



# Apprenticeships in advanced therapies

**Useful guidance, hints and tips**

**Apprenticeships in England**

[www.advancedtherapiesapprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.advancedtherapiesapprenticeships.co.uk)

Coordinated by

**CATAPULT**  
Cell and Gene Therapy

## Introduction and content

This booklet provides useful information about how apprenticeships can support the upskilling of your existing workforce, as well as recruiting new talent into your organisation. Apprenticeships are a viable option to support employers to meet workforce skills needs, now and in the future. You will find information within this guidance document which provides an overview of apprenticeships and the current and pending apprentice intakes across the advanced therapy sector. See an overview of the guidance content below:

1. Apprenticeships – an overview
2. Benefits of apprenticeships – including what can they be used for
3. Apprenticeship programme structure
4. Off the job learning
5. Identified apprenticeship pathways – programmes identified for the advanced therapies sector
6. Apprenticeship funding (from the gov.uk website)
7. Recruitment and employment
8. Advanced Therapies Apprenticeship Community (ATAC) and interest
9. Getting started on your own – information for employers on how to access apprenticeships (if you do not wish to join one of the planned cohorts)
10. Signposting and useful information

# Apprenticeships: An overview

## What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is made up of several components that are put together to create a 'standard' which when completed, demonstrates occupational competence within the studied area. An apprenticeship programme will include a mixture of competencies, knowledge, behaviour and transferable skills. This is a recognised route to show occupational competence.

## What is the length of an apprenticeship?

The duration of an apprenticeship is outlined within the standard documentation. The actual time scale for completion will be set out in the apprentice's individual learning plan (ILP) once formally enrolled with a recognised training provider, taking into account any prior experience and learning. Apprenticeships are a minimum of 12 months typically for an Intermediate (Level 2) Apprenticeship and can be up to five years for Higher (Levels 4 and 5) and Degree (Levels 6 and 7) Apprenticeships.

## What are the different types of apprenticeships?

There are various apprenticeship levels ranging from Level 2 up to Level 7. Programmes are also currently being developed for Level 8. Across all levels, apprentices work towards work-based learning to demonstrate occupational competence or skills, knowledge, behaviour and functional skills. An overview of the levels of apprenticeships and an example of what these are equivalent to are:

<b>Intermediate Apprenticeship: Level 2 programme.</b> Equivalent to 5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C or grades 9 to 4.
<b>Advanced Apprenticeship: Level 3 programme.</b> Equivalent to 2 A Level passes.
<b>Higher Apprenticeship: Levels 4 and 5 programmes.</b> Equivalent to a HNC (for level 4) or HND or a Foundation Degree (for level 5).
<b>Degree Apprenticeship: Levels 6 and 7 programmes.</b> Equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree or Postgraduate Diploma (for level 6) or a Master's Degree (for level 7).

## Benefits of apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a fantastic opportunity to improve career prospects, whether the apprentice is starting out in their first job or expanding their skills and experience within the workplace as an existing employee.

As a manager employing an apprentice or supporting an existing employee to undertake an apprenticeship, some of the benefits are:

- Evidence suggests apprenticeships can improve productivity, morale, commitment and loyalty
- They can help tackle potential skill shortages – there are various programmes available at different levels; providing different pathways to support different job roles
- They can be a great way of attracting enthusiastic talent with fresh ideas from a more diverse background
- They are tailored to specific job roles, making them flexible to different workplace settings
- Funding is available for those who are eligible (see later section in this booklet)

Some of the benefits to an existing employee or new apprentice completing a programme are:

- Various pathways of opportunity available providing career and development progression routes
- Tailored support throughout the programme
- Opportunities to learn new and transferable skills
- Demonstrate accredited occupational competence
- Some programmes enable the apprentice to gain a fully funded accredited qualification, e.g. Degree
- Be part of our new advanced therapies apprenticeship network of industry expertise
- The training and assessment of the programme is fully funded resulting in no student debt upon completion

## Apprenticeship programme structure

This section provides a structure overview of an apprenticeship. Please note that this may differ depending on the standard being completed, therefore the actual structure and the assessment methods used will differ. These would therefore be discussed with the apprentice, once formally enrolled on the programme with your chosen registered training provider and end-point assessment organisation.

### **Competence/skills:**

The competence/skills part is made up of several elements; each describes activities that the apprentice will need to demonstrate at work. The apprentice must be competent in all criteria before being signed as complete. To show that the apprentice can demonstrate the standard requirements, they may be required to gather a portfolio of evidence. The assessor (allocated from the training provider) will discuss what can be used as evidence throughout the programme and to achieve the end point assessment.

### **Knowledge:**

This section is made up of different elements and may reflect competence and theoretical understanding. This enables the apprentice to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and understanding to carry out the work to the level required and why this is required, as outlined within the apprenticeship standard and by their employer. Taught lessons may be a requirement for this part.

### **Behaviours:**

The apprentice will be required to show that they role-model positive behaviours. Each standard will detail the types of behaviours that will be assessed, such as a range of communication skills, teamwork, autonomy and time management.

### **Functional skills:**

The apprentice will need to achieve functional skills if they do not hold GCSE (or equivalent) grades at A\* to D or grades 9 to 4 in English and mathematics. This is done by demonstrating competence, collecting evidence and/or by passing external examinations. Apprentices may be exempt from completing these functional skills if they have relevant GCSEs or any other relevant qualifications. The training provider will assess the support needed for this at the start of the programme.

### **End point assessment (EPA)**

Within every apprenticeship standard, there is an EPA that must be achieved to complete the programme. Each standard has an EPA Plan, which details the apprenticeship. The EPA can be found on the Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA) webpage at:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>

## Other useful information

### **Professional registration**

Some programmes may have an essential requirement for the apprentice to register for student level of professional registration/membership upon enrolment. It is important to note that all new apprenticeship standards have been written in recognition of obtaining professional registration upon completion to demonstrate occupational competence, such as RSciTech or RSci. This is not funded from the levy unless it is a mandatory requirement; therefore, the employer may need to fund this from their own budget.

## Off the job learning

Every apprenticeship programme has a requirement for the employer to support the apprentice with a minimum of 20% off the job time for the duration of the programme to focus on their studies, development and learning. This equates to one day per week for a full-time employee and is pro-rata for part time employees. Once formally enrolled on the programme, your chosen registered training provider will discuss this further. Anything that is developmental which supports the apprenticeship should be counted towards the minimum 20% off the job training time. Some examples (not all), of what can be counted are:

- Induction into job role (for a new starter)
- Mandatory training
- Appraisal and personal development plan
- Review Meetings with the training provider
- Shadowing other colleagues for development
- Undertaking a specific project, task or activity to increase experience in a topic
- Mentoring/coaching/buddy (for self or supporting colleagues)
- Attending any lessons as part of the apprenticeship
- Any work towards the apprenticeship portfolio (gathering and creating information, tasks, assignments, professional discussions etc.)
- Any research conducted for the apprenticeship portfolio
- One to one meetings with line manager where development is discussed
- Team meetings or briefings
- Networking activity
- The minimum 20% off the job time does not include time for studying towards the maths and English functional skills or any activity/task that are part of the employee's normal day-to-day job role; this includes training provider observations within the workplace, however, the discussions surrounding the observation would be counted.

## Apprenticeship pathways

The following apprenticeship programmes have been identified as being suitable for job roles within the advanced therapy sector. You can find copies of the 'standard' and 'end-point assessment' documents, which detail what the apprenticeship programme entails, at the Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA) webpage (see page 6 for the link).

Area	Programme/standard
Laboratory science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Laboratory Technician (Level 3)</li> <li>Technician Scientist (Level 5)</li> <li>Laboratory Scientist (Level 6 Degree)</li> </ul>
Healthcare science (NHS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthcare Science Assistant (Level 2)</li> <li>Healthcare Science Associate (Level 4)</li> <li>Healthcare Science Practitioner (Level 6 Degree)</li> </ul>
Science manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science Manufacturing Process Operator (Level 2)</li> <li>Science Manufacturing Technician (Level 3)</li> </ul>
Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science Industry Process/Plant Engineer (Level 6)</li> </ul>
Leadership and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team Leader/Supervisor (Level 3)</li> <li>Operations/Departmental Manager (Level 5)</li> <li>Chartered Manager (Level 6 Degree)</li> <li>Senior Leader (Level 7 Masters)</li> </ul>
Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Driver (Level 2)</li> <li>Supply Chain Operator (Level 2)</li> <li>Supply Chain Warehouse Operative (Level 2)</li> <li>Supply Chain Practitioner (Level 3)</li> <li>Supply Chain Leadership Professional (Level 6 Degree)</li> </ul>
Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science Industry Maintenance Technician (Level 3)</li> </ul>
Business admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business Administrator (Level 3)</li> </ul>
Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer Service Practitioner (Level 2)</li> <li>Customer Service Specialist (Level 3)</li> </ul>
Bioinformatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bioinformatics Scientist (Level 7)</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research Scientist (Level 7)</li> </ul>
Quality & Regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality Practitioner (Level 4)</li> <li>Regulatory Affairs Specialist (Level 7)</li> </ul>

**There are other apprenticeship programmes available in addition to the above to suit various job roles such as HR, H&S, Finance, Procurement and IT; these can be found via the IFA webpage.**

# Apprenticeship funding

(Information from gov.uk)

## Levy paying employers

If you're an employer with a pay bill over £3 million each year, you must pay the apprenticeship levy from 6 April 2017. Read guidance on [how to pay the apprenticeship levy](#) available on the gov.uk website. You will report and pay your levy to HMRC through the [PAYE process](#). If you are a levy-paying employer, you can now [create an account](#) on the apprenticeship service (via gov.uk) to:

- receive levy funds for you to spend on apprenticeships
- manage your apprentices
- pay your training provider
- stop or pause payments to your training provider

If you would like to over-spend your levy, you are able to do this. After you have spent your levy, co-investment (under non-levy paying employers) would then commence after your total levy spend has been used as detailed below.

## Non-levy paying employers

Non-levy paying employers will share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government - this is called 'co-investment'. From April 2019, you will pay 5% towards the cost of the apprenticeship training and government will pay the rest (95%), up to the [funding band maximum](#).

## What you can buy with funds in your apprenticeship service account

You can only use funds in your account to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment for apprentices that work at least 50% of the time in England, and only up to the [funding band maximum](#) for that apprenticeship.

If the costs of training and assessment go over the [funding band maximum](#), you will need to pay the difference with other funds from your own budget. You can find information on the funding bands per apprenticeship programme on the gov.uk website.

You can't use funds in your account to pay for other costs associated with your apprentices (such as wages, statutory licenses to practice, travel and subsidiary costs, work placement programmes or the setting up of an apprenticeship programme). The levy will only fund the training and assessment of the apprenticeship and this is paid through the digital apprenticeship service account.

There are funding incentives for the employer for age and social mobility which should be considered after recruitment.

To set up your account, whether you're a levy paying employer or using co- investment, follow the instructions at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds>

### **Further information**

Read the [apprenticeship funding rules](#) for full details of what you can and can't pay for with funds from your apprenticeship service account.

Visit the apprenticeship gov.uk page at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/key-facts-you-should-know-about-the-apprenticeship-levy>

## Recruitment and employment

This guidance booklet has provided detail on what an apprenticeship is, the benefits, off the job learning and funding. This section provides an overview on considerations for recruitment and employment – it is important to note that this guidance document does not cover all aspects, these are initial consideration points only; you are responsible for reviewing the apprenticeship.gov.uk webpages and ensure all apprentice rights are in place and supported.

### Recruitment:

- You will need to ensure you have a genuine vacancy to attain the learning required to complete the apprentice standard. Follow your normal in-house approval processes for this
- Once you have agreed your recruitment and advertised through your normal methods, send your advert via e-mail to your training provider
- Vacancies will be posted on National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) by your training provider. This is a primary tool used by future apprentices and training providers and links provided to employers to circulate to their networks

### Employment:

- Issue your apprentice an apprenticeship service agreement, which details their apprenticeship programme, commitment, terms of conditions and entitlements
- Employ your apprentice using your normal recruitment processes, either on a fixed term contract for the duration of the apprenticeship programme or permanent employment. You may want to build in a probation period
- Consideration should be taken on the age of the apprentice entering the business and practices may need to be adapted to support younger workers (16 to 18-year olds), if applicable. Ensure you comply with younger worker rights (see [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk))
- Apprentices should be onboarded using your normal processes, follow the same induction and training
- Plan how you are going to support the 20% of off the job time and agree this in advance
- Apprentices should be allocated a direct supervisor in the work place for day-to-day interactions and may want to consider other support in the network such as a buddy or mentor
- Salary should be paid as advertised and may want to be reviewed after year 1 to align with your company's internal policy. This is not funded by the levy; this will be funded from your own budgets
- Set clear expectations with regards to performance, behaviour and reward
- Travel and expenses should be paid in line with internal policies. This is not funded by the levy; this will be funded from your own budgets
- Apprentices should be able to access all the same reward, benefits and entitlements to everyone else, such as annual leave, pension, HR policies etc.

**Training and assessment:**

- Agree a contract, service level agreement (SLA) and key performance indicators (KPIs) with your training provider to ensure all parties are clear on service delivery, performance and expectations
- Pay for the apprenticeship through the digital apprenticeship service account(levy or co-investment)
- Obtain a copy of your apprentice's commitment statement, apprenticeship agreement and individual learning plan on enrolment
- Arrange regular informal one to one meetings with your apprentice for the duration of their apprenticeship
- Plan when review meetings with your training provider and apprentice to 'check in' on progress and if any support is needed
- Ensure your apprentice and you have access to the e-Portfolio system to access resources, upload and access documents and track progress
- You should choose the EPA provider which are available on the DAS RoAAO (register of apprenticeship assessment organisations), for a specific standard
- Registration for the end-point assessment service needs to also occur at the beginning of the apprentices training so the apprentice and employer have the right materials to monitor and sign off competencies and behaviours – the training provider will arrange this

## Advanced Therapies Apprenticeship Community (ATAC) and interest

The Advanced Therapies Apprenticeship Community (ATAC) has been set up to support skills development in this sector through apprenticeships.

As of September 2020, we have over 100 apprentices live on programme, across 8 different standards, from 36 companies. Visit the ATAC webpage for details on the programmes that are live and get in contact via email if you have any queries.

The Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult (CGT Catapult) leads this initiative, funded by Innovate UK, that builds on the Advanced Therapy Manufacturing Taskforce ([ATMT recommendations](#)). The CGT Catapult have initially subcontracted the ATAC programme to the original interim team to maintain momentum. They are:

Contact lead	Remit
<a href="#">Dr Kate Barclay</a> , Independent Consultant at Kate Barclay Consulting and Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA)	Employer engagement. Point of contact for all employers based in the South East of England and London. Lead for setting up new programmes, Technician Scientist (Level 5) and Regulatory Affairs (Level 7) programmes.
<a href="#">Laura Bennett</a> , Independent Consultant at LBU Consulting	Employer engagement. Point of contact for all employers based in the North of England and Scotland. Lead for setting up new and support for current programmes in Scotland.
<a href="#">Annette England</a> , Independent Consultant at BioMax	ATAC communications, events and company engagement. Point of contact for all employers based in the South West of England, Wales and Oxford. Lead for Senior Leader (level 7) programme.
<a href="#">Stevie Buller</a> , Interim ATAC Project Support Manager	ATAC communications and events for all levels of apprentices.

If you are interested in finding out more about our ATAC programme, please contact [apprenticeshipsinfo@ct.catapult.org.uk](mailto:apprenticeshipsinfo@ct.catapult.org.uk)

## Getting started on your own

The table below provides you with an overview of what to consider for starting for own apprenticeship scheme (in addition to the points within the previous section).

Area	Points to consider
Suitable programmes	Review the Institute for Apprenticeship (IFA) webpage for information on the programmes (standards) that are ready for delivery and/or under development
Job role (genuine vacancy)	Decide if you are recruiting to a new genuine vacancy or upskilling existing employees (or both). Speak to your HR team for support with this, if needed.
Training provider and EPA organisation	Use the <a href="#">‘Find apprenticeship training’</a> service to select a registered training provider. If you are using a standard, use the <a href="#">register of apprenticeship assessment organisations</a> to select an approved EPA organisation. Your training provider can help you with this.
Contract	Agree an apprenticeship service agreement with the training provider, detailing what they will deliver, at what cost (within the funding bands), timescales, support that they will provide and ensuring they are fully responsible for the quality aspects of the programme. Read the funding rules and ensure you comply with the requirements outlined within this.
Pay for the apprenticeship through the apprenticeship service account	Refer to the funding section of this booklet. With regards to the apprenticeship service, levy paying employers and non-levy paying employers where ‘co-investment’ will apply. Note that if your costs go over the funding banding maximum, then you must pay the difference out of your own budget.
Review	Hold regular review meetings with your training provider to ensure they are delivering the service agreement, the apprentice is being supported and are on track to complete the programme successfully in a timely manner.

## Signposting and useful information

The table below provides you with an overview of what to consider for starting for own apprenticeship scheme (in addition to the points within the previous section).

Topic	Contact / Link
Apprenticeship employer helpline	Email: <a href="mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk">nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk</a> Telephone: 0800 0150 600
Apprenticeship levy	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds</a>
Create an apprenticeship service account	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds</a>
Find an apprenticeship training provider	<a href="https://findapprenticeshiptraining.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/">https://findapprenticeshiptraining.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/</a>
Funding bands	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands</a>
Funding rules	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-and-performance-management-rules-2017-to-2018">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-and-performance-management-rules-2017-to-2018</a>
Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA) – to search apprenticeship programmes	<a href="https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/">https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/</a>
Register of EPA organisations	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations</a>
Apprenticeships in Scotland	<a href="https://www.apprenticeships.scot/">https://www.apprenticeships.scot/</a>

### Thank you for your interest in apprenticeships

For more information please visit [www.advancedtherapiesapprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.advancedtherapiesapprenticeships.co.uk), contact CGT Catapult via email: [apprenticeshipsinfo@ct.catapult.org.uk](mailto:apprenticeshipsinfo@ct.catapult.org.uk) or on the ATAC community [LinkedIn page](#).

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