

## Specification for the Higher Degree Apprenticeship

**This document applies to Academic Year 2022/23 onwards**

The Specification for Higher Level or Degree Apprenticeships should be read as a companion document to the Programme Specification for the academic award linked to the apprenticeship.

1.	<b>Apprenticeship title</b>	Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioner
2.	<b>Qualifications</b>	FdSc & Apprenticeship
3.	<b>Level</b>	Level 5
4.	<b>Professional registration</b>	N/A
5.	<b>Duration</b>	27 months
6.	<b>Managing institution/Main Provider</b>	Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
7.	<b>Teaching institution(s)</b>	Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
8.	<b>Apprenticeship Standard and Number</b>	Healthcare Assistant Practitioner, ST0215
9.	<b>Date of Apprenticeship Specification preparation/revision</b>	Approval date: June 2022

### 10. Distinguishing features of the apprenticeship

Healthcare Assistant Practitioners work as part of the wider health and social care team and have direct contact with patients, service users or clients providing high quality and compassionate care. Assistant Practitioners work at a level above that of Healthcare Support Workers and have a more in-depth understanding about factors that influence health and ill-health (e.g., anatomy and physiology). Assistant Practitioner is a job title applied to a very wide variety of roles that have been developed locally by employers to meet individual service need. Examples of common work activities include assisting in total patient assessment, coordination of care (including referrals to other practitioners) and higher clinical skills such as catheterisation, wound care and discharge planning.

The Higher apprenticeship is suitable for staff who are working in a range of areas such as Cancer Services, Physiotherapy, Genito-Urinary Medicine, Orthopaedics, Hospice Care, Mental Health, Social Care, Community, Occupational Therapy, Learning Disabilities as well as hybrid roles that cross traditional occupational areas. Assistant Practitioners will therefore develop additional skills and knowledge based on their employer's requirements depending on the clinical or professional area within which they are working. An Assistant Practitioner works under the supervision of a Registered Practitioner.

The programme is aimed at individuals employed in health and care settings. Therefore, at the heart of the programme, is flexible, authentic work-based learning to develop competent, confident and compassionate Assistant Practitioners providing high quality, safe and responsive person-centred care.

## 11. Occupational Profile

A Healthcare Assistant Practitioner works under the supervision of a Registered Practitioner in accordance with employer policy, protocols and standard operating procedures. The Registered Practitioner remains accountable for the appropriate and effective delegation of activities and must ensure that the Assistant Practitioner has the competency, confidence and expertise to carry out such activities. Having accepted the activity, the Assistant Practitioner is accountable for their actions. In a situation where the Assistant Practitioner feels they do not have the necessary skills or ability then they must alert the registered practitioner immediately.

Assistant Practitioners must be:

- Honest
- Caring
- Compassionate
- Conscientious
- Committed.

Assistant Practitioners must always:

- Treat individuals with dignity, respecting individual's beliefs, culture, values and preferences
- Respect and adopt an empathetic approach
- Demonstrate courage to challenge areas of concern and work to best practice
- Be adaptable
- Demonstrate discretion.

## 12. Admission

### **Work-related entry requirements:**

Under UK Government requirements, Higher Level/Degree Apprentices will normally be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and must have the right to live and work in the UK.

All candidates must be employed in a role related to the subject matter of the apprenticeship and be sponsored by their employer. The support of the employer is articulated in an Apprenticeship Agreement. Applications can only be made through the sponsoring employer. The College is responsible for the recruitment of apprentices in consultation with employers, and it will liaise with the University to ensure all issues related to applications are compliant with university regulations; for example, with arrangements for RPL and protocol for non-standard entry.

### **Academic entry requirements:**

The academic entry requirements are as stipulated in the approved Programme Specification for the academic award. These are as follows:

Eligible candidates from within an organisation will be selected for registration by the University and/or partner college in consultation with the employer. Most candidates will have existing relevant Level 3 qualifications, and English and maths at Level 2, but other relevant or prior experience may be considered as an alternative. We would expect that applicants meet the level 2 English and maths requirement on entry. Where we recruit without these qualifications on entry, apprentices and employers will agree to commit to a weekly, half-day teaching, learning and assessment of the English and/or maths functional skill on entry until successful achievement. Details of acceptable level 3 qualifications, policy in relation to mature students or applicants with few or no formal qualifications can be found in the prospectus or on the University webpages. See the University's Admissions Policy for other acceptable qualifications and the section below specific to recognition of prior learning.

Candidates with non-standard entry applications will be considered on the basis of relevant work experience and attainment of skills. They will be invited to complete an essay, which will demonstrate an ability to study at this level. Students whose first language is not English must have a minimum standard of English at IELTS 6.0.

The normal minimum entry requirement for Foundation Degree courses is the possession of 4 GCSEs (Grade C/4 or above) and 1 A Level (or equivalent Level 3 qualification). The current UCAS Tariff requirements for entry to this course are published in the prospectus and on the UW website <https://www.worc.ac.uk/journey/a-z-of-courses.html>

It is essential that all applicants are able to demonstrate that they are in paid employment in order to utilise a work-based setting for the undertaking of work-based learning activities. Apprentices will be required to demonstrate agreement from their organisation to enable work-based activities to be undertaken in relation to the course. This will be negotiated with their employer through contractual commitments that are required by the apprenticeship.

Each potential apprentice will go through an initial assessment process with a representative from the College and employer. Their job role and responsibilities will be discussed and assessed against the knowledge, skills and behaviours and an initial assessment to assess their English and maths skills and digital fluency will be undertaken.

Once this is complete, an assessor from the College will undertake an assessment of the apprentice's current position. They will review prior experience, knowledge and learning to ensure that they are in a position to successfully enrol onto and complete the apprenticeship.

Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioners (apprentices) will be required to travel to and from work-based learning settings at their own expense.

**Please note:** To be eligible to undertake the end point assessment, Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioners (apprentices) must evidence GCSE Grade 4/Level 2 equivalent in maths and English.

**Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Occupational Health requirements:**

Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioners (apprentices) will be required to complete a Declaration of Offences form at the recruitment event. Apprentices will be required to demonstrate good health and character sufficient to ensure safe and effective practice. This includes confirmation of a satisfactory enhanced DBS and occupational health clearance from the apprentice's employing organisation. These will be verified by the University.

Prior to enrolment, apprentices, the employer and the College are required to complete the Commitment Statement.

**13. Structure of the apprenticeship**

The Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioner incorporates the Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care. The apprenticeship is 27 months (2 years, 3 months). This duration allows 24 months for the Foundation Degree (including a second-year resit period and August assessment board) and a three-month period for the end-point assessment. Higher-level/Degree Apprenticeships involve both paid work-based employment and academic study. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) specify that at least 6 hours per week are 'off-the-job' learning hour per calendar year, while the remaining proportion takes place 'on the job'. The off-the-job learning is typically covered by the taught academic course and associated activities and learning.

Apprentices follow the approved Foundation Degree academic programme with a usual one and a half-day a week attendance pattern. It is important to note that there is also an expectation for learning

through on-the-job and online activities, some of which will inform module assignments. In this way, module assignments are valuable as both an assessment of learning and an assessment for learning. Apprentices will be expected to set aside time each week to conduct independent work and study activities in support of their apprenticeship, in addition to the off-the-job, in-class activities.

Our courses are informed by research and current developments in the discipline and by feedback from students, external examiners and employers. Modules do therefore change periodically in the interests of keeping the course relevant and reflecting best practice. The most up-to-date information will be available to apprentices once they have accepted a place and registered for the course. If there are insufficient numbers of students interested in an optional module, this might not be offered, but we will advise them as soon as possible and help them choose an alternative.

The modules delivered are those approved to the Foundation Degree Health and Social Care.

Year 1:

Module Code	Module Title	Credits Status	Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)*
FDHS1212	Ethics, Values and Use of Self in Practice	15	M
FDHS1213	Communication Skills for Practice	15	M
FDHS1214	Preparing for Practice in Health and Social Care	30	M
FDHS1215	Contemporary Issues in Health and Wellbeing	30	M
FDHS1216	Human Development across the Lifecourse	15	M
FDHS1217	Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology	15	O*

Year 2:

Module Code	Module Title	Credits Status	Mandatory (M) or Optional (O)*
FDHS2003	Research and Evidence-based Practice	15	M
FDHS2004	Understanding Teamwork in Professional Practice	15	M
FDHS2005	Innovative Working in Health and Social Care	30	M
FDHS2006	Promoting Health and Wellbeing	15	M
FDHS2008	Equality, Diversity and Anti-oppressive Practice	15	M
FDHS2009	Understanding Health Conditions in Person-centred Practice	30	M

Throughout the programme, apprentices will be visited in their workplace by visiting tutors/ assessors who will ensure that their individual learning plan remains on target, and in alignment with the Apprenticeship Standard, through a process informed by feedback from both the apprentice and their employer. The employer will ensure the apprentice has a workplace mentor at the correct level, to support them in the workplace.

### Apprenticeship Requirements

Throughout the programme and to complete the apprenticeship programme, Level 5 Healthcare Assistant Practitioners (apprentices) must participate in training, development and on-going review activities which are incorporated into the structure and delivery of this programme.

The requirements for this apprenticeship will follow the academic programme as articulated in the Foundation Degree programme's award map and programme requirement. To meet the Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) requirements for the apprenticeship requires of a minimum of 278 hours of off-the-job training per calendar year. Off-the-job time consists of all taught elements and independent study (preparation for formative and summative assessments).

### **Off-the-job calculation**

Once statutory leave is accounted for, this equates to a minimum of 278 hours of off-the-job training per calendar year (46.4 weeks x 6 hours = 278 hours) for a full-time apprentice. The minimum hours per week would be pro-rated for a part-time apprentice.

This would be met by the care certificate, academic skills development, taught hours on the foundation degree, assessment work, research and independent study.

## **14. Knowledge, skills and behaviours**

The knowledge, skills and behaviours required by Healthcare Assistant Practitioner are mapped below. There are 25 requirements in the Standard in total, 20 relating to knowledge and skills and 5 related to behaviours, which are as follows:

### **Knowledge**

- The principles and philosophy of health and social care.
- The physiology, organisation and function of the human body.
- Lifespan developments and healthcare needs from prenatal to end of life/bereavement.
- Research and development in the health and social care sector to inform and improve quality of care.
- Provision and promotion of holistic person-centred care and support, duty of care and safeguarding of individuals.
- The importance of the strategic environment in health and social care and the implications for the individual.
- The importance of current evidence-based practice within scope of the role.

### **Skills**

- Responsibilities and duty of the role
- Case management
- Supervision and teaching
- Personal development
- Team working
- Assessment
- Communication
- Person-centred care and wellbeing
- Physiological care and wellbeing
- Physiological measurements
- Risk management
- Equality and diversity
- Quality

### **Behaviours**

- Treat individuals with dignity, respecting individual's beliefs, culture, values and preferences.
- Respect and adopt an empathetic approach.
- Demonstrate courage to challenge areas of concern and work to best practice.
- Be adaptable.
- Demonstrate discretion.

There may be opportunities to progress via a third year of top-up study to a BA (Hons) in Applied Health & Social Care. For those Assistant Practitioners who wish to progress into Registered Practice, the apprenticeship can provide credits into some Higher Education programmes aligned to professional registration.

It is anticipated that successful completion of the Level 5 Apprenticeship Standard Healthcare Assistant Practitioner will often result in the offer of a permanent role and help meet workforce supply.

## **15. Learning and teaching**

### **Teaching**

To meet the off-the-job requirements of a minimum of 278 hours of off-the-job training per calendar year is required, this is typically covered by the taught academic course, the FD Health and Social Care programme and associated activities and learning. The Higher Apprenticeship enables learners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours to support professional development in their chosen sector.

Continuous monitoring will normally be undertaken through performance reviews completed with the apprentice and employer. Mentors in the workplace will support and guide the apprentice. These are decided during enrolment and are required to support personal and professional development and to be directly involved with progress monitoring – for both 'on the job' and 'off the job' learning - alongside the delivery team.

Each apprentice has an allocated assessor/work-based tutor from the College who will be their main contact and lead for supporting the apprentice through the programme regularly liaising with the delivery team and employer, and to provide support for on-the-job learning. They will also have a mentor in the workplace, at the correct level to support them in their role and their apprenticeship.

Within Level 4 in the first-year, assessment is modular based with students being required to complete a variety of written tasks, case studies and presentations. There is an open book examination as part of the assessment process.

On Level 5 in the second-year, assessment is modular based however, at this level; there is a greater emphasis on students being independent students completing module assignments relating to their own chosen study area, interests and career progression.

Apprentices will learn through sessions that are a combination of lectures, e-lectures, seminars and group work, all of which aim to encourage student interaction. Sessions will focus on subject specific information and will take a variety of different formats to promote learning. Seminars, case studies, scenarios and problem-based learning will facilitate development of inquiry into real world situations, developing skills, knowledge and practice. Online lectures will provide apprentices with the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the material presented through online learning. In addition, meetings with personal academic tutors are available and encouraged, in order to support them throughout the course.

Apprentices will attend College one day a week during term time and undertake some online sessions. In addition to this, the apprentice's assessor will visit the apprentice in the workplace at least every 12 weeks.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) specify that at least 20% of an apprenticeship must involve 'off-the-job' learning, while the remaining proportion takes place 'on the job'. The 20% off-the-job learning is typically covered by the taught academic course and associated activities and learning.

In addition to the contact time, apprentices are expected to undertake around 15 hours of personal self-study per week. This is in addition to the 20% off the job training requirement. Typically, this will involve completing online activities, reading journal articles and books, working on individual and group projects, undertaking research in the library and online, preparing coursework assignments and presentations, and preparing for examinations.

Independent learning is supported by a range of excellent learning facilities, including The Student Hub and library resources, the virtual learning environment, and extensive electronic learning resources.

## 16. Assessment

Higher Apprenticeships incorporate a set of assessment points in relation to assessment of achievement of the apprenticeship. These involve the following stages:

- On-programme knowledge and skills: through the academic programme. The Foundation Degree in Health and Social Care course provides opportunities to test understanding and learning informally through the completion of optional 'formative' assignments. Each module has mandatory 'summative' assessments, which are graded and count towards the overall module grade. Assessment methods include written examinations and a range of coursework assessments such as essays, reports, case studies, reflective portfolios and presentations.
- Gateway to end point assessment: before going forward for end point assessment the apprentice must have completed:
  - the 15 standards required by the Care Quality Commission [as set out in the Care Certificate]
  - Level 2 Maths and English
  - A regulated Level 5 occupational competence qualification
  - A reflective journal. The apprentice reflects on their knowledge and skills development as well as their approach to the workplace (the values and behaviours). Evidence must be gathered following completion of their programme of training and development and during the 3 months leading up to the planned date of the end point assessment. Judgement on whether the apprentice is ready for the end point assessment is taken by the employer who should gather views from the training provider and the apprentice to inform this decision. Apprentices should not be put forward for the end point assessment before they are ready.
- End point assessment: The end point assessment is triggered by the employer when the gateway requirements have been met, and after determining the readiness of the apprentice.

The end point assessment includes the following components:

1. A multiple choice and short answer test
2. An observation of practice undertaken in the workplace
3. A reflective journal completed by the apprentice and an interview.

The successful apprentice receives an overall grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Please note that the end-point assessment is currently under review with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/healthcare-assistant-practitioner-v1-0>

For final certification, the apprentice must have passed all components in the end point assessment. At the conclusion of the end point assessment, the independent assessor collates the evidence and determines the final grading for the apprenticeship. The grading decision is made solely by the independent assessor. The apprentice must attempt all components of the end point assessment on their first attempt. Should the apprentice fail any components they are required to re-take only those components which they have previously failed. Re-takes are permitted after 1 month and within 12 months but not after 12 months. The number of times an apprentice is permitted to re-take the end point assessment within the permitted timeframe is determined by the employer.