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## Council Apprenticeship 2025

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### Executive Summary

This paper sets out proposals for running the latest, and fifth, cycle of our Council Apprenticeship initiative.

The aim of this initiative is to provide an opportunity for talented registrants with an interest in leadership roles to gain experience with a non-executive governing body. The HCPC in return benefits from more diverse voices participating in its governance and informing its decision-making.

The HCPC launched this initiative at the start of 2021 with our first two Council Apprentices. Learning from the four years of running so far has been incorporated into the planning for the fifth cycle, should the Council agree to continue.

In the corporate plan for 2024-25 one of the actions to support our aim to be visible, engaged and informed is to continue to review the learnings from the initiative and evaluate its impact on the careers of our previous Council Apprentices. This will involve sharing learning and insight with other regulators and organisations to widen the impact of the Council Apprenticeship scheme. While this work will be reflected in the process for the latest cycle where possible, it is unlikely to be fully completed in advance of appointment.

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Previous consideration	The Council reviewed the scheme at its meeting in October 2023 and agreed to continue with the fourth cycle in 2024.
Decision	The Council is asked to approve the proposal to run a fifth year of the Council Apprenticeship initiative.
Next steps	Launch the appointment process in October 2024, incorporating the latest feedback into the third cycle of HCPC’s Council Apprenticeship scheme.
Strategic priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be visible, engaged and informed</li><li>• Build a resilient, healthy, capable and sustainable organisation</li></ul>
Risk	Discussed within the paper.
Financial and resource implications	The financial implications of the HCPC’s scheme relate to the remuneration and expenses for the Council Apprentices for meeting attendance. Council Apprentices are remunerated on a day rate basis, at an approximate cost of £7,000 per annum for two Council

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Apprentices attending Council and Committee meetings. These costs have been fully budgeted.

EDI impact The HCPC's Council Apprentice initiative was launched to increase the diversity of experience and perspectives around the Council table whilst providing a great opportunity for talented candidates to gain the experience they need to go on to build a non-executive career.

The recruitment and selection process for the HCPC's scheme encourages EDI, aimed at our registrants and underrepresented groups.

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# HCPC Council Apprentice 2025

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In 2021 the Council welcomed its first Council Apprentices to the Council. This initiative was launched to increase the diversity of perspectives and experiences contributing to Council discussions and decision-making, whilst providing a great opportunity for talented registrants to gain the experience with a non-executive governing body. Since then, we have continued to welcome new Council Apprentices each year, currently in our third cycle.
- 1.2 Our current Council Apprentices will complete their year at the end of January 2025 and so this paper proposes seeking new Council Apprentices to continue the initiative into a fifth year.

## **2. Overview of approach**

- 2.1 The Council Apprentices attend and participate in all Council meetings and seminar sessions as well as joining the meetings and any workshops for one of the Council's committees.
- 2.2 The Council Apprentices are supported and encouraged to contribute to the discussions at Council and committee meetings. However, they are not a member of the Council and entitled to vote on any decision as the appointment is not made by the Privy Council or overseen by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA).
- 2.3 Following a comprehensive HCPC induction, the Council Apprentices are paired with a Council member to act as a buddy/mentor throughout their year with us. We expect that these buddies/mentors would regularly discuss the Council Apprentices' experiences of meetings and issues that arise in a coaching style.
- 2.4 Throughout the year the Secretariat team provide a central monthly 'check in' point for the Council Apprentices to provide support and practical assistance.
- 2.5 Additionally, the Chair of the Council meets regularly with the Council Apprentices and undertakes an end of apprenticeship evaluation to understand both the Council Apprentice experience and the HCPC's running of the scheme.

## **3. Review of the scheme**

- 3.1 Before we launched our third cycle in 2023, we undertook a comprehensive review of the running of the scheme including consideration of alternative approaches. The result of this review was the Council's agreement that the HCPC should continue the scheme as it was delivering value for both the

HCPC and the Council Apprentices. The following adjustments to the scheme were made:

- eligibility being for registrants only;
- non-mandatory committee participation depending on the time available to the Council Apprentice;
- establishing an alumni network for former and current Council Apprentices; and
- confirming that each apprenticeship would run for a year and not two years to allow a larger group of registrants to benefit from the opportunity on offer.

- 3.2 It is proposed that these decisions continue to be reflected in the fifth cycle commencing in 2025.
- 3.3 We request feedback on the scheme from the Council Apprentices at the end of the time with the HCPC. These are always positive and the feedback informs the appointment and induction process and the scheme as a whole.
- 3.4 The corporate plan for 2024-25 includes the following actions to support our aim to be visible, engaged and informed in relation to the Council Apprentice scheme: which will be reflected in the. These are:
- review learnings from the last four years of the scheme and evaluate its impact on the careers of our previous Council Apprentices;
  - share our learning and insight with other regulators and organisations to widen its impact; and
  - develop the Council Apprentice alumni network.

While this work will be reflected in the process for the latest cycle where possible, it is unlikely to be fully completed in advance of the appointment of the Council Apprentices to participate in the scheme in 2025.

#### **4. Induction and Training**

- 4.1 On appointment the Council Apprentices will receive a comprehensive induction within their first two months with the HCPC, with the aim of meeting their buddies/mentors and the members of the Executive Leadership Team prior to their first Council meeting. They will take part in all Council and relevant committee meetings and any seminars and workshops in 2025 and receive development support through the buddy/mentor system.

#### **5. Selection criteria**

- 5.1 Applications will be assessed on personal motivation to get involved with public service as well as the ambition to pursue leadership roles and a non-executive career. Equally important will be a demonstrated interest in, and understanding of, the work of the HCPC.

5.2 We will be looking for candidates who have not had that first opportunity to get involved and have the potential to grow through the opportunity.

## **6. Remuneration**

6.1 As previously agreed by the Council, the Council Apprentices will be compensated for their time attending formal meetings of the Council and the committee they are involved in and any seminars and workshops. This remuneration is the same day rate as paid to independent committee members.

## **7. Timescales**

7.1 Should Council agree to continue with the scheme, we will go live with advertising the opportunity as soon as possible and aim to commence the year-long appointments from 31 January 2025. This will also enable a 'handover' period where our current Council Apprentices can support the induction of the new Council Apprentices.

## **8. Risk considerations**

8.1 This proposal will, if effective in its running, help to reduce our governance risk. This is because it will increase the diversity of views and experiences at the most senior level, which in turn helps to mitigate against group think and to improve decision-making.

8.2 Key to ensuring this benefit is achieved is careful management of the scheme to ensure both the Council Apprentices and the HCPC have a positive and beneficial experience. Having several points of contact and support for the Council Apprentice will help us to manage the scheme. We will seek feedback throughout the scheme.

8.3 Risk of potential regulatory concern has been mitigated. We made the PSA aware of our plans and they support the initiative and have confirmed they would not raise concern at the involvement of a non-voting member in our governance structures and processes. We are also clear in the information provided to candidates and the memorandum of understanding entered into with the Council Apprentices that the role is non-voting and that this is not an employment relationship.

8.4 The memorandum of understanding also includes confidentiality undertakings in respect of the confidential information they are privy to as part of Council discussions.

**9. Council decision**

- 9.1 The Council is asked to approve the continuation of the HCPC's Council Apprentice initiative for 2025 with the appointment of two new Council Apprentices for a one year term.