

Advanced Clinical Practice Programme Handbook 2020/21



HEE London

This pack is for Advanced Clinical Practitioner trainees, supervisors, ACP Leads and anyone interested in implementing ACP 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 Clinical Practitioner (ACP) funding in 2020/21.

If you have other questions not included in this document and need an answer prior to submitting an application, please contact ACPenquirieslondon@hee.nhs.uk.

Content

Section 1 - Advanced Clinical Practitioners and Trainees Page 3-4

- Q1. What is an Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP)?
- Q2. Is an ACP a specialist practitioner?
- Q3. What is a trainee ACP?
- Q4. What learning can a trainee ACP expect to receive?
- Q5. What commitment is expected of the trainee ACP whilst studying?
- Q6. How much time will the trainee ACP be away from their job studying?
- Q7. I understand ACP 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 – HEE Funding Page 4-8

- Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee ACP, what is HEE London's funding offer in 20/21?
- Q10. I am considering employing a trainee ACP, why would I choose the Apprenticeship route rather than the existing MSc Advanced Clinical 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 ACP programme?
- Q12. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee ACP?
- Q13. Which organisations can apply for funding?
- Q14. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee ACP?
- Q15. Which organisations can apply for funding?
- Q16. Is this funding for new or existing employees and does HEE have a preference?
- Q17. What about continuing ACP trainees?

Section 3 – HEI's and Student Support Page 8-9

- Q18. What HEI's in the London region can individuals' study at?
- Q19. What are the HEI's admission requirements for a trainee ACP?
- Q20. What support can trainee ACPs expect during their studying?
- Q19. What happens if the employee discontinues their ACP programme before it is completed?
- Q20. What happens if the trainee ACP leaves the employer that HEE is currently funding, for another employer?
- Q21. What happens if the employee discontinues their ACP programme before it is completed?
- Q22. What happens if the trainee ACP leaves the employer that HEE is currently funding, for another employer?

Q23. How do I submit an expression of interest?

Q24. Who should complete the application?

Q25. What happens after I have submitted my application?

Q26. What if I am successful in obtaining funding but then unable to employ the trainee ACP in time?

Section 1 - Advanced Clinical Practitioners and Trainees

Q1. What is an Advanced Clinical Practitioner (ACP)?

Answer: Advanced Clinical Practice (ACP) 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 a masters 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. ACP's come from a range of professional backgrounds such as Nursing, Pharmacy, Paramedics and Occupational Therapy. The [ACP Multi-Professional Framework](#) provides a clear and consistent approach to the development of advanced clinical practice across England.

Q2. Is an ACP a specialist practitioner?

Answer: No, Advanced Clinical 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 knowledge in that specific area. ACPs have a **breadth** of knowledge and work across traditional professional boundaries. Services may need both specialist clinicians and Advanced Clinical Practitioners to provide good care to patients.

Q3. What is a trainee ACP?

Answer: A trainee ACP is an experienced healthcare professional employed in a funded training post specifically to undertake the required training to work at the level of Advanced Clinical Practice. The training comprises study at masters level (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 ACP 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, 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 ACP whilst studying?

Answer: Trainees are required to attend university teaching days, practise clinical skills in their workplace and complete work-place 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](#). It is expected that each trainee will dedicate many hours to independent study in order 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 ACP trainees have sufficient work-based learning time to develop their advanced skills.

Q6. How much time will the trainee ACP be away from their job studying?

Answer: For trainees on the apprenticeship programme, generally, 80% of an apprentice's time will be training in the workplace with 20% at the HEI. For trainees on the PGDip Advanced Clinical Practice Programme, employers are expected to provide the trainee with sufficient study leave and protected time for work-based learning per 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 ACP 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.

Primary Care only – Historically separate funding has been available within primary care for Non-Medical Prescribing and Independent Prescribing courses for nurses, AHPs and pharmacists and we have continued to receive a number of requests for these modules this year. Whilst most funding has been allocated to programmes that will train individuals to become an ACP, unlike Trusts, primary care does not receive equivalent CPD funding. Therefore, we are intending to make some funding available to support staff in primary care who may not yet be ready to fully develop into an ACP role but want to expand their scope of practice to do NMP modules.

Q8. What supervision is required?

Answer: Good supervision is a key factor for successful completion of training and trainees who are not well supervised can struggle and some have dropped out. Each trainee ACP requires a named supervisor who has completed training in multi-professional supervision and is familiar with the requirements of advanced clinical practice. Supervisors must be willing and have protected time (in their job plan) to support the trainee.

Section 2 – HEE Funding and Support

Q9. I am thinking of employing a trainee ACP, what is HEE London's funding offer in 20/21?

Answer: HEE is supporting the development of ACP roles in 20/21 by offering a package of funding and support for ACP trainees. There are three ACP training pathways and employers are invited to put forward requests for funding under the below potential training pathways available. There is the intention, subject to budget signoff, to provide funding as detailed.

- **1 ACP PG Diploma** – Funding for tuition fees for a period of two-years for an Advanced Clinical Practice Programme. HEE will pay the full tuition costs plus a supervision fee equivalent to £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer. The individual or employer would be required to pay for the dissertation or any 3rd year modules in order to complete a full MSc.
- **2 ACP Apprenticeship** – Funding for a national Level 7 Advanced Clinical Practice Apprenticeship programme that has a typical length of 36 months is paid via the apprenticeship route. HEE will provide a supervision fee equivalent to £2,500 per annum, per individual paid directly to the employer. If a HEI is charging a top up fee to the levy funding, organisations should contact HEE and this will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- **3 ACP Top Up Modules - Part Qualified Staff** – There is the possibility of funding for completion of a number of top up Level 7 modules associated with the MSc Advanced Clinical Practice programme to achieve the full ACP framework. Top-up modules must be completed within the academic year, no further funding will be committed. HEE will fund tuition costs directly to the HEI to staff that have existing academic and workplace capabilities and that can be further supported to achieve the full ACP requirements. This is in recognition that a number of students do not need to embark on the full apprenticeship or Masters programme to achieve all the learning they need to operate as an ACP.

Funding for single modules will not be provided unless there is a strong case that it is as part of an ACP pathway. Trusts may use alternative HEE workforce development funding can be used to support standalone modules for individuals.

Q10. I am considering employing a trainee ACP, why would I choose the Apprenticeship route rather than the existing MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Programme?

Answer: HEE funding for Advanced Clinical Practice programmes is limited and therefore levy paying employers are encouraged to adopt the apprenticeship programme and consider apprenticeships as their primary option. This will enable support to be provided for an increased number of applicants. To view the Apprenticeship Standard for an Advanced Clinical Practitioner, click [here](#). Employers should ensure that individuals put on to an apprenticeship route are committed to completing the full programme.

HEE will provide a supervision fee to support employers with the delivery of the ACP programme where this is agreed through the commissioning process.

Overview of funding

Training pathway	Tuition fees	Supervision fee
ACP PG Diploma	Full tuition fees paid to the HEI for a period of 2 years practice (the individual or Trust would need to fund the dissertation or third year modules)	£2,500 per annum
ACP Apprenticeship	N/A (paid by the employer through the apprenticeship levy)	£2,500 per annum
ACP Top-up modules	Tuition fees paid to the HEI for named modules agreed between HEE and the employer. Modules must be completed within a single academic year and must upskill the individual to fully meet the Multi-Professional ACP Framework	N/A

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

Answer: A £2,500 supervision fee is available to support trainees on a full ACP pathway, to contribute to organisational costs of supporting an ACP. It is based on the equivalent cost of 0.25PA at consultant level per week.

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 HEE to confirm enrolled students.

- Trusts: The fee will be paid directly to the employer via the LDA after an individual has enrolled and started the programme, based on the validation exercise.
- Primary Care: Training Hubs should invoice HEE for the supervision fees for their geographical footprint, and then reimburse the employing practice for each ACP trainee.

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

- Sufficient study leave for university training. It is not acceptable for ACP trainees to be taking unpaid or annual leave for dedicated training days.
- Supervision provided by an appropriately trained supervisor. The expectation is that ACP trainees will have 0.25PA (1 hour) of supervision per week over the course of their training.
- Inclusion of postgraduate medical education department in discussion of supervision where appropriate to enable suitable job-planning.
- Sufficient work-based learning opportunities to gain clinical competence at an advanced level.
- Appropriate governance in place in line with the Multi-Professional Advanced Clinical Practice Framework.

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

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 ACP trainees not being supported appropriately, future funding for ACP may be fully withdrawn from the employer.

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 PGDip programmes, generally require the student to work for a minimum of 30 hours per week.

Q13. Can a trainee fund their own ACP programme?

Answer: For most trainees, self-funding a Masters level ACP programme is not recommended for several reasons. Advanced clinical practice roles can only make the desired impact on patient care when integrated and fully supported by organisations as a strategic plan, rather than individuals self-funding their own development. In addition, the availability of places on ACP programmes is co-ordinated by universities in conjunction with HEE and it cannot be guaranteed that places will be available for applicants who are self-funding.

Funding from HEE is for a 2-year PG Dip programme so if a trainee wishes to compete a full Masters, they will need to arrange separate funding.

Q14. What are the minimum hours the employee needs to be employed, to be a trainee ACP?

Answer: For the apprenticeship programme it is a minimum of 30 hours per week. For the PGDip Advanced Clinical Practice Programme, 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 ACP, 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 Training Hub) in the HEE London region are invited to submit their expressions of interest for ACP training for new learners.

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

Answer: The funding offer is for both new and existing NHS staff and HEE 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 ACP 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 ACP trainees?

Answer: Continuing students are being reviewed separately through our monitoring process with HEIs. You will be contacted at a later date to confirm continuing students and agree 2020/21 commitments. The supervision fee will be made available to students who started in 2019/20 and in year two of their programme.

Section 3 – HEI's and Student Support

Q18. What HEI's in the London region can individuals' study at?

Answer: A list of HEI's that provide ACP programmes in the London region is shown in the **ACP Prospectus 2020/21 document and included in annex 1 of the letter you will have received inviting your expression of interest.** This should be viewed prior to making an application. The HEI's listed includes all those that HEE holds a workforce development contract with, which is the mechanism of payment for ACP funding. Please note it is not a list of recommended HEIs and is not an exhaustive list of HEIs offering ACP programmes. It is possible for learners to study at other HEIs not included in the list if this is the preference.

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

If funding is agreed by HEE, individuals are responsible for successfully applying to the HEI programmes on a first come first served basis. Funding will then be paid from HEE to HEIs directly (for those that we hold a workforce development contract with) or reimbursed to a trust or Training Hub after proof of payment is given to HEE (for those HEI's that HEE don't hold a workforce development contract with).

Q19. What are the HEI's admission requirements for a trainee ACP?

Answer: Basic entry requirements for HEI courses can be found in the **ACP Prospectus 2020/21 document.** We would also recommend checking with the HEI directly on their specific entry requirements, which can often be found on their website. Entry requirements will likely consider; 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, including any international qualifications and levels of English and Maths.

Q20. What support can trainee ACPs expect during their studying?

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 HEI also offers 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. In the case of failing students, the matter would be discussed with the student in the first instance.

A standardised e-portfolio for ACP trainees is not yet available. This is being looked at in the first instance for equivalence route entry.

Q21. What happens if the employee discontinues their ACP 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, personal reasons etc. Where a student is discontinuing their studying but will be returning to complete this and have indicated the timescales to the HEI, this is called 'stepping off' and HEE 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 is able to complete the course within the timescales available on their return.

Where a student is not returning to study, HEE will discontinue the clinical supervision fee at the point they leave the programme. In all circumstances HEE should be informed immediately by contacting ACPenquirieslondon@hee.nhs.uk.

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

Q22. What happens if the trainee ACP leaves the employer that HEE 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, HEE would first consider how it can continue funding the current employer who was granted the funding for a trainee ACP and where that is not possible look to see how the trainee ACP can continue to be supported.

Section 4 – HEE Funding Application Process

Q23. How do I submit an expression of interest?

Answer: All expressions of interest are required to be submitted via the provided template emailed directly to organisations. Templates which are not completed fully will not be accepted.

Applications open on **Friday 28 February 2020** and the deadline for submissions is **Friday 3 April 2020**. The template should be returned to ACPenquirieslondon@hee.nhs.uk.

Employers are encouraged to complete a readiness for advanced clinical practice checklist (document below) before submitting expressions of interest.



Readiness for ACP
Checklist.pdf

Q24. Who should complete the application?

Answer: HEE requires a single ACP lead (or an individual responsible for ACP with an organisation) contact 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 funding being applied for. 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, if not submitted through the organisation ACP lead.

Q25. What happens after I have submitted my application?

Answer: HEE will review all expressions of interest and the indicative demand. Funding will be confirmed where possible, depending on the allocated budget during May. It may not be possible to provide funding for all applications received and where you are not successful, you will be notified. Successful applications must include the student names and professions so that a validation exercise can take place with the HEIs.

Q26. What if I am successful in obtaining funding but then unable to employ the trainee ACP in time?

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