

University of Huddersfield Advanced Clinical Practitioner Registered Provider

University of
HUDDERSFIELD
Inspiring tomorrow's professionals

Level 7 Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Integrated Degree) apprenticeship.

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Advanced Clinical Practitioners are experienced clinicians who demonstrate expertise in their scope of practice. Advanced Clinical Practitioners manage defined episodes of clinical care independently, from beginning to end, providing care and treatment from the time an individual first presents through to the end of the episode, which may include admission, referral or discharge or care at home.

We recently spoke to the University of Huddersfield about their experiences as an apprenticeship training provider. Keep reading to find out more.

The university joined the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers in 2017. Building on their experience in delivering vocational programmes in health, they began delivery of the first higher apprenticeship in the School of Human and Health Sciences in June 2018. The development of higher and degree apprenticeships provided a natural progression for the University which already enjoyed a strong reputation for delivering robust academic programmes grounded in the health professions. There are six schools, and the Level 7 Advanced Clinical Practitioner (Integrated Degree) apprenticeship is taught within the School of Human and Health Sciences.

1. Currently which apprenticeship standards do you offer? How many Apprentices do you currently train?

The University currently runs 10 apprenticeship courses across the School of Human and Health Sciences and Huddersfield Business School. We currently have 500 apprentices training across our entire apprenticeship provision.

2. What benefits have employers seen because of working with you to train apprentices?

As a provider of a Level 7 Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP) (Integrated Degree) apprenticeship, we have built on our ethos of workplace based assessment and support for supervision in practice. We have done this by increasing our student contact to include a minimum of seven individual touch points for the students each academic year. We also have a practice portfolio that supports learners and educational supervisors to guide the level of competence to be achieved at each year. Our apprentice ACP programme has been expanded to include five specialist routes in response to our employer's needs. These specialist routes will ensure core common competence is achieved in the key areas but also allows the practitioners to provide specialist skill in practice in the following key areas; cancer care, critical care, primary care, mental health care and emergency care.

3. How do you ensure you have strong employer partnerships that reflect the needs of health and social care?

We enjoy successful partnerships with over 70 apprenticeship employers across the North of England. We maintain a schedule of regular meetings throughout the year to ensure that partner representatives from all levels can influence the quality of our apprenticeship provision. The main three meetings are the Strategic Health Education Partnership, Course Stakeholder Meeting, and Course Committees.

The Strategic Health Education Partnership involves senior representation from partner organisations who meet tri-annually to provide feedback on all our provision. We work in partnership to plan cohort numbers and frequency and ensure our programmes meet quality standards.

Course Stakeholder Meetings are typically held bi-monthly and comprise service managers, and education leads from all partner organisations. The partnership team meets to plan and implement admission and selection processes, course content, placement allocation, learner and employer or quality assurance processes and action plans and generally negotiate course developments or additional clinical requirements.

Finally, our Course Committees include employers, course administrative and academic teams, service users, and Computer and Library services. The committees oversee the management of the course and feed into the annual evaluation of the provision. Learners also attend this event to facilitate open and consistent dialogue about expectations and challenges of the course.

4. What are you most proud of?

An ethos of workplace supervision. This is assisted by minimum hours of employment as a learner on the apprenticeship programme. In addition the university is one of seven universities to offer a Blended Learning Nursing programme. Learning from the move to online delivery during the Covid-19 crisis has enabled us to offer this programme to students from a full geographical spread. They complete their nursing degree with minimal time spent on-campus. We have built a team to manage these students which will broadly benefit all programmes offered. This programme is open to traditional entry students as well as apprenticeship learners. Furthermore, we successfully and seamlessly transitioned all apprentices to online learning during the Covid-19 crisis which ensured there was no impact to any apprenticeship learning.

5. What do you hope to achieve in the next 12 months?

We have many hopes for our apprenticeship programmes in the coming 12 months. One of our primary initiatives is to encourage current apprentices to highlight the successful careers that they enjoy with the NHS to future apprenticeship candidates.

6. What are your top 3 hints and tips for employers wanting to employ apprentices?

Work closely with your university to plan work experience which is directly relevant to your apprentice's current learning. You will get a well-rounded, more engaged and occupationally competent staff member in no time.

Identify previous apprentices from elsewhere in your organisation to become mentors for future apprentices. Not only will recent apprentices feel more invested in their development, but it will also present an opportunity for previous apprentices to develop their management and/or coaching skills.

Ensure that you have a colleague who can spend time understanding the apprenticeship compliance documentation that needs to be completed at enrolment and throughout the apprenticeship. It will ensure a much smoother learning journey for the employer and the apprentice.