

# **Advanced Practice Programme Handbook 2024/25**

**NHS England, London**

This information is for Advanced Practitioner trainees, supervisors, Advanced Practice Leads, Consultant Practitioners, and anyone interested in implementing Advanced Practice in their organisation.

The following is a set of frequently asked questions and answers to assist employers in London to put forward their expressions of interest for Advanced Practice funding in 2024/25.

If you have other questions not included in this document and need an answer prior to applying, please contact [England.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net](mailto:England.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net)

# Content

## Section 1 - Advanced Practitioners and Trainees

Page 5-6

- Q1. What is an Advanced Practitioner?
- Q2. Is an Advanced Practitioner a specialist practitioner?
- Q3. What is a trainee Advanced Practitioner?
- Q4. What learning can a trainee Advanced Practitioner expect to receive?
- Q5. What commitment is expected of the trainee Advanced Practitioner whilst studying?
- Q6. How much time will the trainee Advanced Practitioner be away from their job studying?
- Q7. I understand Advanced Practice training can include a Non-Medical Prescribing (NMP) element, what happens if I already have it, or I don't need it?
- Q8. What supervision is required?

## Section 2 – NHSE Funding

Page 7-11

- Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee Advanced Practitioner, what is NHSE London's funding offer in 2024/25?
- Q10. I am considering employing a trainee Advanced Practitioner, why would I choose the apprenticeship route rather than the existing MSc Advanced Practice Programme?
- Q11. What is the supervision fee and what is the responsibility of the employer on receiving this?
- Q12. How is the supervision fee calculated for part time staff?
- Q13. Can a trainee fund their own Advanced Practice programme?
- Q14. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee Advanced Practitioner?
- Q15. Which organisations can apply for funding?
- Q16. Is this funding for new or existing employees and does NHSE have a preference?
- Q17. What about continuing Advanced Practice trainees?

## Section 3 – Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Student Support

Page 12-13

- Q18. What HEI's in the London region can individuals' study at?
- Q19. What are the HEI's admission requirements for a trainee Advanced Practitioner?
- Q20. What support can trainee Advanced Practitioners expect during their studying?
- Q21. What happens if the employee discontinues their Advanced Practice programme before it is completed?
- Q22. What happens if the trainee Advanced Practitioner leaves the employer that NHSE is currently funding, for another employer?
- Q23. What should trainees do if they fail an NHS England funded module?

## Section 4 – NHSE Funding Application Process

Page 14

- Q24. How do I submit an expression of interest?
- Q25. Who should complete the application?
- Q26. What happens after I have submitted my application?
- Q27. What if I am successful in obtaining funding but then unable to employ the trainee Advanced Practitioner in time?
- Q28. Do Health and social care professionals from abroad working in the NHS doing an Advanced Practice MSc pay home fees?

## Appendix 1 – NHSE Funding Application Process

## Appendix 2 – NHSE Advanced Practice Faculty Contact List

## Section 1 - Advanced Practitioners and Trainees

### Q1. What is an Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** Advanced Practice is delivered by experienced, registered health care practitioners. It is a level of practice characterised by a high degree of autonomy and complex decision making. This is underpinned by an academic level 7 master's level award or equivalent that encompasses the four pillars of clinical practice, leadership and management, education, and research, with demonstration of area specific clinical competence. Advanced Practitioners come from a range of professional backgrounds such as Nursing, Midwifery, Pharmacy, and the Allied Health Professions. The [Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework](#) provides a clear and consistent approach to the development of advanced practice across England.

### Q2. Is an Advanced Practitioner a specialist practitioner?

**Answer:** No, Advanced Practice is quite different from specialist practice. Specialists are experts in their chosen clinical area, for example in diabetes or asthma care and have a **depth** of competencies in that specific area. Advanced Practitioners have a **breadth** of competencies and capabilities that extend across the four pillars of advanced practice (clinical practice, leadership & management, education, research). It should however be noted that Advanced Practitioners may work in either generalist or specialist areas of practice and the two roles are therefore not mutually exclusive.

### Q3. What is a trainee Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** A trainee Advanced Practitioner is an experienced healthcare professional employed in a funded training post specifically to undertake the required training to work at the level of Advanced Practice. The training comprises study at master's level (academic level 7) and work-based learning to develop competence across all four pillars of the ACP Multi-professional Framework.

### Q4. What learning can a trainee Advanced Practitioner expect to receive?

**Answer:** The timetables and study time required will vary according to the training route and the specific Higher Education Institution (HEI), but all trainees will need periods of study leave to attend university and will be required to produce course work, write essays, undertake work-based assessments, and produce a portfolio of evidence. Trainees may also benefit from rotations or placements in other areas within the organisation to gain the required breadth of experience.

### Q5. What commitment is expected of the trainee Advanced Practitioner whilst studying?

**Answer:** Trainees are required to attend university teaching days, practise clinical skills in their workplace and complete workplace-based assessments of competencies. They will also need time to meet their supervisor regularly to plan their individual educational needs and monitor their progress. The requirements of supervisors are explained in more detail in the [HEE ACP Toolkit](#) and the NHSE Minimum Standards for Supervision guidance. It is expected that each trainee will dedicate many hours to independent study to become successful in achieving the qualification. The notional number of hours of study and teaching expected is approximately 100 hours per 10 academic credits (which includes both contact hours and independent study hours) however, the

actual time spent may be more, or less, dependent on individual learners. It is therefore important for Advanced Practitioner trainees to have sufficient work-based learning time to develop their advanced skills.

### **Q6. How much time will the trainee Advanced Practitioner be away from their job studying?**

**Answer:** For trainees on academic level 7 Advanced Practice apprenticeship and MSc programmes, generally, 80% of an apprentice's/ trainee's time will be training in the workplace with 20% at the HEI. Employers are expected to provide the trainee with sufficient study leave for university-based modules and protected time for work-based learning each week. The HEI programme lead will provide information on the total amount of study days required. For trainees who are not registered on a full programme and only require top-up modules, the time required for study leave will vary according to individual need.

### **Q7. I understand Advanced Practice training can include a Non-Medical Prescribing (NMP) element, what happens if I already have it, or I don't need it?**

**Answer:** If a student already has the NMP qualification or doesn't need it the training provider is likely to provide a choice of module(s) that the student can undertake instead and agree this with their employer. NMP qualification is not an essential requirement for an Advanced Practitioner, but the Advanced Practitioner job description may dictate that NMP is necessary in a particular role.

### **Q8. What supervision is required?**

**Answer:** Good workplace-based supervision is a key factor for successful completion of Advanced Practitioner training. Trainees who are not well supervised can struggle and some have failed to complete their programmes. Each trainee Advanced Practitioner requires a named workplace co-ordinating educational supervisor (with possible associate supervisors depending on trainee need) who can undertake multi-professional supervision and is familiar with the learning requirements of advanced practice. Supervisors must have protected time in their job plan to support the trainee. National guidelines on Advanced Practice supervision were published in 2020 and can be accessed here: [National Guidance](#) and the [HEE Minimum Standards for Supervision guidance 2022](#).

The expectation is that Advanced Practice trainees will have supervision over the course of their training adhering to the principles of the [HEE Quality Framework](#), [Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework](#) and [Minimum standards for supervision](#) for all learners.

## Section 2 – NHSE Funding and Support

### Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee Advanced Practitioner, what is NHSE London's funding offer in 24/25?

**Answer:** NHSE is supporting the development of Advanced Practitioner roles in 24/25 by offering a package of funding and support for trainees. There are three Advanced Practice training pathways and employers are invited to put forward requests for funding under the training pathways outlined below. There is the intention, subject to budget signoff, to provide funding as detailed:

- **Advanced Practice MSc Qualification:** Funding for tuition fees for a period of up to three years for an Advanced Practice programme. NHSE will pay the full tuition costs directly to the HEI. In addition, NHSE offer a supervision grant of £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer. The purpose of the grant is to support Advanced Practitioners with workplace-based supervision and assessment.
- **Advanced Practice Apprenticeship:** For organisations who utilise the apprenticeship levy for funding of programme fees, NHSE's contribution to workplace supervision will be increased to £6,000 per annum. This is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2024/25 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled.
- **Advanced Practice Top-Up Modules:** Only top-up module requests for conversion of NHSE-funded Post Graduate Diplomas (PGDip) to the full MSc will be funded by NHSE London. Any requests for stand-alone modules that could complete an established Advanced Practitioner mapping of capabilities against the domains of the Multi-Professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice would be directed to the national e-Portfolio (Supported) Route process to receive recognition by the Centre of Advancing Practice. All e-portfolio (Supported) routes requests must be discussed with the Employer named Advanced Practice Lead.
- **Speciality Advanced Practice Programmes:** This funding is available where it is clearly demonstrated that the completion of a speciality MSc programme will meet a specific workforce need that cannot be met by current generic Advanced Practice pathways.

To provide this assurance, the employer, supported by the ICB, will be required to submit a business case outlining the workforce development plan. This should include the speciality training need of the Advanced Practice workforce as well as outlines of job descriptions confirming the roles available to trainees on completion of their speciality programme that fully map to the domains of the Multi-professional Framework for Advanced Clinical Practice. The employer will also be required to attend one of the drop-in sessions that will be made available during the demand process, to discuss the request with the faculty.

The requests for funded training places will be prioritised in the following order (please see table below), with each subsequent level of prioritisation only supported where budgetary capacity can support demand:

Priority	Description
1	Places on Centre-accredited Advanced Practice programmes (Standard or apprenticeship MSc)
2	Places on non-accredited legacy Advanced Practice programmes (Standard or Apprenticeship, MSc)
3	Top-Up modules required to convert a NHSE-funded Advanced Practice PGDip to a full MSc
4	Places on non-standard HEI programmes that fulfil a specific Advanced Practice workforce development need and whose curricula can be mapped against the four pillars of advanced practice

### Q10. I am considering employing a trainee Advanced Practitioner, why would I choose the apprenticeship route rather than the existing MSc Advanced Practice Programme?

**Answer:** NHSE funding for Advanced Practice programmes is limited and therefore levy paying employers are encouraged to utilise apprenticeship programmes where available and consider this training pathway as their primary option. This will enable support to be provided for an increased number of applicants, and access to a higher supervision fee of £6,000 per annum. **This supervision fee is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2024/25 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled.** To view the Apprenticeship Standard for an Advanced Practitioner, click [here](#). Employers should ensure that individuals put on to an apprenticeship route are committed to completing the full programme.

Where it has been agreed through the commissioning process, NHSE will provide a supervision fee as outlined in Q9 to support employers with the delivery of the Advanced Practice programme.

### Overview of 2024/25 funding

Training pathway	Tuition fees	Supervision fee
Advanced Practice MSc Qualification	Full tuition fees paid to the HEI for a period of up to 3 years practice.	<b>£2,500</b>
Advanced Practice Apprenticeship	N/A (paid by the employer through the apprenticeship levy)	<b>£6000</b>
Advanced Practice Portfolio Route: Top-up modules	Tuition fees paid to the HEI for named modules as agreed between NHSE and the employer. Modules must be completed within the academic year and must upskill the individual to fully meet the Multi-Professional Advanced Practice Framework	N/A

### Q11. What is the supervision fee and what is the responsibility of the employer on receiving this?

**Answer:** A £2,500 per annum, per trainee supervision fee is available for those on a full Advanced practice MSc that is funded by NHSE. This offer is to support organisational costs of supporting an Advanced Practitioner with workplace-based supervision and assessment. For organisations who utilise the apprenticeship levy for funding of programme fees, NHSE's contribution to workplace supervision will be increased to £6,000. This is available for each new and continuing student undertaking a programme of study in the 2024/25 academic year and will be paid to employers after the named individual student has enrolled. A data validation exercise will take place between HEIs and NHSE to confirm enrolled students. Where a student expects their programme to be undertaken for a longer period than three years, the student and employer are advised to contact the faculty to discuss this further, as we cannot guarantee the payment of a supervision fee for longer than a three-year period.

A lack of support often results either in individuals withdrawing from the programme or seeking alternative employment; employers should consider whether they can fully support individuals before seeking funding for training.

The supervision fee should be used to support the employer in relation to the associated costs in helping the employee achieve their qualification. A data validation exercise will take place between HEIs and NHSE to confirm enrolled students.

- Trusts: The fee will be paid directly to the employer after an individual has enrolled and started the programme, based on the validation exercise.
- Primary Care: ICB Lead Training Hubs will invoice NHSE for the supervision fees for their local Training Hubs, and then reimburse the employing practice for each Advanced Practice trainee.

The expectations of employers in return for the supervision fee are:

- Should be able to articulate *a clear case for the Advanced practice role*, demonstrating that it is an organisational priority in line with their workforce transformation plans and service requirements.
- Should, wherever possible, be able to articulate how new Advanced Practitioner numbers connect to system level recovery priorities.
- Should be able to provide assurance that there will be *an Advanced Practice post on completion of training*. This is necessary to avoid investing in the upskilling of staff who cannot then put their advanced skills into practice.
- Must *identify an appropriately trained supervisor* who will be able to apply the [Principles of Workplace Supervision](#) and the [Minimum standards for supervision](#)
- The expectation is that Advanced Practitioner trainees will have supervision over the course of their training adhering to the principles of the [HEE Quality Framework](#), Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework and The [Minimum standards for supervision](#) for all learners. This should include provision of a suitable workplace-based learning environment and opportunities to gain competence across the 4 pillars of advanced practice (clinical practice, leadership/management, research, and education).
- Must provide sufficient study leave for university training. It should not be expected that Advanced Practitioner trainees take unpaid or annual leave for dedicated training days.
- Should encourage trainees to complete NHSE's [National Education and Training Survey \(NETS\)](#)



- Should ensure that the supervision funding reporting form 2024/25 is fully completed and returned to NHSE.

The supervision fee must not be used for equipment or capital costs.

**N.B At the end of the year, employers will be required to report on their use of the supervision fee in meeting these expectations. Where the expectations are not met, funding may be discontinued and where there is a pattern within an employer of Advanced Practitioner trainees not being supported appropriately, future funding for Advanced Practice may be fully withdrawn from the employer.**

It is expected that the employers use the supervision fee to support the trainees whilst they are on programme, this may require the employer to utilise the funds throughout the academic year of which intakes may start in January, May, or September.

### **Q12. How is the supervision fee calculated for part time staff?**

**Answer:** All employers receive the same amount of supervision fee per learner irrespective of whether the student is working full time or part time. This is because both the apprenticeship and MSc programmes generally require the student to work for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

### **Q13. Can a trainee fund their own Advanced practice programme?**

**Answer:** For most trainees, self-funding a master's level Advanced Practice programme is not recommended for several reasons. Advanced Practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as part of a strategic plan, rather than individuals self-funding their own professional development. In addition, the availability of places on Advanced practice programmes is co-ordinated by universities in conjunction with NHSE and it cannot be guaranteed that places will be available for applicants who are self-funding. Please contact your Advance Practice Lead in your organisation should you wish to access NHSE funding for your Advance practice training.

### **Q14. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee Advanced Practitioner?**

**Answer:** For the apprenticeship programme it is a minimum of 30 hours per week. For the Advanced Practice MSc, this will differ at each University but again, this will generally be a minimum of 30 hours. If the employer is recruiting a new person as a trainee Advanced Practitioner, then it is suggested they are recruited on a minimum contract of 30 hours. For existing employees, if they work less than 30 hours per week, please contact the relevant programme lead at the HEI to discuss their suitability for the programme.

### **Q15. Which organisations can apply for funding?**

**Answer:** NHS organisations such as Trusts and GP Practices (via their ICB Lead Training Hub) in the NHSE London region are invited to submit their expressions of interest for Advanced Practice training for new learners.

### **Q16. Is this funding for new or existing employees and does NHSE have a preference?**

**Answer:** The funding offer is for both new and existing NHS staff and NHSE welcome applications for both. However, for employers who are planning on recruiting a new member of staff, it is recommended financial commitment for the recruitment is obtained as soon as possible and with plenty of time prior to the HEI admissions process.

The employer should provide assurance that there will be an Advanced Practitioner post on completion of training, demonstrated in the service/division establishment by way of a job description or job plan, to avoid investing in the upskilling of staff who cannot then put their advanced skills into practice. Organisations are asked to confirm if a job description or job plan is in place when submitting their expressions of interest.

### **Q17. What about continuing Advanced Practitioner trainees?**

**Answer:** Due to the changes in the commissioning process in 2021/22 academic year, continuing students who were previously funded to PGDip level will be given the option to transfer onto the Advanced Practice MSc pathway. Continuing students will be reviewed through our monitoring process with HEIs, who will confirm which students are still on their programmes. The supervision fee will be made available to students for up to 3 years only, until the completion of the Advanced Practice MSc.

## Section 3 – HEI’s and Student Support

### Q18. At which HEIs in the London region can individual’s study?

**Answer:** A prospectus of HEI’s providing Advanced Practice programmes in the London region is **included in the email you will have received inviting your expression of interest**. This should be viewed prior to making an application. Please note it is not a list of recommended HEIs and is not an exhaustive list of HEIs offering these programmes. It is possible for learners to study at other HEIs not included in the list if this is the preference, especially if programmes required are not available at HEIs on the list.

When completing the expression of interest application, organisations are asked to indicate their preferred HEI for delivery of training. Please note that this does not guarantee placements with HEIs. It provides NHSE with an indication of demand for HEI courses across London.

If funding is agreed by NHSE, individuals are responsible for successfully applying to the HEI programmes. Funding will then be paid from NHSE to HEIs directly unless there are exceptional circumstances.

### Q19. What are the HEIs’ admission requirements for a trainee Advanced Practitioner?

**Answer:** Basic entry requirements for HEI courses can be found in the [Advanced Practice Prospectus 2024/25](#). We would also recommend checking with the HEI directly on their specific requirements, which can often be found on their website. Entry requirements will likely consider previous academic qualifications, current professional registration, significant post-registration experience of professional practice, evidence the employee is / will be operating in a role that will offer the opportunity to practice at an advanced level within their profession and evidence of professional and academic development.

### Q20. What support can trainee Advanced Practitioners expect during their study?

**Answer:** All HEI programmes will be taught by lecturers and expert clinical practitioners in their field who will offer dedicated academic support and guidance and students will be allocated a named personal tutor. The HEIs also offer support through a dedicated librarian and a comprehensive student support service. Students also find their cohort of colleagues of immeasurable value as a support network.

### Q21. What happens if the employee discontinues their Advanced Practice programme before it is completed?

**Answer:** It is recognised, from time to time, some students may have to suspend their study e.g., for long term sickness, change of employment, personal reasons etc. Where a student discontinues their studies but will be returning to complete them and have indicated the timescales to the HEI, this is called ‘stepping off’ and NHSE will consider resuming funding when the student returns to study. However, these are reviewed on a case-by-case basis as it is dependent on whether the student can complete the course within the timescales available on their return.

Where a student is not returning to study, NHSE will discontinue the clinical supervision fee at the point they leave the programme. In all circumstances NHSE should be informed immediately by contacting [england.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net](mailto:england.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net)

There are implications on the use of levy funding for not continuing an apprenticeship programme and these should be discussed with your employer on a case-by-case basis.

### **Q22. What happens if the trainee Advanced Practitioner leaves the employer that NHSE is currently funding, for another employer?**

**Answer:** All such instances will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and no guarantee of continued funding can be provided to either the employer or employee. However, in reviewing the situation, NHSE would first consider how it can continue funding the current employer who was granted the funding for a trainee Advanced Practitioner. Where that is not possible NHSE would look to see how the trainee Advanced Practitioner can continue to be supported.

### **Q23. What should trainees do if they fail an NHS England funded module?**

**Answer:** Trainees should liaise with their HEI programme lead to discuss individual circumstances and suitability to repeat failed modules and continue on programme. NHS England will not routinely cover any additional course fees incurred from repeating modules already funded in a previous academic year. Requests for funding subsequent modules required to complete an MSc advanced practice programme will need to be submitted in the usual way by Trust / training hub AP Lead via the regional demand scoping survey.

## Section 4 – NHSE Funding Application Process

### Q24. How do I submit an expression of interest?

**Answer:** All expressions of interest are required to be submitted via the template that NHSE will share directly with organisations. Templates which are not completed fully will not be accepted.

To support organisations with their workforce planning, NHSE have developed the [Readiness Checklist](#) and [Primary Care Readiness Checklist](#) to assist you in considering the infrastructure needed to fully support Advanced Practitioner trainees.

The funding application processes is outlined in Appendix 1.

### Q25. Who should complete the application?

**Answer:** NHSE requires the Advanced Practice lead (or an individual responsible for Advanced Practice with an organisation) for each employer to submit applications for this funding. This person will act as the key liaison for all enquiries relating to the applications for which funding is being applied. This is to ensure there has been appropriate scrutiny applied to the application including agreement for recruitment (where needed) and alignment with organisational workforce development needs. Applications from individuals seeking funding will not be accepted.

### Q26. What happens after the organisation has submitted an application?

**Answer:** NHSE will review all expressions of interest and the indicative demand. Funding will be confirmed where possible within two weeks of the submission, depending on the allocated budget for the current financial year. It may not be possible to provide funding for all applications received and where organisations are not successful, they will be notified. For applications to be successful please include the *student names* and *professions*. This facilitates a more efficient validation exercise with the HEIs.

### Q27. What if I am successful in obtaining funding but then unable to employ the trainee Advanced Practitioner in time?

**Answer:** You must inform NHSE as soon as possible so that the funding place can be reallocated to another employer.

### Q28. Do Advanced Practice students from abroad working in the NHS doing an MSc pay home (tuition) fees?

**Answer:** Advanced Practice MSc Students from abroad who are working in the NHS may not be entitled to Home Student Fee Status; this may depend on the student's residency in the UK and must be discussed with the university and the employer at application to the HEI. NHSE London's Faculty only have the capacity to pay home tuition fees for all students (regardless of fee status) on the MSc and Top-up Module pathways.

# Appendix 1 – NHSE Funding Application Process



## Appendix 2 – NHSE Advancing Practice Faculty Contact List

Contact	Role	Contact Details
<b>Nora Ponnusamy</b>	Advancing Practice Project Manager	<a href="mailto:England.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net">England.acpenquirieslondon@nhs.net</a>
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