



Paramedic Apprenticeship Prospectus 2025 (2)

1: WELCOME

Introduction

Welcome to your online prospectus for the paramedic degree apprenticeship at the selected University. Upon successful completion, the BSc (Hons) in Paramedic Science programme will enable you to register as a Paramedic with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), and practise under the protected title of Paramedic.

The structure of the award has been developed through mapping against the HCPC Standards of Proficiency (SOP) for Registered Paramedics, the Quality Assurance Agency's

(QAA) benchmark statements for Paramedic Science, and the College of Paramedics (CoP) 2019 Curriculum Framework Guidance.

The award recognises the broad knowledge and skills base required of a Paramedic, and incorporates a strong work-based learning component, with a skills framework mapped to the requirements of the role. This evidences to apprentices the cross mapping to the respective standards, which also includes the paramedic apprenticeship standards that are produced by IfATE. The BSc (Hons) in Paramedic Science sits within the Centre of Excellence in Paramedic Practice, as part of the Institute of Health.

We have a wide range of programmes and modules available for healthcare professionals and others to access and study with us, including continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for you, once you have qualified as a Paramedic.



We have put this prospectus together to help inform you about all of what you will need to know about the Paramedic Apprenticeship programme.

Each section has been carefully compiled in conjunction with the relevant departments with detailed information so to provide you with what is vital to know at the early stages on your journey of the programme.

Any degree level programme will be hard work and the Paramedic Apprenticeship programme is no different, you need to understand how the nearly three years of studying and working will require your full commitment and time and if you are successful in securing a place on the apprenticeship, you will be required to electronically sign this document as a way of evidencing that you have taken the time to read this and consider all areas of the programme and the requirements of you as an individual.

Universities



The University of Cumbria and Worcester have extensive experience in delivering high quality paramedic education across the UK. Currently we have over 1000 learners on the CPD programme with formal contracts with 9 out of the 11 English ambulance services.

We also currently deliver the HM armed forces paramedic programme and an open access paramedic course from our Lancaster campus. This pedigree in paramedic education has led to the creation of the Centre of Excellence in Paramedic Practice (CEPP), which recently won the Preferred Provider Status for the Southern Ambulance Alliance (SWAST, SCAS, SECAMB, LAS, IoW), East of England Ambulance Service and North West Ambulance Service for paramedic degree apprenticeships. The University now has over 500 registered learners across the 6 apprenticeship programmes.

Meet the team at SWAST



1 - Stacey Robinson

Apprenticeship Education Manager



Practice Placement Coordinator



3 - Sian Burnett

Practice Placement Coordinator

- Rich Francis – Apprenticeship Lead
- Kerry Springle – Senior Administrator (Apprenticeships)
- Connie Toy – Senior Administrator (Apprenticeships)

The SWAST Apprentice Team are responsible for the coordination of, and recruitment to the Paramedic Apprenticeship programme. The team work very closely with the University of Cumbria and Weston and Worcester to ensure that those undertaking the apprenticeship have a positive, enjoyable, and high-quality academic experience.

For any questions, please email the team [here](#)

2: THE APPRENTICESHIP

What is it?



The Trust runs an internal education pathway; the Paramedic Apprenticeship Programme, in conjunction with the selected Universities. The Paramedic Apprenticeship is a BSc level 6 degree programme – an exciting and rewarding journey that will require a lot of commitment, dedication and hard work.

If you are reading this then you either must be considering a career in paramedicine or you have already been offered a place on the programme. Either way, this prospectus is here to help inform, prepare and support you on your journey towards this fantastic internal higher education pathway.

This programme is open to staff with a **minimum of two years (3150 operational hours) frontline NHS SWAST service as an Emergency Care Assistant (ECA/EAA) or Ambulance Practitioner (AP).**

Higher level and degree apprenticeships are a great option for people of any age. They are designed to be studied whilst working to help you progress academically and professionally in your programme of study or career.

On successful completion of the apprenticeship, you will have a BSc Hons in Paramedic Science with eligibility to apply to the HCPC for registration as a Paramedic.

Full information about a Paramedic degree with University of Cumbria is available [here](#) and Worcester [here](#)

Is it right for me?



Every individual is different, but someone who is well organised, passionate and resilient and able to conduct themselves as a professional, confident individual stands a great chance of being successful.

The Paramedic Apprenticeship is a distance learning programme made up of teaching components that take place as a combination of virtual learning and through face-to-face contact days that require you to attend a SWASFT training location. There is no need for you to travel to Cumbria or Worcester University for any of the programme.

Distance learning is a way of studying, especially for a degree, whereby you study mostly at home. You will be taught through a blended approach to education, a mix of theory and practical. Lectures/lessons are mostly conducted over the internet and by using a virtual learning environment called Blackboard to submit work and engage with your tutor. The blended approach reduces the requirement to physically attend places of study.



On the Paramedic Apprenticeship there are mandatory contact days allocated to study every year which will include skills and practical elements. These will account for the face-to-face teaching time required and will be covered within your contracted hours – therefore you will not be required to use your ‘own time’ for this educational contact time. These days are calculated as 7.5-hour days and there will still be an expectation that you will undertake further ‘self-directed’ study in your own time as part of your achievement of the apprenticeship.

There will also be a pre-requisite bridging module to successfully achieve prior to the apprenticeship and this is to be completed in your own time and funded by you. You must be fully operational when you commence on the bridging module to gain the practical exposure to complete the practical elements of the logbook and in practice which are needed to successfully achieve the course. See the bridging course section for more information.

You will be required to move onto a structured relief rota on commencement of the full apprenticeship programme and there are several reasons as to why this is necessary, such as:

- There are no external placements and therefore a risk of limited exposure to a varied practice from other clinicians;
- Due to the requirement for internal placements, structured relief allows flexibility to plan internal placements within SWAST with notice and without further abstraction to a roster as some placements may come up at short notice;
- Due to the abstraction requirements, there would be significant disruption to any existing rota pattern which could in turn result in hours being owed to the Trust;

- There is a requirement to work in both urban and rural settings, also including various shift times to broaden the exposure of the student to different settings, stations, and people demographic.



The move into structured relief will happen at least a week before your commencement on the apprenticeship programme and not on the bridging course; you will remain on your existing arrangements for the duration of the bridging programme.

ROC are fully aware of the requirement to move and plan you onto structured relief at least a week prior to your course commencing; the Apprenticeship Team provide these details to the ROC.

Please review the [relief working policy](#) for further understanding.

Although you will have a named Education Lead there will be no requirement for you to work with them for the majority of your shifts, they will oversee your learning, but you will gain experience working with a variety of clinicians, in a variety of settings. Your Education Lead will arrange one shift per month where you will review and work on the learning outcomes of the apprenticeship. They will try and book these shifts with another apprentice to allow you both time in the vehicle with complex cases and share learning, but this will not always be possible.

As soon as we know your university days these will be planned into GRS for you, you will not need to complete shift swaps or book time off for these. Your remaining shifts will then be planned around the university days, in line with the relief and working hours policy.

Your university days will count towards your worked hours for that week. You will have a named ROC scheduler as you do now, and you will continue to be able to work with them in relation to your shifts and any support ROC can offer you.

If planning to embark on this programme you should do so on the understanding that you will be expected to work flexibly in order to achieve the apprenticeship requirements and this will mean:

- You will have to move away from your current line and into structured relief
- Your existing line will not be protected

What does it look like?

Teaching components will be delivered in the SWAST region without the need to travel to Cumbria or Worcester.

- There are 41 taught days each academic year. These are delivered in blocks of five days in a combination of self-directed study days, on-line delivery, or face-to-face days. All face-to-face days take place within a central location in the Southwest. There is no need for you to travel to the University of Cumbria or Worcester.
- 5 days of non-ambulance placements per year
- Completion of a portfolio
- Requirement to undertake additional study in own time

LEVEL 5 - YEAR 1 OF THE 2-YEAR PROGRAMME

- Developing clinical care, judgement and competence in Paramedic practice
- Pre-hospital recognition & management of acute illness and long-term conditions
- Pre-hospital care & management of trauma and environmental emergencies
- Pre-hospital care of women and children's health
- Research Methods

LEVEL 6 - YEAR 2 OF THE 2-YEAR PROGRAMME

- Enhancing clinical practice & decision making for the contemporary paramedic
- Preparing the professional practitioner
- Holistic approach to patient health & wellbeing
- Understanding primary and urgent care
- Dissertation

Within the apprenticeship programme you will be required to attend five non-ambulance based placement days in each academic year.

Placement days will be arranged by our practice placement team in liaison with ROC students. Placement opportunities are offered within several departments across the Trust, such as Tiverton UCC, HART, SPUEC shifts and, when available, the Clinical Hubs.



Balancing work and study can be challenging and throughout the apprenticeship regular review meetings will be held between you, the Trust and the University to ensure your performance and progress is on track and you are supported as much as possible. You will have a workplace practice educator (formally known as a mentor) and a university personal tutor, who you will work together with to monitor your progress regularly.

Practice educators must have a mentorship qualification and attend the yearly updates. As you are on a relief rota, there is no expectation for your practice educator to work shifts with you. You will be required to evidence your progress and clinical skills in your portfolio and demonstrate this to your practice educator for any sign-off.

What about the costs?

As a formal apprenticeship, the programme will be fully funded through the Apprenticeship Levy, and therefore the Trust will cover the tuition fees of the programme.

Please note that the pre-requisite bridging course module to be completed prior to commencement on the apprenticeship cannot be funded via the levy. You cannot fund the bridging course with student finance.

This will need to be self-funded at the current cost of **£1,750**. However, from January 2023, the Trust will cover the cost of this until you have completed the course and are in an NQP Role.

You will then need to repay the Trust as a one-off payment or as a monthly repayment over 10 months. Repayments will be set up from the month that you are HCPC registered and in a B5 NQP role.

In the event that you do not complete the course, or become HCPC registered, or leave the Trust, you will need to pay it back in full at your current or final salary.



Although the apprenticeship is funded by the levy, there may still be some financial implications that you have not thought about, such as when you need to attend the contact days and the travel involved in this. How far do you need to travel and how much could travel and accommodation cost? The Trust will cover certain elements of this; however, you should prepare yourself for potential additional costs.

As of 1st April 2024:

The Travel, Accommodation & Subsistence funding is now in Line with the Trust Policy, with an addendum being progressed to fully formalise the current arrangement below. Please [click here](#) if using a Trust Device or download the policy below for further information.

If you are required to travel over 60 minutes/60 miles for your academic days or placements, the Trust will arrange accommodation for any two consecutive dates and you will be provided up to the amount of £100 towards this overnight accommodation, and/or, travel/mileage costs will be reimbursed:

- at standard mileage rate (currently 59p) if no public transport/pool car is available, subject to approval via your line manager or equivalent. Home to base miles will be deducted. **OR**
- at the reserve rate (currently 30p) if public transport/pool car is available but has been refused or the use of own car is preferred. Home to base miles will be deducted. **OR**
- at the reserve rate (currently 30p) if attending a training course on overtime. Home to base miles will not be deducted. The Apprenticeship Team book any accommodation required. [Click here to book accommodation](#).

Claiming Mileage

The expense items below must be used to claim mileage for these courses and any placement mileage, as appropriate:

Travel - Mileage Based	Mileage - RotaTrainingEvent - No Public Transport	To be used for claiming mileage for attending a training event - when approved by manager If no manager approval please use the option RotaTraining-Public Transport	£0.00
Travel - Mileage Based	Mileage - RotaTrainingEvent - Public Transport	To be used for claiming mileage for attending a training event - when public transport available	£0.00
Travel - Mileage Based	Mileage - Overtime Training	For use where you are required to return to work on overtime for Training purposes and incur additional travel to work expenses using your own vehicle.	£0.00

Further information on how to book can be found under the Student Portal.

Equipment

You will need to have use of the following to complete the course:

1. **Own desk and chair**
2. **Own laptop/computer**
3. **Dedicated workspace**

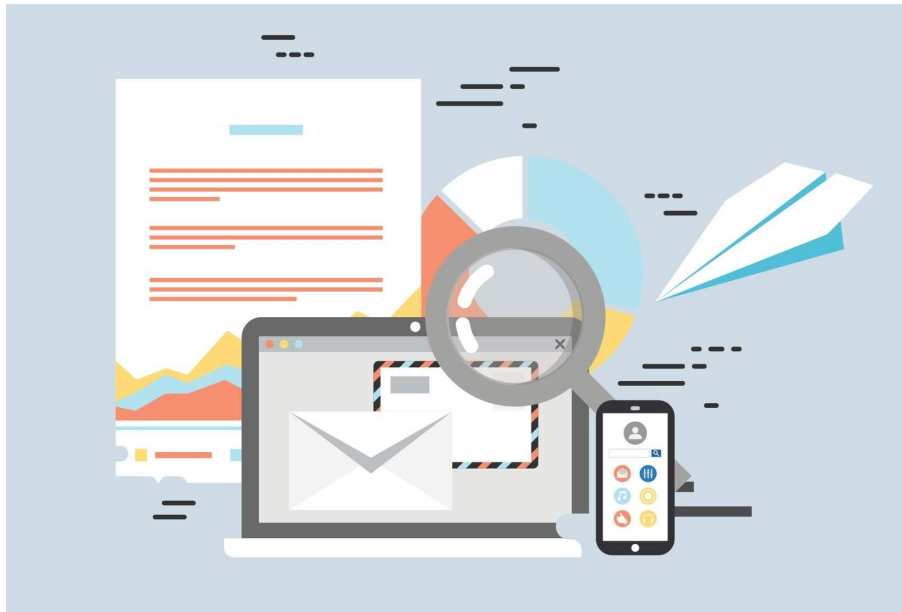
You may additionally complete a DSE work assessment via ESR, which may identify items SWAST can fund for you, such as:

- laptop stand
- keyboard
- mouse

SWAST are not able to provide funding for office furniture or other hardware not listed above.

Commitment - How will studying affect your life?

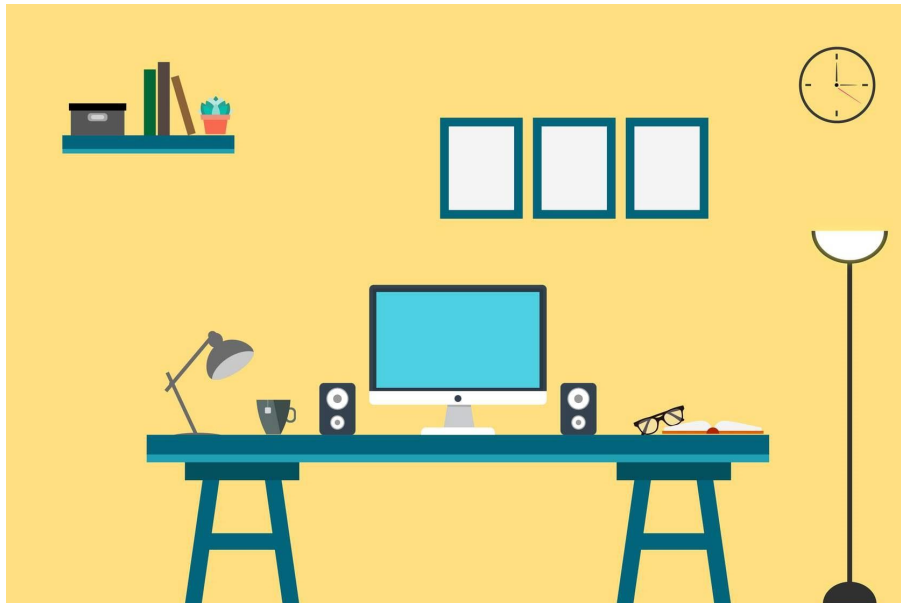
The decision to train or retrain is a big one and will no doubt impact your other commitments so you will want to make sure the impact is as manageable as possible. See the following cards to discover a few things to consider:



What hours of commitment per week, number of assignments and due dates, exam timetables, time away from family and any other special requirements will your course require? Before you start, think about the impact this will have on others.



Do you have support from family, friends and colleagues? Talk to your people about your plans, tell them what you are thinking and keep them in the loop about things you decide to do.



What do you need to do to prepare yourself for the change? Do you need to organise any kind of specific support? Do you have a quiet space to study, how will you organise your space and your time?

Find someone who has undertaken similar study and might be able to help you understand more about the realities of undertaking that particular course – from what they thought of the course format, teaching styles and support available through to areas they found challenging, times of high demand and impact on family life etc. Not only will this help you gain a better understanding, it will also help you plan your personal life to fit around your studies. It's important to talk to people who have undergone study or training and find out the strategies that worked for them; everyone is different so get a mixture of views on what works for people individually.

Speak to the education provider. They will be used to talking to prospective students and should be able to answer questions relating to how the time of study is broken down, when exams may fall and are often able to give an approximate suggestion of how many hours of external study are usually required for each module/exam or assignment.

Most study or training courses offer student support, mentors or coordinators whose role is to support students. Find out who they are and don't be afraid to ask for support. Reach out to each other and learn from each other. Use those around you that you are comfortable in asking for advice, but also surprise yourself. Use those you would not normally approach, as you may find a different solution to a situation you may not have considered before and you may find it refreshing. But rest assured whatever you are experiencing – whether it is the joys of submitting an assignment on time, pressure of a deadline or stress or an overwhelming feeling of workload – there is support for you. Further information about the support available can be found [here](#).

The journey you could be about to embark on is exciting, but it may also be filled with difficult moments whereby you may feel you are struggling and wish to give up. This is natural but be assured there is no doubt that others will be experiencing the same feelings at similar points!

The more prepared you are before starting your training, the easier it will be. As with all life changes, just be prepared for a period of adjustment. Make sure you don't over-commit yourself in your personal life during those first few months.

All of these reasons are why you must ensure that you are fully informed, prepared and ready to take the leap onto this programme before you start. You need to be 100% certain, because the programme needs 100% of your attendance, time and commitment.

Structured Relief: Paramedic Apprenticeship



Before Structured Relief was introduced, paramedic apprentices were placed on a relief line as it was not possible to remain on their rota line. That system wasn't ideal for apprentices or schedulers, so SWAST designed a better approach: *Structured Relief*.

Structured relief in your apprenticeship programme is specifically designed to support your academic success and overall well-being. Below is the explanation of this relief pattern, along with reasons it improves things for both apprentices and schedulers.

NWD

The above is a fixed Non Working Day (NWD) – in essence a rest day.

Study 7.5

7.5 hour study days are planned per cohort along with your university days and represent paid hours which form part of your contractual hours. They allow you to consolidate your learning from university days or to work on your next assignment, for example.

Relief 22	Relief 22	Relief 22	Relief 22	NWD	NWD	NWD
Uni Day 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Study 7.5	NWD	NWD
Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	NWD	Relief 44	Relief 44
Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	NWD	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44
Relief 44	Relief 44	NWD	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44
Relief 22	Relief 22	Relief 22	Relief 22	NWD	NWD	NWD
Study 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Uni Day 7.5	Study 7.5	NWD	NWD
Relief 44	NWD	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44
NWD	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44	Relief 44

The NWDs try to follow a pattern (as per above example), which provides the scheduling team the best possible assistance to plan your contracted hours, whilst simultaneously trying to meet demand. These fixed rest days provide clear days off for stability, giving you time to recharge and prepare ahead of university weeks. ROC will aim to utilise one rest day around the NWD to give blocks of time off, where possible.

Impact on shifts and pay

As a result of the structure relief pattern, your allocated working hours for university weeks will be reduced compared to what you may be accustomed to currently, as the weekend before university weeks are designated as *protected rest days* and each university or study day is only 7.5 hours.

While this approach is beneficial for your studies and recovery, it's important to consider the potential impact on your take-home pay during the two years of the apprenticeship. The reduction in **unsociable hours** during university weeks may lead to a corresponding decrease in income, so planning your finances accordingly is recommended. This setup ensures a balance between work, study, and rest, ultimately setting you up for success in your apprenticeship journey.

Benefits of Structured relief

Here's why structured relief is an improvement over standard relief for paramedic apprentices:

Predictable Rest Days:

Apprentices know *some* of their days off months/years in advance (their fixed Non-Working Days (NWDs)), making it easier to plan leave or personal commitments. Each cohort will have a pattern created, to fit with their cohort's university days.

These fixed rest days are guaranteed and won't be unexpectedly changed.

Flexibility with Annual Leave:

If you were planning to book annual leave which falls on a fixed Non-Working Day (NWD), you can instead choose to move that leave to another day or use it later, if leave limits allow this.

You'll also have other rest days *on top of* the fixed NWDs during the same week; these will be arranged during the scheduling window, approx. 6 weeks ahead.

Balanced Over Time:

The structured relief pattern ensures your hours and shifts balance correctly by the end of the 2-year apprenticeship, whilst allowing the extra fixed rest days to provide some stability for apprentices.

More Weekends Off:

Standard relief rotas guarantee *one weekend off in four*. With structured relief, you'll get slightly more weekends off on average over the 2 years, as the fixed NWD days are varied.

Working Hours Policy:

Structured relief, as with other work patterns, must adhere to the working hours policy which includes strict rules about:

- The maximum number of hours you can work in a week.
- How many shifts you can work in a row.
- Minimum rest periods between shifts.

Structured relief is designed to ensure apprentices and schedulers have a fair, manageable, and predictable framework while meeting contractual and safety requirements.

Rolling relief and hours balances

Starting with a positive (+) hours balance or one at 0 (or close to it) is crucial for apprentices to maintain fairness and balance in the rolling relief system. It prevents long-term imbalances, avoids placing extra workload on colleagues, and supports proactive planning within each relief period. This ensures fair scheduling and smooth team operations.

3: RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Eligibility

This is the first step on your journey towards the Paramedic Apprenticeship; one which we know can be both daunting and stressful. The programme to date has attracted significant interest and so application numbers are extremely high, but if you are determined, prepared and passionate, you can achieve success!

In order to fulfil the requirements of the course as set by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA), successful applicants will have to demonstrate all of the following, proof of which will be required as part of the recruitment and selection process:

Please note if successful, a full DBS and OH are required to proceed onto the course.

1. A minimum of two years' SWAST experience as a front-line NHS Emergency Care Assistant (ECA/EAA) or Ambulance Practitioner (AP) (your period of ECA training can count towards satisfying the experience requirement). ***The two years SWAST experience must be completed by 20 October 2025 *****
2. Able to evidence, at time of application, the required qualifications (GCSE Grade 4-9 (historically A-C) in Maths and English Language or the equivalent Level 2 Functional Skills or Key Skills certificates); **Please note provisional statements of results are not sufficient evidence, we will need either the certificate or a certified statement.**
3. *Qualsafe Level 3, 4 and 5 First Response Awards*: Application for direct entry to Level 5 of the BSc Paramedic Science can be considered for those holding the combination of the FREC 3, 4 & 5 First Response Awards. The level 3, 4 & 5 awards need to be completed in sequential order, with each award acting as a pre-requisite to entry to the level above. Therefore, a candidate presenting the FREC 5 award for entry will also hold the FREC 3 & 4 awards, but these will still need to be evidenced through the admissions process. Applicants will still need to evidence maths and English GCSE grade C/4 (or L2 Functional Skills) to meet entry criteria.
4. At commencement of the apprenticeship, to be working a minimum of 30 contracted hours per week (you must have a minimum of 3150 operations hours prior to applying);
5. Have your Line Managers support for application. This includes (where relevant) to have the agreement to be contracted to a minimum of 30 hours per week at

commencement of the apprenticeship programme (applicants must have worked a minimum of 3150 hours to be eligible to apply).

6. To have read the [Paramedic Prospectus 2025](#) and understand all that is required from you, before, during and after the course, including the Bridging Course. Sign and Return the Declaration.
7. The '[Head Start Plus to Apprenticeships](#)' is an online open module for you to freely access as you start on your journey towards transitioning into University academic studies at levels 5 and 6. **This module needs to be completed at application stage.** To support the development of your academic skills and digital capabilities whilst helping to boost your confidence as you transition into academic study alongside working in your daily role, the 'Head Start Plus to Apprenticeships' module is available for you to access online and reflects one way of working through a University assignment journey. Everyone can access this version and no log-ins are required. **Evidence of completion of this will be requested at application stage to show you have completed the module.** Utilising this functionality will help you to start thinking about academic writing and the requirements of you if you are considering applying or in fact are due to commence on the Paramedic Apprenticeship Programme.
8. Have the right to work in England and spend at least 50% of their working hours in England over the duration of the apprenticeship, be one of the following:
 - a citizen of a country within the European Economic Area (EEA) (including other countries determined within the EEA or those with bilateral agreements), or have the right of abode in the UK, and have been ordinarily resident in the EEA (including other countries determined within the EEA or those with bilateral agreements), for at least the previous three years on the first day of learning;
 - a non-EEA citizen with permission from the UK government to live in the UK, (not for educational purposes) and have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least the previous three years before the start of learning.

The entry requirements for this programme require an ECA/EAA to be working for SWAST NHS Ambulance Trust. Therefore, we are unable to accept other experience such as Hub, community responder, fire co-responder experience in place.

*****Your period of SWAST ECA training can count towards satisfying the experience requirement but Overtime will not. The experience needs to be a full 2 years service and if***

unplanned absence impacts the length of service between application and start of course, applicants may be withdrawn or added to a holding pool.

How and when can I apply?

PARAMEDIC APPRENTICESHIP [How and when to Apply](#)

Please see the SWAST CPD Paramedic Apprenticeship Page for Further information.

Our next recruitment drive will commence January 2025. Please look out for updates on here and the SWAST weekly bulletin for the job advert. You will be able to search on NHS jobs from 6 January using the advert ref number 202-6864480.

What else do I need to know?

The need to work 30 hours per week

In the format that this course is currently delivered, you must be contracted for at least 30 hours per week in order to fulfil the requirements as set by the Education Skills and Funding Agency (ESFA).

You can apply if you work less than 30 hours per week however you must have agreement to move to a contracted minimum of 30 hours per week at commencement of the apprenticeship programme. If you do work less than 30 hours per week then you must have worked a minimum of 3150 hours NHS frontline service to be eligible.

The ability to increase your working hours will be dependent on workforce requirements, establishment and vacancy rates in your area. You should speak to your county commander in the first instance.

You will need to ensure that any approved increase in hours is contractually in place as at the commencement of the apprenticeship for the cohort you are applying for. It is **not** possible to stay on a part time contract (less than 30 hours per week) and work additional shifts to make the hours up.

To accommodate the learning on less than 30 hours per week requires an increased delivery duration under the apprenticeship rules, meaning we are unable to facilitate cohorts with a mixed of working hours of 30 hours+ and less than 30 hours.

We are currently working towards the hopeful possibility of rolling out the paramedic apprenticeship to those working less than 30 hours per week. This work is going on behind the scenes and we will update you as and when we are able to.

Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS)

An essential requirement of a place on the Paramedic Apprenticeship with the selected University is that you need to have an updated DBS clearance; a check needs to have been completed within three years of commencement of the apprenticeship start date. Those who fall into this category will be contacted and provided with step-by-step instructions.

Pay changes

From commencement of the apprenticeship, if you are on Section 2 you will continue to be paid as such; if you are on Annex E, you will receive unsocial pay at 21% regardless of station.

You will move onto Section 2 at the point of completion of the apprenticeship, when you move into an NQP position.

Under the 2018 pay deal changes, any member of staff who has a change in role after 1 September 2018 will move from Annex 5 (e) to Section 2 from the start of their new role therefore there will not be any automatic change to your unsocial hours payments whilst you are undertaking the programme, however you will move to Section 2 unsocial hours arrangements on commencement into an NQP position.

Pay deal national documentation is available [here](#).

4: INTERVIEW PROCESS

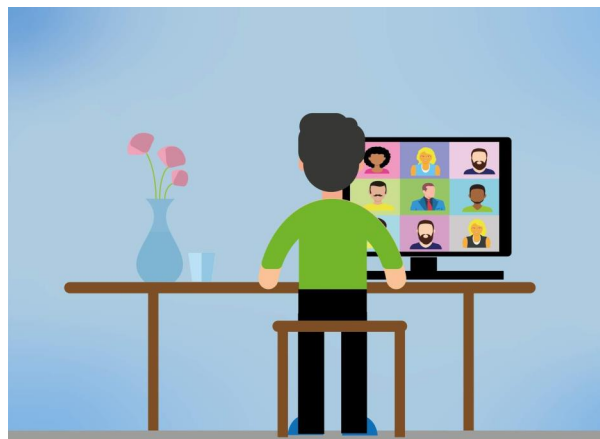
Interviews

Interviews can be a scary thought and preparing yourself for one can be even scarier, which is why we have put together some hints and tips to help ease that thought and help to support you through the process.

Consider the type of interview you are participating in and in what format; a virtual group interview process is different to that of a face-to-face, one-on-one interview, and is designed to draw on your team player attributes alongside recognising your individual skills too. Be confident and prepared to speak up in front of others, whilst remaining mindful and professional for others involved in the process at all times.

Interview skills support can be found [here](#).

Microsoft Teams is now an integral part of education delivery and forms a virtual workplace for many. Your interview is likely to take place over Microsoft Teams, and the course will have elements of delivery that utilise a similar platform. Digital etiquette and professionalism are fundamental to how you are perceived over a virtual platform; you need to ensure that you are fully prepared and informed for working and studying in this way.



Quick Tips

- Learn how to use Microsoft Teams ([Microsoft Teams Support can be found here](#))
- Consider your background and your surroundings, i.e. noise
- Dress appropriately

- Be professional and polite

What may seem like a small oversight such as a slightly cluttered background, uninvited visit from a pet or the inability to operate your camera or the 'mute' function can take away from what you are saying and the impression you are trying to set. Ensure you have thought of details such as your background and how to operate Microsoft Teams prior to interview. There are heaps of articles and YouTube videos to help you prepare.

Be ready! The best option is to be sat ready and prepared 15 minutes prior to your interview, but don't join the call until five minutes before. Joining 15 minutes early means an awkward wait for you and notifies all others you have started the call which may cause unnecessary stress to others. Equally, the moment you join a call, you will be assessed even if the interview hasn't formally started. There is nothing wrong with talking to the other candidates, but do so in a professional manner.

This is one of the most highly discussed topics since the move to video interviews. The consensus is to dress as you would for a face-to-face interview. For an interview such as this, the smarter side of smart-casual, or if you prefer to wear uniform then you can of course do so.

This is a values based type process so the panel are looking for you to showcase yours, alongside demonstrating your passion, team work, ethics and beliefs, and underpinning knowledge. Don't forget to think outside of the box; this is not just about the Trust, you or the University – think and consider the wider NHS and holistic patient care within your answers. Have confidence in your answers and ensure you support your fellow applicants in theirs. You have a short opportunity to contribute to the group and leave a positive impression of your values as a person.

Support - Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The recruitment process is designed to be inclusive of all therefore it is important that you declare any disability/ALN at the point of applying, which will allow any reasonable adjustments required to be implemented throughout the recruitment process.

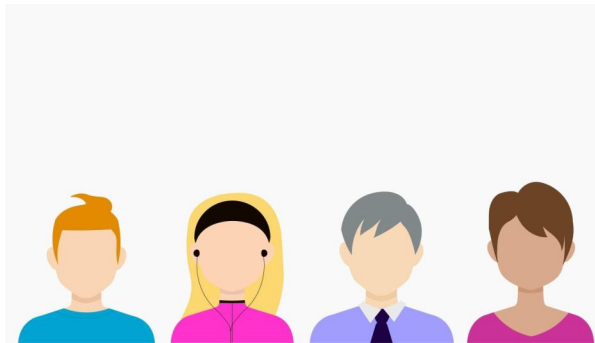
We will work with individuals directly where adjustments need to be put in place.

If successful through the process for a place on the apprenticeship programme then you will be supported by an internationally recognised establishment for the support and welfare of learners in the University of Cumbria. [Cumbria Support](#)

SWASFT is the first Ambulance Service in the country to achieve Disability Leader status, and one of only six NHS organisations across the country to have achieved Leader status. Find out more [here](#).

Education.Support@swast.nhs.uk and we have a page on SWAST CPD here [Education Support Information, News & Contact - SWAST CPD](#).

Who is the panel?



The panel is made up four assessors; two from the selected University and two from SWASFT.

The University will lead the process, whereby one assessor will be ‘the chair’ and control the flow of the whole interview; the other University assessor and SWASFT assessors will sit in the background without being seen but can hear what is going on, in order to score applicants.

All panel members are experienced and fully trained for a fair and equitable recruitment process.

Outcomes

Recruitment will take place over a number of weeks, so outcomes will not be delivered until this process comes to an end.

Whatever the outcome, this will be delivered via email and you will be informed of any next steps; so please ensure you read any email content carefully and take note of any timeframes provided.

For the number of applicants that go through the process, there are an extremely limited number of course places available, so try not to be disheartened if you do not secure a place. This really is a highly competitive process so all the more reason to ensure you are absolutely fully prepared and ready to showcase that you deserve a place on the Paramedic Apprenticeship programme!

5: Pre-Requisite Bridging Module

Prior to the Apprenticeship programme, you will need to complete a pre-requisite module, known as the bridging course which is approximately six months in duration.

‘Bridging’ is a programme of learning which enables a learner to progress from a context where they are capable of studying at Level 3 to a context where they are capable of studying at Level 4 and beyond.

The module will be in the form of approximately five virtual (online) days of learning, giving you the skills to take away to develop a portfolio of evidence and testimonies, concluding with a final academic piece of writing. You will have the support from a University personal tutor to assist and track your progress.

The bridging course allows academic staff (University lecturers) to check evidence that underpinning knowledge, understanding and skills are evident to ensure readiness for level 5 study and practice. The bridging course allows students to enter onto the second year of a BSc Paramedic course directly, negating the requirement to undertake the first year of the degree.

The bridging programme comprises of three elements:

- 24 month full time employment (3150 hours) as an ECA/AAP (generally AAP's can bypass the bridging module however this will depend on what AAP training you undertook).

- L3 Diploma in Ambulance Emergency and Urgent Care Support - (480 learning hours)
- Level 4 bridging programme portfolio

Applicants must complete all three elements in order to be eligible for entry to level 5 (you will already have the experience as this will have formed part of the shortlisting). The Portfolio will be assessed, alongside the other requirements, against level 4 skills, knowledge and practice.

You must be fully operational when you commence on the bridging module in order to gain the practical exposure to complete the practical elements of the logbook and in practice which are needed to successfully achieve the course.

Students will be required to sign to an agreement with the selected University on commencement of the bridging module where milestones for learning will be set and the requirements for individuals to engage along the way will be clearly laid out. Support routes will be communicated as part of the induction, tutorials and can also be found within the student handbook. Students are required to fully engage with personal tutors; failure to comply with the bridging module signed terms of agreement could result in withdrawal from the course at any point.

Learners must successfully pass the bridging course in order to progress on to the Apprenticeship programme. Failure to engage on or pass the bridging course will result in withdrawal from the apprenticeship. Deferrals can be facilitated in extenuating circumstances and these will be looked at on an individual case basis.

Please click on the links below, of which are invaluable details and information about the bridging module in its entirety.

[AAP Bridging course Level 3 Flyer](#)

These flyers aim to visually inform you of what the bridging course offers.

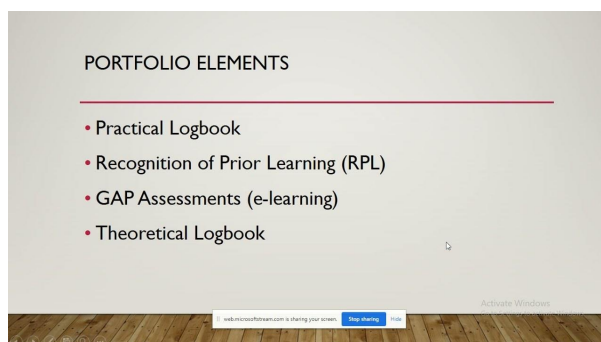
AAP Bridging course Level 4 Flyer

These flyers aim to visually inform you of what the bridging course offers.

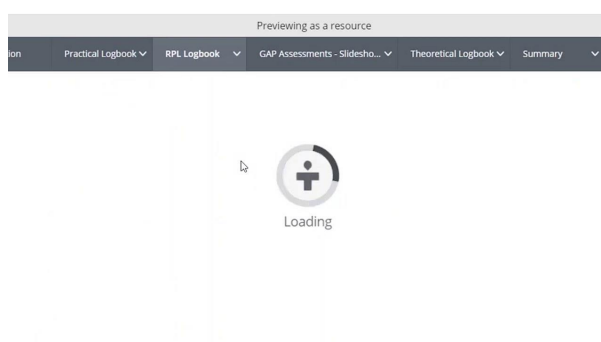
[Bridging Course Academic Requirements](#)

Generally, most learners will be required to undertake the bridging course however where a learner has prior academic study/credits, these can be discussed as to whether they can APEL. Please see guidance on this link.

The two videos below aim to discuss the bridging courses provided by the University of Cumbria.



4 - AAP Bridging Course Entry Routes



5 - Lvl4 Generic Introduction

Generally, most learners will be required to undertake the bridging course however where a learner has prior academic study/credits, these can be discussed as to whether they can APEL. Please see guidance below.

[Bridging Course Academic Requirements](#)

6: Preparation for study

Thinking of higher education study or about to commence your journey on the Apprenticeship programme? The '[Head Start Plus to Apprenticeships](#)' is an online open module for you to freely access as you start on your journey towards transitioning into University academic studies at levels 5 and 6.

To support the development of your academic skills and digital capabilities whilst helping to boost your confidence as you transition into academic study alongside working in your daily role, the '[Head Start Plus to Apprenticeships](#)' module is available for you to access online and reflects one way of working through a University assignment journey.

Everyone can access [this version](#) and no log-ins are required. If you do secure a place on the Apprenticeship then you will fully register with the selected University and learners will access the module via the closed blackboard VLE platform which is then monitored with regards to usage and progression.

Utilising this functionality will help you to start thinking about academic writing and the requirements of you if you are considering applying or in fact are due to commence on the Paramedic Apprenticeship programme.

For a head start on learning please check out Skills at Cumbria - [Skills at Cumbria](#)

7: Expectations from you



You will be expected to adhere to the HCPC Code of Conduct of Performance and Ethics, as well as the Student Code of Conduct, from your commencement on the programme, otherwise you may face a Fitness to Practice hearing or review with the University of Cumbria and Worcester which will determine your continuation on the programme.

Guidance on the HCPC Student Code of Conduct and Ethics can be found [here](#)

Apprentice paramedics will be required to support ECA Preceptees as part of their apprenticeship programme.

8: Hear from our current students

"Being naturally curious, I am finding the apprenticeship scheme an excellent way to satisfy my curiosity about the human body systems and develop my clinical skills. The apprenticeship scheme is enabling me to develop my clinical skills and deepen my understanding of the processes behind them. The course has enthused me and although requiring commitment, sacrifices and a lot of work, will enable me to develop to the best of my abilities to fulfil my potential. A rewarding way to develop my skills and deepen my knowledge requires a lot of hard work but I am already feeling more competent on my route to becoming a Paramedic."

"I was determined to get a place on the apprenticeship when it was advertised. It's time consuming but rewarding as I have already seen the benefits of the course content in my clinical practice. As a single parent, working full time, juggling my time between parenting, work and study is a struggle, but if I can manage it then anyone can!"

"This is my first ever university degree and I started it with trepidation due to my own learning disabilities. However, from the very start, the university staff and my own trust have been so helpful and supportive. Yes it has been (and still is difficult) but I know that I can talk openly if I have a problem. So looking forward to graduation when I know I will be equipped with knowledge and experience thanks to the course."

"Getting on the course as a mature learner was a challenge. Proving I am capable of completing the degree will show that age is just a number and SWAST recognise the value of life experience in the development of future paramedics."

"I feel very honoured to have been selected for the first Paramedic Apprenticeship cohort through SWAST and UoC. As a mature student it has provided me with the opportunity to become a HCPC registered qualified paramedic, which otherwise may have not been achievable. With the support of my tutors and mentor I aspire to be the best that I can be."

"I am in the course to make my son proud of me, help patients in their time of need and improve their chain of survival whilst developing myself in line with the every changing paramedic profession and gaining a professional qualification."

"I can study and work, which leaves time for me and my family, this allows me to provide high quality patient care."

9: Quick Links

[HCPC](#)

[Paramedic Curriculum Guidance - College of Paramedics](#)

[Degree Apprenticeships - UCAS](#)

[How to use Microsoft Teams](#)

[University of Cumbria](#)

[Dyslexia Support](#)

[Paramedic Apprenticeship - SWAST CPD](#)

[Education Support Information, News & Contact - SWAST CPD](#)

10: IF YOU GAIN A PLACE ON THE COURSE

Break in Learning, Deferral, Extension & Withdrawal

If you are struggling to cope with your studies or life has become particularly challenging, please let us know, as support is available.

If you do need to take a break with your studies, the below document link shows some of the options available to you.

[Break in Learning, Deferral, Extension & Withdrawal - Definitions SWAST](#)

Declaration

Please note that if you are successful in securing a place on the apprenticeship, you will be required to provide your signed acceptance to confirm that you have fully read and understand the requirements of the program outlined in the prospectus document.

Please sign the below document and return this to ParamedicApprenticeship@SWAST.nhs.uk

[Cohort 17-18: Paramedic Apprenticeship Declaration - V3 Dec 2024](#)

[Cohort 19 onwards: Paramedic Apprenticeship Declaration - V4 from Aug 2025](#)

The End Goal



Will I be guaranteed a paramedic position when I qualify?

On successful completion of the course you will be offered a paramedic vacancy as soon as one is available, however the location of vacancies at the time you will qualify cannot be determined this far ahead.

There may be a competitive process if the demand for a specific vacancy is high to ensure fair allocation.

If you choose to decline the position offered to you, it may mean that you are placed in a holding pool until you do accept a paramedic position. Until you accept a position and move onto a clinician line, you will remain in your ECA/EAA role at your current banding.

When you accept a paramedic position, you will receive preceptorship on commencement of the newly qualified paramedic role.

Paramedic positions offered on qualification will be on a relief basis and managed by local county management teams.

Who to Contact



6 - Got a question?

We're Here to Help

Please use the contacts below to help you contact the right team to answer your queries!

Recruitment Queries:

For any queries regarding your application please contact our Paramedic Apprenticeship Recruitment Team

Email: paramedicapprenticeships@swast.nhs.uk

University General Queries:

For any general queries regarding the course including start dates, qualification requirements etc

Cumbria Email: apprenticeships@cumbria.ac.uk

Worcester Email: Support@ucw.ac.uk

Bridging Programme General Queries:

For all general and application queries

Cumbria Email: paramedics@cumbria.ac.uk

Weston Email: TBC