

**Apprenticeships in Volunteer Services
Employer's Guide**

Volunteer Services are always looking to improve the lives of NHS staff, patients, and our communities through the power of volunteering. They help create a future where volunteering in the NHS can be part of our everyday lives – where there's always a helping hand when you need it most. This document shows how apprenticeships can be used to support volunteer services staff to develop in their own roles, enabling them to provide a better service to their health sector colleagues and to the volunteers themselves.



Guide developed by Skills for Health in conjunction with Helpforce February 2019.



Apprenticeships for Voluntary Services

A range of apprenticeship standards are available for use in the health sector. Below some suggestions of apprenticeships that may be appropriate for staff working as part of the volunteer services team.

Customer service

- Customer Service Practitioner (level 2)
- Customer Service Specialist (level 3)

Bid writing/fundraising

- Bid and Proposal Coordinator (level 3)

Business Administration

- Business Administrator (level 3)

Project management

- Associate Project Manager (level 4)
- Project Manager (level 6)

Management and Leadership

- Team Leader/Supervisor (level 3)
- Operations/Departmental Manager (level 5)
- Chartered Manager (level 6)
- Senior Leader (level 7)

Learning and development

- Learning Mentor (level 3)
- Assessor/Coach (level 4)
- Learning and Skills Teacher (level 5)

This list is not exhaustive. The standards are for broad occupations so that career progression in and out of voluntary services is optimised. Roles vary from organisation to organisation so there may be other apprenticeship standards that are appropriate to your workforce. A full list of apprenticeship standards available and in development can be accessed here: <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/standards/>

You may also be interested in considering pathways which show how staff can move from apprenticeship to apprenticeship. See more here: <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/pathways/?type=2#pcat=1129>

Volunteers

Apprenticeships cannot be used for volunteers as apprentices must be employed.

To undertake an apprenticeship a volunteer would have to become a member of staff instead of/as well as a volunteer. Level 2 apprenticeships such as customer service or healthcare support worker can make good entry-level routes into the workforce for some volunteers, especially if they are returning to work after a long break or if they do not have existing qualifications and experience.

How to select the right apprenticeship

Always look at the content of the apprenticeship standard, rather than just the title or level. You want to choose an apprenticeship which is a step up from the potential apprentice's current role. An apprenticeship must last at least 12 months and represent significant learning for the apprentice. You need to take into account their previous learning and experience and check that they meet any entry requirements set within the standard or by the training providers. Holding a previous qualification at the same level as one included in the apprenticeship is permitted, as long as the new learning for the apprentice represents 12 months or more. This includes at degree and postgraduate level.



Top tips for getting started

- Get familiar with content of the Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment Plan.
- Remember, the content not the level or title are the most important factors when selecting an apprenticeship.
- Start talking to others in your organisation about how the apprenticeship fits with workforce plans and levy spend. You may need to see your finance and HR departments.
- If you have an apprenticeship lead, make sure you speak to them as soon as possible to see what else is happening in your organisation and where you can work together.
- Talk with training providers. Remember you are the customer. Be well-informed and negotiate with providers on what you want delivered and how much you will pay.
- If you are a small department, organisation or occupation you may need to work with others either in your own organisation, in partner organisations, regionally or even nationally to procure the apprenticeship.
- Set a realistic start date so that your organisation can employ or agree to support apprentices.
- Think about on-the-job training and how you will provide pastoral support before, during and after the apprenticeship.
- Think about end point assessment – you will be able to choose which organisation provides this. Make sure your apprentices are aware of what end point assessment involves at the start of their apprenticeship so that it doesn't come as a surprise.
- Review career pathways and vacancies so that you know where progression opportunities in your organisation and occupation are so that you can advise staff, potential and current apprentices.



Get familiar, start talking, link with workforce planning, be an informed customer, procure, set start dates, prepare pastoral support and consider end point assessment.



Find out more about apprenticeships in the health sector here: <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/> and about volunteering and voluntary services in the NHS here: <https://www.helpforce.community/>

Background

New Apprenticeship Standards are available in England, several of which may be suitable for use by the volunteer services workforce, as listed above.

Following the 2012 Richard Review of Apprenticeships, the apprenticeship landscape has changed significantly. Apprenticeships are now available at a wide range of levels, across all sectors and open to all age groups, not just young people. Employers are using apprenticeships as a central tenant of their workforce plans, enabling to 'grow their own' workforce of the future. Many existing staff are also progressing their own careers by stepping into an apprenticeship. Keeping local staff, who are well-trained and have the potential to develop their careers within the same organisation are important factors for NHS organisations managing sustainable services for their patients and service users.



Apprenticeship Standards

An Apprenticeship Standard is a document that describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours that an apprentice should achieve by the end of their apprenticeship. The government requires that all apprenticeships also contain an independent end-point assessment. This means that each Apprenticeship Standard is accompanied by an assessment plan which sets out the requirements for the holistic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been developed during the apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship standards outline:

- The profile of the occupation
- The level and duration of the apprenticeship
- Any qualifications that must be completed during the apprenticeship
- The knowledge, skills and behaviours that are required to achieve full competence in the occupation

Assessment plans outline:

- The methods of assessment that will be used in End Point Assessment
- The grading criteria that will be used within each assessment
- Assessor requirements such as qualifications and experience
- Venue, equipment and resource requirements
- A timeline of when the assessments must be completed
- Resit and retake information

Apprenticeship Standards and Assessment Plans can be viewed and downloaded here
<https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/standards/>

Training and Assessment organisations

Training and End Point Assessment Organisations involved in the delivery of apprenticeships must be registered with one of the following:

- The Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-apprenticeship-training-providers>
- The Register of End Point Assessment Organisations
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-end-point-assessment-organisations>

You can look at these registers when seeking organisations to partner with to deliver your apprenticeships.

Funding

Employers and the government co-invest in apprenticeships. For most NHS organisations, the employer contribution is available through the Apprenticeship levy.

All employers with a payroll over £3million are subject to the levy from April 2017. They make a 0.5% contribution on payroll that they can only claim back as digital 'vouchers' for Apprenticeships.

Levy funding can only be used to pay recognised training providers to deliver training, education and assessment. Funding pays for training and assessment only, not salary costs. The employer is able to negotiate with the training provider to determine the exact cost of training and assessment, however if the cost exceeds the funding cap allocated by the Education Skills Funding Agency, the employer will be required to pay the additional amount.

Smaller, non-levy paying organisations contribute 10% towards the cost of training and assessing their apprentices. The government will pay the rest (90%) up to the funding band maximum.

See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes> for more details about the levy and funding arrangements.

Individual funding enquiries should be addressed to nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

Procurement

With the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and the potential financial value of contracts for training provision, a formal procurement process is advisable to ensure compliance with NHS Procurement Rules.

The Apprenticeship Levy is public money and there is therefore a legal requirement for organisations to achieve value for money through fair, open and transparent competition. Public sector bodies need to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 when selecting a provider or assessment organisation from the approved registers, as well as adhering to their own organisational Standing Financial Instructions.

For some occupations, particularly smaller professions, procurement may be done on a regional or even national basis.

To read more about procurement visit <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/procurement/>

Pay and contracts

Apprentices have to be employed by the organisation. Examples of apprenticeship contracts and an outline of wage requirements can be found here <https://haso.skillsforhealth.org.uk/recruitment-employment-and-pay/>.

This section of the website also contains guidance relating to literacy and numeracy, English for speakers of other languages and widening participation resources.

