

Developing the prosthetist and orthotist workforce: apprenticeship initiative 2023/24

Implementation Guidance for Employers

Contents

Introduction	2
Funding offer	2
EOI Process	3
Procurement	3
Course Providers	3
FAQ's and further information	3
Contact details.....	7

Introduction

To support meeting challenges in the Prosthetics and Orthotics workforce and to promote the tangible benefits apprenticeships bring to the NHS, NHS England is proposing to offer training grants in 2023/24 for employers to develop apprenticeships in Prosthetics and Orthotics.

Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes which are designed to help employers train people for specific job roles. At the same time, apprentices get a paying job with valuable training while they work towards a nationally recognised apprenticeship standard or framework. Apprenticeships bring a number of tangible benefits to NHS and other organisations they can create skilled, motivated and qualified employees and, if used properly, can help to address skills shortages across the workforce.

Funding offer

To help grow the prosthetics and orthotics workforce NHS England are offering approx. 20 training support grants nationally to employers of £8,300 (per apprentice, per year for the duration of the apprenticeship) for the following apprenticeship programme start in January 2024:

- Level 3 Prosthetic/Orthotic Technician Apprenticeship
- Level 6 Prosthetist and orthotist degree apprenticeship

The overarching aims of the offer is to:

- Support Trusts in developing the prosthetics and orthotics workforce and develop the pipeline of individuals along the career pathway
- Support existing and new staff to develop in their roles and along the career pathway (this includes existing support workers, assistant practitioners and aspiring prosthetists and orthotists)
- Grow the number of prosthetists and orthotists
- Increase access to and provide new routes into prosthetics and orthotics through supporting the apprenticeship pathways

This proposed support, would be available as a pro-rata payment in the current financial year (2023/24) and carried over to 2024/25. The grant could be used by employers (in addition to the apprenticeship levy) to support and facilitate their trainees completing a recognised apprenticeship training programme. The training grant is to support trainees commencing the programme within this current financial year and this NHS England funding must be expended in the financial year 2023/24. The next planned cohort for the prosthetics and orthotics apprenticeship is in January 2024

EOI Process

Employers should submit their request for funding via this national online survey – <https://forms.office.com/e/PkFW7FrdWd>

Th expression of Interest survey will open on Tuesday 12 September 2023 and close at midnight on Sunday 1 October.

Please note that neither you (the employer), nor NHS England, are committing to anything at this point in time. Employers are advised to wait for confirmation from NHS England as to which training posts will be awarded funding before enrolling candidates on programme.

Employers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm whether your EOI will be supported and, where necessary, informed of next steps in the process.

Procurement

To support this project NHS England and Salisbury NHS procurement have undertaken a national procurement process to identify an education provider to deliver the prosthetics and orthotics apprenticeships.

This service is managed and owned by Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust and aims to deliver a range of support for employers to increase their uptake of Apprenticeships. **Please contact** Sft.commercial@nhs.net

Course Providers

Please see the below details for prosthetics and orthotics apprenticeship courses, including recruitment and intake timelines.

Level 3 prosthetic/ Orthotic Technician Apprenticeship:

[Level 3 Prosthetic and Orthotic Technician Apprenticeship - Apprenticeships courses - University of Derby](#)

Level 6 Prosthetic and Orthotic Degree Apprenticeship:

[Prosthetics and Orthotics Degree Apprenticeship - Apprenticeships courses - University of Derby](#)

FAQ's and further information

When do learners need to start an apprenticeship to be eligible for the grant?

The grant is available for apprenticeship programmes that start in the financial year 2023/24 (April-23 – March24). The next planned cohort for the prosthetics and orthotics apprenticeship is in January 2024 so this cohort would be eligible.

How does my organisation apply for the grant/s?

Employers should submit their request for funding via this expression of interest online survey – <https://forms.office.com/e/PkFW7FrdWd>

If I Submit a request for funding will my organisation be guaranteed the funding?

No, neither you (the employer), nor NHS England, are committing to anything at this point in time, this is an expression of interest phase. Employers are advised to wait for confirmation from NHS England as to which training posts will be awarded funding before enrolling candidates on programme.

When will I hear about the outcome of my request for funding?

Employers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity to confirm whether your request will be supported and, where necessary, informed of next steps in the process.

What are the entry criteria for learners?

The criteria below are the standard requirements for each programme. However ,the teaching team will take into account prior learning from candidates which may be different from the qualifications listed below and experience within prosthetics and orthotics will also be considered on an individual basis.

Level 3 Prosthetic/ Orthotic Technician Apprenticeship:

- 5 GSCE's (or equivalent) at grades A-C or 4-9, including Mathematics and English
- English and Maths L2 or for those with an education, health & care plan or a legacy statement, the English & Maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3
- Evidence of recent study
- Current DBS
- Ability to meet the occupational health requirements of the programme.
- If applying as a candidate for whom English is a second language the applicant should hold an overall IELTS score of at least 7.0 with no element below 6.5.
- Apprentice/Learner must be employed within a Prosthetic or Orthotic Department and must have the support of their manager that they will be able to complete the programme/apprenticeship.

Level 6 Prosthetic and Orthotic Degree Apprenticeship:

- 120 UCAS tariff points which can be achieved through relevant level 3 qualifications including Access to Higher Education (60 credits: 45 at level 3 with a minimum of Dist: 15 Merit: 24 Pass: 6), A-Levels, T Levels or BTEC (distinction, distinction, merit)
- Or Level 3 qualification in a Health and Social Care related course
- Level 2 English qualification (GCSE Grade 4-9, GCSE Grade A-C, Level 2 Functional Skills English, Key Skills Level 2 Communication or equivalent)
- Level 2 Maths qualification (GCSE Grade 4-9, GCSE Grade A-C, Level 2 Functional Skills Maths, Key Skills Level 2 Application of Number (Numeracy) or equivalent)
- Health or care experience to demonstrate an insight into the professional values and behaviours associated with health and care environments.
- Employers are responsible for ensuring apprentices meet occupational health requirements and have passed appropriate vetting procedures, which may include a Disclosure and Barring Service Check and Right to Work check. This is evidenced through the submission of supplementary evidence as part of the selection process.
- Apprentices will have been identified by the organisation as being able to succeed in the programme, and employers may set additional entry requirements as part of the selection process prior to assessment for entry by the University.
- Applicants must complete an occupational health assessment and an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as part of the selection process and any offer made will be subject to these.
- The apprentice must be employed in a Prosthetic or Orthotic Department and must have the support of their manager that they will be able to complete the apprenticeship. Apprentices can be either new or existing employees.

How much are the course fees?

All course fees will be covered by the apprenticeship levy. The levy is accessible to all prosthetic and orthotic employers and not limited to those who pay into the levy. The apprenticeship course fees for the prosthetics and orthotics apprenticeships are:

- Level 3 Prosthetic/ Orthotic Technician Apprenticeship: £6,000
- Level 6 Prosthetic and Orthotic Degree Apprenticeship: £24,000

Help can be given to services to access this levy funding.

How do I access apprenticeship levy to pay for the course fees?

There are three ways to access funding to pay for apprenticeship training. This levy funding does not cover salary costs; you will have to fund the apprentice's salary. The training grant can be used by employers to go towards employment costs.

1. **Apprenticeship Levy** Employers with a pay bill over £3 million each year pay the apprenticeship levy. Levy-paying employers can spend their apprenticeship levy funding on apprenticeship training.

2. **Reserve government co-investment** If you don't pay the apprenticeship levy you can reserve funding, where the government pays 95% of the training costs and the employer pays the remaining 5%.
3. **Levy Transfers** Levy-paying employers can transfer some of their annual levy to other employers. These transfers cover 100% of the training costs of the apprenticeship (you still need to cover salary).

Can apprentices spend their time across several sites?

There are several benefits to exposing the trainee to several sites and experiences, ensuring appropriate supervision requirements are in place. Apprentices will need to complete clinical experience in both prosthetics and orthotics and the university will help single discipline employers to access the alternative discipline for the necessary placements. Provision of a suitable breadth of clinical experience in prosthetics and orthotics remains the responsibility of the employer.

How many hours will the apprentice work per week?

Apprentices should be employed on at least a 30 hrs per week contract (of which 20% will be 'off the job' training to include study and tasks related to their development).

What activities is the apprentice expected to be involved in?

Apprentices will undertake a range of activities dependent on the learning environment in which they work and develop their knowledge and skills in practice. Activities should allow them to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and link to the agreed learning outcomes as outlined in the learning plan. As the apprentice grows in confidence and competence, they will become an integrated part of the workforce. When progressing through the apprenticeship, their skills and confidence will grow meaning that they will be able to take on more tasks in the workplace.

Can part time staff undertake the apprenticeship?

Yes, part time staff can undertake the apprenticeship. If an apprentice works less than full time the apprenticeship duration will be extended accordingly.

Can I use apprenticeship levy to pay for my apprentices' salary?

Apprenticeship levy, reservations and transfers do not cover salary costs. Your organisation will need to fund the apprentice's salary. The training support grant however can contribute to the employment costs.

What does “off the job training” mean?

Off-the-job training is the amount of time that should be spent on occupational off-the-job training during an apprenticeship. Off-the-job training is a statutory requirement for an apprenticeship. It is training, which is received by the apprentice, during the apprentice’s normal working hours for the purpose of achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the approved apprenticeship referenced in the apprenticeship agreement.

Contact details

For enquiries regarding **the Level 6 Prosthetics and Orthotics Degree Apprenticeship** please contact:

Jane Ansell

Senior Lecturer Prosthetics & Orthotics, AHP Degree Apprenticeship Programme Lead.
College of Health, Psychology and Social Care

M: 07769671888

E: j.ansell@derby.ac.uk

For enquiries regarding **the Level 3 Prosthetic/ Orthotics Technicians Apprenticeship** please contact:

Ian Adam

Lecturer Prosthetics & Orthotics, AHP Degree Apprenticeship
College of Health, Psychology and Social Care

M: 07769 671798

E: i.adam@derby.ac.uk

For enquiries regarding **the training support grants and levy funding** please contact:

Fay Lane

National Programme Manager | Apprenticeships
National Talent for Care Team | NHS England

Email: Fay.Lane@nhs.net