

Frequently Asked Questions

Overview of apprenticeships

What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are 80% on-the-job training with 20% off-the-job learning. The focus is on gaining the Knowledge, Skills & Behaviours (KSB) to complete the duties required for a job role, to a good standard, with protected time for training.

There is 600+ different apprenticeship standards available, and 7 different levels.

	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4,5,6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

Who can do an apprenticeship?

Anyone aged 16+ years old can do an apprenticeship, there is no upper age limit.

To start an apprenticeship, you'll need to be:

- living in England
- not in full-time education

For each apprenticeship there are varying entry requirements, depending on the Level of the apprenticeship. More information on each apprenticeship standard can be found on the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education \(IfATE\)](#) website

How long does an apprenticeship last?

The duration of an apprenticeship depends on the Standard being followed and the ability of the individual apprentice. It will take longer if the apprenticeship is completed part-time. The minimum is 12 months, and the maximum can be four years.

What types of apprenticeships do ELFT offer?

ELFT offer apprenticeships for internal colleagues, as well as externally recruited apprentices.

The apprenticeships offered include both clinical and non-clinical, both can be a career pathway for Continuous Professional Development.

What is a Training Provider?

A Training Provider is the organisation that supplies the training element of an apprenticeship. Training Providers range from colleges, Universities, training centres and even some employers.

At ELFT, we only use Training Providers that are on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) and are listed on the Salisbury NHS Framework. For each apprenticeship that we offer, there is a preferred Training Provider that we have a contract set up with.

What is off-the-job training?

Off-the-Job Training (OJT) is a requirement for all apprenticeship standards at all levels. Apprentices must spend 20% of their contracted working hours undertaking Off-the-Job Training. OJT is defined as "learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads toward the achievement of an apprenticeship." Off-the-Job Training must be directly relevant to the apprentice's programme and teach them new knowledge, skills and behaviours that will help them reach competence in their occupation.

What is the apprenticeship levy?

Apprenticeship levy is an amount paid to HMRC at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill. As an employer, ELFT must pay Apprenticeship Levy each month as we have an annual pay bill of more than £3 million. The levy is there to fund apprenticeship training for all employers and cannot be spent on any other L&D training. Employers must meet the ESFA funding rules to use the apprenticeship levy.

The amount paid into our levy each month has an expiry of two years. After this time, any unspent levy funds are used to support existing apprentices (not at ELFT) to complete their training and to pay for apprenticeship training for smaller employers.

What is an EPA?

All apprenticeships are completed with an independent End Point Assessment (EPA). This is an assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure the apprentice meets the KSB set out in the apprenticeship's standard.

ELFT colleagues

Are apprentices available for existing staff?

Yes - An apprentice doesn't have to be someone new. You or one of your team could be an ideal candidate for an Apprenticeship. This is a great way to upskill and nurture the talent you already have, improve retention, and promote Continuous Professional Development.

The chosen apprenticeship must align to the job role the apprentice is in. Their learning will need to be evidenced against the role eg. someone working in Finance would not be able to start a Social Worker apprenticeship (unless they moved into that role).

What are the requirements to apply for an apprenticeship at ELFT?

- Be an ELFT employee (Bank staff are not eligible)
- Work a minimum of 30 hours per week
- Have endorsement from your line manager
- If on a fixed term contract, the end date allows time to complete the apprenticeship
- Have obtained Level 2 Maths & English functional skills*
*These qualifications are equivalent to GCSE level 4 or grade C. If you do not have these qualifications, please contact ELFT's Functional Skills Coordinator, Chris.Tyson1@nhs.net who can help you gain them before starting an apprenticeship.

Do my terms and conditions change when I become an apprentice?

No – your contract will not change and you are entitled to the same terms and conditions

Will I be required to attend college a day or more a week? Will my team get backfill for the time I am away from work?

This will depend on the apprenticeship, and the delivery of the programme. Each Training Provider is different. Many have now moved to a blended learning approach where you will have a combination of online and in-person sessions, but the frequency will vary.

We ask that you get the endorsement and commitment from your line manager prior to applying as unfortunately there is no funding for backfill when you are absent at your online/in-person sessions.

Hiring Managers

What benefits are there to having an apprentice?

Apprenticeships are an effective way to recruit staff. They can fill skills gaps and bring trained staff into hard to fill roles. Apprentices can bring new ways of looking at things and fresh ideas. There is a cost saving on salary and the training element is paid for using our Apprenticeship Levy.

Apprenticeships also provide great, funded development opportunities for existing staff. (please see 'Are apprentices available for existing staff?' question and answer)

Is an apprentice an employee?

Yes - apprentices are employees and are subjected to all the same terms and conditions as substantive and fixed term employees. The only differences are that they will be employed on a fixed term apprenticeship contract, required to sign an Apprenticeship agreement that sets out the rights and

responsibilities of the Apprentice and have a probation period for the first 3-6 months of their employment. Apprentices are entitled to the same terms and conditions as other staff, including annual leave currently 27 days per annum (pro rata for part time staff) and sick pay, dependent on continuous service

What is an apprentice paid?

Apprentices are paid a percentage of the band and London weighting is added dependant on where the apprentice is based. We have a set pay for our entry level roles but higher-level posts would be calculated using the Annex 21 rules in the AfC Handbook.

Can I use the apprenticeship levy money to cover salary and administration costs?

No – levy money can only be used to pay for Apprenticeship training costs and end point assessment. The money cannot be used for other associated costs, such as salary or travel costs. Funds are tightly controlled and only available to providers through a digital account and cannot be spent directly by the Trust. The Trust cannot directly access its Levy money. The money can only be drawn down by approved Apprentice programme providers that are contracted with the Trust through the NHS Salisbury framework.

Will the Apprentice be required to attend college a day or more a week? Do I get backfill for the time the apprentice is away from work?

The delivery method differs depending on the Apprenticeship Standard, some have face to face elements, others follow an online model. The Apprenticeship team can provide details on specific courses if needed. All apprentices must follow the 20% off the job ruling- Off-the-job training is defined as any activity that is not part of an apprentice's day-to-day role which supports their apprenticeship training.

How do I employ an apprentice?

The first step is to contact the [Apprenticeship Team](#). The team will support you to recruit your apprentice, please click here to view the [full recruitment process](#).

I've heard that Apprentices can only be appointed on fixed term contracts – is this true?

Apprentices are employed on a fixed term apprenticeship contract for the duration of their programme. If you or your staff member is upskilling using an apprenticeship contracts and terms and conditions remain the same.

How many hours a week does an apprentice work?

Apprentices should work for at least 30 hours per week and be either on a fixed term or substantive contract

More information is available on the ELFT Intranet [Apprenticeships page](#)