**Opportunity to undertake the Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeship (RNDA BSc Hons) in partnership with Sunderland University**

**(Current Staff)**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

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**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q. What entry qualifications/experience do I need?**

**A. C**NTW is inviting applications for three entry points – a 2-year programme, a 3-year programme and a 4-year programme:

Applicants for the 2 year RNDA programme – musts have

* Nurse Associate Apprenticeship ( this includes a Foundation Degree)
* **PLUS** Maths and English at GCSE grade C or above, or equivalent (functional skills)
* **PLUS** a minimum of 12 months experience working in a Nurse Associate role within CNTW. If you have worked as a Nurse Associate for less than 12mths in CNTW but meet all other entry requirements, we will review previous experience in this role gained elsewhere on a case by case basis.

Applicants for the 3 year RNDA programme – must have

* Foundation Degree Level qualification/first degree in a health related topic
* **PLUS** Maths and English at GCSE grade C or above, or equivalent (functional skills)
* **PLUS** a minimum of 12 months experience working in a healthcare support role within CNTW. If you have worked in a healthcare support role for less than 12mths in CNTW but meet all other entry requirements, we will review previous experience in this role gained elsewhere on a case by case basis.

Applicants for the 4 year RNDA programme must have

* 3 x A levels level 3 qualifications in health related areas i.e. Advanced Apprenticeships, QCF Diploma or NVQ
* **PLUS** Maths and English at grade C or above, or equivalent (functional skills)
* **PLUS** a minimum of 12 months experience working in a healthcare support role within CNTW. If you have worked in a healthcare support role for less than 12mths in CNTW but meet all other entry requirements, we will review previous experience in this role gained elsewhere on a case by case basis.

**You MUST** have your qualifications validated at a ‘Course Information/ Qualification Check for Registered Nurse Degree Apprenticeships (RNDA)’ by Sunderland University admissions staff

***If you have an alternative qualification you believe is equivalent to the above, please come along and discuss your individual circumstances. You may be required to submit additional evidence of academic competence at this point in the form of an essay or other written submission. If this is applicable you will be advised on an individual basis.***

***You cannot proceed beyond this point without attending an event.***

**Q. What do I need to do to apply for the programme?**

**A.** Before attending the qualification check session you will need to have a conversation with your manager, as the only way to be progress to the interview stage is with the approval of your Manager & Associate Director.

**Q. Can I apply if I don’t work full time in a clinical nursing role?**

A. No, in order to meet the requirements of the RNDA programme you need to be working 37.5hrs per week in an appropriate clinical nursing role. This will allow you to meet & stretch the competencies for the RNDA programme.

**Q. What happens if I can’t find my qualification certificates?**

**A.** You will be unable to apply. Sunderland University must verify entry requirements are met and to do so they must see the certification

**Q. How is the length of time on programme calculated?**

**A**. The decision to allocate a person to the 2, 3 & 4yr programme is based entirely on their prior accredited learning & how it maps against the RNDA standard. This decision is reached by the Apprenticeship Team and the Programme Leads from Sunderland University & is based on evidence provided during the application process.

**Q. If I am unsuccessful first time, will I be able to reapply?**

**A.** Usually yes – all unsuccessful candidates will receive feedback and be signposted to options they may wish to follow to improve their success at a later date

**Q. If I am successful, what will I be paid during the programme?**

**A.** Successful applicants will be seconded at their current band and increment point.Increments (where applicable) will be paid as normal.

**Q. What kind of commitment do I need to make?**

**A.** You need to commit to attending all study dates, complete all work on time, seek guidance as required and complete all placements, and successfully achieve the academic and clinical standards set by this NMC programme.  This is a degree level course, and whilst you will have dedicated placement time and university study time, you will inevitably be expected to contribute your own time to additional studying to successfully complete your studies to become a registered nurse.

**Q. Will my contract of employment change during the programme?**

**A.** No. You will remain on the same terms and conditions but you will be asked to sign an Apprenticeship Learning Agreement, showing you understand your commitment to learning.

**Q. Will I still get paid my enhancements?**

**A.** Any employed staff member will be paid enhancements as per the rota system for the ward/dept. they are based on or working on as part of their placements. These will paid as an ‘average’ of the previous working enhancements when they’re on annual leave.

**Q.** **What will happen if I need to step off the programme?**

**A.** All applicants are advised that they must commit 100% to the RNDA. However, life events occur and will be addressed on an individual case-by-case basis in consultation with the University, PPF/ESN team, line managers and the Apprenticeship Team.

It may be that you need to take a break from learning for a period of time, called a ‘Break in Learning’. In this case you may usually re-join the programme at the point where you left but you will have a personal plan around this and another meeting will take place prior to restarting the programme to make explicit the conditions (if any) of re-joining. Ultimately, any decision to temporarily leave, or re-join, will be sanctioned by the Trust**.**

**Q. What if I need sick leave, parental leave, compassionate leave as per CNTW’s terms and conditions?**

**A**. There will be a different/additional reporting structure for apprentices. Apprentices must meet the Nursing and Midwifery competencies to achieve professional registration and must meet the academic requirements of the university to achieve the RNDA. Similar to ‘stepping off the programme’, if a prolonged problem arises it will be addressed on a case-by-case basis

**Q. When can I take annual leave?**

**A.** You need to take your annual leave throughout the year. This should be arranged in agreement with your base area of work. The only stipulation the university has, is that you don’t take leave during your block study weeks. This is not negotiable.

If you take leave when you are on supernumerary placements, you will need to make up these hours at another time. This can be done by negotiating with your manager and the placement to either increase the hours you do on placement for all or part of the placement, or by extending the number of weeks you are on placement to compensate for the annual leave.

If you miss any university taught sessions when you are on annual leave, you will be given the teaching materials and also some academic work to demonstrate that you have read and understood the session, and you have recouped the study hours.

**Q. Will I be super-numerary?**

**A**. You will have super-numerary status during your ‘apprenticeship’ placements. The rest of the time you will be working in your base team in your usual health care support role. Over the 2, 3 or 4 years this works out at an approx. 50/50 split

**Q. What uniform do I wear in my work base?**

A. You wear your apprentice uniform on your work base and on placement, if a uniform is required in these areas. This raises your profile as an apprentice and identifies you as a learner at all times.

**Q. Do I need to work night shifts and weekends/evenings while I am on the programme?**

A. The NMC standards for Education and Training state that you must ‘experience the range of hours expected of registered nurses’.

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/standards-of-proficiency/standards-for-pre-registration-nursing-programmes/programme-standards-nursing.pdf>

They no longer set a number of night shifts which you must complete over the programme, but you should demonstrate that you have worked either some night shifts or, Mental Health and Learning Disability nursing apprentices can work ‘twilight shifts’, a twilight shift would finish around 23.00-midnight

**Q. How many hours will I work, and will I be working shifts?**

A. You will work 37.5 hours per week as per your contract of employment. University attendance is during 9-5, Monday to Friday; Apprenticeship Learning Placement hours will vary depending on the placement; Base department hours will be as they usually are with allowances made to accommodate Apprenticeship Learning Placements where they happen in the same weeks – e.g. an apprenticeship placement may require 2 days a week of learning for 6 weeks. It would be unreasonable for the base department to ask the healthcare worker to do night shift on the other 3 days for those 6 weeks.

**Q. Am I entitled to enhanced hours when I am on placement?**

A. If you work on a ward and receive enhancements, and you go on a community placement, you will receive the same average enhancement that you receive e.g. when you are on annual leave unless you have worked shifts which attract enhanced hours on your work base that week.

If you work in community and go to a placement on a ward where you work enhanced hours, you will received enhanced payments.

You do not get enhancements for the weeks when you are in university block study as this is study time, not clinical hours.

**Q. What hours do I work on placement?**

A. Placement hours can vary depending on assigned timetables & can be anything from 15hrs to 37.5hrs per week. Timetables are shared with successful applicants before the programme Induction, which allows managers and students the opportunity to review placement and University hours.

Placement hours may be condensed in negotiation with your work base and placement, but placements must be no less than four weeks in duration.

**Q. Do I get my study leave day when I’m not at university or on placement?**

A. If you are not at university or on placement, you are not entitled to study time from your work base. During these periods, you should concentrate on maintaining and developing the knowledge and skills that you have had signed off on your supernumerary placements under the supervision of your work base supervisor (WBS). There is a handbook to support this, if you do not have a copy please ask your ESN for the WBS Handbook.

**Q. What support can I expect?**

**A.** You will be supported with your academic work, and whilst on placement you will have the support and guidance of work based staff and a member of the Trust Practice Placement Team as well as an AESiP (Apprentice Educational Supervisor in Practice). It is in everyone’s interests for you to successfully complete this programme of study.

**Q. Whose responsibility is it to arrange Work Base and Placement Tripartite meetings?**

A. The tripartite meetings are a requirement of the apprenticeship standard, the university must ensure that these meetings take place, but it is the responsibility of ***the apprentice*** to co-ordinate the date and time of these with your manager or assessor/supervisor, and university. Your ESN is happy to attend any work base or placement tripartite meetings if you wish to invite them.

**Q. Why do I need to have regular contact with Education Support Nurses (ESNs)**

A. The ESN role is to support you throughout your apprenticeship with whatever you need to remain on the programme and enjoy your learning time and placements. To do this effectively, we need to have regular contact with you. If you get a request from an ESN for a meeting or call, please respond to this promptly. Having discussions about concerns or issues can often prevent these becoming overwhelming and causing unnecessary distress.

**Q. Can I change my role or work base while I am undertaking an apprenticeship programme**

A. Yes, you can apply for posts and move your work base during your apprenticeship, but you need to ensure that your new role enables you to meet the criteria for the profession you are training for. Therefore, before you apply for a different role, you should speak to your ESN to discuss this and be aware of how this might affect your ability to complete the apprenticeship programme.

**Q. Will I automatically be appointed to a Band 5 post on successful completion of the course & where will I have a choice of placement?**

**A.** No, however, in line with the new Preceptorship Policy all newly registered nurses will be required to work in inpatient settings for a minimum of 24mths.

You will need to go through a shortened values based recruitment process to match you to a vacancy, but the support you will receive during your 2 / 3 / 4 years of learning is designed to equip you to have a successful outcome at this stage. The investment in your learning makes you a valuable asset that the Trust wants to retain.

**Q. What are the new requirements for Preceptorship once I am qualified?**

**A.** The first 12mths in CNTW of post registration is underpinned by the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) principles of preceptorships as a period of transition. This period is to further enable and embed professionalism into a qualified health professional role. CNTW has translated this into 2 accredited units of work-based study of 30 academic credits each.

The preceptorship units can be studied at either Level 6 (degree) or level 7 (masters) depending on your individual circumstances and preference, this is the first step in a lifetime of continuing professional development (CPD).

**Q: I’ll find it difficult to travel to University of Sunderland as I am based too far away – is there an alternative?**

A: We recognise that some parts of our trust are remote and excessive travelling adds to the challenges. We have a similar but alternative option which we are exploring with the Open University if it is appropriate for the individual and the seconding team. Please discuss this on a case by case basis with the Apprenticeship tea

**Q. Am I expected to sign a study bond to stay working for CNTW for a period of time after I qualify?**

**A**. When staff have previously been seconded, CNTW has asked them to sign a ‘bond’ to work for the Trust for a period of time post qualification. Typically this was three years for a three year course.

An apprenticeship is different. CNTW cannot ask you to be ‘bonded’ but is asking you to make your first commitment to the beginning of your professional life and plan to spend at least two/three/four years (and hopefully a lot longer) post qualification with CNTW to reflect the support given to you during your learning and support the workforce plans in your Clinical Business Unit.

**Q. Am I able to reclaim travel, accommodation & car parking expenses during the course?**

**A.** For those staff travelling from Cumbria it has been agreed that travel and accommodation expenses can be reclaimed in the usual way, any issues please contact the Apprenticeship Team for further advice.

For those staff travelling from other extreme geographical locations of the Trust we will review on a case by case basis, please contact a member of the Apprenticeship Team for advice. **However,** all other expenses accrued as part of the programme i.e. to & from University, travelling to your placements & any car parking charges will not be paid.

**Please note that any travel costs accrued as part of your placements i.e. travelling to visit service users as part of a community placement will be repaid & can be claimed for in the usual way .**

**Managers’ considerations**

**Q. Will there be backfill available or do I have to pay the salary of this seconded staff member?**

A.  Within the financial system within CNTW, all support workers who become apprentices are identified through the systems and budgets adjusted accordingly to account for the time they spend away on super-numerary placements. Managers should consider the ability of the wider service to offer cross cover to support on a practical basis. Please remember, the RNDA does NOT require the worker to be seconded full time for 2, 3 or 4 years – the programme is very different to a traditional BSc Hons programme and your worker will be away from their substantive healthcare role for approx. 50% of the time over the 2, 3 or 4 years

Managers may wish to consider the balance of staff supported so the entire Clinical Business Unit is able to operate effectively whilst supporting staff development.   Remember, this ongoing programme to create our future registered nurses is a key part of Trust workforce planning.

It is CNTW’s wish to support this process – as an individual manager you should not ‘block’ this application because of immediate concerns over staffing.

If you have burning questions in the meantime about managing someone on this programme, please email both gayle.hennessey@cntw.nhs.uk and annette.connor@cntw.nhs.uk with your question and one of them will respond.