



Graduate Management programme

Guidance for host organisations FAQs

Who can host a graduate?

Placement organisations for the Graduate Management programme represent the diversity of adult health and social care and come from the private, public, voluntary and regulatory sectors in England.

They range from diverse organisations that form the sector, including independent and residential care providers, NHS partnerships and funding bodies, commissioning groups and public bodies to national organisations with a strategic remit. What unifies all host organisations is their commitment to excellent adult health and social care and leadership development.

What are the benefits of hosting a graduate?

Benefits for host organisations include:

- a full-time team member, contributing ideas, initiatives and opportunities for development in meeting and managing improvement priorities in your care setting
- access to a talent pipeline of future leaders who consistently adopt a service-centric approach and are able to contribute to the effective leadership and management of quality care across the health and social care sector
- fully-funded support for graduate recruitment and provision of comprehensive integrated leadership development programme, including a professional qualification
- funding for graduate learning and development and access to leadership and development training, with supervision and management support
- an opportunity to contribute actively, collectively and coherently to leadership development across adult health and social care.

 **Our graduates have brought youthful enthusiasm to the team, reminding us that having the right attitude is so important in work. Their questioning of what we do and why we do it was helpful in identifying many areas for improvement.** 

Guy Kilminster, host at Cheshire East Council

What placement opportunities should a graduate be offered?

Graduates are expected to demonstrate a continuous improvement in their skills and performance during their placement and should be given the opportunity to learn through a variety of roles and responsibilities within the host organisation. We ask that all graduates are suitably challenged and given 'real' responsibility within their placement.

Project work and day-to-day responsibilities extend the graduate's knowledge of adult health and social care and enable them to develop their leadership and management skills. A placement should provide the graduate with access to management, senior management and some frontline work.

Graduates will be recruited for their values and potential (not academic discipline). Therefore a one-month thorough and diverse induction to the host organisation and the wider health and social sector is considered to be key to a successful placement.

How long does the placement last?

The programme will run for one year, starting in October 2020 and completing in October 2021. Graduates will spend the majority of this time on placement with the host organisation.

What is the NHS secondment?

The secondment is a unique opportunity to observe, research and consider the interface between health and social care from different viewpoints. To deepen the graduate's understanding of the role of collaboration within the wider health and social care environment and to report on and share opportunities to enhance collaborative working between organisations.

Your NHS partner is determined through consultation with you, as the main placement organisation, and will directly relate to the nature of the work that the graduate is undertaking. This may include mental health provision, step-down or discharge provision, accident and emergency admissions. The secondment will be sourced in consultation with Skills for Care's locality managers and placement review coach, and will be bespoke to each host and graduate requirements.

How does Skills for Care match graduates to host organisations?

It's critical that each placement is mutually beneficial. The graduate programme manager will match graduates to the placements available across the country, with consideration to the following:

- placement outline, including induction, support, day-to-day responsibilities and post-project opportunities
- opportunities for the graduate to demonstrate a return on investment
- graduate's personal circumstances
- spread and diversity of host organisations.

What commitments will graduates have?

Graduates will be required to attend scheduled learning events every month.

Annual leave

Graduates are entitled to 20 days annual leave plus bank holidays, and are entitled to six days independent study leave during the programme.

Development and training commitment

The graduates will spend on average two days a month attending training, networking and mentoring activities. Over the year, this includes:

- Association for Project Management (APM) – Project Management Qualification, PMQ Level 7
- three days face-to-face Mary Seacole Leadership programme
- three action learning sets
- six further coaching, networking and mentoring days.

Induction period

The graduates will spend one month fully familiarising themselves with the host organisation and the wider health and social care context in which they are hosted.

Will the graduate be an employee of the host organisation?

No, the graduate is on a training bursary with Skills for Care. They do not affect your organisation's payroll and consequently do not incur income tax, national insurance, benefits, sick or maternity pay. You will need to reimburse graduates for costs incurred from work-related expenses, excluding commuting costs

Participation in the Graduate Management programme does not constitute a contract of employment. Skills for Care, the host organisation and the graduate will sign a tripartite learning agreement outlining the respective responsibilities.

You may ask your graduate to sign your organisation's Code of Conduct to ensure that they are aware of the expectations of them. In particular, we would expect all graduates to be made fully aware of safeguarding, health and safety and whistleblowing procedures.

How does Skills for Care select graduates?

The programme is advertised widely across and beyond the Skills for Care network. This includes a variety of graduate recruitment and university portals, social media and our own website and networks.

Candidates are required to evidence a minimum of a 2:2 (or equivalent) at degree level in any academic discipline. Graduates are rigorously tested through an online application portal and only then assessed for their abilities.

At the final stage of the recruitment cycle, candidates are invited to attend an assessment centre, which includes a competency-based interview developed from the Skills for Care Leadership Qualities Framework (LQF). The participation of prospective host organisations at the assessment centre stage is encouraged. Skills for Care takes up references and enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) clearances for all prospective graduates before confirming their place on the programme.

How are the graduates funded?

Graduates are paid a £20,000 tax-free bursary for their training, based on a learning agreement. This does not constitute a contract of employment. The bursary is paid in monthly instalments through Skills for Care. All payments are conditional on active participation in the programme and would cease immediately should the training placement be terminated for any reason by the graduate, host organisation or Skills for Care.

How much is the Graduate Management programme?

Skills for Care and the NHS Leadership Academy are working to secure a sustainable talent pipeline for health and social care. Host organisations are asked to cover the main part of their graduate's bursary at a single cost of £18,000 plus VAT paid in instalments.

All costs associated with recruitment, ongoing support and learning and development for graduates will be covered by Skills for Care, and the investment in the sector by the Department of Health and Social Care.

Graduates are responsible for their own living expenses, including travel to their base site. The exception to this is any travel costs necessarily incurred through placement-related activity, which should be covered by the host organisation.

What supervision arrangements should be put in place for the graduate?

Placement supervisors play an integral role in the success of the programme, supporting graduates to maximise their time on the programme.

All host organisations are required to identify a placement supervisor in advance of the programme launch. This supervisor will have the most day-to-day contact with the graduate and a clear oversight of their one-year programme. The placement supervisor will line manage the graduate, oversee their work and learning activities, and meet with the graduate programme manager at the beginning of the programme and as required during the placement.

Placement supervisors are ideally placed to identify the graduate's strengths and development needs and provide feedback on the programme as a whole.

What academic work will graduates be required to complete during their placement?

Graduates will work towards a leadership and management qualification. The full cohort of graduates will spend approximately 24 days over the year in learning-related activities. This will include development days, action learning sets and tutorials. Graduates are entitled to six independent study days away from their placement.

Outside classroom and placement hours, graduates will be required to complete a number of assignments and a 'real-time' research project in the latter half of the year.

What support will the placement supervisor receive?

The graduate programme manager will provide informal support as and when required. The placement supervisor will be offered a one-to-one meeting at the start of the programme, which will provide further information on the programme and will cover the role of the placement supervisor in detail.

What further support could we put in place for a graduate?

Previous host organisations have reported the benefits that a capable and ambitious graduate has brought to their organisation. In return we would ask that graduates have access to appropriate opportunities to observe your organisation's governance in action and to shadow key individuals.

Our experience of running the programme has demonstrated that the most successful placements are those offering graduates access to a broad range of learning opportunities and exposure to real responsibility. This is achieved by providing a network of support which enables graduates to achieve their development goals.

Please direct any further questions or feedback to the graduate programme manager at graduates@skillsforcare.org.uk

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/hostagraduate