

PhD Opportunity

What are the perceptions and experiences of participants involved in tripartite progress reviews in healthcare apprenticeships?

Supervisory team:

Director of Studies: Dr Helen Holder, Principal Lecturer and Head of Department Apprenticeships and CPD

Supervisors: Dr Kay Norman, Principal Lecturer in Adult Nursing

Research Group: [Health Professions Education and Practice](#)

The PhD Opportunity

Healthcare apprenticeships have been gathering pace over the last several years and are embedded in the NHS Long term Workforce Plan (2024) for nursing, midwifery and allied health professions to grow the workforce and support widening participation to access these training routes.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE 2017)* as long arm of Department for Education (DoE) sets out apprenticeship occupational standards and routes to aid employers in developing a suitably skilled workforce. Some example of healthcare apprenticeships currently delivered in the region include Nursing Associate (NMC 2018), Registered Nurse Degree (NMC 2018), Advanced Clinical Practitioner (integrated degree) and Assistant Practitioner (health) with further apprenticeships in the pipeline.

A fundamental component of apprenticeships is the progress review which involves a three-way (tripartite) discussion with the education provider (usually an academic), apprentice, and employer (usually a line manager). This meeting must take place at least every 3 calendar months in accordance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as an agent of the DoE. Progress reviews are paramount to successful apprenticeships as they offer support for the apprentice in the development of their occupational learning aligned to the IFATE occupational standard and the requirements of Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) for further and higher education (Ofsted 2024).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the progress review is poorly understood in healthcare apprenticeship delivery which can lead to lack of clarity and a disjointed approach to apprentice support in their apprenticeship journey. This PhD offers the opportunity for a highly motivated individual to investigate the perceptions and experiences of participant involvement in the progress review to generate findings and recommendations to inform future practice in this essential component of apprentice support.

*The government has created Skills England which will replace IFATE this year.

References

Department for Education (2024) Apprenticeship Funding Rules, version 1.
Department for Education. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-2/#2-train-growing-the-workforce>

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (2017)
<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/skills-england/>

NHS Long Term Workforce Plan (2024) <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-2/#2-train-growing-the-workforce>

Ofsted (2024) Further education and skills inspection handbook.
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/nhs-long-term-workforce-plan-2/#2-train-growing-the-workforce>

Application Process

To begin the application process please go to:

<https://www.worc.ac.uk/research/research-degrees/applying-for-a-phd/>.

The Interview

All successful applicants will be offered an interview with the proposed Supervisory Team. You will be contacted by a member of the Doctoral School Team to find a suitable date. Interviews can be conducted in person or over Microsoft Teams.

Funding your PhD

For information about Doctoral Loans please visit: <https://www.worc.ac.uk/study/fees-and-finance/doctoral-loans.aspx>

During your PhD you can access the Research Conference Support Scheme to support the costs of presenting your research at an external conference.

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Research is central to the University's mission to make a difference in everything that we do. We are committed to delivering excellent research which extends the boundaries of human knowledge, but which also improves people's lives by enabling better health outcomes, improving food security, developing environmentally sustainable solutions for crop production and socially sustainable solutions to our ageing population, enhancing public knowledge and understanding of the past and present.

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- [Culture, Identity and Social Exclusion](#)
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- a Research Student Study Space with both PCs and laptop docking stations
- a comprehensive Researcher Development Programme for students and their supervisors
- a programme of student-led conferences and seminars

Widening Participation

As part of its mission statement the University is committed to widening participation for its higher degrees. Although most candidates will have an undergraduate and/or a Masters degree, the University is happy to accept applications from candidates with relevant professional qualifications and work related experience.

For further information or an informal discussion on this project, please contact Dr Helen Holder h.holder@worc.ac.uk