

Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry Breast Screening Service
Advanced Apprenticeship in Clinical Healthcare (Ed Excel) Level 3:
Mammography

Course Overview

The Advanced Apprenticeship in Clinical Healthcare is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to support their individual work roles as assistant practitioners in mammography. Work-based learning is a key feature of the programme, enabling students to apply the newly acquired knowledge to their practice effectively and in a timely manner.

Course Structure

This programme is designed to run over an 18 month period. Professional theoretical aspects of the role will be taught by clinical staff of the Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry Breast Screening Service (WSCBSS) and other trust employees. Lectures and tutorials will take place at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire site (UHCW) as day release over a 12- 18 month period. Clinical learning and assessment will be conducted within the WSCBSS primarily at the static breast unit based at George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust (GEH).

Programme content is informed by the delivery and standards of the NHSBSP, the National Occupational Standards and the College of Radiographers professional standards.

The Advanced Apprenticeship Diploma in Healthcare will cover a number of topics relating to breast screening and mammography. The main topics covered are;

- Anatomy and physiology of the breast
- Principles and pathway of screening
- Basic science
- Science and instrumentation
- Clinical mammography practice.

Modules of Study

The award of the apprenticeship requires at least 65 credits across 12 mandatory modules of study (36 credits) and an additional 9 Optional Units totalling 30 credits. In practice, the BSU has selected the most appropriate optional units relevant to the clinical service. This apprenticeship forms the basis of the education and training of the student. Acquisition of the skills and competences of the M2 National Occupational Standard then prepares the student for the role of an assistant practitioner.

The Advanced Apprenticeship in Clinical Healthcare will provide a mixture of learning and assessment tools including written assignments, independent study, work-based learning and reflective practice. The course aims to support and advise candidates who may not have studied formally for some years in developing existing skills and also to encourage new ones including:

- Assignment writing skills
- Communication skills
- Effective learning skills
- Reading and research skills
- Time management and planning skills

Each student will undertake an initial clinical practice placement of 9 days over 3 weeks which will consist of one-to-one training with a Practice Educator. Training will include practical demonstrations, mammography practice under direct supervision, reflection and feedback sessions and evaluation of the student experience. Following formal mammography training the external student is expected to practice within their own workplace under the guidance of a nominated trainer and supported by a separate mentor within their own department. Follow-up training days can be arranged subsequent to the initial training practise.

Theoretical education will be undertaken in the conference room within the breast screening department and in the Clinical Science Building where power-point is available. Learning facilities are available to students at the Trust Library in the Clinical Science Building (CSB).

Course Assessment

Assessment is by written assignment and essay, reflective writing and written exam. Students are also required to complete a record of their clinical practice and clinical progression is regularly measured through image assessments after 50, 100, 200, 350 examinations respectively. Additional assessments will be timetabled if required. A minimum of 500 examinations must be completed before final image assessment can be undertaken.

Entry Requirements

- The candidate must be employed by an NHS Breast Screening Service, a private hospital or health screening centre where mammography is undertaken on a weekly basis and in sufficient numbers to enable consistent skills and knowledge progression. Advice should be sought from the programme leader prior to enrolment if this might be a potential difficulty. Written confirmation of appropriate employment will be required.
- The candidate will have achieved five or more GCSE's at grades A to C, or equivalent, to include Mathematics and English. Internal candidates applying to UHCW NHS Trust will be appointed via the NHS Recruitment and Selection process
- Students who do not have GCSE in Mathematics or English grades A-C or equivalent will be required to complete Mathematics and English assessments before being registered on to the course to ensure they are capable of completing this part of the qualification. Registration will only be permitted on successful completion of the assessments.
- Any candidate who has already achieved a Level 3 Diploma in a healthcare associated subject will not be required to repeat or retake the qualification. Depending on the choice of Optional Units incorporated into their Diploma, additional units appropriate to the breast screening pathway may need to be completed to achieve a full breast screening award.
- External candidates may wish to undertake the Level 3 Diploma in their own hospital or place of employment. WSCBSS would then reach an agreement with the student's employer to provide the additional mammography competencies required for the student to achieve a full apprenticeship in breast screening.
- Internal candidates will be selected taking into account University Hospital NHS Trust Equal Opportunities Policy and NHSBSP guidelines.