

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP)

Advanced clinical practitioner (ACP) apprenticeship implementation Guidance for CSP members

What is the ACP apprenticeship?

1. The ACP apprenticeship

- Is available in England to all the registered non-medical health and care professions
- Is open to experienced clinicians who are supported by their employer to pursue it
- Is defined by an apprenticeship standard that defines ACP as an occupational role and sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to fulfil it across four domains (clinical practice, management and leadership, education and research)
- Provides the opportunity to follow a structured, supported development route (relevant to service, professional and skills development needs) into an advanced practice role, funded by their employer
- Is underpinned by an MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice
- Enables clinicians to undertake a Master's degree part-time while practising and contributing to patient care and service delivery
- Includes a minimum of 20% off-the-job learning (this equates to one day a week, but does not have to be delivered in this way; e.g. it could be provided through blocks of study on a periodic basis)
- Includes an end-point assessment (EPA) comprising 20 credits at level 7 that has to be completed as an integral part of the underpinning MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice
- Attracts the £12k apprenticeship tariff; this is the funding that is available via the apprenticeship levy for education delivery.

2. The ACP apprenticeship standard and assessment plan can be accessed via the following link: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/advanced-clinical-practitioner-degree/>

Key messages

3. It is important that physiotherapy engages with opportunities to use the ACP apprenticeship to meet workforce development needs. While apprenticeships present some unknowns and challenges (in healthcare, higher education and at Master's degree level), they present a new way for employers to invest in skills development.
4. The ACP apprenticeship forms a new way in which physiotherapists can gain access to career progression and a new way in which employers (as service providers) and universities can strengthen their collaboration to develop the workforce in response to changing population, patient, service and job role needs.
5. The ACP apprenticeship has been developed within the apprenticeship infrastructure in England. It is possible that it could be used as a model for parallel developments in the other UK countries.

6. If physiotherapists don't seek to use the ACP apprenticeship, others will and employers will use their apprenticeship levy for different parts of the workforce.
 - **If you're an educator**, liaise with your colleagues to find out whether and how you can best progress plans to deliver the ACP apprenticeship to meet multi-professional workforce needs
 - **If you're an employer/manager**, contact your workforce development lead and find out how you can use the ACP apprenticeship to meet your workforce development needs
 - **If you're a clinician**, find out whether your employer is planning to offer the ACP apprenticeship and what the application process will be.

Education providers

7. Discuss with colleagues whether you are intending to deliver the ACP apprenticeship and the value and issues involved in doing this
8. Check that your institution is on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers
9. Check that your institution is on the Register of End-point Assessment Organisations
10. Seek support from your institution's apprenticeship unit on progressing your development plans and ensuring compliance with all apprenticeship requirements (including those to do with apprenticeship design, procurement, delivery and assessment)
11. Seek discussions with local employers (and further afield) about their interest in the ACP apprenticeship to inform the development of your provision and to ensure its responsiveness to service and workforce needs
12. Review whether and how existing ACP provision fits with workforce need (locally and potentially further afield), including for particular services and specialties, for different professions (including physiotherapy), and to support particular new initiatives (e.g. the first-contact physiotherapist role in general practice)
13. Review your existing level 7 learning provision that sits outside your institution's ACP provision, but which could now usefully be drawn within it to contribute to your ACP apprenticeship offer (including to meet workforce needs across services and professions)
14. Review how you will adapt the design and delivery of your existing ACP provision to fit with the ACP apprenticeship standard and requirements for apprentices' on-the-job and off-the-job learning
15. Map your ACP provision against the four domains and the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the ACP apprenticeship standard
16. Review how you will integrate the EPA into your ACP MSc and the modifications required in your programme design and delivery (including assessment)
17. Seek advice from your apprenticeship unit and quality assurance/assessment regulations colleagues on making the required changes to existing ACP provision to meet the apprenticeship requirements
18. Consider the value of developing new modules within your overall ACP provision to increase responsiveness and relevance of your provision to changing workforce needs and identify priority areas

19. Consider the implications of integrating the 20-credit end-point assessment (EPA) into your HEI's existing MSc in Advanced Clinical Practice in terms of its structure and unit/module content
20. Consider the most appropriate mode of offering the minimum 20% 'off-the-job' learning to prospective apprentices in order to optimise its accessibility to clinicians and their employers (including in terms of enabling practical backfill arrangements for apprentices to have protected time for their 'off-the-job' learning)
21. Consider how you can address economies of scale and practical issues relating to meeting particular workforce needs
22. Consider how you can appropriately enable the accreditation of prior learning towards the ACP apprenticeship (mapped to the KSBs and in line with apprenticeship requirements and your institution's assessment regulations)
23. Consider the award titles attached to successful completion, adhering to the requirement that your Master's degree carries the Advanced Clinical Practice as its core title, but that some indication of the focus of apprentices' learning (e.g. relating to patient group, profession, specialty, etc.) is permitted as a bracketed descriptor, where this seems appropriate
24. Consider and pursue the value of making collaborative arrangements (e.g. ones that are reciprocal, co-ordinated and avoid duplication) with other HEIs so that your respective offers are complementary, rather than in direct competition, and so that you can meet priority areas, while taking account of viability of provision and economies of scale
25. Explore how you can link with colleagues in your institution in other disciplines (outside health and care) who are engaged in designing and delivering degree apprenticeships to explore how you can tackle common issues together and share learning
26. Engage with the Council of Deans of Health (CoDH) project to support ACP developments across nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions.

Employers

27. Discuss with colleagues whether and how you can engage with the ACP apprenticeship to meet identified service delivery and workforce needs, including planned changes to service delivery model and/or workforce transformation plans (e.g. in relation to first-contact physiotherapy roles)
28. Consider how ACP apprentices can be incorporated within your staffing plans, including in support of the above, both in the short- and long-term
29. Consider the staffing requirements to provide good-quality learning opportunities for ACP apprentices, and to provide valuable professional development opportunities for staff to support, mentor and assess apprentices' work-based learning
30. Consider how ACP apprentices could contribute to workforce sustainability and career progression opportunities, including in ways that will contribute to service improvements, workforce transformation and staff recruitment and retention
31. Secure clarity on/make the case for using your apprenticeship levy to offer the ACP apprenticeships, based on fulfilment of skills/workforce development needs
32. Secure clarity on arrangements for the remuneration of ACP apprentices (whether seconded from substantive posts within your organisation, or recruited to an ACP apprenticeship from outside your organisation), adhering to national guidance on terms and conditions, as these are developed

33. Seek advice from your workforce development/apprenticeship lead (where available) on how you can be supported to progress engagement in recruiting ACP apprentices, including from the perspective of procurement processes, employment and education provider links
34. Consider how you will make appropriate backfill arrangements for ACP apprentices' 'off-the-job' learning
35. Pursue with other employers the value of engaging in collaborative activity to optimise the responsiveness of ACP apprenticeship opportunities to your shared workforce development needs
36. Pursue and seek to influence how your strategic transformation plan footprint (STP)/integrated care system (ICS) is taking a strategic approach to apprenticeships, at all levels, as a new workforce pipeline and approach to workforce development
37. Pursue and seek to influence whether and how your STP/ICS is able to support system-wide engagement in apprenticeships to help employers to engage in collaboration with one other, comply with procurement processes, and address economies of scale
38. Pursue discussions with HEIs planning to deliver the ACP apprenticeship on how their planned provision can meet your identified service delivery and workforce development needs
39. Pursue through discussions with HEIs how you can actively input to how the ACP apprenticeship is made available, including in terms of the content and structure of learning provision (particularly 'off-the-job' learning) and how apprentices' learning and development will be supported
40. Pursue discussions with HEIs on how they can support the development of your staff to be able to support and assess apprentices' on-the-job learning.

Members as prospective ACP apprentices and apprentice mentors

41. Consider whether the ACP apprenticeship is a potential professional development/ career progression opportunity for you (or members of your team) and how you can access it
42. Consider whether and how you can make the case for the value of your employer offering the ACP apprenticeship as part of developing workforce capacity/capability in sustainable, responsive ways
43. Consider how you can make the case to your employer and local HEIs for the delivery of particular modules within the ACP apprenticeship to meet particular physiotherapy workforce needs
44. Consider whether you would be well placed to support the delivery of the ACP apprenticeship in your workplace and what time and support you would need to be able to contribute to apprentices' high-quality learning experience
45. Consider how you could contribute to the development and design of HEIs' delivery of the ACP apprenticeship to optimise its relevance and responsiveness to skills development needs in physiotherapy (including in support of changing areas of practice, models of service delivery and job roles).