

Allied health professions: support workforce training, education and careers



Introduction

Support workers, senior support workers, assistants, and assistant practitioners work in, with and alongside the allied health professions (AHPs), providing high quality, life changing care across a range of acute and community services.

Access to training and education, and clear career pathways, for this crucial workforce is essential to meeting the needs of patients, populations, and future healthcare.

This summary resource supports Chief AHPs, AHP faculties, workforce leads and others. It includes:


- Examples of support roles working with the allied health professions.
- Training and education to support high quality care and service delivery.
- Career progression via apprenticeships.

Allied Health Professions are: art therapists, dramatherapists, music therapists, chiropodists/podiatrists, dietitians, occupational therapists, operating department practitioners, orthoptists, osteopaths, prosthetists and orthotists, paramedics, physiotherapists, diagnostic radiographers, therapeutic radiographers, speech and language therapists.



Where does the AHP support workforce work?


Support workers and [assistant practitioners](#) are at the heart of multiprofessional care pathways, including:




Ambulance Services
[Emergency care assistants](#) (ECAs) work with paramedics as part of emergency ambulance crews attending 999 calls.




Art Therapies
[Creative therapy support workers](#) help children, young people and adults in a range of hospital and community settings.




Dietetics
[Dietetic assistants](#) are vital in helping people with their diet and nutrition.




Occupational Therapy
[Occupational therapy support workers](#) help people who struggle with day-to-day activities to live a full and independent life.



Physiotherapy
[Physiotherapy assistants](#) make a difference to the lives of patients every day by helping them recover from a range of illnesses and conditions.




Podiatry
[Podiatry assistants](#) treat and care for people whose feet and legs have been affected by injury or illness.




Prosthetics
[Prosthetic technicians](#) give the gift of artificial replacements to patients missing an arm or leg.




Orthotics
[Orthotic technicians](#) help people with conditions such as arthritis live their lives to the full by making splints, braces and special footwear.




Theatres
 Working as part of the multidisciplinary theatre team in a range of roles, [theatre support workers](#) are the glue keeping the surgical team together.



Radiology
[Radiography assistants](#) and imaging support workers are crucial cogs in the diagnosis and treatment of NHS patients.



Rehabilitation
 Rehabilitation assistants work with nursing and therapy teams to provide rehabilitation programmes for people with a range of illnesses and conditions.



Speech and Language Therapy
[Speech and language therapy assistants](#) are the frontline of helping patients with conditions that affect their communication, swallowing and feeding.

Click on the name of a role to learn more

Training and education for the AHP support workforce

Nationally recognised training and education available for AHP support workers across the country includes:



Care Certificate

Nationally agreed standards that define the knowledge, skills and behaviours of NHS & social care support staff providing direct care and support.



e-Learning for Healthcare

210+ healthcare modules covering a wide range of specialities and subjects.



Functional Skills

Studied via a local provider and/or through self-directed learning via HEE's free package.



Information Technology Skills Pathway

Quality assured digital skills and Microsoft Office learning and assessment.



NCFE and CACHE

A vast range of fundable qualification options for distance learning.



Level 2 Apprenticeships

- > [Healthcare Support Worker](#)
- > [Optical Assistant](#)



Level 3 Apprenticeships

- > [Senior Healthcare Support Worker](#)
- > [Prosthetic and Orthotic Technician](#)
- > [Ambulance Support Worker](#)



Level 4 Apprenticeships

- > [Associate Ambulance Practitioner](#)
- > [Mammography Associate](#)



Level 5 Apprenticeships

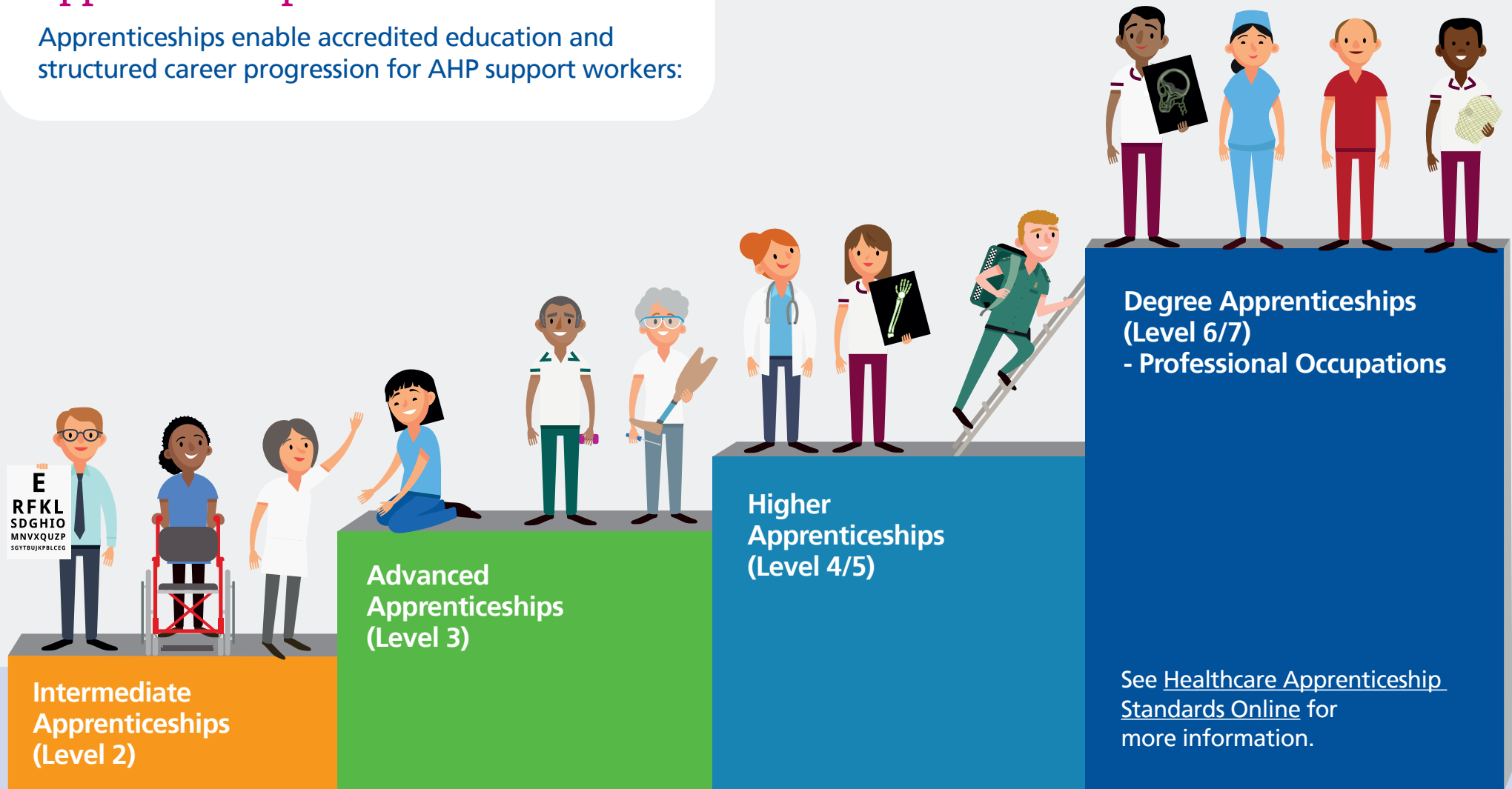
- > [Assistant Practitioner](#) - including pathways to support ambulance services, mental health, radiology, theatres and therapies.

Click on the name of a resource to learn more

Information on local providers is also available via the links above.

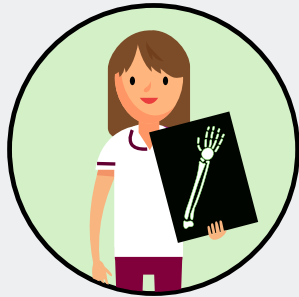
Career progression with apprenticeships

Apprenticeships enable accredited education and structured career progression for AHP support workers:

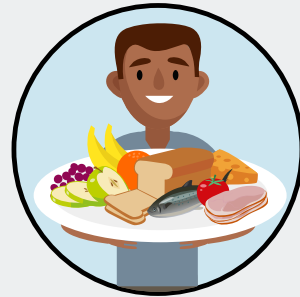


Apprenticeships in the allied health professions

A range of apprenticeships have been approved that enable career progression to one of the allied health professions:



[Diagnostic Radiographer](#)



[Dietitian](#)



[Occupational Therapist](#)



[Operating Department Practitioner](#)



[Paramedic](#)



[Physiotherapist](#)



[Podiatrist](#)



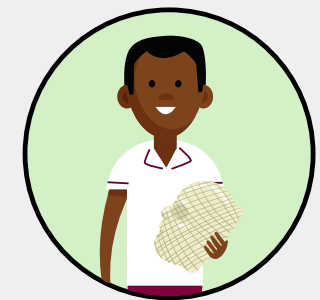
[Prosthetist/Orthotist](#)



[Art Therapist](#)



[Speech and Language Therapist](#)



[Therapeutic Radiographer](#)

Click on an apprentice to learn more



AHP careers resource



Roles in the allied health professions



Health Careers NHS



Healthcare Apprenticeship Standards Online



Health Education England

Click on a link to open the resource in your web browser