

Council Apprentice 2026

Applicant information

Message from our Chair

Dear Council Apprentice applicant,

I am thrilled to announce our search for the HCPC's sixth cohort of Council Apprentices. Two talented and motivated registrants ready to take their first steps into non-executive governance roles will be able to do so within a safe learning space. We are searching for individuals without prior boardroom experience, dedicated to public protection, who can commit to serving on the HCPC's highest decision-making body. If this sounds like you please apply!

The apprenticeship scheme has two key aims. First, to provide an opportunity for registrants to gain boardroom experience and skills as a non-executive. And second, to enhance the quality of our deliberations and decisions by broadening the diversity of opinion, backgrounds and expertise.

This is a scheme very close to my heart, and as we prepare for its sixth year, I reflect with pride on the contributions of our Council Apprentices to our decision-making and the wider culture of the HCPC. I also feel privileged to have seen at first hand the personal growth demonstrated by our Council Apprentices, some of whom have gone on to secure their next non-executive role, contributing to the UK's health sector governance. I am delighted that this year Pameleta Ricketts a former apprentice was appointed to the HCPC Council in February 2025.

As a Council Apprentice, you will take part in all our Council meetings and related activity. You will also get involved in the work of our committees, to maximise transferable governance experience. You will be supported throughout this by a dedicated Council member mentor, as well as taking part in our Council Apprentice alumni network to learn from our previous Council Apprentices' experience. This is a unique opportunity for the taking, and I look forward to getting to know our new Council Apprentices.

Christine Elliott, Chair



Who are we?

We are a UK-wide regulator established by law, committed to delivering high quality, efficient regulation in order to protect the public.

We regulate **15 professions**:

- Arts therapists
- Orthoptists
- Biomedical scientists
- Paramedics
- Chiropodists/Podiatrists
- Physiotherapists
- Clinical scientists
- Practitioner psychologists
- Dietitians
- Prosthetists/Orthotists
- Hearing aid dispensers
- Radiographers
- Occupational therapists
- Speech and language therapists
- Operating department practitioners



What do we do?

We regulate by:

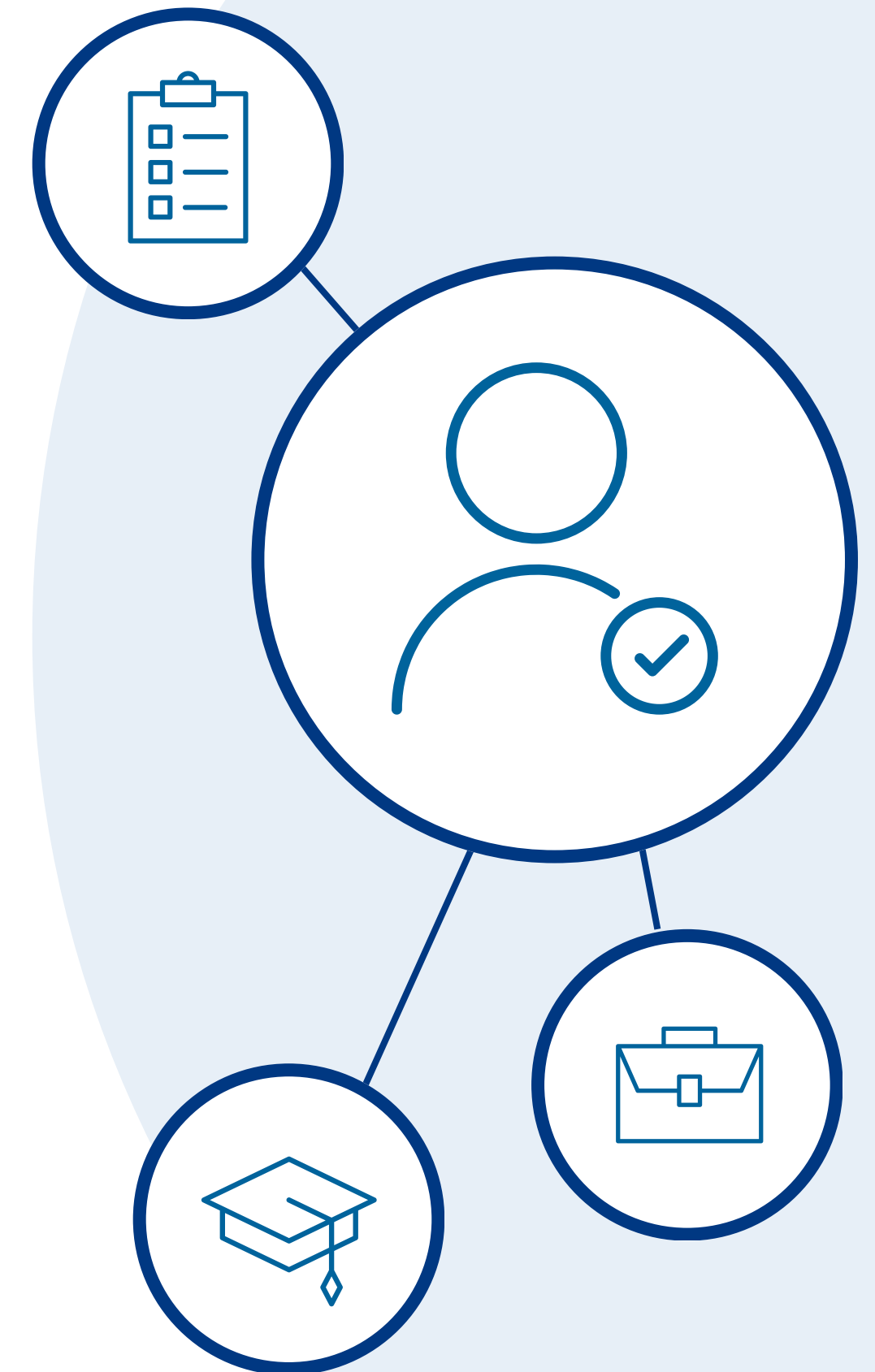
- deciding what it takes to be a member of one of our professions;
- approving education programmes that will produce competent graduates who are safe to treat people;
- keeping an accurate register of people who are legally able to use the protected titles of any of our 15 professions; and
- taking action when a professional isn't meeting our standards for safe practice and conduct.

To do all these things for 15 different professions is complex and requires good governance.

Our Council plays an important role in this by setting the HCPC's strategic direction and overseeing the organisation's performance.

For more information on what we do and how we do it, please read our current [Corporate Strategy here](#).

We are currently developing our new corporate strategy for the next five years and a significant focus for the Council will be the regulation of hospital managers, following the government's announcement of its plans to bring forward legislation for a new regulatory scheme.



What is the Council?

Our Council is our governing body or ‘board.’

The Council is the most senior decision-making group at the HCPC. It is ultimately responsible for the success of the HCPC. Our Chief Executive and his team are accountable to the Council.

There are 12 members of our Council and they are all non executive, meaning they are not employed by the HCPC.

Half of our Council members are professionals currently on our Register. The other half are ‘lay’ members, who have skills and experience that benefit the HCPC, for example legal, business, people and financial expertise.

More information about our Council and previous meeting papers can be found [here](#).



What is the Council Apprentice?

The Council Apprentice was first introduced in 2020. We want to help give talented individuals on our Register the experience and skills they need to go on to confidently take part in governance groups elsewhere.

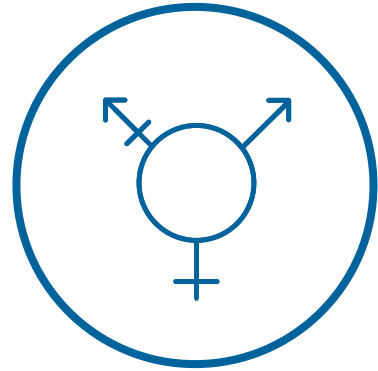
Once appointed, our Council Apprentices take part in all our Council meetings and associated activities. They also get involved in our committees to maximise their transferable experience of governance.

While Council Apprentices are not voting members when decisions are taken (due to our legal and governance framework), they see all the information that supports decisions and they are encouraged and supported to participate in the discussions that lead to decisions being made.

Each Council Apprentice is assigned a dedicated Council member as a mentor to support them throughout the year and they will also be part of a network of former Council Apprentices, to learn from others who have been through the apprenticeship scheme.

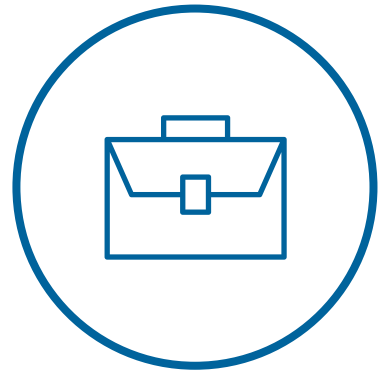


What are we offering?



Inclusion

We are a supportive board and very keen to hear opinions and views that may differ from our own. We will take the Council Apprentices into everything that happens on the board and no issues will be off limits.



Range

We will also involve the Council Apprentices in our committee work which will enhance the experience gained by the Council Apprentices. We will introduce you to wider networks within healthcare governance.



Development

We will provide a comprehensive induction into the HCPC's work, our Council and governance. You will also take part in all Council and committee seminars and workshops through the year.



Support

You will have an assigned Council member mentor; additionally our Council Chair will regularly check in with you to provide ongoing mentorship and our Governance team will be on hand to provide you with practical support and assistance. You will be able to seek advice from our previous Council Apprentices through our alumni network.

What our previous Council Apprentices say

Summary of your experiences so far

I would wholeheartedly encourage fellow registrants to consider the benefits this unique opportunity can bring to your career and to reaching your full potential, while making a difference to those we serve and work alongside. It has pushed me outside of my comfort zone but I was welcomed into a forward-thinking and psychologically safe culture.

As I near the end of the apprenticeship, I have built a clearer understanding of governance and public safety, gained confidence in strategic thinking, and considered how to take this learning back to my NHS trust to broaden my vision of the difference I want to make. It has been truly incredible - if it has crossed your mind, just give it a shot.

Alice Gair,
Registered Occupational therapist
Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

“The HCPC Council apprenticeship was a fantastic experience which challenged my previous assumptions about who got to sit on a board and gave me the confidence not only to join an external governance group, but to become its Chair.”

“It exceeded expectations in terms of how extensive the wraparound support has been to help me get most out of the experience.”

What our previous Council Apprentices say

What have you gained?

“The council apprenticeship scheme provided me with a unique and fulfilling year which fast tracked my understanding of board level decision making and the important role the HCPC serves in protecting the public. The opportunity to gain a mentored insight into the operations of an organisation at the highest level has been extremely valuable. Thanks to the yearlong mentored experience I have built greater self-assurance in the critiquing of organisational performance and strategic direction alongside a more considered attention to detail and confidence to question.”

Oli Davies

Senior Lecturer, Advanced Clinical Practice
University of Brighton

How has it felt for you?

“It has been scary at times; I have been out of my comfort zone when reading board papers and engaging in workshops. These were all overcome by the support of an amazing 1:1 Council member mentor. I have been able to reflect on my progress and can see the personal growth this role has given me. I now have a new perspective on my career development and progression.”

What would you say to someone considering applying?

“I would say go for it! If like me, you want to be part of future change in the healthcare sector, then this will provide you with the initial exposure, experience and understanding of governance within healthcare regulation. The recruitment process provided me with a positive experience and allowed me to see my own value.”

What are we looking for?

We are looking for potential.

We do not expect prior boardroom experience, but Council Apprentices need to demonstrate an interest in the work of the HCPC and an ambition to take part in governance groups.

Excellent interpersonal skills are essential as well as the confidence to share your perspective.

Council Apprentices must be:

- A current HCPC registrant
- Interested in the HCPC's work
- Keen to learn about being on a board
- A good communicator
- Resident in the United Kingdom with the right to work in the UK
- Willing and able to commit the time
- Able to uphold the seven principles of public life



How to apply?

To apply for the role you need to submit a CV and covering letter via our [online portal](#). The covering letter should address the following:

1. Why do you want to be a Council Apprentice and get involved in a non-executive role?
2. What interests you about the work of the HCPC?

Applications will close at 9am on Monday 17 November 2025

Applications will be assessed by Christine Elliott, Chair of Council, David Stirling, Senior Council Member and our current Council Apprentices.

You will be notified if you have been shortlisted or not by Wednesday 3 December 2025.

If shortlisted, you will be asked to take part in a brief virtual conversation on 10 December 2025 to ensure we are right for each other. A thorough induction will be provided and the role will run for fifteen months to 30 April 2027. Initial induction sessions are planned to take place on 13 and 20 January 2026.

If you would like an informal conversation with a member of the Governance team, please get in touch with Patricia Morrissey at appointments@hcpc-uk.org.



Questions and answers

We hope the below information will answer questions you may have about our scheme.

How long is the appointment?

The appointment is for fifteen months from 31 January 2026 until 30 April 2027

What is the time commitment?

The main time commitment will be to attend meetings and the reading and preparation required for these meetings. You will be expected to attend all Council and assigned committee meetings, as well as the Council seminar sessions. Our meetings typically take half a day. Outside of meeting activity we want our Council Apprentices to regularly meet informally with their assigned Council member mentor. Altogether we estimate the time commitment will be a maximum of 20 days over the course of the appointment term. **We encourage you to speak to your employer before applying so that you can manage your time effectively.**

Will I be paid?

Yes. Formal meeting attendance will be remunerated at £362, this includes preparation and reading time. Remuneration is paid through the HCPC's payroll and subject to tax and National Insurance deductions at source. It is not pensionable.

Questions and answers

Will I be entitled to annual leave and other employee benefits?

No. The Council Apprentice is not a HCPC employee and will not have employment rights. They will be expected to adhere to the Council members' code of conduct and should any issues arise with conduct these will be addressed through the Council member concerns process

Will my expenses be paid?

Yes. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed according to our Council and committee member expenses policy.

Does the role require travel?

Yes some travel will be required. We hold a mix of virtual and in person meetings. If a meeting requires travel, the HCPC will cover your expenses in line with our expenses policy for Council and committee members.

Will I receive training and development?

Yes. When you first join, you will receive a comprehensive induction. Throughout the year, we run training for our Council members which you will be invited to take part in. Aside from this schedule of training, you will receive support from your dedicated experienced Council member mentor during your term of appointment.

Will I receive feedback on my performance?

Yes the Chair of Council will check in with you during your term of appointment to provide mentorship. They will also undertake an end of placement review with you. Throughout all of this engagement we are very interested in understanding how you think we are doing. We want to make the scheme as useful as possible.