

# Apprenticeships Social Care

South West London  
**Health & Care**  
**APPRENTICESHIPS**





“ I wanted to progress my dream of becoming a social worker without having to return to university full-time as it just wasn’t a viable option for me. I felt that an apprenticeship would be the best way to use the skills and experience I have acquired in my current role to gain a qualification. I thrive from learning practically, so I am able to build my skills and knowledge and put what I am learning at university into practice in my workplace. Having the hands-on experience that couldn’t possibly be provided from a traditional degree will really give me that extra confidence in taking the next step in my career as a social worker. ”

**Cody, Adult Social Care Assessment Officer**

**SOCIAL WORK INTEGRATED BA (HONS) DEGREE APPRENTICE (LEVEL 6)**

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# Apprenticeships in Social Care

Apprenticeships in social care are a brilliant way to enable individuals and organisations to develop the skills and workforce needed to provide outstanding care for our communities. They provide a free pathway into a wide range of social care careers for anyone - from school leavers, career changers or even existing employees looking to upskill.

A social care apprenticeship can offer a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience, earn a salary, and achieve nationally recognised qualifications – all while making a real difference in people's lives.

Apprenticeships enable people to build careers and support employers in nurturing the next generation of skilled professionals. In social care, apprenticeships play a crucial role in:

- Addressing workforce shortages by developing skilled, dedicated professionals.
- Providing career progression for new and existing employees.
- Enhancing the quality of care through hands-on training and real-world experience.
- Opening opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds to enter a rewarding sector.

## What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job with an accompanying assessment and skills development programme. It is a way for individuals of any age, both new staff and existing employees, to earn while they learn while gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. Apprentices gain this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practice new skills in a real work environment.

## Who can be an apprentice?

To be eligible for a social care apprenticeship, you need to be over 16, not in full-time education, and have been a resident of the UK for three or more years.

Go to the [Government Apprenticeships website](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) for more information about eligibility and your rights as an apprentice:

**[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)**

## What is involved in an apprenticeship?

Each apprenticeship is different. It always includes:

- regular paid employment with holiday leave
- hands-on-experience
- at least 20% off-the-job training
- formal assessment that leads to a nationally recognised qualification

All apprenticeships are structured, formal programs that typically include:

- workshops
- courses
- mentorship
- work-based training and projects
- dedicated study time
- regular assessments
- recognised qualifications.

## Are there qualifications or skills prerequisites?

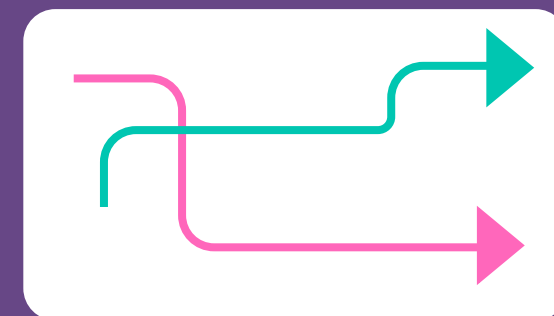
Every apprenticeship is different. Sometimes you will need to have specific skills or a qualification. Whatever job you currently do, there will be an apprenticeship to help you progress your career.

Development pathways are not always a straight line. They could include sideways steps to gain additional specialist skills and knowledge. You could even move into a different field of care.

### Career pathways

With all the different careers in health and care, there are also many different jobs that can be done through an apprenticeship.

**Go to page 10 to see example career pathways:**



“

A positive thing that I get from working as a care worker is every day, I am learning new things and different ways. I also find that going out and helping others takes my mind off of things and has a positive effect on myself knowing someone else is happy. Care work can be difficult but at the same time very rewarding

”

**Ben, Care Worker**



# What is off-the-job training?

Apprenticeships are all about getting skills and knowledge while you work in a specific field. They combine a regular job with training and study that is not part of your everyday work.

It must account for 20% of the overall contracted hours for the duration of the apprenticeship. Employers and training providers collaborate to design the best model for each role.

Off-the-job training can be delivered flexibly, for example, as part of each day, once a week, or as a block of time. It can take place in or out of the work environment.

Across South West London we work with colleges, universities and training providers to deliver the training.

Off-the-job training covers many things that will help the apprentice gain the skills they need.

It is delivered by subject experts and can include:

**Teaching theory**

– for example, classroom lessons, lectures and online learning

**Practical training**

– for example, shadowing, mentoring, industry visits and specialist projects

**Study time**

– for example, learning support and time to write assignments and complete assessments.



## Benefits of an apprenticeship

Apprenticeships offer the chance to earn a wage in a field that interests you while developing new skills and studying in that area.

**It’s free!**

The employer covers your course costs using government funding. Unlike other types of higher education, you incur no debt.

**Get qualifications**

Boost your resume with nationally recognised qualifications and proof of your skills and knowledge. Use it as a stepping stone to further education.

**Real-world experience**

Hands-on experience in a real work environment, be job-ready from day one and demonstrate you have the skills that employers value most.

**Earn while you learn**

Keep working while you study. Earn a regular wage so you can support yourself financially.

**Get new roles and higher salaries**

Move into specialist roles or senior management, or follow a new career path across the health and care system.

**Build your confidence and competence**

Develop technical skills and crucial professional skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.



### Case study:

### Clair, Level 6 Occupational Therapist Degree

“

I only started my apprenticeship in September, and I am already learning so much from both teaching staff (who go the extra mile) and fellow students.

The support available from the whole team including my amazing workplace (OT) mentor and ward manager who kindly agreed for me to commence my training, is so very welcomed and greatly appreciated.

Completing my first assignment and receiving such positive feedback after being away from University for such a long time.

The support and guidance from my lecturers has helped to raise my confidence and self-esteem.

Take the first step and speak with your line manager as well as the wonderful Apprenticeship and Career Development Team who will provide all the information necessary for you to start your journey

”





# Career advancement through apprenticeships

## Find a pathway to suit you

Apprenticeships offer a clear pathway to developing professional skills, progressing to specialised or advanced roles, and earning higher salaries.

Apprenticeships can be offered at all levels. Whether you’re just starting your career or looking to progress in your field. Entry requirements will depend on the employer and the details of each apprenticeship.

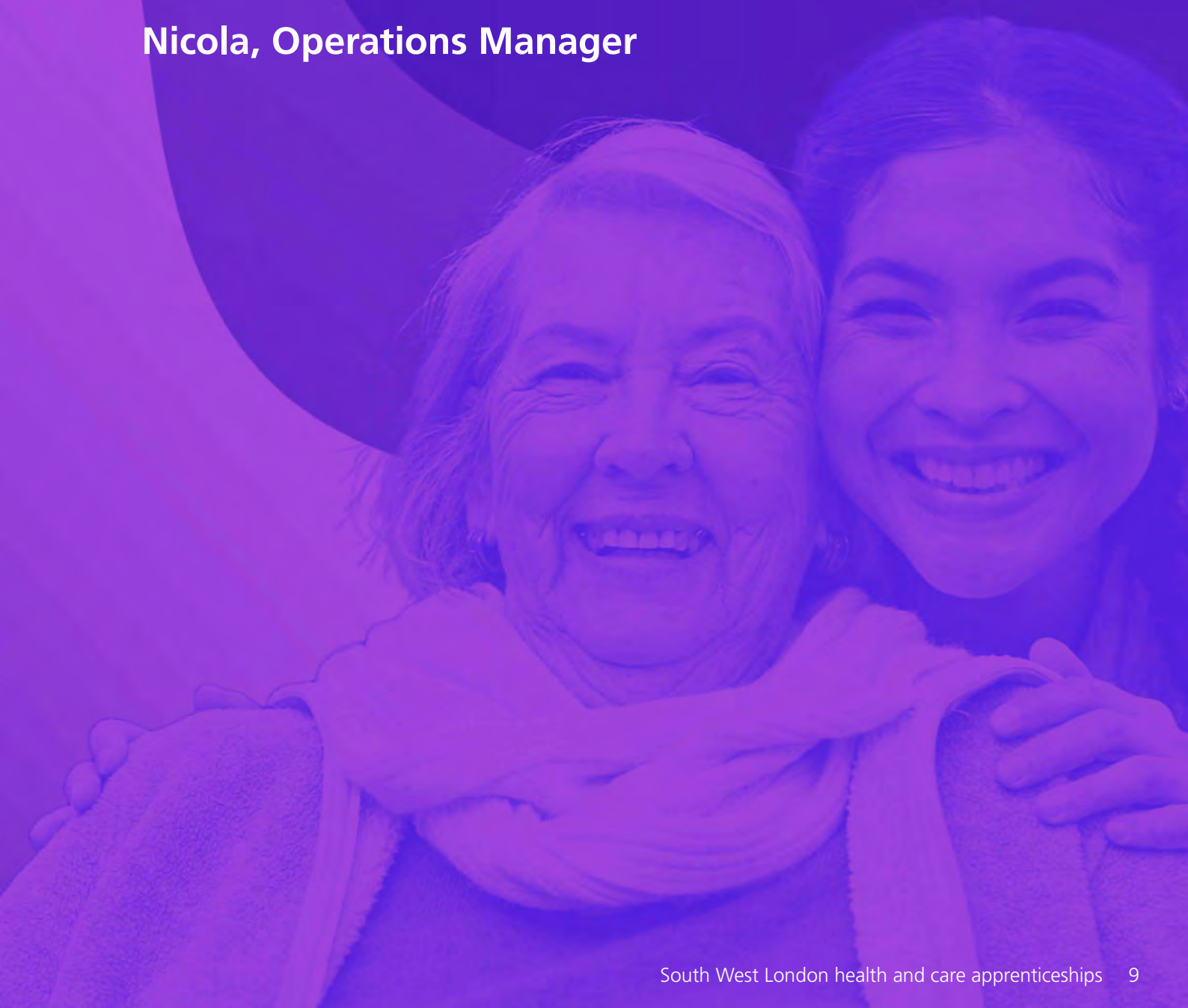
### Adult social care apprenticeships

Level	Apprenticeship	Description	Duration (months)
2	Adult Care Worker	Providing frontline care for vulnerable adults.	12
3	Lead Adult Care Worker	Leading frontline care for vulnerable adults within their own homes, day care centres, residential and nursing homes and other healthcare settings.	18
4	Lead Practitioner Adult Care	Managing teams of frontline carers to look after vulnerable adults with care needs.	18
5	Leader in Adult Care	Leading the care service and managing teams of carers to look after adults with care needs.	18
5	Nursing Associate	Providing care and support to people who are sick, injured or disabled.	24
6	Occupational Therapist	Occupational therapists work with people of all ages and can look at all aspects of daily life in your home, school or workplace.	48
6	Physiotherapist	Delivering programmes and interventions to help people affected by injury, ageing, illness or disability.	48
6	Registered Nurse	Giving care, advice and support to sick, injured or disabled people.	48
6	Social Worker	Protecting vulnerable children and adults from harm or abuse and supporting adults to live independently	36

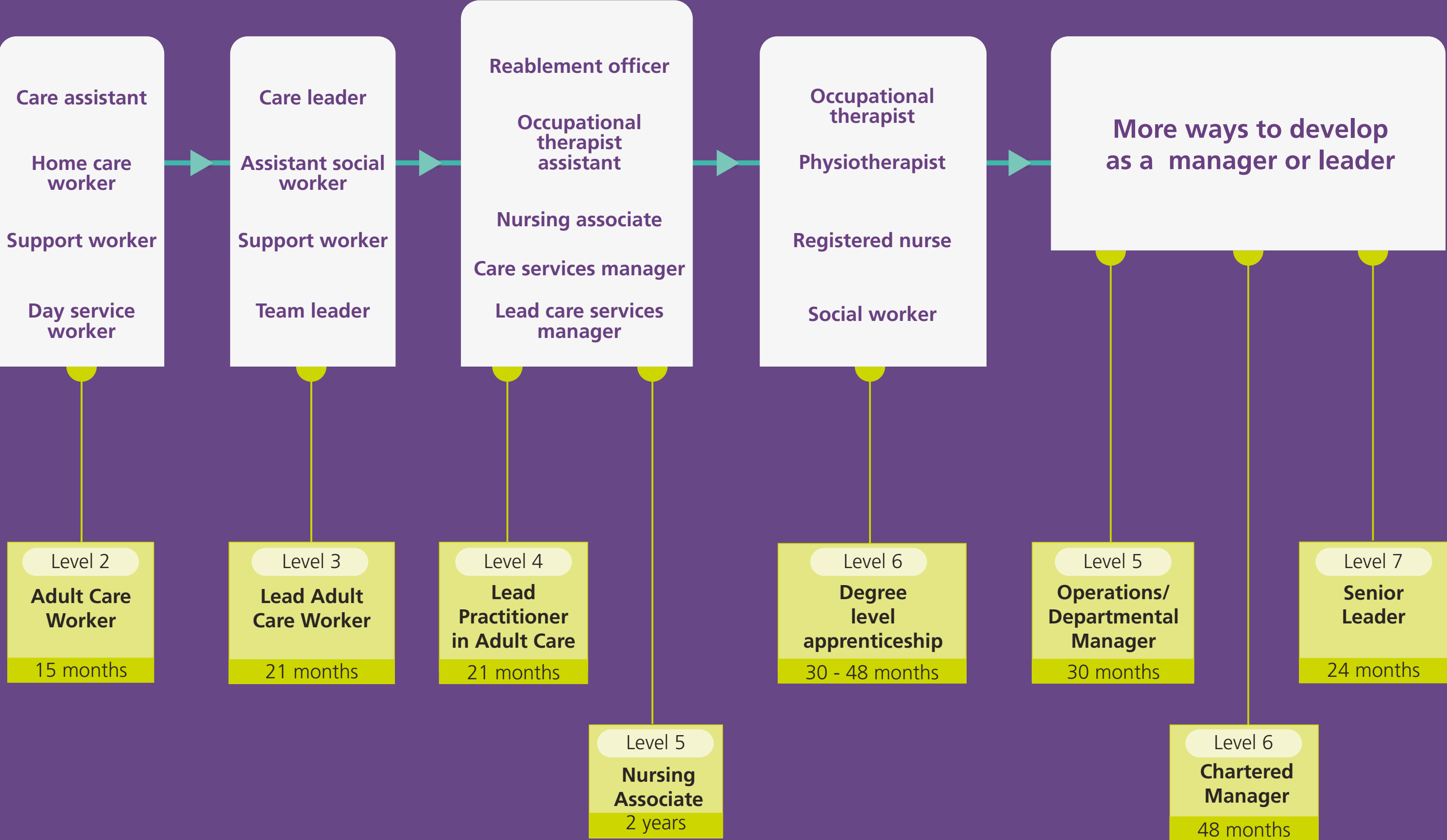
“ We have two entry-level support workers within the team who have really displayed the values and aptitude required to progress in their care careers. Offering them an apprenticeship was not only a great opportunity for them but also demonstrates our commitment as an employer to retain and develop our staff.

Through the government funding and an apprenticeship levy transfer, the training costs are covered and we also benefit from the knowledge they will bring from their learning journey.

**Nicola, Operations Manager**



# Career pathways





“

*The apprenticeship has made a big difference to me. I've been able to raise a family while achieving qualifications. It's more than a job, I have a career now and I'm able to progress in my profession.*

”

## Apprenticeships that can crossover in a variety of social care settings

Level	Apprenticeship	Description	Duration (months)
2	Healthcare Support Worker	The broad purpose of the occupation is to provide high quality and compassionate person-centred care and support based on individual needs and setting.	12
3	Senior Healthcare Support Worker	Providing high-quality and compassionate specialist health and social care for a range of people.	24
3	Community Health & Wellbeing Worker	To work in partnership with individuals and their communities to identify and address health and wellbeing needs, improve health, prevent ill-health and reduce inequalities.	12
4	Children, Young People & Families Practitioner	Working with children, young people and families, including carers, to achieve positive and sustainable change in their lives.	24
4	Early Intervention Practitioner	Provide intervention services early in identified cases.	18
5	Assistant Practitioner (Health)	Providing, supervising and coordinating high-quality and compassionate health and social care for a wide range of people.	24
5	Associate continuing healthcare practitioner	Planning and commissioning care for people with complex health and social care needs.	24
5	Children, Young People & Families Manager	Manage teams to help and advise families that need support.	24
5	Rehabilitation worker (visual impairment)	Help people with visual impairments lead normal lives.	24
6	Public Health Practitioner	Assessing and managing risk of disease and ill-health, and the prevention of premature deaths.	36
6	Speech & Language Therapist	Speech and language therapy provides treatment, support and care for children and adults.	48
6	Psychological wellbeing practitioner	Helping people with mild to moderate anxiety and depression manage their conditions.	12
7	Play Therapist	Work to improve children's mental health, emotional well-being, learning capabilities and social relationships.	36
7	Arts Therapist	Using art, drama or music to carry to improve a person's mental, physical health and wellbeing.	24

# Benefits of supporting apprentices

## Choose an apprenticeship that suits your business

Apprenticeships are more rigorous, better structured, independently assessed and more clearly aligned to your needs as an employer. By considering apprenticeships and implementing a strong workforce development plan, your business will be working towards making a positive change to its culture, work ethics and business succession planning. For further information on the standards, please refer to the Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education website:

[www.instituteforapprenticeships.org](http://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org)

## Attract and retain highly skilled professionals

Hiring an apprentice and encouraging employees to take up an apprenticeship is a great way to attract fresh talent and enhance your team’s skills.

Apprentices have higher employee retention rates. They can help ensure continuity and stability within the team and reduce the disruption caused by high staff turnover.

## Productivity benefits

It will help improve productivity, fill skills gaps, enable future positions to be filled and leaders to be developed from within:

- 92% of companies that have taken on apprentices believe this leads to a more motivated and satisfied workforce
- 86% said apprenticeships helped them develop skills relevant to their organisation
- 80% have seen a significant increase in employee retention



## Could an apprentice enhance your team?



What are the current and future skill needs of your team – are there any skills gaps that an apprenticeship could address?



Have you experienced challenges in recruiting skilled workers for specific roles?



Are there any upcoming projects or initiatives that could provide meaningful learning experiences for an apprentice?



Are there budget constraints where funding for an apprenticeship could help boost efficiency?

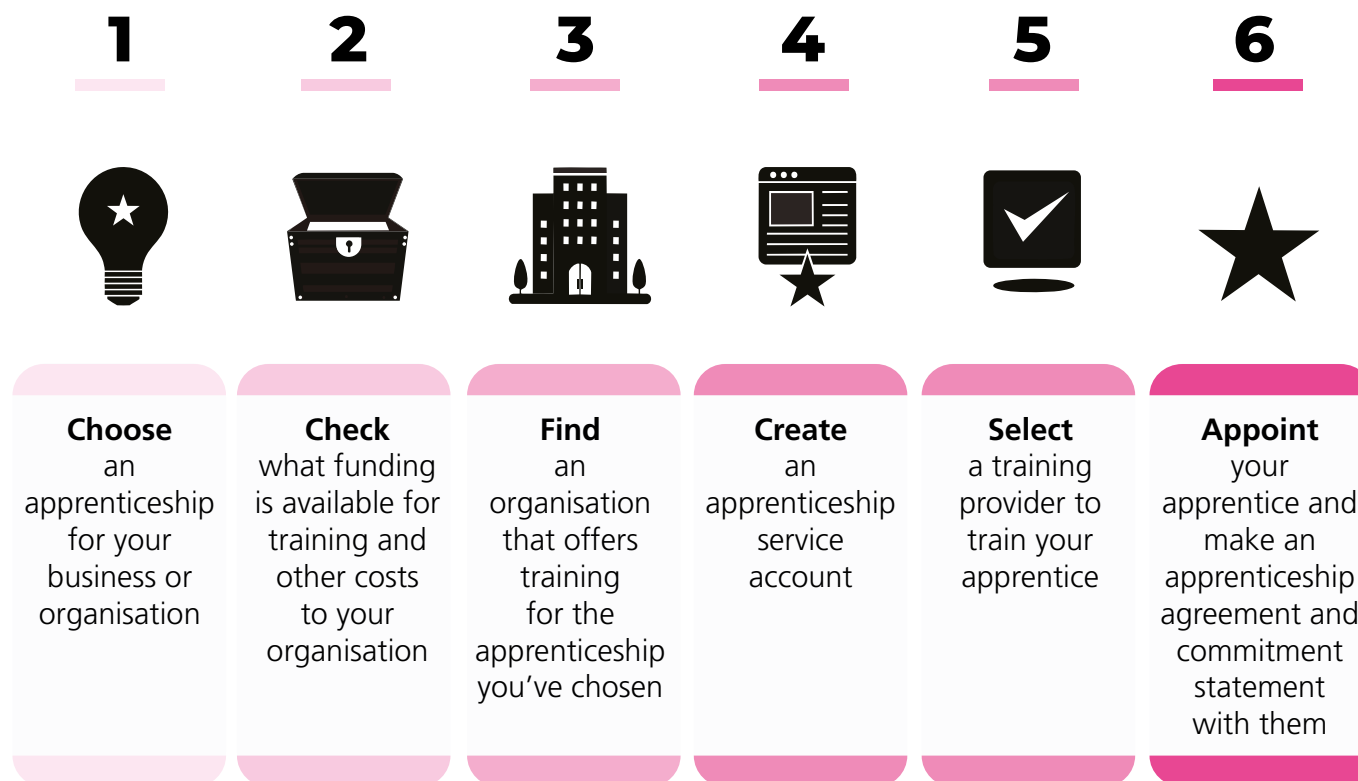


Do team members demonstrate a desire to develop more skills and do more than their current role?



## Process for employing an apprentice

### Six steps to follow to employ an apprentice



### Find a training organisation

Choosing a training provider that's right for your business is really important.

Consider things like:

- how well they communicate with you about the training
- what other employers say about them
- what apprentices say about them.

To choose a training provider, use the find apprenticeship training service. It allows you to:

- choose an apprenticeship training course
- choose a course at the right level and skills
- check the availability of training providers at the apprenticeship location
- view employer reviews
- share your interest in an apprenticeship training course with a selection of training providers.

Your training provider doesn't have to be located near you as many are national and offer training at your workplace and online. Your training provider can provide you with as much help and support as you need when you take on an apprentice. It's up to you how you work together. Just ask them any questions you have.

## Funding an apprenticeship

The employer pays the apprentice's salary. There is help from the government to pay for apprenticeship training. The amount you get depends on whether you pay the apprenticeship levy or not. The government pays 100% of the apprenticeship training cost for people aged from 16 to 21 years.

### Levy-paying employers

As an employer with a pay bill of more than £3 million, you're required to pay the apprenticeship levy. You can manage funds using the apprenticeship service and spend it on training and assessing your apprentices. The government will apply a 10% top up to the funds you have in your account.

### Non-levy-paying employers

If your organisation does not pay the apprenticeship levy (payroll under £3m), you only pay the 5% contribution for apprentices over the age of 22 and there are levy transfer funds available to support. You'll pay the training provider directly and agree on a payment schedule.

### More information

For further information please go to the employers area of the [www.GOV.uk Apprenticeships](http://www.GOV.uk/Apprenticeships) website:

[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers/funding-an-apprenticeship](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers/funding-an-apprenticeship)

# Frequently asked questions

## Where can I find available apprenticeships?

New apprenticeship roles are advertised at [www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch)

## Already employed and keen to do an apprenticeship?

Speak with your line manager or employer. With a wide range of apprenticeships available there are many options to get a qualification as part of your role.

## What qualification can an apprentice get?

Each apprenticeship qualification is different. All apprentices work towards a nationally recognised apprenticeship standard or framework that is accredited by relevant industry regulatory bodies. They may also have the chance to work towards other recognised qualifications including functional skills in English and maths.

## Is employment guaranteed following completion of the programme?

This depends on the contract an employee has with the employer. If you are on an apprenticeship contract, there may be an opportunity to stay at the same company and progress to the next level apprenticeship. Many apprentices are already permanent team members, so continue their role as normal once completing the apprenticeship. There may also be an opportunity to progress to the next level apprenticeship or role.

## Would my salary change if I sign up for an apprenticeship?

The salary for a current employee wouldn't automatically change if you apply for an apprenticeship; however you should check this with your employer.

## Does 'off-the-job training' mean one day of study leave each week?

No. Off-the-job training is calculated as a combination of any activities where they can learn and practice their skills and knowledge. It can be delivered flexibly, for example, as part of each day, once a week, or as a block release. This type of training must be 20% of the overall contracted hours for the duration of the apprenticeship.

## What if I need additional study leave?

Additional study leave can be arranged at manager's discretion. However, the standard apprenticeship time commitment should be enough to complete the qualification.

## How are apprenticeships delivered?

The off the job knowledge elements are delivered by the training provider in a 'classroom' environment either face-to-face or online. To complete the qualification apprentices need to build an apprenticeship portfolio of evidence guided by the tutor.

## What are the contractual arrangements and pay?

New employees recruited as apprentices are usually recruited full time for the length of the apprenticeship.

## Do apprentices need a lot of extra support?

Some apprentices may need additional support in the initial stages, especially if this is their first experience of employment. As their skills and confidence grow the additional support they may need tends to decrease.

## What do the different apprenticeship levels mean?

There are four apprenticeship levels and each one has an equivalent education level. When an apprenticeship is completed the equivalent education level is achieved. For example, if a level 3 apprenticeship is completed, the equivalent of an A level is achieved.

### Level 2

Provide basic knowledge and skills for specific jobs and are equal to GCSEs.

### Level 3

More specialised knowledge and skills. Equal to A levels.

### Level 4 and 5

Focus on higher-level professional skills and can be equal to a foundation degree, a Higher National Certificate (HNC), or a Higher National Diploma (HND).

### Level 6 and 7

Lead to either a full bachelor's or master's degree. Some apprenticeships require specific qualifications, for example GCSE English and maths. You may be given extra training to meet these qualifications. You may also have to meet other academic requirements to apply for a higher or degree apprenticeship.

## How long will it take to complete a qualification?

Duration can vary based on the specific apprenticeship program, the employer, and the individual's prior experience and qualifications.

**Level 2** – 12 to 15 months

**Level 3** – 18 to 24 months

**Level 4** – 24 to 36 months

**Level 5** – 36 to 48 months

**Level 6** – 36 to 48 months

**Level 7** – 48 to 60 months



## Find out more

For more information on apprenticeships in social care or for support on how to develop an apprenticeship within your workforce please visit:

[www.swlsocialcarehub.org.uk](http://www.swlsocialcarehub.org.uk)