



Trainee Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Programme Frequently Asked Questions

Background

What is the Occupational Profile and Programme background?:

The Nursing Associate is a highly trained support role to deliver effective, safe and responsive nursing care in and across a wide range of health and care settings. Nursing Associates work independently, and with others, under the leadership and direction of a Registered Nurse within defined parameters, to deliver care in line with an agreed plan. Nursing Associates will have a breadth of knowledge and a flexible, portable skill set to serve local health populations, in a range of settings covering pre-life to end of life. The Nursing Associate apprentice must meet the 15 standards as set out in the Care Certificate, prior to taking their end point assessment.¹

During the apprenticeship programme, the apprentice will undertake a regulated level 5 qualification such as a Foundation Degree or Level 5 Diploma of Higher Education delivered by an institution approved by the Nursing and Midwifery Council to provide pre-registration nursing education.²

What is the Apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship is the source of funding for the Nursing Associate training programme. Earlier pilots have been funded by HEE, but a Nursing Associate Apprenticeship standard has now been approved and this pilot is using apprenticeship funding to cover the cost of the training. The qualification achieved is the same and the training is provided by the same universities (Middlesex University for this partnership).

Contact Details

Who are the key contacts in NCL?

Tnaenquiries.london@hee.nhs.uk – HEE

Daniella.halil@communitymatters.co.uk – Community Matters (PMO)

¹ <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/nursing-associate/>

² https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1481/st0508_nursing-associate_15_final.pdf



Timetable for Entry 2019

What does the training programme look like?

Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Programme - Year 1 Calendar diagram

The programme structure has specific periods of time within each academic year for the different activities, as shown below for the first year of the programme:

Year 1 – commences 21 st October 2019															
21 st Oct 20 19	11 th Nov	23 rd Dec	13 th Jan 2020	27 th Jan	10 th Feb	24 th Feb	6 th April	27 th April	11 th May	25 th May	15 th June	29 th June	13 th July	14 th Sept	28 th Sept – 18 th Oct
TW x 3	Hub 1 X 6	NS x 3	SP x 2	TW x 2	NS x 2	Hub 2 x 6	NS x 3	TW x 2	SP x 2	NS x 3	TW x 2	SP x 2	NS x 9	SP x 2	NS x 3
	Tri-partite reviews w/c					Tri-partite reviews w/c				Tri-partite reviews w/c				Tri-partite reviews w/c	

TW- Theory Weeks, NS – Non specified time in Hub placement, Hub – Hub assessed placement, SP – Spoke placement

Trainee Nursing Associates will be required to undertake clinical placements in their employing organisation and also away from their employing organisation in various different settings. These placements will be delivered on a 'hub' and 'spoke' model. Hub placements are at the employing organisation and are two six-week blocks each year. The spoke placements will be in a range of settings including: health/care at home, close to home and in hospital and will be four two-week spoke placements in year 1 and five in year 2. All areas who employ TNAs will support an 'incoming' TNA for a spoke placement when their own TNA is on a spoke placement elsewhere.



What are the current cohorts and deadlines for Middlesex University?

The table outlines the next cohort and deadlines for Middlesex University tNA programme.

Candidates	Application deadline	Testing	Interviews	Programme commencement
*External to current employers	June 3 rd	June 11 th	1 st July 2 nd July 3 rd July	October 21 st
**Internal to current employers	15 th July	5 th August	3 rd September 4 th September 9 th September 11 th September 12 th September	

*External candidates are those that are applying for the Nursing Associate role through an advertised job description

**Internal candidates are those already employed in the Practice or Care Home and want to get into the Nursing route

Entry Requirements

Who can join the Nursing Associate Apprenticeship Programme?

Trainee Nursing Associates joining the apprenticeship programme will be your staff – either existing or newly recruited staff, working on a full-time basis (37.5hours). The apprenticeship rules state that a member of staff can complete an apprenticeship on a minimum of 30 hours a week, however in order to meet the required programme hours a full time (37.5hours per week) contract is required. They will have experience as HCAs and may have Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications in health/social care (this is not essential). They will be valued HCAs and demonstrate the right values and potential to take on a more responsible/complex role.



Desirably, they will have level 2 Maths and English (a GCSE Grade A-C/9-4 or equivalent) qualification upon entry however Middlesex University are accepting those who don't hold the relevant Maths and English qualifications as long as they show the ability to be able to achieve this prior to the end point assessment. For candidates that do not hold level 2 qualifications in Maths and English upon entry, Middlesex University can make arrangements for the apprentices to undertake this extra provision alongside their apprenticeship with an approved delivery partner. This is funded separately by the ESFA and comes at no additional cost to the apprentice or their employer.

In addition, they will need to demonstrate the potential to cope with an intensive Level 5 academic programme, e.g. the ability to write complex sentences suitable for essays and assignments. Students who do not have these qualification and who therefore do these alongside the programme, will have additional work to do which needs to be taken into consideration.

Trainee Nursing Associates will also need to demonstrate a strong motivation to complete this intensive training programme which includes intensive learning in the classroom, the workplace and self-study and homework. They need to have sufficient time and capacity to invest lots of time and energy in the programme.

They will also need to meet apprenticeship eligibility requirements: they must be employed for a minimum of 37.5 hours or more, allowed to work in the UK and have lived in the UK/EU for the past 3 years.

How does the employer know whether their TNA Apprentice meets the required English and Maths levels?

Applicants who hold English and Maths GCSE certificates at levels A-C/9-4 (or the equivalent, Level 2 Functional skills/key skills) meet the required level of English and Maths meaning they do not need to achieve this as part of the programme (providing that they can submit the evidence of this ,i.e certificates). All applicants will sit initial assessments in English and Maths provided by Middlesex University on application. They will be informed of their current level and, if extremely low, the employer will be informed and will be able to signpost to an alternative provider to support them in English and Maths to get to the required level for the apprenticeship. Those that achieve a high level and need to achieve English and Maths, will proceed to an interview with the University and if successful they will secure a place onto the apprenticeship but will need to complete the functional skills before they are put forward to the Gateway.

Does the TNA apprentice need to hold a Level 3 qualification or equivalent on entry of the apprenticeship?

A Level 3 qualification is equivalent to A-level and a Level 5 qualification is equivalent to a foundation degree. Therefore, it is *recommended* that the TNA apprentice has a Level 3 qualification to ensure they have the academic ability to work towards a foundation diploma. However, it is not essential and candidates will be assessed on an individual basis by Middlesex University.



Employers need to know

Does the TNA apprentice need a qualified Practice Assessor on site at all times?

Areas who currently have mentors will be undertaking a range of processes to transfer these Mentors to the new role of Practice Assessor as defined by the NMC (NMC 2018). Areas who wish to support TNAs must have an appropriate number of Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessors.

What are the employers teaching/learning requirements?

The employer must be committed to support the employee by providing them with relevant on the job training and tasks, on-site support from senior management and Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessors. Trainee Nursing Associates need to be supported in their placements by Practice Supervisors and Practice Assessors who, with support from the HEI, will be responsible for supervision, observation and validation of agreed placement activities completed. This will be for both your staff member and for other Trainee Nursing Associates undertaking placements in your organisation. Middlesex university will provide briefing and support to your nurse, plus supervisory/mentor training if required.

In addition, as with all long-term training programmes, there will be some involvement from management in terms of line management and liaison with the HEI to ensure the programme is running as intended. We will also ask all participating employers to be part of the pilot partnership and to contribute to the evaluation process. ³

How much does the apprentice get paid? Can this be paid through Apprenticeship Levy funding?

The starting salary for tNAs is commensurate with Agenda for Change Band 3. For practices that do not pay against agenda for change, the current hourly rate for an employee with less than 2 years experience is £9.10. For an employee with 2- 3 years experience it increases to £9.43. Further information on pay scales can be found on NHS employers page. ⁴

How much funding is a levy paying employer able to transfer?

From April 2019, levy paying employers can transfer up to 25% of their unused funding to non-levy paying employers. This means that trusts within NCL can support General Practices by transferring levy funds to a number of them which can be agreed through the partnership arrangements. For the TNA programme, the Practice or Care Home will receive the full funding (£15,000) through a levy transfer from a Trust

³ The Institute of Apprenticeships have set out the National standards for the TNA apprenticeship programme which outlines what is expected of the employer, employee and training provider https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/media/1481/st0508_nursing-associate_I5_final.pdf

⁴ For more information on salary, please follow link <https://www.nhsemployers.org/your-workforce/pay-and-reward/agenda-for-change/pay-scales/hourly>



and this is managed through the partnership. General Practices must ensure that any levy transfer agreements with levy paying employers are in place ideally prior to the commencement of the apprenticeship, but no later than 3 months after the start.

What support will be given to employers around setting up and managing Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) account?

A guide on how to set up, manage and transfer levy accounts has been created. It is important to recognise that the partnership agreement for levy transfer needs to be in place before this is completed.

Once the agreement is in place, the Practices must make sure they register their account as soon as possible so that the levy paying employer can start making the transfers. Details on how to do this will be in the guidance notes.

Will there be additional funding?

Support packages for 2019/20 will include HEE post assigned to each university for placements (co-ordination an increasing the number of quality placement opportunities); HEE Band 7 Practice Facilitators for every 30 TNAs. HEE also funded Maths and English support.

HEE have confirmed that the total national support package for TNAs for 2019/2020 who start their programme before 31st December 2019 will be £7,200. This is inclusive of £1,600 per TNA per year (£3,200 in total over a 2 year period) and £4,000 towards workforce development/upskilling up front per TNA.

Does the Practice need to be a training Practice?

The Practice does not need to be a training Practice but will need to have in place the sufficient support such as on-site Practice Assessors and Practice Supervisors to support the TNA apprentice through the programme. The apprenticeship is a work-based learning programme which means that apprentices learn on the job through activities outlined in their job descriptions and apprenticeship standards.

The practice must be willing to participate in tri-partite reviews as planned by the HEI and agree to having an incoming spoke when their own TNA is out on spoke.

What are the Employees and Employers responsibilities?

Employer responsibilities:

- Supports the apprentice throughout their training and development
- Supports their Practice Supervisor and Practice Assessor
- Conducts reviews to monitor progress
- Contributes to tri-partite reviews
- Host an incoming spoke when their TNA is out on spoke



- Determines when the apprentice is competent and ready to attempt the end-point assessment

Employee responsibilities:

- Participates fully in their training and development
- Actively contributes to their performance review
- Contributes to the decision on the timing of their end-point assessment
- Complies with Practices and Trusts /Employers code of conducts and contract

Scope of the TNA in practice

What will apprentices be able to do on completion of the TNA apprenticeship?

On completion of the apprenticeships, the employee will be a competent and job ready Nursing Associate (NA). They will develop the key knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the standards. They will embrace some of the activities traditionally in the domain of GPNs such as treating minor illnesses and managing long term conditions. During their placements, they will gain experience of patient pathways and journeys, bringing this learning back to the team to share good practice.

On completion of the apprenticeships will the employees be able to carry out Immunisations?

HEE's view is that once the apprenticeship has been completed, additional training can be offered by the employer for the additional treatments/procedures to be carried out. At the moment, this training will have to be paid by the employer. However, we are also in current discussions with HEIs about incorporating these elements into the apprenticeship programme or receiving additional funding for them.

On completion of the apprenticeship, will the employees be able to carry out Cervical cytology?

The NHS Cervical Screening Programme (CSP) is pleased to report that qualified registered Nursing Associates working in primary care are eligible to train to undertake the role of cervical sample taker.

Nursing Associates meet the NHS CSP requirement that sample takers need to be registered health professionals. Cervical sample taking is a skilled, intimate clinical examination and women attending for screening need the protection that professional registration and training brings. Skills, knowledge and proficiencies gained in Nursing Associate training ensure they can meet the core clinical competencies laid down in the Skills for Health competency framework as set out in the NHS CSP sample taker training guidance.

For nursing associates to undertake cervical screening they would first need to have:

1. Completed a Nursing Associate qualification and be registered as a Nursing Associate with the NMC



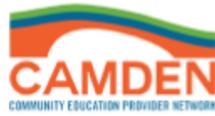
2. Undertaken initial theory and practical training as required by the cervical screening programme, successfully complete the course and be assessed as competent
3. Undertaken update training and maintain competency in line with national programme cervical sample taker training guidance

Nursing Associates are not yet a named health care professional under the TDDI legislation. Essentially it means that this will be a delegated activity and a professional who is named in the legislation (in this case a GP or RN) will need to be on the practice premises.

Steps to identifying the right staff for the Trainee Nursing Associate Apprenticeship

The decision to support a staff member on the programme sits with the employer. However, we need to ensure that they have the potential to complete the academic programme and to become a high calibre Nursing Associate once they qualify. So, we also need to take account of the University entry requirements for the programme. The process will include the following key steps:

- **The employer identifies a potential Nursing Associate / The applicant expresses an interest.** We expect that usually this will be an existing valued staff member but it may be that the employer decides to recruit to the role. The employer will want to ensure that the individual meets the criteria as well as having the right values, track record and experience to be suitable – not just for the programme but suitable for their workplace and the Nursing Associate role once qualified. They will also need to be highly motivated and be able to undertake the intense academic learning required, including having time for completion of homework and assignments.
- **The individual makes an informed decision as to whether they want to take up the programme.** The staff member needs to understand the level of effort they will need to put into study and work placement. This is an intensive programme and a move from vocational training to academic study which is hard for many individuals and they need to really know what is involved and what is expected of them and have thought through whether they have time and whether they feel this is a realistic option for them.
- **Middlesex University checks suitability for the Trainee Nursing Associate programme.** This is in terms of their ability to complete the programme and also apprenticeship eligibility requirements. Your nominated TNA will need to complete an on-line application with the University, followed by maths and English assessments and then an interview. (These assessments will be able to be carried out by the University)
- **Once the university confirms suitability, the employer makes the job offer of Trainee Nursing Associate and the HEI offers a place on the course.** We expect that this will be in the form of a specific contract of employment as a Trainee Nursing Associate with the specified salary over the period of the programme. Different employers will have different approaches regarding the offer, for example some will specify that there will be automatic progression to a Nursing Associate role with a new contract of employment subject to achievement of the qualification and Registration.



Decision on the suitability of the individual sits with the employer, university and individual themselves. Decision to accept the individual onto the training programme sits with the university. Decision to employ and support the individual as a Trainee Nursing Associate (TNA) sits with the employer.