**BridgingPlus course: Supporting staff to progress to Physiotherapy, Podiatry and other relevant degree apprenticeships**

Expressions of interest for this pilot course are invited from NHS Trusts by 4th April 2022.

HEE is piloting a short course for individuals who do not meet the traditional UCAS points entry criteria for entry to the degree apprenticeship but who the NHS Trust or other health provider has assessed as suitable for the degree apprenticeship and would like to offer them a place. The course has been agreed by specific HEIs as alternative entry criteria, when combined with a relevant level 3 vocational qualification plus several years’ experience in a healthcare support worker/rehab role which is relevant to the target degree. 30 fully funded places are available to NHS Trusts across England.

The **BridgingPlus** course is supporting progression towards degrees that include a science qualification in entry requirements (see below for specific target degrees) and includes science modules. This is distinct from the **Bridging** course which does not include science and is available separately[[1]](#footnote-1)

**The Course**

The **BridgingPlus** course is made up of 2 components:

1. The level 3 certificate in Bridging Skills for Higher Education. This is a nationally recognised qualification focusing on academic study skills and support for progression to higher education. It covers the following five modules:
	1. Extended Academic Essay and Report Writing Skills for Higher Study.
	2. Essential Skills for Academic Study.
	3. Extended Project Skills for Academic Study.
	4. Finding and Reading Information Skills for Academic Study.
	5. Understanding Opportunities in Higher Education.
2. Physiology and anatomy units taken from the BTEC Level 2 in Health Science. The modules selected for the pilot are:
	1. Unit 9: intro to human cell and tissue structure
	2. Unit 21: Intro to anatomy and physiology
	3. Unit 23: A&P: the nervous system
	4. Unit 24: A&P: Cardiovascular, Lymphatic and Respiratory systems
	5. Unit 25: A&P: the Skeletal system
	6. Unit 29: A&P: the Endocrine system
3. The course will run over 10 weeks with one full day class per week delivered virtually. Attendance for all 10 class days is mandatory. Participants will need to allocate the equivalent of a further day each week towards self-directed-study and completion of assignments. There is no requirement for the learning to be done during paid working hours – the decision to allow participants one or two days per week during working hours sits with the employer. Learners need to complete key assignments including a report, extended essay and extended project. They will receive ongoing coaching and support if needed. This is a short intensive programme that will give participants a feel for the way of working required to undertake a degree apprenticeship.
4. The course will be delivered by Dynamic Training Ltd[[2]](#footnote-2), which has experience of delivering the Bridging Certificate (since 2014) and also the level 2 Healthcare Science Apprenticeship which includes the BTEC qualification above.
5. There will be 2 groups of 15 learners running on the following dates:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Information Session**  | **Day 1**  | **Day 10****Final day including evaluation and consolidation** |
| Group 1 (Tuesday class) | 20th April 9 – 10am  | Tuesday 26th April | Tuesday 28th June |
| Group 2 (Wednesday class) | 11th May 9 – 10am | Wednesday 18th May | Wednesday 20th July |

**Link with Universities**

**Progression agreements will be needed**

1. The course has been designed in collaboration with the following universities, and is intended to recognise relevant work experience plus vocational qualifications which, when combined with the **BridgingPlus** course, will provide an alternative entry criterion to the traditional UCAS points system. Participants will need to combine each of these elements:

1. This pilot is intended to support progression to Physiotherapy and Podiatry degree apprenticeships: Formal progression agreements will be in place with those universities already involved with the pilot programme (University of East London, Sheffield Hallam University).
2. Where a Trust is planning to use a different university for Physiotherapy or Podiatry degree apprenticeships, we will accept an expression of interest and seek a formal progression agreement from that university before confirming a place on the course. A condition of being offered a place on the course will be that the target university has signed a progression agreement.

**Which AHP degrees will the pilot support?**

1. The physiology and anatomy units selected reflect those felt most appropriate for progression to physiotherapy and podiatry degree apprenticeships. For this reason, these 2 apprenticeships will be prioritised. However, if we fail to fill the 30 allocated places with participants targeting physiotherapy and podiatry degree apprenticeships, we will consider other target AHP degrees that include a science qualification in their standard entry requirements. We would need to confirm with the relevant university that the units are suitable for other AHP degrees and also secure a progression agreement prior to confirming the place (this will be done by the project team).

**The course will run in parallel with the university recruitment process**

1. We anticipate that participants on the **BridgingPlus** course will progress to the degree apprenticeship in the autumn of 2022. Given that the University recruitment process is already underway, the expectation is that the staff member will be put forward to the university by the Trust and they will go through the recruitment process in parallel with the course. If they pass the recruitment process, the university would make an offer that is conditional on their achieving the bridging course qualifications outcomes.

**Target Learners**

1. The course is for staff who the NHS Trust has already identified that they would like to join the physiotherapy or podiatry degree apprenticeship, and for whom the Trust has formally agreed to provide a place with the Trust’s chosen university should they be successful with the university recruitment process and achieve the **BridgingPlus** qualifications. Preference will be given to those planned to start Autumn 2022.
2. In addition to the above, staff will:
	1. Have met other entry and eligibility requirements for the target degree with the selected University, including level 2 Maths and English
	2. Have completed:
		1. the Level 3 Senior Health Care Support Worker apprenticeship, or
		2. a similar level 3 vocational qualification (tell us which and we can discuss)
	3. Have at least 12 months experience as a Healthcare Support worker/Rehab Worker or similar role in a setting relevant to their target degree (preference will be given to those who have worked in such roles for longer).
	4. Be available for all ten classroom days and willing/able to undertake the required self-directed learning hours each week (expected 7.5hrs p/week, but may be more depending on the learner). It is the employer’s decision as to whether the classes and/or the self-directed learning can be done during paid working hours. The participant needs to confirm that they can allocate the time in non-working hours if necessary. Applicants also need to be fully committed to producing the required assignments to the set deadlines. It should be noted that this is an intensive course that will be challenging to some staff who’s experience to date has been with vocational, rather than academic, learning.
	5. Be eligible to join an apprenticeship.
3. It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that staff put forward meet the criteria and to progress them through the university recruitment process in parallel.

**How to express an interest**

1. NHS Trusts to submit an Expression of interest (EOI) form to nhsapprenticeships@hee.nhs.uk

 **by 4th April 2022**. Places will be confirmed by 11th April.

1. The EOI will need to be co-completed by AHP Lead and Apprenticeship Lead, in consultation with the applicant.
2. In the event that we have more than 30 suitable EOIs, the following criteria will be applied:
	1. We will seek as even a spread of participants across the 7 HEE regions as possible
	2. While NHS Trusts can include as many applicants as they wish in their EOI we will seek to share places across NHS Trusts in each region. Trusts should list applicants in priority order.

**Questions?**

1. A Q&A session will take place via Microsoft teams on Wednesday 23rd March at 3.30pm. If you wish to join this session please use this link .
2. Any other questions should be directed to your HEE TfL Relationship Manager for your region in the first instance.

**Expression of Interest (EOI) – for BridgingPlus course**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organisation** |  |
| **Main Contact Name:** |  | **Email:** |  | **Direct line:** |  |

This form needs to be completed by the NHS Trust AHP lead and Apprenticeship lead.

Please complete only one EOI per NHS Trust per HEE region. You can add as many staff names as you wish but please bear in mind that we only have 30 funded places and we will offer these across all 7 HEE regions. Please put names in priority order. The EOI needs to be sent to nhsapprenticeships@hee.nhs.uk by 4th April. Please copy and complete a separate form for each target degree apprenticeship (ie one form for physiotherapy, a different form for podiatry).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Target Degree Apprenticeship that you want staff to progress to |  |
| Has your Trust formally agreed to support places on this degree apprenticeship? |  | How many places will the Trust be allocating in 2022 and 2023? |  |
| Which university has the Trust decided to use? |  | Has the university indicated that the applicants listed below will meet their entry requirements if they complete Bridging Plus?  |  |
| Main university contact name: |  | Job title: |  |
| Email: |  | Direct line: |  |
| Start date of degree apprenticeship |  |  |  |
| Will your Trust allow applicants to do the course during working hours? | Delete as appropriate* They will do both class and self-directed study during working hours (2 days per week x 10 weeks)
* They will do the class during working hours and self-directed study in their own time
* Both class and self-directed study will be done in their own time

Please confirm that this has been discussed with all applicants and they are in agreement: **Yes / No** |

**Applicant Details: -** please list applicants in priority order in case we cannot offer all a place on the course

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Email** | **Current Job** **Please give job title and length of time in post** | **What qualifications do they have?** (delete as appropriate and add any other health/care qualifications including level and title). | **Which course is your preference?**  | **Are they available to attend all 10 class dates and are they able to complete a day’s worth of self-directed learning between classes?** (delete as appropriate | **What is the applicant’s current position regarding your NHS Trust allocation of places for the degree apprenticeship?** (please delete any of the bullet points that do NOT apply) | **What is the applicant’s current position with the university?** (please delete any of the bullet points that do NOT apply) |
|  |  |  | * L3 Senior Healthcare Support Worker Apprenticeship
* Other L3 health/care qualification – PLEASE ADD DETAILS REQUESTED
 | Course 1Course 2(delete as appropriateNB preference cannot be guaranteed) | Yes / No (if no, give details of what they cannot attend and why) | * My Trust has formally agreed to allocate this applicant a place on the next degree course if they are successful with the university recruitment (and completion of the BridgingPlus course)
* My Trust has agreed a number of places on the next degree course but this applicant has not yet been confirmed as having a place
* My Trust has not yet formally agreed to any places on the next degree course
* Other (please specify)
 | * The university has made a conditional offer subject to the applicant achieving the Bridging Plus Course
* The applicant has been interviewed by the university
* The applicant has completed the university application and is awaiting interview
* The applicant has not yet been put forward to the university
* If none of the above apply please add further info regarding progress with university recruitment
 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Add more rows if you have more than one applicant, presenting them in order of priority.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Employer confirmation** | **To be completed by an appropriate AHP lead** | **To be completed by the Apprenticeship lead** |
| **I confirm that all staff listed meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the ‘target learners’ section on page 3.**  | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) |
| **I confirm that discussions have been had with the applicants listed and they understand how intensive the programme is, they are available for all the classroom dates and they are committed (and can allocate the time) to undertaking the self-directed learning between each class in order to complete the required assignments and work set each week.** | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) |
| **I confirm that the information provided above is accurate to my best knowledge** | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) | **Yes / No** (delete as appropriate) |
| Name |  |  |
| Job Title:  |  |  |
| Signature |  |  |
| Date |  |  |

**Thank you.**

**Please send this form to the email address at the top of the form as soon as possible and by 4th April at the latest.**

1. Information on the Bridging Course, including approved training provider list for the Bridging Course will be circulated to Trusts via HEE Talent for Care Relationship managers in each region. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.dynamictraining.org.uk/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)