

Wessex NVQ Centre Employer Engagement Practice

Version: 1.0

Date Issued: June 2019
 Review Date: June 2022
 Document Type: Policy

Contents		Page
Paragraph	Executive Summary	2
1	Scope and Purpose	2
2	Definitions	2
3	Information, advice and guidance on apprenticeship programmes	3
	Recruitment to apprenticeship programmes	4
	Monitoring and reporting on apprenticeship progress	5
4	Roles and Responsibilities	6
5	Related Trust Policies	6
6	Communication Plan	6
7	Process for Monitoring Compliance/Effectiveness of this Policy	6/7
8	Arrangements for Review of this Policy	7
9	References	8

Document Status

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version posted on the intranet is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled.

As a controlled document, this document should not be saved onto local or network drives but should always be accessed from the intranet.

Executive Summary

This policy applies to both internal University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust (UHS) managers and to external employers who are interested in sending individuals to undertake apprenticeship programmes delivered via the Wessex NVQ Centre (UHS apprenticeship centre).

1 Scope and Purpose

As a large NHS teaching hospital UHS and its apprenticeship centre has a clear understanding of the knowledge, skills and behaviours apprentices require in the workplace. The apprenticeship programmes offered through the Centre reflect this occupational expertise. The Centre will only deliver apprenticeships where we have this expertise and will not offer apprenticeships in occupations where we are not experts and other providers would be better placed to deliver.

The aims of the Wessex NVQ Centre (the Centre) are to:

- Deliver apprenticeship programmes specific to healthcare in occupational areas we know we have expertise to deliver.
- Deliver high quality training that is designed to provide the apprentices with the new knowledge, skills and behaviours to deliver excellent services and care to patients.
- Enable the development of support workers as part of the Trust's workforce plan
- Support recruitment to, and retention of, these roles through the offer of apprenticeships and career pathways.
- Support progression opportunities for the clinical and pharmacy support workers to higher level qualifications and roles.
- Be a preferred local training provider in these apprenticeship programmes for other local healthcare employers to also have well trained competent staff, supporting the development of support staff for the wider healthcare delivery system.

This policy sets out how the Wessex NVQ Centre will ensure that Trust managers and local healthcare organisations are informed about the apprenticeship programmes that are delivered via the Centre.

The scope of this policy is limited to those UHS managers and external employer that are likely to send individuals onto one of the apprenticeship programmes delivered via the UHS apprenticeship centre, for example Senior Healthcare Support Worker Level 3 and Pharmacy Support Worker Level 2.

The aim of this policy is to inform UHS managers and local healthcare employers how the Centre will engage with them to inform them about apprenticeship programmes delivered via the Centre and continue provide update information about apprenticeship progress once the apprentices have started on their programme.

To do this the Centre will:

- provide information, advice and guidance to managers/employers about the apprenticeship programmes delivered via the Centre so they are able to make an informed choice about which apprenticeship programme will be best to meet their workplace skill mix.
- ensure the apprentices on programmes will be monitored and progress will be reported to managers/employers who have apprentices on the programmes.
- Involve employers and managers in the ongoing development and improvement of the apprenticeship training programmes offered.

2 Definitions

- **Apprentice** – an individual who receives apprenticeship training and, where applicable end-point assessment through an apprenticeship framework or standard, funded by the ESFA (ESFA definition March 2019)¹
- **Apprenticeship** – is a job with an accompanying skills development programme (ESFA definition March 2019)
- **Centre** – this refers to the Wessex NVQ Centre (UHS apprenticeship centre)
- **Employer** – the organisation that employs the apprentice e.g. UHS Trust or Solent NHS Trust
- **Workplace manager** – the direct line manager of the apprentice in the workplace
- **Off the job training (planned learning activity)** – the training received by the apprentice, during the apprentice's paid hours, for the purpose of achieving their apprenticeship (ESFA definition March 2019)
- **Observational Assessor** – an occupationally competent member of staff in the workplace who mentors and assesses the apprentices workplace activity as part of the apprenticeship programme.
- **Centre tutor/assessor** – this is the main link person that supports, mentors and assessing the apprentices' course work as part of their apprenticeship programme. They will also delivery training in the Centre to apprentices during the taught element of off the job training.
- **Lead Internal Quality Assurer** – the individual in each apprenticeship team who has lead responsibility to ensure the quality of training and assessment practices and the overall programme.
- **Commitment statement** – a statement signed and held by the main training provider, the apprentice and employer (workplace manager). It sets out how the apprentice will be supported to successful achievement of the apprenticeship (amended from ESFA definition March 2019)
- **Apprenticeship agreement** – is a document showing details of the apprenticeship undertaken and is set out and signed as an agreement between the employer (workplace manager) and an apprentice (amended from ESFA definition March 2019)
- **Action plan and failure to progress** – is a document that is used by the Centre tutor/assessor to identify specific actions required to be undertaken to enable an apprentice who is not completing work satisfactorily to help them to improve.

3 Promoting apprenticeships and engagement with local employers

The Centre is primarily looking to support local health employers to develop their individuals to meet workforce planning needs.

The Centre will promote the apprenticeships on offer through regional forums where these employers are attending. These forums will include meetings and events organised by Health Education England (HEE) and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP). The Centre has strong links and relationships with these employers through these networks.

The Centre also has a strong working relationship with Southampton City Council and links with the Council around the development of skills required in the health and

¹ *Apprenticeship funding rules for training providers (August 2018 to July 2019)*; version 2; Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) March 2019

social workforce and will promote the apprentices offered to the Council as part of the solution for recruiting and retaining workforce in the sector.

The Centre will also organise and participate in events and activities during the annual National Apprenticeship Week

Other employers will be able to find the Centre through the ESFA 'find an apprenticeship training provider' link on the digital account.

Delivery of apprenticeship training

The Trust has specialist staff in the workplace who are able to offer the training in specialist areas of the programme enabling current practice to be delivered to the apprentices, including where appropriate, clinical skills and simulation training. There are opportunities for the apprentices to visit and work shadow some of the specialist areas in the hospital that may not be available in other organisations.

Information, advice and guidance to managers and employers about apprenticeship programmes

If there is a request from an external employer or an UHS workplace manager about one of the apprenticeship programmes being offered at the Centre a meeting will be arranged.

The meeting between on the Centre manager and the employer/workplace manager will cover the following:

- The rationale for the request to start apprentices i.e. why the programme will be of benefit to workforce skill development, talent management and workforce plan
- A discussion about the apprenticeship standard to ensure that the apprenticeship programme will meet the employer/workplace managers rationale to start apprenticeships
- The training requirements of the apprenticeship programme including the importance of releasing apprentices for a minimum of 20% off the job training for the duration of the programme (minus statutory leave entitlement)
- The requirements of the learning environment to support apprenticeships in the workplace, including mentoring and assessment (if required for any mandatory qualification) and access suitable workplace activities to ensure the apprentices can become competent during the apprenticeship period.
- Assistance to set up and use the ESFA apprenticeship digital account for employers
- The employment contract arrangements for apprentices
- The recruitment process to bring apprentices onto the programme. This includes advising the employer of the option of using the free Recruit Apprentice Service [Recruit an apprentice - GOV.UK](#) .
- Initial assessment to check for prior learning
- The commitment statement and apprenticeship agreement documentation
- The structure of the training programme, frequency of study days and preparation for end point assessment

If the apprenticeship programme is felt to be the best option for the employer/workplace manager then the individual can apply for and be recruited onto the apprenticeship programme.

If the apprenticeship programme is not felt to be the best option for the employer/workplace manager then further options can be explored, including suggestions for alternative apprenticeship programmes that may be delivered via different provider(s).

Recruitment to apprenticeship programmes

Individuals are recruited onto the Centre apprenticeship programmes in 2 different ways. They are either existing staff who already work for their employer and applying for the apprenticeship programme to up-skill themselves in their current role or to enable them to progress further in their chosen career. Alternatively some apprentices may be recruited directly into an apprenticeship post with the employer. Recruitment of apprentices will be undertaken to ensure all applicants are treated equally without discrimination due to any of the Protected Characteristics.

Recruitment onto an apprenticeship – existing staff

The process from closing date to informing successful applicants will be completed in 3 weeks, ensuring a minimum of 8 weeks' notice to managers for workplace rostering planning.

All applications will be reviewed within 5 working days of the closing date by the Quality Assurance (QA) Lead for the relevant apprenticeship programme and at least one other member of the apprenticeship centre against the shortlisting criteria.

Once applicants have been shortlisted against application requirements the QA Lead and a member of the apprenticeship centre will speak with the applicant and their manager confirming understanding of the rigors of enrolling on the apprenticeship, the responsibilities of the workplace areas to provide 20% off the job training (OJT) against contracted working hours.

Recruitment of apprentices will be undertaken to ensure all applicants are treated equally without discrimination for any of the Protected Characteristics.

Recruitment onto an apprenticeship – new recruits

Advertising for recruitment onto an apprenticeship programme can be undertaken by the employer through their own recruitment process, clearly stating in the advert that the post is for an apprenticeship.

Alternatively, if the employer is a levy payer they are able to advertise their apprenticeship vacancy through the national free Recruit Apprentice Service [Recruit an apprentice - GOV.UK](#) themselves. The Centre is able to provide advice and guidance on how to do this working with the employer.

If the employer is a non-levy payer the Centre can work with the employer to advertise their apprenticeship vacancy free on the Recruit Apprentice Service on the employers behalf.

Initial assessment

As part of the selection process the applicant and a member of the Centre team undertake an initial assessment against the relevant apprenticeship framework or standard. This will be carried out as set out in the Centre Initial Assessment of Prior Learning Policy. This will help to inform whether the applicant is eligible for the programme and will require a minimum of 12 months training over and above existing knowledge, skills and behaviours. This forms part of the recruitment process.

Decision on application

A decision will be made by the QA lead for the relevant apprenticeship programme and at least one other member of the apprenticeship centre following discussion with the applicant's manager, the applicant and the education lead (where appropriate)

and completion of the initial assessment. The applicant, manager and education lead will receive feedback as to whether the applicant has been successful in being recommended a place on the programme.

Acceptance or deferral of a place on the programme will be a transparent process with full disclosure as to the rationale behind the decision.

If the applicant is accepted onto the programme and prior to their starting, they and their manager will receive an email with the timetable for the duration of the programme at least 8 weeks before the programme commences. This will detail the study dates, times, locations and topics.

If the learner, manager or Centre tutor have concerns that the learner may have special education needs then an assessment must be planned within 2 weeks of this being raised to establish if this is the case and the recommendations arising from the report are acted on and put in place by the Centre manager.

Monitoring and reporting on apprenticeship progress

All apprentices will receive regular assessment and progress review meetings with their Centre tutor. These should occur every 4-6 weeks. At this meeting the Centre tutor should observe the apprentice in the workplace and complete the progress review form which should be uploaded to the learner portfolio on OneFile and a copy sent to the learner's workplace manager.

The Centre tutor will arrange to meet with the workplace manager and apprentice every 12 weeks to discuss progress against the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship and discuss future plans to support ongoing development.

A progress monitoring report will be generated at this meeting which will be sent to the apprentices' workplace manager. This will highlight progression on the apprenticeship and any areas of concern.

If a learner is found not to be making the expected level of progress then an action plan should be put in place outlining what the learner needs to do to maintain progress and the consequences of not doing so. A copy of this action plan should be uploaded to OneFile and a copy sent to the workplace manager. The frequency of progress review meetings should be increased to ensure the actions agreed are being undertaken and if not the plan should be amended.

If a learner continues to fail to progress despite action planning then a further meeting with the learner, line manager, education lead and the Lead IQA should be carried out to decide on whether the learner can continue on the programme as per the Centre's Complaints and Appeals policy.

Employer and manager input to curriculum development

The Centre is keen to ensure that managers and employers are able to influence the content and delivery of apprenticeships. For each of the apprenticeship programmes there are opportunities for managers and employer education leads to shape the curriculum by being part of curriculum development groups.

Employer and manager involvement is essential to ensure the apprentices will be taught the current practice and reflects changes in any national requirements in the occupation, for example new requirements set by professional bodies. Apprentices

will also be asked to influence changes to the curriculum through regular meetings with the Centre managers and through the evaluation processes.

As per the Centre quality improvement policy there will be 2 improvement events per year to which managers as stakeholders will be invited. Information gathered from training evaluation and other sources will be presented. Managers will be able to contribute experiences and ideas for improvement about the curriculum and other aspects of the apprenticeship programme at these events. This information will also assist the Centre in the development of the Ofsted Self Assessment Report (SAR).

4 Roles and Responsibilities

- **Centre manager** is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and monitored.
- **IQA** is responsible for ensuring the overall consistency of training and assessment practice between Centre tutor/assessors and observational assessors across apprentices undertaking a defined apprenticeship programme.
- **Centre tutor/assessor** is responsible for providing high quality support and assessment of allocated apprentices during the programme.
- **Workplace manager** is responsible for ensuring the apprentice has access to suitable learning opportunities in the workplace to practice and embed the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to gain to meet the apprenticeship standard/framework requirements as agreed in the signed Commitment Statement.
- **Apprentice** is responsible for ensuring they undertake all of the requirements of the apprenticeship programme in a timely way as set out in their signed Commitment Statement.

5 Related Policies

- Wessex NVQ Centre Initial assessment policy
- Wessex NVQ Centre Complaints and appeals policy
- University Hospital Southampton NHS Trust (UHS) Equality and Diversity Policy
- Wessex NVQ Centre Evaluation policy

6 Communication Plan

The workplace manager and Divisional education leads will be provided with a copy of this policy. The Centre manager will ensure that all of the Centre staff are aware of this policy and their responsibilities within it. Apprentices will be given a copy. A copy of this policy will also be available on Onefile as a resource to refer to.

7 Process for Monitoring Compliance/Effectiveness

"[What, who, how and how often compliance will be monitored]"

The purpose of monitoring is to provide assurance that the agreed approach is being followed – this ensures we get things right for patients, use resources well and protect our reputation. Our monitoring will therefore be proportionate, achievable and deal with specifics that can be assessed or measured.

Key aspects of the procedural document that will be monitored:

What aspects of compliance with the	What will be reviewed to evidence this	How and how often will this be	Detail sample size (if	Who will co-ordinate and report findings	Which group or report will receive
-------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------	------------------------	--	------------------------------------

document will be monitored		done	applicable)	(1)	findings
Initial meetings with managers	Record of meetings to discuss apprenticeship programmes	Annually	10% of manager discussions	Head of Wider Healthcare Teams Education	Education and Workforce Strategy Group
Application timescales	Completed application forms showing time from application to offer	Annually	10% of application forms	Head of Wider Healthcare Teams Education	Education and Workforce Strategy Group
Monitoring and reporting on apprentices progress.	Progress review forms	Annually	10% of completed forms	Head of Wider Healthcare Teams Education	Education and Workforce Strategy Group

(1) State post not person.

Where monitoring identifies deficiencies actions plans will be developed to address them.

8 Arrangements for Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless there are significant changes that are required as a result of amendment to national guidance from the ESFA or Ofsted before that date.

9 References

Apprenticeship funding rules for training providers (August 2018 to July 2019); version 2; Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) March 2019

Document Monitoring Information	
Ratifying Committee:	UHS Education and Workforce Strategy Group
Date of Approval:	June 2019
Signature of ratifying Committee Group/Chair:	Jo Mountfield, Director of Education and Workforce
Lead Name and Job Title of originator/author or responsible committee/individual:	Anita Esser, Head of Wider Healthcare Teams Education
Target audience:	Apprenticeship Centre staff, managers employing apprentices to be trained through the Centre and apprentices.
Main areas affected:	Wessex NVQ Centre and employers of apprentices being trained through the Centre
Summary of most recent changes if applicable:	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment completion date:	Insert date of completion (please provide a copy of EqIA for records)
Number of pages:	Insert total number of pages including appendices
Type of document:	Policy
Does this document replace or revise an existing document	No
Should this document be made available on the public website?	It will be available on the apprenticeship pages on UHS Careers website.
Is this document to be published in any other format?	Yes, hardcopy to be given to managers and apprentices.

The Trust strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all, both as a major employer and as a provider of health care. This document has therefore been equality impact assessed to ensure fairness and consistency for all those covered by it, regardless of their individual differences, and the results are available on request.