**Guidance for Social Work Apprentice**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **What is the apprentice programme about?**

Apprenticeships allow employees to develop and gain a qualification while continuing to work. It is an employer-led scheme: the apprentice learns ‘on the job’ with 20% of their time (1 day a week) allocated to ‘off the job’ learning.

As a social work apprentice in Camden, you would work in that role, while also undertaking the qualification, which will lead to a degree award and a professional qualification as a social worker. Apprentices will complete academic work and attend university sessions, but the main learning is through employment.

 **2. How many places is Camden offering?**

* There will be up to 3 places in Children and Learning practitioners for social work apprentices applicants.

**3. Which university is delivering the degree qualification?**

For the social work degree apprenticeship course and the PG DIP apprentice, the current provider is Kingston University.

The course was developed from a London wide tender to deliver bespoke apprentice courses. Camden works with other employers and the universities to ensure that the course is tailored to meet our requirements.

**4. What is the duration of the programme?**

* For social work degree, the programme is 36 months.
* For PG DIP, the programme is 19 months.

**5. When will the programme start?**

* The social work apprenticeships will start in September 2025.

**6. Who can apply?**

We can only use our apprenticeship levy funds for Camden employees.

Anyone who meets the following criteria:

* Minimum of 2 years’ experience of working in social care.
* Permanently employed by Camden in Children and Learning for 12 months at the point of application
* Working full-time or able to work a minimum of 30 hrs per week
* Must hold GCSE English and Mathematics (Grade C or above / 4-9 if after 2017) or equivalent qualification (e.g. Functional Skills level 2 in numeracy and literacy)
* Not subject to any performance or conduct issues
* Willing and able to commit to the academic and work- based requirements for the length of the course
* Willing to commit to work as a social worker in Camden upon completion of the apprenticeship

 **7. Can I apply if I work part-time?**

Part-time employees can apply. To meet the requirements of the apprenticeship programme, you will need to be able to work a minimum of 30 hours a week once you start the programme.

**8. What is the pay grade for this role?**

HR Services has evaluated the job at grade Level 3 Zone 1.

**9. Is there a minimum academic entry criterion for this role?**

Applicants must hold GCSE English (normally English language) and Mathematics at Grades 4-9 (or grade C or above for GCSEs taken before 2017) or an equivalent qualification (e.g. functional skills level 2 in numeracy and literacy). The university require that all apprentices starting on the either Apprenticeship programme meet the English and Maths entry requirement at the point of starting their programme.
Camden requires all applicants to present evidence of their certificates during the internal recruitment process.

 **10. How do I apply?**

There is a two-stage application process.

**Stage one (Camden)**

The roles will be advertised through the HR resourcing process, restricted to applicants from Children and Learning. You will need to complete an application for the apprentice role. This application will need to explain why you are applying for the role and how you meet the job description. This is what we will use for shortlisting.

These are the proposed timescales. They may change but would be pushed back and not brought forward.

Applications open **10 February 2024**

Closing date for the application is **23 February 2025**.

Shortlisting will take place **w/c 24 February 2024**.

Interviews will take place **from 10 March 2024**.

The process is likely to involve a written exercise and an interview.

If you are successful at this stage, you will be provisionally offered an apprentice role: ***this is subject to a successful application to the university at Stage 2*.**

Stage 1 should provide experience and support to ensure that you are successful at Stage 2.

**Stage two (University)**

Once offered a social work apprentice role in Camden, you will have to apply for the university course. For social work, this involves a separate application form and a university selection process. The application must be submitted by **23 May 2025.**

**11. I am on leave during Camden’s application stage, will you accept late submissions?**

We cannot accept late applications.

**12. I am on leave when the university is hosting interviews and assessments. Will the university offer alternative dates?**

The application process extends over a few months so there should be scope to accommodate individual arrangements.

**13. If I am successful, when will I start in my new apprentice role?**

The course start dates are in September 2025. You will start your new apprentice role on the same day.

 **15. What happens to my substantive job?**

You will be on secondment for the duration of your new role. Your substantive post will either remain vacant or be backfilled temporarily depending on the needs of the service. If, for whatever reason, you cannot complete the programme you would have a role to return to.

 **16. What happens if my manager does not agree to the secondment?**

We hope that managers will support applications and an individual’s progression and development. You should inform your manager before you apply and discuss your application.

 **17. Will I remain in my current team and service during the programme?**

You will work in Children’s social care setting for the duration of the programme. You will need to be in a role that allows you to progressively undertake suitable social work tasks to meet the requirements of the degree apprenticeship.

For the social work apprenticeship, you will undertake a contrasting learning experience for 70 days in the second year to meet the requirements of the social work degree. There may be other opportunities for learning in other parts of the service during the programme.

**19. Is funding for the apprenticeship guaranteed for the whole programme?**

Yes, funding is from the apprenticeship levy.

**20. What support will I get during my qualification?**

You will receive support during the programme from an assessor and a mentor. The university and employers work together to ensure that apprentices have the best possible support and there will be a variety of different support forums.

 **21. Am I guaranteed a social worker role within Camden council when I complete the programme?**

We want to offer a qualified position to those successfully completing the programme. Assuming you have passed the course and there have been no performance issues, you will be able to apply for a role without a competitive process.

**22. Will I be expected to undertake ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) after I complete the social work apprenticeship?**

Yes. After you complete the social work degree apprenticeship, you would need to apply for a qualified position and the ASYE would run alongside this.

**23. If I don’t** **gain my qualification at the end of the course, will I go back to my substantive post?**

Yes, you will revert to a role at your substantive grade.

**24. Will this opportunity be available again?**

The intention is to continue to offer an apprentice intake at least every two years.