



FINANCE ACADEMY



FINANCE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

March 2022

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Introduction

At the heart of NHS Wales are people, patients and staff. We want the best for our population. Within the organisations that constitute NHS Wales, our finance staff are committed to supporting our healthcare and operational colleagues to deliver the best value and care resulting from excellent financial management at every level.

There are different entry routes to join NHS Wales Finance through our apprenticeship and graduate schemes as well as an overview of the rest of our Talent Pipeline programme, offering leadership development opportunities over the breadth of a career.

Get a financial qualification and learn about public sector finance through the apprenticeship programme.

Our ambition is to create a Finance Function that is:

“Best suited to Wales but comparable with the best anywhere”.



"I cannot recommend this apprenticeship enough. If you would rather start your career 3 years earlier than university, gain qualifications and begin working in the finance industry then you will go a long way to find a better opportunity than this."

Sam Stephens, Apprentice

Who we are

The NHS Wales Finance Academy is a voluntary collaboration of every NHS Wales Finance Director whose collective ambition is to develop an NHS Finance function that is “best suited to Wales but comparable with the best anywhere”.

Our ambitious aim is delivered through 9 interdependent programmes each sponsored by an individual NHS Wales Finance Director of Finance:

- Developing our People through Learning and Development and Talent Pipeline programmes
- Innovating and adding value through Innovation and Value programmes
- Driving Excellence through our Digital, Governance and Excellence programmes
- Working in Partnership through our Partnerships and Foundational Economy programmes.

We deliver this collaboration through the Finance Academy Board, with membership drawn from every Director of Finance in NHS Wales plus key partner organisations. The Board is supported by a Director and small programme team.

The ethos of the Finance Academy is that every member of staff working in the NHS Wales Finance is a “member” of the Academy and plays a vital contribution to improvement of the finance function. We have a range of activities to support the development of leadership across the spectrum of the finance community with the strong messaging that personal leadership applies at all levels.



Do you want to make a difference?

We are proud to offer all our finance staff opportunities to develop the skills, attributes and experiences needed to operate to the best of their ability. Our entry level Talent Pipeline programmes are our excellent apprentice and graduate schemes and for existing staff looking to progress into senior roles within NHS Wales finance, the later Talent Pipeline leadership programmes offer exposure to education, experience, mentoring and coaching support to enhance your skills to take your career to the next level.

At the heart of the Apprenticeship programme, is the creation of a cohort experience with colleagues from across NHS Wales Finance. Our first Cohort are pictured below and started the Apprenticeship Programme in September 2021:



Picture: Cohort 2021

"I decided to pursue a career in finance after working in retail for a few years and wanting a new start in a job that will give me opportunities to grow and progress my career. An apprenticeship was the perfect option as I wanted to be able stay in full time employment whilst gaining the relevant qualifications."

Drew Driscoll, Apprentice

What is an Apprenticeship?



An apprenticeship combines practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice you will:

- work alongside experienced staff
- develop skills related to the field
- earn a wage and get holiday pay
- get time to study (usually one day a week)
- boost your earning potential
- Apprenticeships take 3 Years to complete



How would you like to work for **NHS Wales finance, whilst also experiencing life at other participating public sector bodies?**

Working alongside other public sector partners, we have developed an All-Wales Public Sector Finance Apprenticeship programme as a career pathway into public sector finance.

You will gain experience in a variety of public sector settings, gaining an industry recognised AAT qualification whilst earning a salary.

We hope you will enjoy this programme so much that you will continue your career in NHS Wales finance.

Programme Information

Earn whilst you learn!

The three-year fixed term programme offers technical accountancy training with the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) from level 2 through to level 4. This supplemented with on-the-job training with a programme of learning encompassing the following areas:

Transactional

- Management Accounts
- Financial Accounts

Transitional

- Costing, Capital & Commissioning & Value

Putting Learning into Practice

- Business Partner Support



There is the possibility of a 6 Month placement with other public organisations such as Gwent Police, Audit Wales or Local Government.

If you have a big ambition to work in one of the toughest roles in modern organisations, are serious about a career in NHS management, have not been to University but hold the essential criteria set down in the person specification whilst also applying your passion, drive and determination to make a difference, **then we are interested in you!**

Examples of What We Are Looking For

Three A Levels at a min C grade or above (can include Welsh Bacc) or equivalent qualification

Minimum of 5 GCSEs (Grade A*-C), including Maths (B)

Good analytical and problem-solving skills

Good team working skills - active and enthusiastic but confident to work on your own

What you can expect:

We'll give you training, support and guidance to develop your potential.

As Finance Apprentice, the programme will stretch you and give you the opportunity to develop your financial management and leadership skills, whilst studying for a professional accountancy qualification through an intense development experience, learning to work alongside clinicians and other professionals.

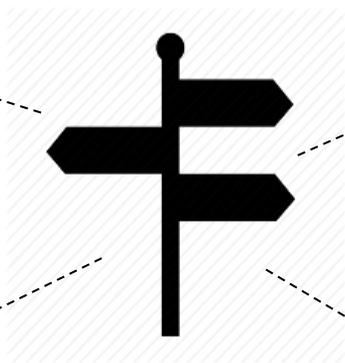
You will receive development support from the host organisation and the Finance Academy throughout the three-year programme including performance discussions and feedback on a regular basis to make sure that you learn and develop your financial management skills “on the job”.

During the three-year employment contract, you will develop specific personal and professional financial skills and expertise for future roles. These skills will be developed through the experience of successful financial management within the roles and you will be supported to manage your own personal development through learning logs and progress reviews. The programme will provide skill development workshops, studying for a formal professional accountancy technician qualification and a mentor and buddy who will help with your personal development and growth.

Generous employee benefits

AAT levels 2-4

Working within a network of apprentices



Access to NHS Wales finance student community events

Public sector wide experience in finance

Our Application Process

We recruit in the spring/early summer for a start date the following September. Our application process has a several parts, and you need to pass each one to go through to the next stage.



Stage 1: Online application form

You will need to apply by completing a NHS application form online, through the trac.jobs website (more information [here](#)). When applying for this post, please read the job description and person specification carefully, and tailor your application to the requirements of the post.

Stage 2: Interview and presentation

Our interviews are with a panel of finance professionals from NHS Wales and will help us find out more about your strengths, behaviours and skill set.

Interviews are held in May following successful completion of stage 1 in the process.

Offer: Congratulations

Successful candidates will be offered a place on the 3-year programme as an NHS Wales Finance Apprentice subject to pre-employment checks and verification of qualifications and other eligibility.



Hints & Tips

Is the role a good fit for you?

You don't need prior knowledge of the NHS or finance, but you may find it helpful to do some background research before you apply. We won't test anyone on this of course, but it's good to find out what NHS Wales finance does and why, to check the role is a right fit and help understand why we are looking for certain competencies and values. Here are some suggestions to start you off.

- **the health business** - try reading about current NHS issues, including health efficiencies and value-based healthcare. You may also want to speak to family or friends to understand what matters to them about the services they provide as staff or receive as patients.
- **what an NHS accountant does** - there are many varied roles, and our apprentice programme is more than technical finance training. Have a read of our stories, look up finance roles on Wales NHS careers, or google Finance Business Partnering.
- **technical finance training requirements and exams** - the qualification offered as part of our apprenticeship programme is through AAT - their website will give you more information about their qualification and the support they give students.



The apprenticeship programme is "Diverse, Supportive and Stimulating".

Zuhair Mateen, Apprentice

Hints & Tips continued

The online application

- **Plan ahead** - don't leave your application to the last minute.
- Familiarise yourself with the **application process** on NHS Jobs/trac.
- Check you are **eligible to apply** - *do you hold three A Levels (A*-C) or equivalent qualification and have a minimum of 5 GCSEs (Grade A*-C), including Maths (B).*
- Read the job description and person specification carefully, and make sure your **evidence** shows us how you meet the requirement of the role.
- Write clearly and in your own words. Be succinct but not so short that you leave important things out – **use the space wisely**.
- **Double check** to make sure you've filled everything in and there are no spelling or grammar mistakes. You could also consider reading your responses out loud to see if they make sense to you.
- If you are through to the next round, respond in **plenty of time** to emails and check junk mail and inform us of email address / mobile phone number changes.

"Prepare yourself by researching the roles required within the job and show enthusiasm for the opportunity."

Garin Meredith, Apprentice



Interested?

Want to know more about our apprenticeship program, or feeling ready to apply? Head over now to our website

<https://financeacademy.nhs.wales/nhs-wales-finance-careers/finance-apprenticeship-programme/>

CONTACT US

Interested in finding out more about the NHS Wales Finance Academy and the work that we do?

Come and find us at:

Website: <https://financeacademy.nhs.wales>

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@nhswalesfinance



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