

# Accredited Training and Professional Roles in Conductive Education

## A Guide for Conductors and Employers



### Introduction

Since 1997 NICE has been delivering a BA (Hons) in Conductive Education, leading to Qualified Conductor Status (QCS). Over the time since its inception the course has developed in combination with the setting up of Professional Standards for Conductors in the UK (PCA) and these now form the framework for the qualification.

Over the past 24 years a number of professional roles have developed within the practice field. The setting up of multi and transdisciplinary teams, working alongside conductors, is one example of how the work has developed and changed.

The Conductive College was formed, from our previous training department, in 2012 with the aim of developing accredited training courses to promote excellence in CE practice. In order to meet this aim it was essential to review the formal qualifications available and develop a range of professional roles within the field.

Whilst it is fully recognised that qualified conductors are essential in the planning, delivery, monitoring and future of CE practice we should also be mindful of the high numbers of other professionals working alongside them to enable this to happen.

Previously there has only been one route to gaining a qualification in CE – that of a full-time three-year degree programme. This has limited opportunities for others working in the field and to some degree hindered the development of practice due to low numbers of conductors and problems with recruitment.

In 2012 we validated the Conductor Assistant, level 3 course, with OCN West Midlands. This is continuing to develop with conductors across the UK being able to deliver at a regional and local level improving accessibility to the training.

In 2016 we also started to offer a Multi-disciplinary Conductor qualification. This is a part time professional qualification enabling existing professionals working in CE, alongside conductors, to gain a recognised qualification at an appropriate level of professional competence.

In 2021 we started to offer a Level 4 Higher Level Conductor Assistant Course, validated via Open College Network, West Midlands.



We also have post graduate modules for conductors to study to help ensure development in the field of CE. These are run on a rolling programme and can lead to the qualification of MA Conductive Education. These are an integral part to professional development for conductors which has not previously been available.

### **Information for Employers**

When you employ a conductor, assistant or MD conductor it is essential that you understand what you can expect from them in terms of their professional qualification. This document serves to clarify these different roles and we hope will help to add value to your teams and ensure the best quality of CE practice in your setting.

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### ***Accredited Training in Conductive Education***

#### **1. Conductor Assistant (Level 3 Certificate in Conductive Education)**

To be awarded this professional title the learner must have successfully completed the OCN Level 3 Certificate in Conductive Education and be working alongside a qualified conductor.

Once the certificate has been awarded the Conductive College will then confer Conductor Assistant status.



A conductor assistant will have knowledge around the main elements of CE practice. They should understand the basic philosophy, methodology and CE task series and have developed some facilitation skills. They will be able to apply this learning into daily living skills and should be able to assist the conductor throughout the daily routine.

The assistant will be qualified to:-

- Facilitate in conductive groups alongside a qualified conductor
- Work with small groups of children/adults under supervision of a conductor
- Work with children/adults conductively during everyday living skills
- Support the work of the conductor

## **2. Higher Level Conductor Assistant (Level 4 Certificate in Conductive Education)**

To be awarded this professional title the learner must have successfully completed the OCN Level 4 Certificate in Conductive Education and be working alongside a qualified conductor. Once the certificate has been awarded the Conductive College will then confer Conductor Assistant status.

A higher level conductor assistant will typically have already completed a Level 3 course or have significant experience working alongside conductors. They will understand the philosophy, methodology and have completed a range of professional competencies including facilitating and leading groups. This will be under distant supervision of a qualified conductor but higher level assistants can be expected to lead task series designed by conductors. These will typically be lying, sitting/speech, standing/walking programmes. The nature of this will be centre-dependent and link to the practice area the person qualified in.

A higher level conductor assistant is qualified to:

- Facilitate in conductive groups under distant supervision
- Work with small groups for specific set tasks with distant supervision
- Plan, lead and evaluate conductive programmes under guidance of a conductor

## **3. Multi-Disciplinary Conductors (Professional Qualification)**

To be awarded this professional title the learner must have successfully the MD conductor course and all competencies. It is awarded by NICE, Conductive College and the person will be required to work alongside a Qualified Conductor who is also trained as a Practice Tutor. This course has lectures delivered on a part-time basis to enable the person to continue in employment during their study and undertake the necessary practice-based hours to meet the course



requirements. On completion of these the learner will be awarded the MD qualification, through the Conductive College.

The MD conductor will work alongside a qualified conductor, in their workplace, who acts as a practice tutor. This is usually completed over the period of one academic year. The practical competencies achieved are the same as for a qualified conductor producing consistency in expectation of skill and knowledge base. Tutors from the Conductive College will assess and confirm the successful completion of these competencies.

The MD Conductor will be qualified to work in a multi-disciplinary setting as a conductor. The age range covered will be: early intervention and/or primary age and/or secondary age and/or adults. Students will usually choose the area they are currently working in however can expand on this if their CE setting allows. The certificate will state the area of specialism for the qualification.

MD conductors will function, in the workforce, as qualified conductors and the same expectations will hold true. It is anticipated that the MD team will also have a qualified conductor and this will enhance conductive practice.

#### **4. Qualified Conductor (BA Hons in Conductive Education)**

To be awarded this professional title the learner must have successfully completed a BA Hons in Conductive Education. Once the degree has been awarded the Conductive College will then confer Qualified Conductor Status.

A qualified conductor is usually trained to work with both children and adults; however they can specialise in one area if they wish. This will be indicated on their QCS certificate, so employers should always request a copy. Full QCS indicates experience across children and adults, including people with Parkinson's, stroke and MS. As a part of their degree course conductors will have been required to meet each of the professional competencies identified in the standards document. They will be able to work as autonomous professionals and should be competent in planning, delivering and recording all aspects of conductive practice. They will have some experience teaching curriculum areas and can be expected to use this within their conductive practice.

Newly qualified conductors, as with all newly qualified professionals, will require additional support and training to develop their professional expertise. We suggest that all conductors in the UK join the Professional Conductors Association as this body provides some professional training and a network of support. The Conductive College also offers NQC (Newly Qualified



Conductor) support in a similar way to the teaching profession. This enables the employer to know that conductive skills will also be supported in those early years post-qualification.

## ***Suggested Professional Titles and Roles in CE***

The following titles and expectations only relate directly to CE practice and do not take account of other roles an employer may require as a part of employment. We appreciate that each centre/service will work in a different way and these are therefore guidelines.

### **1. Newly Qualified Conductor**

A newly qualified conductor should be offered support from their employer/a conductor to continue to develop the skills needed prior to being able to work fully independently. We recommend a two-year period of mentoring for any newly qualified conductor.

A newly qualified conductor should be able to:

- Plan, lead and deliver a full range of conductive programmes
- Set appropriate aims, facilitation and equipment needs for individuals
- Write reports on progress against aims in a format set by the centre
- Discuss progress for specified children/adults in internal meetings and with visiting professionals

They should have:

- An experienced mentor allocated to support them in their transition from student to autonomous professional.
- Support to carry out initial assessments

### **2. Junior Conductor**

A conductor should be considered 'junior' for the period of 2-5 years post-qualification. This enables the conductor to work independently whilst still gaining the professional experience for their future career. It is anticipated that employers would encourage a junior conductor to gain a range of work place skills enabling them to enhance their professional development.

A junior conductor should be able to:

- Develop new conductive task series, programmes and daily routines
- Carry out initial assessments and write appropriate report following this
- Represent the child/adult in external meetings



- Support/supervise non-conductive staff in the sessions.

### **3. Conductor**

This title should be used for a conductor with 5 or more years' experience who is able to work fully autonomously within the service.

A conductor should be able to:

- Offer training for non-conductive staff
- Become a qualified Practice Tutor\* to teach student conductors in practice
- Be a fully autonomous professional and represent children/adults and organisations externally and internally
- Give formal presentations on the work and be a representative of Conductive Education more widely.
- Provide training at OCN Level 3 or 4 for conductor

### **4. Lead/Senior Conductor**

This refers to a conductor who has additional responsibility within a service. This will be centred in accordance with the needs of the service.

It is anticipated that a Lead/Senior Conductor will be responsible for the development of service provision, a staff team or an area of expertise.

### **5. Practice Tutor\***

This refers to a conductor who has 5+ years post-qualification experience and has undertaken a Practice Tutor course with The Conductive College. This entitles the conductor to teach students on:

- BA Hons as a practice-based tutor
- OCN level 3 teaching and assessing for own staff
- OCN Level 4 as a practice-based tutor.

This qualification is a requirement for quality assurance from the awarding bodies: Birmingham City University and Open College Network, West Midlands.

Whilst it is accepted that the title of roles may change between different centres the premise is that being a conductor is a professional journey and one that requires appropriate support, mentoring and professional development.

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