



## **Paramedic Degree Apprenticeship Programme February 2025 Cohort**

[Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#)

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## Introduction

It is challenging for any student to undertake a period of professional study, balancing home with work and study is difficult. This fact sheet is to help you prepare for the period of study and what is expected from you once you qualify.

## Background

As a result of the change to the educational requirement for registration to the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) moving to degree level, there has been national work to establish a Paramedic development programme that satisfies this criteria. To become a registered Paramedic requires dedication and hard work. It should be considered a privilege which needs to be earned, however once achieved it is one of the most rewarding jobs and can be a job for life.

The apprenticeship programme is an exciting route to becoming a registered professional. The unique employer led pathway allows the individual to learn both the practical and theoretical aspects of the profession, whilst receiving support and knowledge from a Higher Education Institute and employer.

This fact sheet and FAQ will help you prepare for the period of study and know what to expect when you qualify, including registration with the HCPC, the 2-year Consolidation of Learning (CoL) period and progression into band 6.

## Overview of the Apprenticeship

- The apprenticeship degree differs from a traditional degree programme as the apprenticeship focuses on learning being delivered in the workplace through on-the job learning.
- The programme is two years in duration for full-time in-service apprentices. The duration of the programme for part-time staff will be dependent on the agreed pathway.
- The university learning is spread out over the programme and you will have 41 days dedicated theoretical and practical time in each year of the programme
- You will also have 5 days per year where you will undertake internal rotation placements in another area of the Trust, 111 EOC, clinical Hub, community paramedics, HART as examples.
- Cohorts will be based at the University of Cumbria's Lancaster Campus; theory sessions will be a mix of face to face and online. All practical sessions will be delivered face to face at the Lancaster campus.
- We will be delivering three cohorts every year, commencing in February, June and October and the numbers for each cohort will be agreed in the previous year and in line with the Trust's workforce plans.
- Successful applicants will be offered a place on the Paramedic apprenticeship on a provisional basis pending sector manager approval and operational capacity. If operational demand does not allow for release, successful applicants will be pooled and allocated to an alternative cohort.

## Whilst on the programme

### Apprenticeship details

- Occupational health and DBS clearance must be completed prior to commencing on the apprenticeship. It is your responsibility to ensure that you book and attend any necessary appointments and update the Workforce Development Team once these have been completed. If this is not completed within agreed deadlines it may result in the applicant being removed from the apprenticeship.
- The timetable and delivery model for this cohort will be sent out as soon as it is agreed with the university. A draft version (with agreed dates) is available in the interim for reference.
- Whilst we will provide some additional study time, you may find it beneficial to dedicate some of your personal time where possible towards achieving the Paramedic degree.
- As a condition of your employment as a Paramedic it is strongly recommended you complete your HCPC registration application within 4 weeks of notification of exam board outcomes.
- It is important to note that if you fail to achieve the required standards on this programme and all options to retain you on the course have been exhausted, there will be a significant delay before you will be eligible to apply for the programme again.
- In exceptional circumstances you may be required to pause the programme. Unless this meets the criteria for a break in learning (apprenticeship rules), you will be withdrawn from the programme.
- You will need to upload any necessary information to the university's APTM system a minimum of 8 weeks prior to your cohort start date. Any applicants that do not meet this requirement will be removed from programme and will need to reapply.

### Absences

- All university days are mandatory and it is a requirement of the apprenticeship that you maintain **100% attendance**. If you are unable to attend university due to sickness then you must still notify Carlisle support centre in line with the NWAS sickness/absence reporting procedure.
- Annual Leave **will not** be possible during the university attendances days or practice placement weeks but should be booked through normal procedures and process around the university dates.
- University study days are mandatory and you must ensure you maintain **100% attendance** to both online and face to face sessions.

### Expenses

- You will retain your current pay and terms and conditions through the period of completion of the programme and any changes will be applied when you move into the NQP role. For staff on annex 5 your unsocial hours will not be changed whilst you are studying on the programme. To support staff on section 2 you will be able to claim a training allowance of 22.5% unsocial hours per university day.
- You will not be restricted from undertaking overtime whilst on the programme. If excessive working hours are considered to be impacting on your progress through the programme, this will be reviewed.

- The Trust will support staff with travel costs in line with agenda for change terms & conditions. Mileage will be paid for the excess travel from your base station to the university campus. Mileage is reimbursed at reserve mileage rate. Travelling time cannot be claimed.
- You are not entitled to claim subsistence rates when attending university.

### Working Practices

- You will be a Student Paramedic and will be required to wear 'NWS Student Paramedic' epaulettes and designation.
- Student Paramedics will move onto reserve for the period of the programme with hours being managed by your rostering teams. This has removed the need for makeup shifts as hours will not be lost through abstraction.
- If you wish to retain an existing part-time or flexible working agreement, we will review these on a case-by-case basis. The programme is intended to be full time. If the university attendance days can be met, it may be possible to consider reduced hours, however there is a minimum of 30 hours per week and this may extend the programme.

### When you receive your HCPC Registration

- Upon successful completion of the course the Trust will conditionally offer you a position as a reserve Newly Qualified Paramedic (NQP), with a base in line with the Trust's workforce plan and the Paramedic vacancy factors across the Trust.
- Until your registration comes through you will remain working in your current role and will be restricted to your EMT scope of practice.
- This offer is conditional on you attaining HCPC registration as noted above.
- This may mean a move from your current location and may also mean a move outside of your current sector. You are not guaranteed to return to your previous sector, but any move will consider travelling time.
- You will work as an NQP for 24 months from date of HCPC registration and you will be paid at Band 5. Upon successful completion of the NQP Consolidation of Learning programme and portfolio you will be eligible to move into a full Paramedic position paid at Band 6.
- In line with the changes to national agenda for change terms and conditions, your promotion to an NQP role will see your unsocial hours paid in line with Section 2 of the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook / Part 2: Pay / Section 2 Maintaining round the clock services England. (Amendment number 39) (<http://www.nhsemployers.org/tchandbook/part-2-pay/section-2-maintaining-round-the-clock-services-england>)
- Any existing agreed flexible working patterns will no longer be applicable as it is considered a new contract. If a flexible working pattern is required following qualification, you must submit a Flexible Working application at the appropriate time. This will be considered in line with the Trust's Flexible Working Procedure and there is no guarantee that this will be approved as it will depend on the operational requirements at that particular time within the sector you are allocated to.

## Maths & English Language Level 2

Within the application you will need to provide details and copies of your highest Maths and English **Language** qualifications, English Literature is not accepted by the university. You will need to hold Maths and English **Language** at a minimum of Level 2 to be eligible to apply for the recruitment process. The following link will identify what qualifications fall within this <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-and-maths-requirements-in-apprenticeship-standards-at-level-2-and-above>.

For those that do not hold Level 2 qualifications in Maths and English Language, there are support mechanisms in place to help you achieve these. Although you will **not** be able to apply for Apprenticeship without these qualifications there is funding in place to help you attain these. Once completed you will then be eligible for the next recruitment intake. Please email [paramedic.apprentice@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:paramedic.apprentice@nwas.nhs.uk) for further information on how to enrol on to these training programmes.

If you are unsure if your qualifications meet the required standard then please email copies to [paramedic.apprentice@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:paramedic.apprentice@nwas.nhs.uk) and we will be happy to check these for you.

Those without the necessary Maths and English Language qualifications will be required to complete these in their own time. It is the responsibility of the individual to negotiate with managers to facilitate attendance to the learning sessions.

Please continue with your application submission and we will run the Maths and English checks in parallel.

## Application Process

Vinny Romano has created a guidance video to assist you with your application

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgQnUUGF9QM&feature=youtu.be>

Applications will be completed and submitted online using the Microsoft forms link you have received via email. You will need to attach any relevant documentation and certificates to this form for your application to be accepted. Your completed form will automatically go to your SPTL for approval.

Applicants will only be invited to interview once it has been confirmed that all of their mandatory training modules have been completed on ESR and all necessary certificates have been uploaded via the Microsoft form application.

### Assessment Centre

Antony Freeman has created a guidance video to the assessment centre process

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpbdVYtmopc&feature=youtu.be>

1. The assessment centre last for one hour and consists of two stages.
2. Stage one is a group discussion on a scenario that lasts 20 minutes, you will be assessed on your; willingness to participate, supporting others in expressing their view, your values and finally, your knowledge base.
3. Stage two is an individual values-based interview. You will be interviewed on an individual basis by a panel of 2 assessors. This element of the interview will last for approximately 10 minutes.
4. Your final score will be based upon the assessment centre scores and your applicant form scores.
5. Please ensure you have declared any specific learning needs on your application if you require additional support with the assessment centre

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Q.** Why can't I remain on my shift line during the apprenticeship?

**A.** Following feedback from the pilot cohorts we have identified several issues:

- Fitting university days into an existing shift pattern leads to poor work life balance, short turn around between shifts, reduced rest days and reduced study time
- High number of hours lost through abstractions means apprentices must try and fit makeup shifts between their existing rota and study time
- Different shift patterns across NWS means some apprentice's hours are impacted by abstractions significantly more than others. Reserve will allow more consistency between apprentices and avoid anyone being disadvantaged
- Concerns raised around apprentices mainly working with one Practice Educator rather than getting exposure to a range of Paramedics
- Concerns raised around potential bias and conflict of interest if apprentices are only mentored by their crewmate. It has also been argued that it is unfair to put Practice Educators in a position where they would potentially have to fail their crew mate and this extra stress/pressure could lead to 'failure to fail'

**Q.** How will the programme be funded?

**A.** As a formal apprenticeship, the programme will be fully funded from the Trust's apprenticeship levy account.

**Q.** On successful completion of the programme what qualification will I attain?

**A.** You will have a BSc Hons in Paramedic Science with eligibility to apply to the HCPC for registration as a Paramedic.

**Q.** How long is the programme?

**A.** A degree apprenticeship programme is traditionally 3 years but will be two years for NWS in-service learners.

As you hold the Level 4 AAP (or equivalent) qualification and have a minimum of 9 months in post as an EMT1 (post end point assessment if via an apprenticeship) this has been mapped against the first year of the programme and you will access the programme at Level 5, year 2.

**Q.** I have been offered a place on the Paramedic apprenticeship but I want to defer to a later cohort, is this possible?

**A.** No, once your place on a cohort has been confirmed it will not be possible to defer to an alternative one. If you are unable to attend the date being offered then please apply for a future intake.

**Q.** What is my rate of pay on the programme?

**A.** You will remain on your current pay for the duration of the programme.



**Q.** If I am on annex 5, will I have to move onto section 2 when I start the programme?

**A.** You will retain your current USH for the duration of the programme. We will monitor USH worked for candidates on the programme and if this is below the current percentage in place, we reserve the right to amend this condition for future cohorts. Any move to section 2 will be at the point you move into an NQP role.

**Q.** I have a holiday booked on one of the modules dates on the timetable, will I still be able to start on the programme and just catch up on what I have missed?

**A.** You must be able to commit to **100%** of all modules, it is essential that you are able to **attend all sessions** indicated. The university will have to work around any short notice absences, but you should apply for a later cohort if you cannot move the booked holiday.

**Q.** Will I be getting any supernumerary hours to work with a paramedic on an ambulance?

**A.** Supernumerary hours on an ambulance are not included in this programme and are not a requirement of the HCPC. If there is a requirement to arrange extra support for learning this will be done on a case by case basis and may include some supernumerary hours if required.

**Q.** What will my 'title' be during my apprenticeship period and will I have epaulettes to wear?

**A.** Your designation will be NWAS Student Paramedic and you will be provided with epaulettes. These should be ordered once you start the apprenticeship and can be done the same as any other uniform request.

**Q.** What does off-the-job learning mean in an apprenticeship? What does this mean for learning in my own time?

**A.** the apprenticeship principles dictate that learning time needs to be protected for apprentices, with a minimum of 20% of the time of an apprenticeship delivered as off-the-job learning which must be paid hours.

On this programme there are 46 days of protected time (university days and internal rotation placements). Full time annual working hours in the NHS are 1725 hours; the programme hours (46 days) equates to 345 hours over a year which is 20% of the working hours which are off-the-job. Off the job learning can only be used for new learning and does not apply to revision, consolidation, assignments or portfolio building as these are consolidation activities and not new learning. Additional study time is provided however you may find it beneficial to dedicate some of your personal time where possible towards your Paramedic development and achieving your BSc.

**Q.** How many internal rotation placements do I need to complete and will these include placements outside of NWAS such as maternity etc.?

**A.** There are 5 internal rotation placements each year and these can be completed at various roles within NWAS. There are **no** external placements as part of the Paramedic apprenticeship.

**Q.** Will my shift line change following my registration as a paramedic?

**A.** Yes, you will move into a reserve position as an NQP.

**Q.** Is there an option to stay over near the university if I am travelling a long distance?

**A.** Yes accommodation requests can be supported for those travelling over an hour each way, however these must have authorisation from your local management team as the cost will come out of their budget so it is strongly advised you discuss it with them first. Please send accommodation queries to [paramedic.apprenticeship@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:paramedic.apprenticeship@nwas.nhs.uk)

**Q.** Will I be able to practice Paramedic clinical skills throughout the programme?

**A.** Yes, you will be taught and assessed by the University; once you have achieved the required standard you will be able to practice these skills under the guidance of a Paramedic Practice Educator.

**Q.** Will I be able to give Paramedic drugs during my apprenticeship?

**A.** No, this is due to drug licences and legalities. You can be involved in the decision making process, drug preparation and checks and post administer monitoring. The Drug should only be administered by the registered Paramedic; this is not a duty that can be delegated. This applies to drugs given by any route and includes Saline flushes.

**Q.** If I have been taught to give an IM injection does that mean I can administer drugs via this route while on placement?

**A.** Alongside IV/IO you will be taught to administer drugs via IM and subcutaneously. This is taught in simulation only and you are not to administer any drugs outside of your EMT1 scope of practice.

**Q.** Does the whole application process require completion by 22nd September 2024?

**A.** Yes, all sections need to be completed and submitted by this date, along with all accompanying evidence required.

**Q.** What format do you require the application form in?

**A.** The application must be sent electronically via the MS Teams link – <https://forms.office.com/e/Q3maPb4Zyq>

**Q.** What is the process once the application has been submitted, is there an interview process or is progression based solely on the application?

**A.** Once your application has been received and marked you will be asked to attend an assessment centre which will involve both NWAS and University staff. Invitations to this stage will only be sent out once it has been confirmed that your qualifications have been submitted and you have completed all of your mandatory training modules on ESR.

**Q.** What happens if I am successful at interview but my manager cannot release me for my allocated cohort, will I need to reapply?

**A.** No, successful applicants who cannot be released due to operational pressures will be placed into a pool and allocated the next available cohort.

**Q.** Which university will the course be at if we are successful?

**A.** University of Cumbria is our chosen university partner for this programme.

**Q.** Can I apply for a student loan?

**A.** No, apprenticeship programmes are not eligible for student loan applications

**Q.** Am I able to claim tax relief whilst on this programme?

**A.** The widening access tax relief is not applicable to programme where individuals are being paid a salary whilst attending the programme.

**Q.** Am I able to get council tax discount?

**A.** We are unable to comment as this is personal to particular addresses. You are a full time apprentice who is receiving a salary and this may affect any applications for discounts.

**Q.** Am I able to claim student discounts?

**A.** The NUS Apprentice extra card is the discount card for apprentices;

<https://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk/>

**Q.** If I have an issue or problem with the course who do I raise this with?

**A.** If this is purely an academic issue for e.g. assignment extensions, referrals etc. you should contact the University in the first instance. If it is work related for e.g. shift or working pattern problems, issues with your Practice Educator etc. you should contact either your line manager or the Apprenticeship Practice Education Facilitator (PEF).

**Q.** Can I join a social media group affiliated with this academic programme?

**A.** Yes, however, please be aware that you are on a professional course and you must always adhere to the Trust's social media policy, do not use this platform to air or discuss issues. Please follow the appropriate procedure to raise a concern or discuss any issues you may have, if in doubt please contact the Apprenticeship PEF. Any unprofessional conduct could result in your final HCPC registration being affected.

# Paramedic Apprenticeship Programme

ARE YOU IN AN EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN POSITION? FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY:

