

Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeships (RNDA)

FAQs for Registered Nursing Degree Apprentices, Employers and Educators.

What is a Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship?

The Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship was developed in response to a growing demand for healthcare employers to 'grow their own' Registered Nurses through the Apprenticeship Levy. The first Registered Nurse Degree Apprentices began training in September 2017, the introduction of this programme has enabled people to train to become a registered nurse in their chosen field of nursing practice (Adult, Child, Learning Disability, Mental Health) through the apprenticeship route (Department of Health & Social Care 2016). Apprentices will be released by their employer to study in a higher education institution (HEI) and will train in a range of practice placement settings. Further information can be found on the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education \(IFATE\)](#), [Healthcare Apprenticeships Standards Online \(HASO\)](#) and [Government websites](#)

The Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship enables apprentices to come together as a diverse group of learners from a variety of different health, social and voluntary care organisations including mental health, acute trusts, community settings, nursing homes, hospices and GP practices. Upon successful completion of the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship, apprentices will be able to apply to the register and be regulated by the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC).

Aim of the Apprenticeship

The aim of the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (RNDA) is to offer an alternative route to obtain a nursing degree and to support progression of those who have already completed Nursing Associate or Assistant Practitioner programmes and who would like to continue to study to obtain a nursing degree. By opening up new routes to become a Registered Nurse, this helps increase the capacity and capability of the nursing workforce by ensuring that the right person with the right level of skills and education is delivering the right care to the patient.

What qualifications are needed to apply for the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship programme?

There are minimum entry requirements for the programme and it's best to either consult the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) standards and also speak to your chosen Higher Education Institution (HEI) to confirm these. The employer must be assured that the candidate is capable of the academic learning required and that they possess the values and behaviours to become a Registered Nurse. It is important that the candidate is sufficiently prepared and understands the requirements of the programme and is committed to completing a degree as part of the apprenticeship. An up-to-date enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Certificate is required that will be effective across all areas. In most cases, the HEI will require that the apprentice can evidence that they have achieved:

Level 2 functional skills in English and maths or GCE/GCSE English and Math (Grade C/ 4 or above) or equivalent, intermediate IT skills are also preferred.

Further information and support can be found on the [HASO](#) and the [Skills for Life and Functional Skills \(bksb\)](#) page.

Can the Assistant Practitioner or the Nursing Associate qualification be used to access the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship Programme?

The Assistant Practitioner (AP) and the Nursing Associate (NA) foundation degree may be accredited for prior learning and experience (APL/APEL) up to a maximum of 50% of both the RNDA Nursing Apprenticeship programme and an undergraduate pre-registration nursing programme which will both lead to a degree qualification and nurse registration with the NMC upon successful completion of the programme.

What are the core requirements of the programme?

All RNDA programmes must be approved by the NMC as meeting their [education standards](#) for pre-registration nursing programmes.

All RNDA's must meet the following:

- To evidence overall 4600 hours of learning, divided equally between 50% (2300 hours theory) and (2300 hours in practice), over the duration of the programme.
- Supernumerary practice hours will be undertaken as part of the apprenticeship – the standards expect experience of all four fields of nursing – adult, mental health, child and learning disabilities, but do not expect learners to have specific placements. HEIs must provide support to employer partners and the employer partner must also be approved by the NMC.

- To include practice learning opportunities to a diverse range of people, across the lifespan and in a variety of settings across all four fields of nursing – adult, mental health, child and learning disabilities.
- The Registered Nurse Degree Apprentice will need a [practice assessor and practice supervisor to support them throughout their apprenticeship](#). The practice assessor will need to be an NMC registered practitioner and have experience in the student's specific field of practice, whereas the practice supervisor can be any registered Health and social care professional.

What does being supernumerary mean during the programme?

Registered Nurse Degree Apprentices will have a supernumerary role whilst completing the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship programme, this means that the work being undertaken is additional to the employers normal staffing requirements, if the apprentice were not there, the role would not need to be filled by anyone else. In order to meet NMC standards, Registered Nurse Degree Apprentices must be supernumerary throughout the 2300 practice learning hours in order to meet NMC education standards.

What is off the job training?

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) also require that apprentices undertake a minimum of 20% off the job learning to complete their apprenticeship. This requirement will be factored into the apprenticeship programme delivered by the HEI.

Is there a National Job Description for the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship?

As for registered nurses there is no national job description, as the scope of the role will be dependent on the area of practice. There is guidance that has been developed and is available on HASO; this includes some guiding principles and an example Job Description developed by an employer to help employers to develop a job description for their own apprentices - [Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship - HASO \(skillsforhealth.org.uk\)](#)

Apprenticeships Resources:

Nursing Pathways: [Pathways - HASO \(skillsforhealth.org.uk\)](#)

Guides: [Resources - HASO \(skillsforhealth.org.uk\)](#)

Printables: [Resources - HASO \(skillsforhealth.org.uk\)](#)

Question	Answer
Will an assessor be required in the primary workplace?	A named practice assessor will be needed to oversee clinical work and contribute to supervision reports. They will manage progress, as well as providing additional support if required. They may need to be involved in organisation of placements, depending on the HEI. The assessor needs to be an NMC registrant; registered supervisors will also be involved.
What is the shift pattern during training?	During the programme the apprentice will be expected to work the shift pattern of the clinical area where they are working or on placement.
What happens if the apprentice needs a break in learning?	Breaks in learning may be required by some apprentices, for situations such as pregnancy / maternity and sickness absence. The apprenticeship provider/HEI should work with the employer and apprentice to support the apprentice in re-joining the apprenticeship at a suitable time when the apprentice returns to work.
Can part time workers apply?	Working part-time should not be a barrier to completing an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship program would need to be extended in duration to enable the part time employee to undertake and complete all apprenticeship program requirements. You will need to contact your HEI to find out about part-time options for the apprenticeship. (Please remember no element of the programme can be undertaken in the Registered Nurse Degree Apprentices own time if it is delivered as an apprenticeship)
Is there a minimum/maximum age to apply for the programme?	Apprentices must be over 16 years of age.
What qualification will I receive?	BSc Honours Degree (Level 6)/Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship If apprentices already have a first degree - MSc (Level 7)/Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship.
Is the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship regulated?	Yes, the programme is regulated. On successful completion the apprentice can apply to become a registered nurse who will pay the annual NMC fee, meet the standards of proficiency for registered nurses and work within the NMC Code of Conduct for Nurses, Midwives & Nursing Associates and undertake revalidation every 3 years, this will include demonstrating evidence of elements of practice including practice hours/CPD/reflective practice/feedback. https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/nmc-publications/nmc-code.pdf