point assessment) up to the maximum of the assigned funding band. Apprenticeship funding includes the funds in an employer's levy account. Where there are insufficient funds in an employer's levy account, or the employer does not pay the apprenticeship levy, the principle of employer-government co-investment will apply. This is where the employer contributes a percentage of the total cost of the apprenticeship with the government contributing the remaining amount.

The Level 5 Nursing Associate standard is assigned to funding band 18, which means that a maximum amount of £15,000 of apprenticeship funding can be used. As with any apprenticeship, if the employer is able to negotiate a lower rate with a main provider, they must do so. Employer-providers and employers acting as a subcontractor are both required to work on an 'actual costs basis' already. Employers must not profit from apprenticeship delivery to their own employees and they must meet any costs over the funding band maximum.

Clinical placement activity

In the nursing associate standard "at least two substantial placements (totaling 675 hrs.) in settings other than the primary place of employment" are required. Up to £2,500 from the apprenticeship service account may be spent on eligible clinical placement costs. A full list of eligible costs is included in the [apprenticeship funding rules](#). The eligible costs that we expect to be associated with the mandatory placements include:

- staff teaching time within the clinical placement,
- planned feedback/assessment (progress reviews), and
- administrative costs related to the training and assessment.

The costs of taking part in the above activities may be included in the costs attributed to the clinical placement activity (and therefore to the total negotiated price of training and end-point assessment). Eligible costs within the placement, above £2,500, must be met in full by the employer. Apprenticeship funding must not be used to cover ineligible costs; these include wages, travel and accommodation costs.

Points to Note:

Involvement of Delivery Subcontractors and Third Parties

It is for the employer and provider to agree the delivery of the apprenticeship. With regards to the clinical placement:

- If the employer is working with a main provider but is delivering the clinical placement activity and the associated apprenticeship training*: The employer is considered to be a delivery subcontractor. The main provider must adhere to the subcontracting requirements set out in the apprenticeship funding rules and make eligible payments to the employer through a subcontracting arrangement. The main provider is responsible for the actions of all delivery subcontractors.
- If the employer is an employer-provider and they are delivering the clinical placement and the associated apprenticeship training*: Subcontracting is not applicable; the eligible placement costs (up to £2,500) should be included in the total price. Note employer-providers may only claim actual costs.
- Where another organisation (e.g. a GP surgery) is hosting the apprentice on a placement but they are **not** delivering any apprenticeship training*: This organisation is considered to be a third party (rather than a delivery subcontractor). There is no requirement for a third party to be on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers. They can receive apprenticeship funding, but only if they are delivering an eligible cost listed in the funding rules e.g. administration, materials.

(*By apprenticeship training we mean relevant training as detailed in the framework or standard, without which the apprenticeship could not be completed).

Why £2,500?

The Institute for Apprenticeships considered the evidence around the eligible costs of the clinical placements, which was submitted by the Trailblazer group who developed the standard. A maximum of £2,500 was placed on this activity. However, as with the total negotiated price, if the eligible costs within the placement do not amount to £2,500 then the actual costs claimed will be less than this. This does not mean that the employer (where funding is routed through a main provider) cannot support other aspects of the apprenticeship (outside of the placement) and be paid for this contribution through a subcontracting arrangement. The £2,500 relates only to the clinical placement activity.

Recognising Prior Learning

As with all apprenticeships, if the individual has prior learning that would contribute towards the standard, then this must be taken into account when negotiating a price. Prior learning will reduce the content required and therefore the duration and the price of the programme.

Inducements

As the activities associated with the clinical placement are eligible costs, as defined by the funding rules, this is not considered an employer inducement; the employer is delivering a legitimate activity associated with the apprenticeship.

Apprentice Contributions

Under no circumstances can an employer ask an apprentice to contribute financially to the direct cost of training or assessment (this includes where an apprentice has completed their programme or has left the programme early (often known as tie-in arrangements or bonds)).