



A guide for employers  
October 2014



# APPRENTICESHIPS THAT WORK

Today's young people, tomorrow's workforce



WORK



WORKFORCE



WORKPLACE

# Championing better work and working lives

The CIPD's purpose is to **champion better work and working lives** by improving practices in people and organisation development, for the benefit of individuals, businesses, economies and society. Our research work plays a critical role – providing the content and credibility for us to drive practice, raise standards and offer advice, guidance and practical support to the profession. Our research also informs our advocacy and engagement with policy-makers and other opinion-formers on behalf of the profession we represent.

To increase our impact, in service of our purpose, we're focusing our research agenda on three core themes: the future of **work**, the diverse and changing nature of the **workforce**, and the culture and organisation of the **workplace**.

## WORK

Our focus on work includes what work is and where, when and how work takes place, as well as trends and changes in skills and job needs, changing career patterns, global mobility, technological developments and new ways of working.



## WORKFORCE

Our focus on the workforce includes demographics, generational shifts, attitudes and expectations, the changing skills base and trends in learning and education.

## WORKPLACE

Our focus on the workplace includes how organisations are evolving and adapting, understanding of culture, trust and engagement, and how people are best organised, developed, managed, motivated and rewarded to perform at their best.

## About us

The CIPD is the professional body for HR and people development. We have over 130,000 members internationally – working in HR, learning and development, people management and consulting across private businesses and organisations in the public and voluntary sectors. We are an independent and not-for-profit organisation, guided in our work by the evidence and the front-line experience of our members.

# Apprenticeships that work: a guide for employers

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# Foreword

The UK is battling with high youth unemployment. Although the situation has recently improved, over 700,000 young people aged 16 to 24 are currently unemployed in the UK. Youth unemployment was on the increase even before the economic crisis of 2008, and CIPD research highlights that there has been a structural shift in the way employers engage – or rather don't engage – with young people. This means that education-to-work transitions take longer and are more difficult. The negative consequences of this don't just impact on young people themselves, but are also a problem for organisations that struggle to build their future talent pipelines.

Employers hold the key to overcoming this issue. Recognising the impact that the HR profession in particular can make is the driving force behind the CIPD's Learning to Work programme, which supports employers in their efforts to increase and improve their engagement with young people. Good, youth-friendly recruitment practices that help organisations reach out to a wide pool of young people, who often struggle with traditional recruitment methods, are at the heart of this.

Apprenticeships are one pathway that can be particularly useful in this regard, as the young person gets taught skills in the workplace that go beyond general employability. The apprentice trains for an occupation, learning from real professionals, thus acquiring industry-specific as well as transferable skills. In addition to helping young people with their first step on the job ladder, Apprenticeships are also a particularly effective way to address employers' skills needs, as they are available for people of all ages and include those within the existing workforce.

Vocational skills are an area where the UK still lags behind when compared internationally. As a result, too many employers still struggle to get the professional, trade and technical skills they need. By hiring apprentices, employers can take this matter into their own hands and ensure they get exactly the skills they need while growing a committed, engaged workforce and opening up pathways for new talent into their organisations, occupations and sectors.

At the CIPD we believe that we can and that we need to help employers to design and run high-quality Apprenticeships that support their business and workforce strategy. At the beginning of 2012 we

produced the first iteration of this guide, which has proven to be a popular and reliable resource for employers seeking to introduce Apprenticeships into their organisation. Many employers recognise the importance of offering access routes but sometimes the practicalities of introducing anything new can be a stumbling block. Our guides are designed to remove such hurdles and provide practical information and real-life case studies to help HR professionals.

Although youth unemployment levels are still very high, we have witnessed a change in employer behaviour over the past two years. Indeed, many employers have started to recognise that investing in young people helps them to win the war for talent and that this investment starts early with engagement, at schools and universities. A recent CIPD survey found that employers have started to diversify the variety of access routes offered to young people. Apprenticeship programmes have seen the biggest increase over the past year, with over half of employers stating they now offer more Apprenticeships. Furthermore, a whole raft of new Apprenticeships has been introduced, in areas such as digital marketing and finance, as employers realise the long-term benefits of their investment in training.

Changes to the funding and delivery model of Apprenticeships will mean that employers will have greater control than ever before in the way they structure and run these programmes, so they can ensure they bring maximum benefit to their business. A recent CIPD research report, commissioned by the National Apprenticeship Service, *The Match Factor: Good practice in Apprenticeship recruitment*, also uncovered a number of recommendations for employers to maximise the Apprenticeship recruitment process. In order to ensure employers are kept up to speed on best practice, we have updated this guide with the latest information and up-to-date case studies to enable employers from all sectors and sizes to continue to take advantage of this excellent way to nurture your own talent.

**Katerina Rüdiger,**  
**Head of Skills and Policy Campaigns, CIPD**

# Our guide to Apprenticeships

## How can this guide help you?

This employer guide is for you if you are thinking about offering Apprenticeships or if you want to improve your current offer and better align it to your business strategy. It provides you with:

- an outline of the business case for bringing apprentices into your organisation
- information on the practical steps you need to take to set up a successful Apprenticeship programme
- a guide to funding, training providers and tricky employment law questions
- best practice case studies that show how Apprenticeships can contribute to business success
- advice on how to make Apprenticeships part of your strategic talent planning process and how this can help to grow your own workforce
- practical advice on how to recruit, manage, support and supervise your apprentices in order to maximise

the benefits for your organisation as well as the apprentice.

## What is an Apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a combination of employment and training (the apprentice obtains a nationally recognised qualification upon completion) available to anyone entitled to work in the UK. Employers train individuals in the context of their organisation, so apprentices develop their skills while contributing to your organisation's productivity. More than 100,000 employers are employing or have employed apprentices in over 200,000 locations, helping to attract new talent, re-skill existing staff and tackle skill shortages. Some differences in terms of the level of funding provided and training required exist in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, but the core features of the Apprenticeship model remain the same across the four nations (note that in Scotland Apprenticeships are known as Modern Apprenticeships).

## BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIPS

Nearly every employer that takes on an apprentice (96%) reports benefits to their business:

- 72% of businesses report improved productivity as a result of employing an apprentice – the average Apprenticeship increases business productivity by £214 a week, with gains which include increased profits, lower prices and better products.
- 75% of apprentice employers say their Apprenticeship programme has helped cut recruitment costs and 80% agree that Apprenticeships will play a greater role in their future recruitment policy, resulting in lower **staff turnover**, fewer **skills-related vacancies** and reduced **recruitment costs**.

*'Payments is a unique and growing industry. The way we work means you can't simply buy in talent and knowledge, and we identified a knowledge gap. As it stood, we didn't have the people to fill it, so we built our Apprenticeship programme.'* **James Lawrence, Next Generation Talent, Visa Europe**

- Improved **brand image** and **greater customer satisfaction** – 81% of consumers favour using a company which takes on apprentices.

*'There were numerous soft benefits which help brand and reputation, which we're very proud of. Our apprentices are so articulate and have great stories and narratives to share. They're a success inside and outside Barclays.'* **Mike Thompson, Director Early Careers, Barclays**

- **Increased employee satisfaction and engagement** as a result of hiring apprentices, with 88% of employers believing they help create a more motivated and loyal workforce.

Source: 2011 British Chambers of Commerce, Populus research commissioned by the National Apprenticeship Service and Productivity Matters, Centre for Economic and Business Research, 2013

### **Why get involved: what are the business benefits for my organisation?**

Apprenticeships are an asset to any organisation and bring significant benefits to your business and existing workforce. Apprenticeships are a unique way to 'grow your own'; they combine on-the-job training in your organisation with off-the-job learning, and provide employers with an effective way of growing their skills base. The apprentice's learning takes place in context and provides a real understanding of the working world, combining practical skills with theoretical knowledge. Apprenticeships can therefore offer a career route into your organisation and an invaluable opportunity to develop the expertise you need now and in the future.

Furthermore, offering Apprenticeships can help to improve social mobility and diversity within your organisation, a benefit which the Royal Opera House recognised when they introduced their Apprenticeship scheme:

*'We wanted to improve the socioeconomic and ethnic composition of our teams as well as tackle gender bias in a number of roles (carpentry is traditionally "male" and costume, for example, is "female") and we thought one way of doing this was through our Apprenticeship programme.'* **Bendy Ashfield, Apprenticeships Manager, Royal Opera House**

As well as improvements to diversity, Apprenticeships can help staff retention and engagement, can offer a means of developing your existing workforce and increase innovation and productivity:

*'When the apprentices began, we started to notice a real ideas exchange between them and the more experienced workers. After a while we were being approached by colleagues who work in our Innovation team asking to meet our apprentices to gain insight and feedback from them – they were almost like consultants!'* **James Lawrence, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Visa Europe**

# Executive summary

The CIPD believes workforce planning – having the people in place to deliver short- and long-term objectives – should be a core process of human resource management. Apprenticeships should be part of this strategic approach, as they offer you the opportunity to grow and develop the skills and the workforce you need for the future and bring bright new talent into your organisation.

This guide provides ‘access all areas’ support and guidance to employers on how to set up and run high-quality, successful Apprenticeship programmes that are beneficial for both organisations and employees. It includes best practice case studies and practical advice from practitioners, key experts and apprentice employers.

## Our key messages are:

- **Apprenticeships need to be embedded in a workforce planning approach with clear business benefits**, as part of a long-term strategy on workforce growth and skills development (see Sections 2, 3 and 10).
- **Traineeships can be an effective way of sourcing and preparing the next generation of apprentices for your business and planning where your future skills are coming from** (see Section 2).
- A prerequisite for a successful Apprenticeships programme is **clarity about the role that apprentices play in the organisation, job design which ensures on- and off-the-job learning and development, and a shared understanding of how they will be supported and by whom** (see Sections 3 and 10).
- **Winning the support of the existing workforce**, senior management as well as line managers and trade unions, is crucial. Line managers in particular need the right support and tools to effectively manage young apprentices straight out of education who may be new to the workplace (see Section 4).
- The **training apprentices receive on and off the job needs to be high quality and tailored to both the apprentices’ and employers’ needs; to achieve this** the relationship with the training provider needs to be managed carefully (see Section 5).
- **Recruiting apprentices may differ from the usual recruitment procedure**, especially when the candidate is particularly young (16–18) and has no prior work experience. Alternative recruitment methods and techniques need to be considered (see Section 6).
- It is important to be aware of the legal framework: **apprentices are covered by a contract of employment and have similar rights to other employees**; however, they have greater protection under the law than most employees (see Section 7).
- To ensure success, **the apprentice needs to be placed at the heart of the Apprenticeship programme** and employers must provide ongoing **support, pastoral care and mentoring**. At this stage, **management of the apprentice is important** in order to guarantee that apprentices adapt to the workplace and continue to grow with your business (see Section 8).
- Employers need to make sure they provide **fair access to their Apprenticeship schemes** and widen the talent pool from which they recruit in terms of gender, ethnicity and diversity (see Section 9).

# 1 Where do you start? What you need to know

So you have decided that you would like to offer Apprenticeships – but where do you start? We outline the practical steps that will help you to run successful Apprenticeships, regardless of the size of your organisation or the sector you are in. We will address each of these in more detail in this guide.

Familiarise yourself with the key features of Apprenticeships – **see Section 2**

Establish where Apprenticeships fit within your strategic workforce planning – **see Section 3**

Gain the support of your colleagues and senior managers for the Apprenticeship programme – **see Section 4**

Find the right provider for your training needs or develop your own training programme – **see Section 5**

Recruit to the Apprenticeship programme (externally and internally) – **see Section 6**

Draw up an Apprenticeship agreement and find out what you need to know about employment law – **see Section 7**

How to run a successful Apprenticeship by managing, mentoring and supporting your apprentice – **see Section 8**

How to be ahead of the game and widen the net, by taking an inclusive approach to Apprenticeships – **see Section 9**

What happens after the Apprenticeship? How to integrate your apprentices into the workforce – **see Section 10**



## 2 Key features of Apprenticeships

You may already be aware of Apprenticeships, but this section provides you with further information on the key features, including the training, cost and funding. This will help you to develop a high-quality Apprenticeship offer, tailored to your organisation's needs and within your business and workforce planning.

### Who can be an apprentice?

Apprenticeships are available to anyone aged 16 and over who is not in full-time education and is eligible to work in the UK. High-quality Apprenticeships offer young people a way of successfully entering the world of work and gaining skills and experience which will continue to grow with your business. Therefore, although Apprenticeships can be offered to new or existing employees, we recommend using this to recruit new talent and provide an alternative route into your organisation.

### What makes Apprenticeships different from other training initiatives?

Apprenticeships are a unique way of learning a profession in the workplace, with the benefit of acquiring knowledge from experts. For your organisation this means you can pass down the skills and knowledge from your most able workers to incoming or existing members of staff, keeping your skills in-house and passing them from one generation to the next. Apprentices also bring with them the latest learning and innovations in their field, combining on-the-job training with time spent in the classroom.

#### WHAT MAKES A GOOD APPRENTICESHIP?

*'A good Apprenticeship needs to be a meaty experience, delivering tangible skills and mentoring in the workplace, leading to a return on investment for the employer and full competence for the apprentice. There needs to be a good balance of on- and off-the-job training, but what this will look like depends on the occupation. Apprentices need clear progression routes; this means courses feeding into Apprenticeships and continuous professional development when the Apprenticeship is completed.'*

**Moira McKerracher, Deputy Director, UK Commission for Employment and Skills**

Apprentices are fully employed, so at the same time you can entrust them with tasks that contribute to your organisation's productivity.

#### APPRENTICESHIPS: AN AGE-OLD, INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED AND POWERFUL MODEL OF LEARNING

*'Despite the variety of Apprenticeship programmes on offer, they are all based on an age-old, internationally recognised and powerful model of learning. An Apprenticeship is designed to develop the knowledge, skills and judgement required in the workplace.'*

*'It takes the form of a journey, with the apprentice moving from being a relative novice to becoming an expert in an occupational field, supported by experienced colleagues, trainers and vocational teachers. The term "Apprenticeship" is used in many occupations, from carpenters to orchestral conductors, from brain surgeons to chefs, and from journalists and lawyers to waiters and administrators. All these occupations recognise the importance of introducing apprentices to the culture, history and specific characteristics of the work they do. Apprenticeship as a model of learning has survived because it has been able to adapt itself to changes and innovations in the world of work whilst still retaining its principles.'*

Source: *Creating and Supporting Expansive Apprenticeships: A guide for employers, training providers and colleges of further education*, Unwin and Fuller (2010).

## What is the Government doing to safeguard the quality of Apprenticeships?

### 1 Recent changes to the minimum length of Apprenticeships

As mentioned in the introduction, the quality of the Apprenticeships provided is key to successfully addressing your skills needs. There continues to be a significant focus on improving the quality standards of Apprenticeships provided.

In April 2012, the Government announced that the minimum length for all Apprenticeships will be 12 months in an effort to eliminate bad practice. At the same time, it also said that all apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours a week. This includes time spent away from the workplace engaged in training.

### 2 Forthcoming government reform of Apprenticeships

The Apprenticeships system has been reviewed thoroughly over the last 18 months, which has led to a series of reforms being implemented.

The reforms, which are ongoing, are set out in full in *The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation plan*, available from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills website, [www.bis.gov.uk](http://www.bis.gov.uk)

### Traineeships

In August 2013, the Government introduced Traineeships in England. Traineeships are designed to boost young people's employability skills and provide pre-Apprenticeship preparation for individuals who are more likely to follow a vocational route but are not quite ready to start an Apprenticeship or employment. A young person could be eligible for a Traineeship if they are between the ages of 16 and 24, unemployed (or work less than 16 hours a week) and have little work experience or qualifications.

A Traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience. Traineeships can last up to a period of six months and consist of work preparation training, English and maths for those who need it, and a high-quality work experience placement of six weeks to five months with an employer. Furthermore, working with a training provider, it is possible to include flexible additional content to meet the needs of your business.

### What are the business benefits?

There are a number of advantages for organisations who wish to offer Traineeships. They include:

- a way of securing the next generation of apprentices and developing their skills and experience so they're ready to do their Apprenticeship with you
- access to a wider talent pool

## POLICY MEASURES TO IMPROVE QUALITY IN ENGLAND

- Trailblazers, made up of large and small employers and professional bodies in a range of sectors, will develop new Apprenticeship standards. Employers in eight sectors have been collaborating on the standards and assessment approaches for occupations within their sector to make them world class. The first of these standards are available to view on the National Apprenticeship website [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/standards](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/standards) A further phase of Trailblazer projects in 29 industries, including STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), has recently been announced. These standards, which replace current frameworks, will set out the level of skill, knowledge and competency required to operate successfully in that sector.
- Employers will have a key role in developing a high-level assessment approach and apprentices will be graded either with a pass, merit or distinction.
- Apprenticeships will be required to last no less than 12 months.
- All apprentices will be required to achieve a certain standard of English and maths in order to complete their Apprenticeship. From September 2014, all Intermediate (level 2) apprentices who have previously achieved Level 1 English and maths will have to study towards Level 2 English and maths. Advanced (Level 3) apprentices will have to achieve Level 2 English and maths to complete their Apprenticeship, as now.
- Off-the-job training will be mandated at a minimum of 20% or equivalent; currently it is 30%.

Full implementation of the reforms will occur during 2015/16, with all Apprenticeships being based on new standards by 2017/18.

- an extended interview period
- the flexibility to tailor the Traineeship to the business and the individual
- opportunities for current employees to build their mentoring, coaching and management skills
- all training costs are met by government funding
- potential eligibility for a grant of £1,500 if a trainee progresses onto an Apprenticeship with your organisation.

Work experience in Traineeships should give the young person experience of a real workplace so they can develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, attitudes and behaviours they need to succeed at work. For more information on eligibility, funding and to find out how to get involved, visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) or call **08000 150 600**.

### What level and kind of training will my apprentice receive?

The apprentice will receive most of their training by working with professionals in your organisation, but in addition to that, there needs to be some learning away from the workstation. Guided learning hours

(GLH) refers to the time required to be utilised by learners developing the technical skills and knowledge of theoretical concepts across a range of contexts. It may include the following:

- individual and group teaching
- coaching
- distance learning
- e-learning
- feedback and assessment
- guided study
- collaborative learning
- mentoring.

In England this is specified as a minimum of 280 guided learning hours (GLH) within the first 12 months, and at least 280 GLH (pro rata) in each subsequent year must be completed. In Wales, Apprenticeship frameworks specify the number of on- and off-the-job hours needed. It is not prescribed in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but is recognised as important to develop the depth and breadth of understanding and knowledge required to support competence.

## CASE STUDY: BARCLAYS

Barclays started to offer Traineeships in 2014 as a way to provide more access opportunities to young people not in training, employment and education (NEET). Traineeships offer a structured and meaningful platform for young, NEET candidates to develop and learn employability and functional skills in a pre-employment, classroom-based environment. What makes a Traineeship unique is that classroom-based training forms part of a wider, work experience offering to all candidates, enabling access and exposure to business environments, on-the-job training and in turn providing a greater opportunity to secure an Apprenticeship with an employer.

Traineeships have been designed in response to the ongoing challenge of young people not being able to secure a job without experience. This model not only provides classroom-based training but enables employers to open their doors and offer on-the-job work experience. Barclays now operate the Traineeship model for all entry-level Apprenticeship vacancies. Not only do our apprentice candidates benefit from a minimum of two weeks' work experience, but it also enables every line manager and their team to build a relationship with the candidates, bring forth our values as an organisation and provide candidates with experience of the workplace, with a view to a permanent opportunity in the bank.

For those who unfortunately do not secure a job with Barclays, they will continue to complete up to four more weeks' work experience with another employer, in turn achieving a Level 1 Traineeship Certificate, which, for some, will be their first ever qualification. This means, ultimately, their journey to source permanent employment is now accompanied by experience and qualification.

Barclays will be offering more than 1,000 Traineeships in 2014, securing 500 apprentices and inspiring 500 more. It has also helped strengthen the assessment process as candidates are then able to draw on 'real' experiences and 'real' customer/client situations having completed hands-on work placements with the bank.

**Shaun Meekins, Head of Employability Engagement, Barclays**

The kind of training that employers need to provide depends on the nature and type of the job. There are hundreds of Apprenticeships available in a wide range of industry sectors, ranging from engineering to accountancy. There are statutory requirements which all Apprenticeship programmes in England and Wales must meet; these are contained in an Apprenticeship 'framework'. An Apprenticeship framework also includes the names of all qualifications and their credit value (what each is worth) and provides guidance on how to get onto an Apprenticeship programme, the

time it will take and career path available after an Apprenticeship. These frameworks vary across the UK (see box for differences across the nations), but they have been developed with employers to cover all the core skills needed for the sectors/occupation concerned.

The training provided depends on the sector and the skills level of the apprentices (there are a number of different levels of Apprenticeships; these vary across the UK so please see Table 1 and check with the relevant body for more details), but what they have

**Table 1: Apprenticeship levels**

England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks for Levels 2–7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks for Levels 2–7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks for Levels 2–6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frameworks for Level 2 and Level 3 only</li> </ul>
Intermediate (Level 2)	Modern (Level 2 and 3)	Foundation (Level 2)	
Advanced (Level 3)	Technical (Level 4)	Apprenticeship (Level 3)	
Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4 and above)	Professional (Level 5)	Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4, 5 or 6)	

## ESSENTIAL PARTS OF AN APPRENTICESHIP FRAMEWORK

### Functional/key skills/core skills/essential skills (Wales)

The terminology of these skills varies across the nations, but they are a core set of skills that people require to do the job and include English, maths and information and communications technology (ICT) using practical applications. All Apprenticeships must offer training to Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE grade A\* to C) in functional skills or English and maths. This offer can only be extended to apprentices who have not already achieved these or equivalent qualifications.

### Competence

The competence (technical skills) aspects of the Apprenticeship are usually based on National Occupational Standards and are completed in the workplace.

### Knowledge

The knowledge part of the Apprenticeship covers the technical knowledge and theory that is relevant to the practical skills an apprentice will develop in their job role.

### Employee rights and responsibilities (ERR)

An apprentice must be told about their rights as an employee – what they are entitled to expect and what their obligations are to their employer and colleagues. For example: sources of information and advice on their rights as an employee; their role within the organisation; the career available to them; the organisation's principles and codes of practice; as well as health and safety, employment law and equality and diversity.

### Personal learning and thinking skills (PLTS) (England) or wider key skills (Wales)

These are the skills that help an apprentice to succeed at work: independent enquirers, creative thinkers, teamworkers, reflective learners, self-managers, effective participants.

**Table 2: Funding for Apprenticeship training**

Northern Ireland	Scotland	England	Wales
Fully funded up to the age of 25	A contribution towards the cost of training	16–18 years old: funding for 100% of the training cost 19–23 years old: funding for up to 50% of the training cost 24 or above: a contribution to the cost of training	Fully funded regardless of age, though priority groups are 16–18 and 19–24

### APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING REFORM IN ENGLAND

In December 2013 the Government announced that from 2016/17 funding for Apprenticeships will be routed through the tax or National Insurance system direct to employers, instead of to training providers as it currently stands. This change is designed to empower employers and incentivise them to demand higher-quality and more relevant training for their apprentices. Under the proposed changes, the Government would introduce a compulsory cash contribution by employers for a significant proportion of the external costs of an Apprenticeship. The new system would also provide an additional contribution by the Government to the cost of training for 16–17-year-olds (and separately consider the approach for 18-year-olds) and introduce a number of caps on the maximum government contribution per apprentice. As with the current funding system, employers will still be expected to pay their apprentices; and remember, the more you're able to pay, the greater commitment, motivation and productivity you will see in your apprentice.

Consultations are ongoing, particularly around potential alternative funding routes for small businesses. For updates or for more information on the government Apprenticeship reform plans, visit [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)

in common is that they all comprise the following core components: a competence-based element, a knowledge-based element and transferable or functional skills (the terminology varies according to the nations). In England functional skills qualifications formally replaced key skills in September 2012 and include English, maths and ICT. For those undertaking an Intermediate Apprenticeship, a minimum of Level 1 or 2 is required (or GCSE equivalent) and for Advanced apprentices it is Level 2. Higher Apprenticeships no longer have maths and English qualifications as a mandatory requirement, but some requirements still apply (please check Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) for more information).

When all of the components have been achieved, the apprentice will receive an Apprenticeship certificate and the Apprenticeship has finished.

### Who delivers the training and who pays for it?

Some larger employers use their own training staff to deliver the off-the-job training, but most use a recognised training provider (see Section 5 on how to find a provider). Funding for Apprenticeship training provided off the job varies across the UK as England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales are in charge of their own training budgets, but in most nations training for young people is at least partly if not fully funded. Under the current system, if you are using a training provider, the funding for the training will usually go directly to the provider. If you are running your own Apprenticeship training, you can apply for direct funding (providing your training will be accredited) via the relevant body in your nation (see Table 2).

Funding varies, and there are often different grants and incentives available, so we recommend

you regularly check the website of your relevant government body (for example the National Apprenticeship Service in England). There can be a levy charged to public sector employers, who are expected to contribute more towards the training fee.

However, don't forget that the apprentice is your employee, so you need to pay their wages.

### How long does an Apprenticeship take to complete?

Historically, Apprenticeships were as much about developing an occupational expertise and identity as they were about maturation and becoming a 'responsible citizen'. We recommend conserving this idea of the original Apprenticeship concept, giving apprentices the time to mature and develop their skills. So how long an Apprenticeship may take will depend entirely on the apprentice in question, their prior knowledge and experience and how quickly they learn.

*'We're careful not to treat all our young people as though they're the same people. Some are a lot more mature than others, while others take a while to acclimatise. They're not all the same, and as such require different support.'* **Sandra Wales, Customer Relations Manager, EDF Energy**

The minimum is 12 months; however, most high-quality Apprenticeships would take longer to complete, sometimes up to four years. Someone who was already in paid employment prior to starting the Apprenticeship may take less time to complete an Apprenticeship than someone who is new to the working world. This flexibility makes Apprenticeships such a good tool to train and grow your workforce.

Remember, this is your opportunity to build your workforce of the future, so you should only end the Apprenticeship if the apprentice has completed their training and if both of you feel that they are ready to be a fullyfledged, confident and productive professional in their selected occupation/trade.

*'British Gas operates a five-year progression programme for their apprentices – that's two years spent as an apprentice – this is very important. However, we then bring them back in years 3, 4 and 5 to refresh their skills and training. We want them to be the best they can be.'* **Simon Eastwood, National Assurance Manager Quality & Design, British Gas Academy**

### What is the cost of an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are generally the most cost-efficient way to deliver workforce training because most

employers will reclaim what they've spent fairly rapidly as the productivity of the apprentice increases.

Having said this, before you develop your Apprenticeship offer, you need to be clear about the direct and indirect investments you need to make; you may even be asked to make a business case. This might include the direct cost, which is the wage paid to the apprentice, and the indirect cost of managing an Apprenticeship and supporting the apprentices (see Section 8 for more details). In some special cases you may also need to contribute to the training costs (see Table 2), depending on the age of your apprentices and where in the UK you are based.

*'We were asked to consider all investment and training costs, so we had to produce a thorough business case. There was definite appetite in the business to invest in our talent but the return on investment was key in the decision to move forward with the Apprenticeship programme.'* **Anouska Ramsay, Head of Talent, Capgemini UK**

### What kind of contract will the apprentice be on?

Apprentices must be hired under an employment contract that follows a prescribed format set out by the Apprenticeships (Form of Apprenticeship Agreement) Regulations 2012 and the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009. Such employment contracts are known as Apprenticeship Agreements. The requirement for an Apprenticeship Agreement between an employer and an apprentice, under the ASCL Act 2009 sections 32–36, came into force on 6 April 2012. An Apprenticeship Agreement is required at the commencement of the Apprenticeship for all new apprentices who started on or after that date, and must be in place for the whole duration of the Apprenticeship.

The ASCL Act makes it clear that the Apprenticeship Agreement is a contract of service and not a contract of Apprenticeship. This reflects the fact that an Apprenticeship is primarily a job rather than training. It also means the apprentice does not have any additional rights over those of other employees, but enjoys employment protection just like an employee.

For more information on the content of an Apprenticeship Agreement and the employment status of apprentices, see Section 7 of this guide.

### What pay will they receive?

The apprentice is your employee, and even though the on- and off-the-job training they will receive is the most important element of that employment



relationship, the apprentice contributes to your organisation's objectives. As such all employed apprentices receive a wage.

The Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage (set by the Low Pay Commission and revised on an annual basis) applies to all 16–18-year-olds and to those aged 19 and over in the first year of their Apprenticeship. The current minimum wage rate for an apprentice is £2.68 per hour. If an apprentice reaches the age of 19 and has completed the first year of their Apprenticeship, an employer must pay at least the full National Minimum Wage rate for those aged 18 to 20. If an apprentice is already 19 and has completed the first year of their Apprenticeship, they must be paid at least the National Minimum Wage rate for their age. It's also important to remember that as the skills of the apprentice develop, their pay should increase accordingly.

However, it's important to remember that paying more pays off, and most employers choose to pay apprentices a significantly higher rate. Aside from ensuring the welfare of your apprentice, there are additional business benefits associated with paying higher rates. Research by unionlearn demonstrates a clear link between Apprenticeship completion rates and pay which helps ensure an employer will see a return on their investment. Paying above the Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage also increases the likelihood that the apprentices will stay on with their employer after completion. Finally, by paying more as an employer you're demonstrating the value of your commitment to the apprentice, helping to create a more engaged and invested workforce.

Finally, many employers provide additional entitlements such as access to bonus and overtime payment schemes. Some apprentices may be eligible for additional benefits such as childcare and transport funding.

Apprentices may also get additional money for essential books, clothing or equipment and receive the same benefits as other employees, such as pension contributions, subsidised canteen and leisure facilities. Again, as mentioned above, you may want to offer to cover their travel and lunch expenses.

For more information on the National Minimum Wage, please see the National Minimum Wage section of the National Apprenticeship Service website ([www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)).

### **PAY, COMPLETION RATES AND QUALITY OF TRAINING – THE UNION'S PERSPECTIVE**

In the history of the union movement's support for Apprenticeships, a founding principle has been that an apprentice should be paid a wage for doing a job, albeit one involving extensive periods of education and training. We strongly recommend that you pay your apprentices a good wage, as research shows that pay is a key factor influencing completion and retention rates. A 2011 research report for unionlearn found that those subjects that appear to have the highest average levels of Apprenticeship salaries also appear to have the highest average retention rates, post-training. This is true of the two highest-paying subject areas, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and Education and Training. So if you invest in your apprentices at the beginning by paying them above the legal minimum, you will be more likely to reap the benefits in terms of commitment and high-quality work later.

To read *Apprenticeship Pay and Conditions Research Report*, and to find out more about Apprenticeship pay, please visit [www.unionlearn.org.uk](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk)

### **What paperwork is required?**

The good news is that there are lots of organisations that can offer you support, advice and guidance on how to begin your Apprenticeship journey as an employer, outline what your obligations are and assist you every step of the way. For a list of agencies in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, see Table 3.

**Table 3: Relevant agencies that offer support for Apprenticeships across the UK**

England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)	Career Wales/Welsh Government (WAG)	Skills Development Scotland	NI direct government services/Department for Employment and Learning
<a href="http://apprenticeships.org.uk">apprenticeships.org.uk</a>	<a href="http://careerswales.com">careerswales.com</a>	<a href="http://skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk">skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://nidirect.gov.uk">nidirect.gov.uk</a>

### Is there any support available for SMEs?

*'We're a small, family-run business and apprentices are our life-blood. Apprentices make up a significant proportion of new staff, and we're proud to have been voted one of the top 100 apprentice employers in the UK.'* **David Barlow, Managing Director, Barlows UK Ltd**

Figures supplied by the National Apprenticeship Service show that 80% of apprentices in the UK are currently employed by businesses with fewer than 200 employees. If you are an SME you might find it more

difficult to recruit an apprentice and not have the structures to develop a full Apprenticeship programme. Some governments provide support for small firms that don't currently hire apprentices, so please check with the relevant body in your nation to find out more about the incentives on offer.

The National Apprenticeship Service has a dedicated team to support small and medium-sized employers that want to find out more about Apprenticeships. For more information, please visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

### APPRENTICESHIPS GRANT FOR EMPLOYERS OF 16–24-YEARS-OLDS (AGE 16 TO 24)

Some organisations in England may be eligible for a £1,500 Apprenticeship Grant for Employers of 16–24-year-olds. The AGE 16 to 24 grant is administered by your training organisation and arrives approximately 13 weeks after the apprentice's start date. Employers can claim support for up to ten apprentices, grants are additional to any apprentice training costs the employer might receive and they do not have to be paid back. To receive the grant, businesses must employ fewer than 1,000 people and must not have enrolled a new recruit or existing employee onto an Apprenticeship programme in the previous 12 months. The scheme, which was originally due to run until December 2014, has been increased by £85 million in 2014–15 and 2015–16 to help businesses grow staff numbers.

For more information visit the National Apprenticeship website [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

### CASE STUDY: KIDS ALLOWED

In 2012 north-west nursery group and small business Kids Allowed launched its own academy to deliver Apprenticeships to school-leavers. Having decided that the company could develop their own qualification to meet their growing skill needs, the Kids Allowed Academy was developed and state-of-the-art facilities were built in which to deliver the learning. The primary objective of the project was to develop people into confident and knowledgeable practitioners; however, additional benefits of delivering their own Apprenticeship programme include a reduction in staff turnover and the ability to 'grow their own' talent and plan for the future. Colleagues who are studying at the academy have already been identified as having the potential to become future managers now that they have the knowledge underpinning their skills.

In order to attract school-leavers, Kids Allowed liaised directly with schools as well as the National Apprenticeship Service to promote the academy and Apprenticeships. Kids Allowed also work in collaboration with Total People to deliver the Apprenticeships. Once recruited, school-leavers are taken on in August and are given eight weeks in the workplace to get to know the work environment and meet their new team. After this time they are enrolled in the academy and start their learning.

Since opening, the academy has been recognised as a Centre of Excellence by CACHE and gained Investors in People in 2012, which highly commended the training Kids Allowed delivers to their colleagues and the career progression it offers.

*'Since the Academy has launched the business has seen many contributions over the first eight months. There are fewer people being recruited externally into a management role as we are able to promote from within. As well as this contributing to the retention of our staff, it has also reduced the training costs associated with bringing a new person into a management role and teaching them the "Kids Allowed Way".'* **Carla Rogers, Director of People and Operations**



## Can I design and run an Apprenticeship programme that runs across the UK?

Skills and training are devolved policy areas; this means that England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have their own Apprenticeships policy and programmes that differ in terms of their levels, funding, qualifications and even legal requirements. This guide aims to provide support for employers delivering Apprenticeships across the UK and although it aims to provide you with an overview of the different structures and approaches, it does

not necessarily capture every detail relevant to each individual nation, so please check with your relevant public body.

However, the key features (high quality, placing the apprentice at the heart of the programme, a focus of on-the-job learning from a professional and fair access) and the approach you take to designing and running your Apprenticeships (as part of your workforce strategy, rather than an add-on) should remain the same across nations and regardless of policy and funding variations.

## MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS IN SCOTLAND

In Scotland, many Modern Apprenticeships are funded through Skills Development Scotland ([www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)). Skills Development Scotland can support new starts or existing employees under 25 by contributing towards the cost of training.

### The elements of Modern Apprenticeships include:

- Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) – the sector/industry-based vocational element or industry equivalent
- a technical certificate to show that apprentices understand the underpinning theory or knowledge, where appropriate
- core skills.

### Frameworks

Modern Apprenticeship frameworks are developed by Sector Skills Councils and approved by the Modern Apprenticeship Group. Their number is constantly growing as new frameworks are developed in different sectors. There are many job roles available, ranging from accountancy to plumbing, business administration to engineering.

### Levels

Modern Apprenticeship levels are measured against the Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) standards. Modern Apprenticeships are available from SVQ Level 2 through to SVQ Level 5, although most are set at SVQ Level 3. Depending on the industry, there may be a requirement to undertake an industry-related technical certificate. Additionally, other qualifications may be undertaken during the Modern Apprenticeship programme. All Modern Apprenticeships include training around core skills.

Source: Modern Apprenticeship Toolkit, Scottish Union Learning

## **APPRENTICESHIPS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

ApprenticeshipsNI is the flagship programme in Northern Ireland. The programme is currently funded by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL).

ApprenticeshipsNI offers training to 16-year-olds across a wide range of Apprenticeships at Levels 2 and 3. ApprenticeshipsNI are open to those who have reached school-leaving age, are either employed or about to take up paid employment as an apprentice with a company based in Northern Ireland, are working a minimum of 21 hours a week and meet the entry requirements for their chosen Apprenticeship. The apprentice is in paid employment from day one. The apprentice follows a national training framework which leads to attainment of a competence-based qualification at Level 2 or 3, essential skills and a knowledge-based qualification.

There are around 100 Apprenticeships to choose from, which can take between two and four years to complete depending on the level of study. They have been devised by industry bodies together with the Sector Skills Councils and are therefore tailored to ensure they meet the needs of your industry.

As Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes, most of the training is 'on the job' with you as the employer. This is usually four days a week. The rest is provided 'off the job', one day a week. For those apprentices aged under 25, the full costs of the 'off-the-job' training for the duration of the Apprenticeship will be paid. Fifty per cent of funding will be paid for the 'off-the-job' training for participants aged 25 and over for the duration of their Apprenticeship in specified areas (to find out more visit the NIDirect website).

# 3 A workforce planning approach to Apprenticeships

To make the most of your Apprenticeship offer, you should see this as a long-term approach to grow your own workforce, helping you to ensure that the skills you need stay in your organisation – even if your employees leave or retire – and helping you to anticipate future skills needs. This will give you an edge over competitors in today's tough market.

## How do Apprenticeships fit with your workforce and human resource planning?

Successful organisations see high-quality Apprenticeships as a way to grow an engaged, committed workforce that has the right skills to deliver high-quality products and services. A survey conducted by the CIPD's Learning to Work programme found that nearly nine out of ten employers agree or strongly agree that apprentices are a cost-effective way of building up the skills of the workforce. For reasons such as this, 65% of employers now offer programmes specifically aimed at attracting young talent – including Apprenticeships.

*'We were facing a situation where we would find ourselves missing an entire generation of talent if we didn't act.'* **James Lawrence, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Visa Europe**

## How do I know whether Apprenticeships are right for my organisation?

In England alone, more than 150,000 employers in over 200,000 workplaces offer Apprenticeships, covering more than 170 industries and 1,500 job roles. Apprenticeships are no longer reserved for traditional crafts professions, but can help develop vocational expertise in every sector and in many occupations.

## CASE STUDY: TELEFONICA

Talentum is Telefonica's new European initiative to hire and inspire the brightest talent, including Apprenticeships, internships and graduate programmes. The aim of Talentum is to double the proportion of young people working in the organisation by 2015, create a sustainable workforce that better reflects the customer base and increase fresh thinking in the business. Launched in October 2012, Talentum has already increased Telefonica's apprentice numbers from 45 to 152.

The success of the programme has enabled Telefonica to grow into areas of the business that previously did not offer opportunities for young people; areas which now benefit from the skills and behaviours that young people bring. However, Talentum has also served as a pipeline to increase the diversity of Telefonica's workforce, particularly for underrepresented groups; for example, 40% of 'Talentees' are female, a significant shift in a traditionally male industry.

UK HR Director Ann Pickering says:

*'We need to harness the potential of young unemployed people in the UK, help them on their journey to work; after all, it's their skills that will make Britain digital. To truly transform Telefonica into a more digitally focused company, its things like Talentum that helps to achieve that goal.'*

*'A recent Telefonica survey valued the unutilised digital skills in the UK youth community at £6.7 billion. By harnessing the skills of young people, including apprentices, Telefonica is incorporating the best talent as they create an industry-leading company, more flexible, global, digital and customer-focused.'*

## HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Higher Apprenticeship in Human Resource Management allows you to develop knowledge and HR skills while being employed and earning a salary. The programme is underpinned by a CIPD Level 5 Applied Diploma in Human Resource Management and also leads to Associate professional membership of the CIPD on successful completion of the programme. So you get to earn a real salary without the burden of university fees:

- Get a professionally recognised qualification.
- Gain immediate and relevant skills to fast-track your career.
- Build a professional network for the future.
- Receive CIPD member benefits and support.

### The employer's perspective – San Johal, HR Director, The Landscape Group

The Landscape Group, based in Coventry but with branches UK-wide, creates and maintains green spaces for local authorities, housing associations and builds landscapes at high-profile sites such as Salford Media City and the London 2012 Athlete's Village. The company began taking on apprentices in 2010, and currently employs 35, the majority of whom work towards Intermediate Apprenticeships in Horticulture. In October 2013, the company expanded its Apprenticeships, offering a Higher Apprenticeship in Human Resource Management for the first time.

*'We have a strategy of "grow our own", and hiring apprentices is our way of bringing new talent into the company. We also knew that hiring an apprentice in the HR team would also set a good example to other departments. In fact, it has worked so well that we are currently recruiting for our second HR apprentice. We're committed to building our own talent in this way, because we can work with a blank slate – no preconceptions – and fully mould apprentices into company-minded individuals. We are well on our way towards the target of apprentices constituting 5% of our permanent workforce.'*

### The apprentice's perspective – Danielle Forrester, Crosby Management Training/Walter Smith Fine Foods

*'No two days are the same for me. One day I could be helping in the company's accounts department, carrying out risk assessments and undertaking administration for performance reviews, and the next I could be attending careers fairs and telling others about what I'm doing! It's varied, which keeps my mind active and I've learned so many key skills as a result of my Apprenticeship; organisation, dedication, attention to detail and undertaking my own research if I'm unsure of an answer. But best of all I have the opportunity to learn and develop myself every day, and help others progress in their jobs too. I feel like I'm making a real difference. The only advice I can give is to give it a try. I can see my goal and know what I want to be in five years' time. HR isn't easy and requires concentration and passion for the career, but if you have what it takes, an Apprenticeship could be for you – give them a go!'*

For more information on the Higher Apprenticeship in Human Resource Management, please visit [cipd.co.uk/qualifications/higher-apprenticeships](http://cipd.co.uk/qualifications/higher-apprenticeships)

Organisations that run highly successful Apprenticeship programmes do so for a reason: they are very clear about the role the apprentice will fill at the end of the programme. Ideally the role profile should be developed with the future business processes in mind and should define the skills required, the knowledge to inform the skills (further education) and a clear behavioural framework for the apprentice to work towards.

Once the role profile has been developed and understood by everyone involved with the apprentice, an appropriate training framework can be identified with the Sector Skills Council and good training providers engaged. Some training will be given by in-house 'subject-matter experts'; good-quality 'train the trainer' programmes ensure that this training is effective and should be seen as an investment in the individual company and the Apprenticeship programme.

*'Young people must have a clear and defined role to fill. It's so important they're not just left making tea.'*

**Chris Wright, Education Producer, Royal Exchange Theatre**

If you keep the apprentices in your organisation, you will reap the full benefits of that investment – which is why some employers guarantee their apprentices a job at the end of the Apprenticeship. This may not always be possible, but we strongly recommend that you think about options to integrate the apprentices in your workforce as part of your workforce planning and ideally before you offer Apprenticeship placements. Recruiting apprentices should not be a short-term fix for imminent skills needs – although they can help to address these too – but a long-term way to grow your own workforce (see further details in Section 10).

*'I am currently in the third year of a Higher Apprenticeship programme at Visa Europe. In our third year we specialise in a role that suits our skills and interests. The idea is that we gain knowledge and experience in this role over the 12 months then progress into a job on completion of the Apprenticeship programme. I have specialised in project management. I complete the Apprenticeship in September this year, and my aim is to migrate straight into a project manager role here at Visa Europe.'* [Rory completed his Apprenticeship two months early and has now graduated after securing a promotion into a project manager role.] **Rory Hatherell, Alliance Project Manager, Visa Europe**

# 4 Getting buy-in from the rest of your organisation

You've worked out the essentials of your Apprenticeship offer, but now you need to get buy-in from senior leaders as well as the rest of the organisation. This is important because, without getting your workforce on board, you won't be able to get the support you need for the high-quality on-the-job training your apprentices should receive. Furthermore, your senior managers may be interested in the wider benefits of running Apprenticeship schemes to your organisation.

## What is the benefit of employing an apprentice compared with the cost?

Apprentices represent new talent that can help you to achieve your organisational goals by helping reduce skills shortages and offering a way to 'grow your own' workforce. Not only that, but apprentices are cost-effective because they learn while working on the job and, in many cases, the Government contributes to, if not fully funds, the cost of learning. Furthermore, taking on an apprentice can create opportunities for existing members of your workforce to develop their management, mentoring and other skills which bring additional benefits to the business.

In terms of the return on investment linked to Apprenticeships, 41% of employers say that their apprentices make a valuable contribution to the organisation during their training period, while a further third report that apprentices add value within their first few weeks. Government estimates suggest that in 2012/13, gaining an apprentice raised an employee's gross productivity by £214 per week, and English Apprenticeship completions between 2012/13 and 2021/22 are expected to contribute £3.4 billion of net productivity gains to the UK economy in real terms. As these figures show, the investment is well worth making.

*'We used labour turnover reports which showed the length of service and the numbers leaving. It was then very easy to show that bringing in young people could help to address this. It's easy to see when it's presented like that.'* **Robert Allan, HR Director, Apex Hotels**

## Will employing apprentices help my employer brand?

Most employers find that investing in the skills of their workforce also helps their employer and business brand by demonstrating their commitment to delivering high-quality products and services as well as to their long-term workforce strategy and people. In other words, your clients will be reassured that you will have the skills to carry out their current and future contracts.

To facilitate this, the National Apprenticeship Service provides the Employer Badge for organisations that employ apprentices. The Employer Badge can be displayed by businesses on their websites, stationery and marketing materials to highlight their commitment to Apprenticeships. Employers can also request an Apprenticeship Employer Certificate available for all employers who have apprentices.

For more information on either the Employer Badge or Apprenticeship Employer Certificate, please visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

## What is the impact of Apprenticeships for the rest of the workforce?

Managing and mentoring an apprentice is a great development opportunity for your existing workforce, especially for people who do not currently have people management responsibilities. Providing you are able to give them the support they need, the responsibility will help them to develop their management and leadership skills. It also helps your organisation to develop its identity and organisational values.

*'Working with young people can provide a great chance to help more junior members of the organisation who aren't quite experienced enough to manage staff, but who need to hone and develop their management skills.'*

**Michelle Hoey, Talent Fulfilment Lead, Accenture**

Investing in skills and training helps with employee engagement and growing your own workforce results in greater commitment than recruiting from the outside. If you have a recognised trade union, you should involve them in the development of your Apprenticeship programme. Unions can support apprentices and ensure that the scheme works for everyone. For more information go to [www.unionlearn.org.uk/Apprenticeships](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/Apprenticeships)

## How do I convince line managers to take on young people?

Most organisations report difficulties convincing potential line managers of the benefits of Apprenticeships when setting up and recruiting people into the scheme: often stemming from concerns around managing a young person, especially in the 16–18 age group. In some cases, the line manager may require additional support or training to be able to give the apprentice the care they need (see Section 8 on supporting your apprentice) or advice on how to induct them into the wider team and support once in post. Remember, all apprentices are different, and therefore require different support.

*'It's about the individual ... not just seeing us as a cohort.'* **Apprentice, unionlearn's 'Voice of the Apprentice' network**

Make sure you communicate your decision to offer Apprenticeship place(s) early on and get as many of your existing staff to help with the design of the programme – to achieve their buy-in, but also to ensure that the Apprenticeship really reflects your organisation's needs, that the Apprenticeship is high quality and that you are clear about the role (see previous section) the apprentice will play in your organisation. You should also communicate to your existing workforce that apprentices are there to learn from them and not to replace any existing workers.

*'The key is to have a mature communications plan to make people aware of what's going on. We made sure all the line managers fully understood what the apprentices were here to do, so there's no miscommunication.'* **Lesley Clarke, Operational Lead – Technical Apprenticeship Programme, Barclays**

## RECRUITING YOUNG APPRENTICES: HOW TO INVOLVE LINE MANAGERS

The line manager is key to determining the success of an apprentice entering the business. As such, winning their support and ensuring they feel comfortable with their new responsibilities is an important step. However, there are things you can do to help facilitate this, as The Aspire Group demonstrates:

- **Identify Apprenticeship champions in leadership and senior management teams:**

*'We had the leadership of the top two key figures within the group talking about the project and setting out their expectations. This provided clear leadership and direction.'*

- **Involve line managers in key decision-making:**

*'We did a lot of engagement work with managers, asking them what type of opportunities they could create.'*

- **Share examples of best practice and aspirations:**

*'We really sold the success stories.'*

- **Show colleagues how they can get involved:**

*'Each apprentice has a mentor, which has led to a large amount of colleagues getting involved in supporting young people. This has had a profound effect on our colleague engagement scores. For example, within the Best Companies survey, our scores for "giving something back" are higher than the 3-star status, which we're really proud of.'*

**Ele Morrissey, Group Head of People and Performance, The Aspire Group**

For more information and guidance on managing an age-diverse workforce, read our Learning to Work guide *Managing Future Talent*, available at [cipd.co.uk/managingfuture](https://www.cipd.co.uk/managingfuture)



# 5 The right provider for your training needs

Once you have established the role apprentices will play in your organisation, the next step is to find the right provider that will deliver the off-the-job training element. The quality of the provider is very important; you need to make sure the training matches your organisation's needs and is both job-specific and transferable. You need to actively manage the relationship with your provider and negotiate a package that fits your needs.

## What do I do first?

Most employers work in partnership with training providers to deliver their Apprenticeship programme. To get the best results, it is important to choose a training provider that will meet your business requirements and fit your company culture and approach. Advice on the National Apprenticeship Service website recommends considering your requirements before approaching a provider, paying particular attention to the following:

- the business area and job role (and potential frameworks and levels)
- the size and scope of the programme (numbers, geography and age groups)
- whether you will integrate your in-house training materials.

## How do I identify good providers?

All providers are quality-assured by a number of external bodies in the four nations (Ofsted in England, the Education and Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in Scotland, and Estyn in Wales all perform similar functions). So looking at the results of their assessment is a good starting point. Then narrow it down to a number of providers and invite them in for an interview. Remember, the training they deliver should match your needs, so make sure you manage the relationship with the provider adequately.

For more information on finding providers, visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

## How to make sure the training corresponds to your organisation's needs

While an inspection grade is a good starting point, it is important to understand that the grading system was designed for schools and colleges. When reading the report, you need to drill down to the actual grade for the Apprenticeship provision you require (for example, the grade for engineering if you wish to attract engineering apprentices). As a rule of thumb, we would

recommend to engage with providers that have been graded at least as '2 – Good' or above.

When selecting your training provider, it is important to ascertain that they have trainers and assessors who understand your business and can teach your apprentice the relevant units in the QCF framework (occupational competence). The frameworks are usually very broad and it is important that your chosen provider is in a position to deliver units that fit your business requirements rather than a generic qualification.

If you are working in a supply chain, it might be worthwhile to check if some of these companies are already working with someone. Equally, if you have a supply chain you should also consider tying them into your training provision to ensure quality across the board.

The approach you adopt will differ according to the scale and complexity of your requirements, but you should certainly select carefully. If you are planning a programme of a significant size or profile, the National Apprenticeship Service recommends you undertake a formal tender process. This will enable you to test the market and understand the different approaches to delivery. You will also be able to ask questions and clarify ways of working to understand whether the provider is right for you.

Documents to help select a suitable provider are available at [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

## How do you manage the relationship once you have found a provider?

Once you have selected your provider, we recommend you establish a service-level agreement that outlines both parties' responsibilities and deliverables. You then need to select a person in your organisation that can act as a point of contact for the training provider and, if necessary, can also liaise between the training provider and your apprentices. Make sure this person regularly checks with your apprentices how the training is going



### **'COLD CALLING' OF PROVIDERS: IDENTIFY GOOD AND BAD PRACTICE**

Providers may call you to offer their training services. This is not a problem generally as it can lead to successful collaborations. Most providers have been through a strict, tendered selection process. However, there is also some bad practice out there, which is when providers offer to deliver short-term Apprenticeships to your existing staff. We recommend that you do not engage with this activity and, if they call you repeatedly, report them to your relevant government body in this area (for example NAS in England or DfES in Wales).

as well as with their line manager to ensure the quality of the provision.

#### **Recruiting apprentices**

In the current system, many employers rely on providers to source, screen and recruit young people. Providers act as brokers between the employer and the candidate, both during the recruitment process and after the match is complete. Providers gauge Apprenticeship candidates for functional skills and attitudes and prepare them for interview. Similarly they assist employers with apprentice job design, scheduling interviews and supporting them through the Apprenticeship. The practices that they demonstrate can have a significant impact on whether a match will happen, the expectations of the learner and the employer of each other, and the sustainability of the match.

Although this service is available, we recommend that employers engage with the entire process of recruiting an apprentice, including design of the Apprenticeship role with duties adequate to the skill

level of the young person, formulating an attractive job advert and selecting the best candidate as that would help manage the employment relationship once the Apprenticeship begins. Make sure to avoid age discrimination and consider government support in covering the training contribution. Also, remember to adjust the recruitment process to the skill and

### **AGREEING AN SLA WITH YOUR PROVIDER**

Capita Talent Partnerships provide Traineeship and Apprenticeship training.

They draw up a bespoke service level agreement and contract with each employer they deal with, containing clear key performance indicators (KPIs) for things such as success rates. They also make sure employers understand how funding works and any charges that the employer may incur.

*'Each employer is as unique as each learner and requires a tailor made agreement'* **Richard Marsh,**  
**Operations Director Capita Talent Partnerships**

experience level of the young person. Consider a skill-based/strength-based rather than competency-based interview approach.

#### **What do I do if things go wrong?**

The contract and service-level agreement is held between the employer and provider. If the service level delivered by the provider is not satisfactory, the employer should liaise with the provider. If a solution cannot be found to improve the situation, the employer has the right to seek an alternative provider.

# 6 Recruiting an apprentice

You can recruit your apprentice either directly or ask for some help from your relevant agency. However, there are a number of ways you can ensure you attract and recruit the best talent available. Advertising your Apprenticeship in an accessible and simple way is one thing you can do. It's also a good idea to consider adapting your interview technique for young candidates with little or no experience of working life. In most cases, traditional recruitment methods might not be suitable; instead, you could opt for some more-informal ways of getting to know them or switch to strengths-based questioning. The more time and care spent at this stage, the more successful you and your apprentice will be.

## What do I need to consider when recruiting an apprentice?

Recruiting an apprentice presents very different challenges from recruiting an older, more experienced worker. Firstly, it is likely that the interview you've asked them along to will be the first of their professional life. In which case, they may have difficulty demonstrating their skills and experience when asked to – partly because of inexperience, but also because they may not have worked before and aren't sure how to discuss their school and extra-curricular activities in this way.

It's also important to remember that when recruiting an apprentice, you're not looking for the finished product. You're looking for the capacity to learn, develop and grow. This can be a useful guide during any apprentice recruitment process.

*'Young people's lack of any scar tissue or baggage makes managing them interesting and fun, and is ultimately an advantage.'* **Peter Atherton, Change Delivery Consultant, Santander**

## Is there any support available when recruiting an apprentice?

There are many ways to recruit an apprentice and a wide range of support is available to help.

In England you can ask the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) for help; their advisers will meet you to discuss your needs face-to-face. Apprenticeship vacancies can be advertised like any other job, or alternatively employers in England can advertise on the NAS vacancy matching service. This is a free online service whereby employers and learning providers can advertise and manage vacancies, and potential apprentices can search, apply and then manage their applications for Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships opportunities anywhere in England. Using this service brings many benefits for employers, including:

- an easy and free way to advertise vacancies and access applicants from all across England
- the ability for vacancies to be displayed on other websites with links back through to Apprenticeship vacancies, enabling the wider promotion and increased visibility as an Apprenticeship employer, and access to a wider pool of potential successful candidates
- large employers, training providers and partners can bulk-upload vacancy details directly from their systems, saving time and resources and enabling a quicker turnaround on posting vacancies
- allows employers who use their own recruitment sites to track successful individuals who apply from Apprenticeship vacancies, removing the need for manual intervention.

In Wales employers can use the Apprenticeship Matching Service. This is a separate system hosted on the Careers Wales website: [www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

In many sectors, group training associations (GTAs) can help smaller employers who do not have the resources to train apprentices directly. Initially GTAs typically involved small groups of firms in the same industry and based in the same local area, and were set up in response to common difficulties in attracting and training young people. Now, GTAs are not-for-profit organisations providing support on accessing and managing training for a group of employers to encourage their involvement in Apprenticeships. In England, some employers, especially smaller organisations, may also turn to Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) to access apprentices. These ATAs employ the apprentice directly and hire them out to employers, effectively operating as an employment agency. The ATA outsources the training activity for the Apprenticeship to training providers. The crucial difference is that an ATA employs the apprentice, whereas a GTA only offers training to apprentices who are employed directly by an employer.

Furthermore, because of the casual nature of the relationship between the employer and the apprentice, ATAs are a cause for concern for many unions. A direct employment relationship between an employer and apprentice will always be better for your organisation, especially as this allows you to take a more strategic, long-term approach (see Section 3 on workforce planning) and embed the apprentices in your organisational culture.

For advice on using GTAs and ATAs, please visit the National Apprenticeship Service website for more information.

### How do I recruit directly from schools?

A good way to attract high-quality candidates is to engage with your local schools. You could run information stands at open days, attend parent evenings and invite young people to visit your company. By doing this you also ensure that information about your opportunities reaches the parents and guardians of potential apprentices who, especially for the 16–18 cohort, significantly influence the decision-making

process of the would-be apprentice. Having a presence in local schools allows you to establish an image and relationship with your local community, which will help you to recruit talent in the future.

Signing up to Inspiring the Future is an easy and simple way of getting into schools to talk about the opportunities available in your organisation, including Apprenticeships, while helping to prepare young people for the working world more generally. The CIPD is working with the charity Education and Employers Taskforce on a free initiative to get HR professionals to volunteer in schools to help students with their CVs, conduct mock interviews and deliver career insight talks. To find out more or to sign up to Inspiring the Future, visit [cipd.co.uk/inspiringfuture](http://cipd.co.uk/inspiringfuture)

### How should you select the candidate?

The majority of would-be apprentices will have no prior experience of work, and therefore no examples to draw upon during a competency-based interview; this is particularly true when recruiting 16–18-year-olds straight out of school or college. They might also not

## CASE STUDY: STRENGTHS-BASED INTERVIEWING

Over the last ten years a new style of interview has become popular with employers recruiting school-leavers, apprentices and graduates. The strengths-based interview is used in early career recruitment at Barclays, EY, Microsoft, Morrisons, Nestlé, and Standard Chartered Bank.

There are a couple of key differences between a strengths-based interview and other types of interview; these include:

- Greater variety of question styles – you might be asked open, closed, hypothetical/situational, past experience questions.
- There are normally two questions per strength. This could mean you are asked between 16 and 24 questions (so have your examples ready).
- You will be asked about experience and feeling.
- There is little or no probing.
- Questions are rapid fire and you will be expected to share examples and responses on a wide variety of topics.

So why are so many youth recruiters adopting a strengths-based interview?

- 1 Young people prefer it – 75% of Barclays graduate candidates stated they enjoyed going through the strengths-based interview more than other interviews they had attended.
- 2 It is associated with innovation – 72% of Nestlé's graduate candidates stated that they thought Nestlé was a more innovative recruiter for adopting strengths based interviewing.

If you want to know your strengths better, log on and try out the free strengths assessment on Jobmi ([www.jobmi.com](http://www.jobmi.com)).

For more information on strengths-based interviewing, see *Recruiting Young People: Top tips for employers*, available at [cipd.co.uk/learningtowork](http://cipd.co.uk/learningtowork)

have the same confidence and ability to communicate their skills as workers who have been in the labour market for a longer period of time.

In this case, traditional competency-based interviewing is not always appropriate. Instead, we recommend using more-informal approaches assessing their enthusiasm rather than academic credentials and technical skills or by using strength-based interviewing (please see box for some examples of more-informal methods). What's more, these techniques needn't be reserved for your Apprenticeship recruitment, but can be used to help you recruit less experienced workers into graduate schemes, school-leaver programmes and entry-level positions.

You could also consider holding an assessment centre where candidates demonstrate their potential through group exercises that are observed by their potential managers. The activities could be designed to measure their potential, aptitude and/or skills depending on your organisation's requirements, and scored against an outcome-based criteria.

### **Be clear about what the Apprenticeship entails**

Be clear on the tasks you want the apprentice to carry out and the job they will be trained to do. While this will reflect your organisation's needs and the Apprenticeship framework for your sector, it should also be tailored to the apprentices' individual abilities. You should also be clear about potential progression routes upon completion of the Apprenticeship and what the employment possibilities are. Being really clear about what you are looking for will also help you to find someone who is the right fit for your organisation.

*'We want our young employees to be a part of the team. Not apart from the team.'* **Lesley Clarke, Apprentice and Graduate Programme Manager, Barclays**

## **WHAT SHOULD YOU LOOK FOR WHEN YOU RECRUIT APPRENTICES?**

What you should look for when recruiting a young person will need to be, as for the recruitment of any other member of staff, connected to the core activity of your organisation. For example, Siemens look for good engineering skills, so they do aptitude tests that will tell them if somebody has the right cognitive skills and they also send their candidates up on a tower to test their ability to cope with heights if they would be working on wind farms.

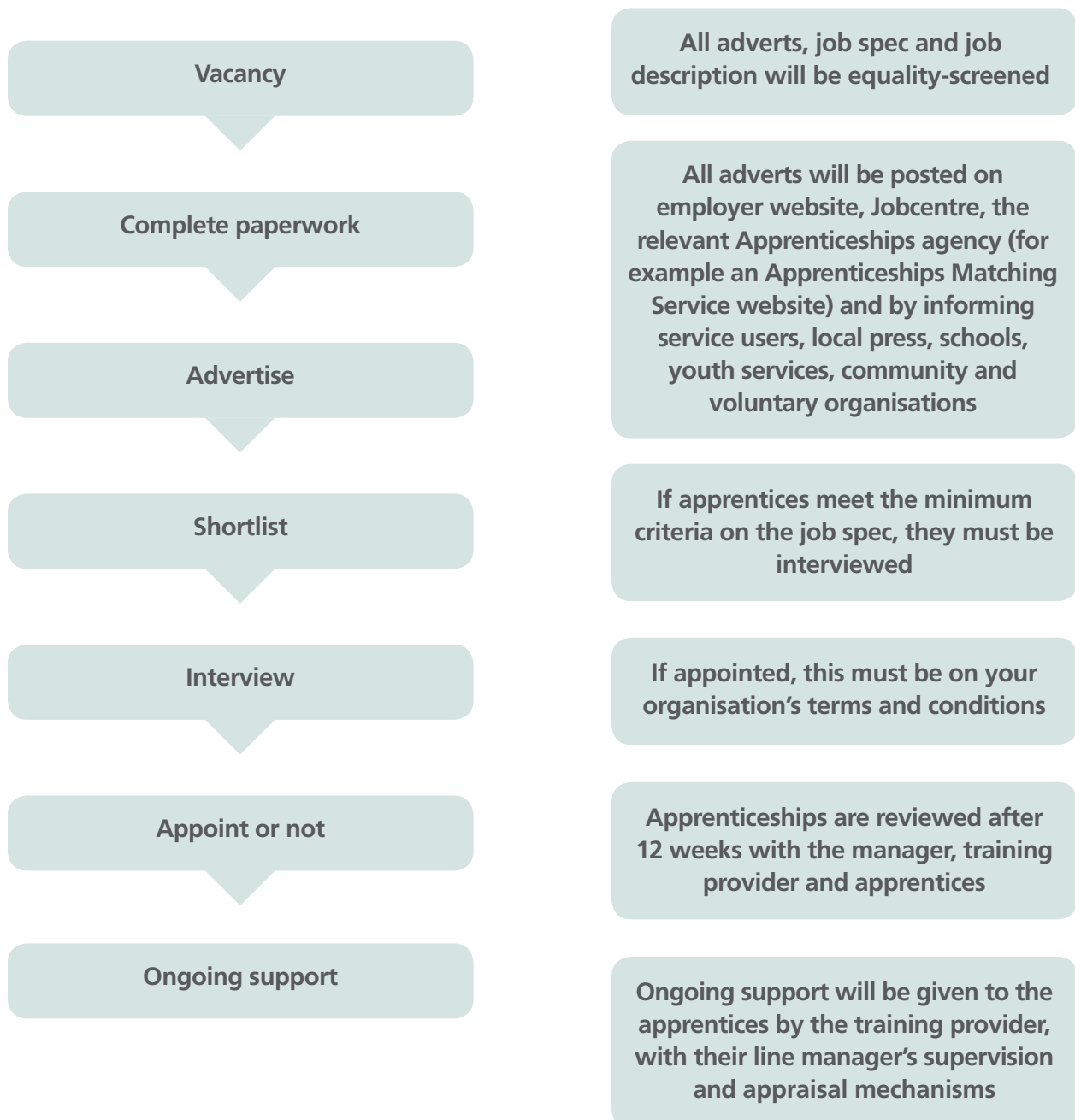
*'Most 16-year-olds have the same CV,' says **Martin Hottass, UK Skills Business Partner at Siemens**, 'so we ask them to bring in something they made in school. This gives them something to talk about and can also demonstrate their engineering skills.'*

*'Diversity and inclusion is key to having an effective workforce – especially in childcare. Many Apprenticeships have a minimum entry requirement, which is a barrier to some people who have great behaviours and a great attitude but lack academically from enrolling on a course. Kids Allowed removed these requirements and recruited on behaviours with the attitude that we can teach you the skills you need to pass the course, however we can't change your attitude. We have had people who have been struggling, but who are now on track to pass their level 2!'* **Carla Rogers, Director of People and Operations, Kids Allowed**

### Apprenticeship scheme recruitment stages

When you have established where your Apprenticeship position will fit within your overall workforce planning, the appointing managers will review the job roles and your recruitment process will take place (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Apprenticeship scheme recruitment stages



Source: UNISON

## CASE STUDY: STRENGTHS-BASED INTERVIEWING

West Sussex County Council recognises the value that Apprenticeships bring and decided to set up its own Apprenticeship programme, supported by the unions. The first challenge was to convince managers across the organisation to offer an Apprenticeship, but once this was overcome we soon had many applications for various roles (from business administration to care assistant). Sometimes, disappointingly, we did not receive as many applications for some Apprenticeships so we had to do more to raise our profile with potential applicants.

### How did we recruit the apprentices?

We recruit via the National Apprenticeships Vacancy service; this is managed via our college and learning providers to ensure good national publicity and access to local pools of candidates. We also advertised on our own job vacancy page.

### What did we do to promote the Apprenticeship programme?

We started a marketing and communications campaign to raise the profile of our Apprenticeship offer, creating some bespoke branding (which was designed by a young person working with us), a website page, a weekly newsletter, A5 literature, pull-up banners and posters. Over a period of nine months we carried out the following activities promoting our scheme to a wide audience across the county:

- library information roadshows, radio broadcasts and press releases
- a campaign with Jobcentre Plus, visits to local job fairs and schools
- good news stories and movies about apprentices
- a flyer which was enclosed with all payslips, staff information events and staff newsletters
- promotion of work experience placements for college students
- meeting with career advisers and other supported employment agencies in our area
- we support activities during National Apprenticeship Week (March).

### So what worked well?

Our internal campaign with staff was received very well and many employees alerted friends and family members to the opportunities available. In particular, the payslip leaflets and staff roadshows attracted a lot of attention. Our bespoke literature was also very popular, so much so that we regularly reprint and keep these up to date. Our weekly e-newsletter was also very successful and cost-effective, as it is relatively quick and easy to produce and can be distributed to a wide-ranging audience (for example, career advisers, Leaving Care social work team managers, Jobcentre Plus staff and customers).

### Lessons learned

It was very important to have sufficient employee resources available to respond to enquiries and help maintain enthusiasm. We also had to be knowledgeable of other Apprenticeships and opportunities on offer to signpost to people who we could not directly help onto this – often through a local college or the National Apprenticeships website.

If we did this again we would develop a communications campaign earlier. We would also be better prepared for literature demand and order more stock: purchasing in bulk is easier on the purse strings!

# 7 Employment legislation and Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have now been assimilated into the employment relationship and are covered by employment law. This means that both the apprentice and the employer have rights and responsibilities.

## Do apprentices have the same status as other employees?

Apprentices are employed by you and have the same rights as any other employee. Apprentices are now subject to the same rights, responsibilities and obligations as normal employees. This means the normal principles in relation to breach of contract and unfair dismissal claims will apply.

As such you will be required to issue a contract of employment. The contract of employment is normally for a minimum of 30 hours, but where this is impossible an absolute minimum of 16 hours must be met and the duration of the Apprenticeship must be extended. However, it's important to be aware that although apprentices should be treated like normal employees, they should be given the necessary time and means to complete studying and training outside of work.

### WHAT DOES THE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT SAY?

Under the Employment Rights Act 1996 (section 230 (1)), an 'employee' means an individual who has entered into or works under (or where the employment has ceased, worked under) a contract of employment. The Act defines a 'contract of employment' as meaning 'a contract of service or Apprenticeship, whether express or implied, and (if it is express) whether oral or in writing.'

## Taking on an apprentice – what do I need to consider?

For an Apprenticeship to be formed it must be recorded in writing. The fixed-term nature of the relationship needs to be understood. Furthermore, you need to take care not to apply age limits to Apprenticeship schemes, so eligibility criterion should be reviewed to ensure they are not indirectly age discriminatory, for example, requiring recent GCSEs. An apprentice can start employment at 15 years old as long as they have left full-time education.

You must also comply with the National Minimum Wage Act. Likewise, you will have obligations under the Working Time Regulations as regards rest breaks and paid holidays, and the usual health and safety obligations akin to those for all staff.

However, you should also make sure you entitle your apprentices to the same benefits as other staff, unless you can objectively justify a decision to treat them differently. Clearly if they are treated differently you could face discrimination claims, including under the legislation protecting fixed-term employees.

## What does the Apprenticeship Agreement need to contain?

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the 'Act') provides that an agreement will be an 'Apprenticeship Agreement' if:

- the apprentice undertakes to work for the employer under the agreement
- the agreement is in the prescribed form
- the agreement states that it is governed by the laws of England and Wales
- the agreement states that it is entered into in connection with a qualifying Apprenticeship framework.

There needs to be an Apprenticeship Agreement in place – this is a legally required written agreement between the employer, learner and training organisation containing the conditions of employment and training of the apprentice. The Apprenticeship Agreement should also include a statement of the skill, trade or occupation for which the apprentice is being trained under the qualifying Apprenticeship framework.

Finally, the requirement to be employed under an Apprenticeship Agreement is a condition for completion of an Apprenticeship. Without it an Apprenticeship certificate cannot be issued.

You can find out more about Apprenticeship Agreements and their requirements, as well as download an Apprenticeship Agreement template, by



visiting the National Apprenticeship Service website, [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

You may also want to consider the following provisions in any written contract:

- the length of the fixed term the Apprenticeship is to last for (there is no set period in the law)
- if the apprentice is under 18, signature by their parent or guardian
- a probationary period before the formal Apprenticeship begins, to make it easier to remove any unsuitable candidates at the outset
- the appointment of a mentor or person with special responsibility for apprentices who will take care of their welfare
- details of how progress will be reviewed and monitored and at what intervals
- the ability to terminate the relationship if the apprentice does not attain the necessary standards after a sufficient opportunity to do so
- requirement for those who leave at the end of the Apprenticeship to pay back certain training fees if they do not stay with you for a stated period of time
- arrangements to transfer the apprentice in the case of redundancy, or at least to make reasonable efforts to find alternative work for them to enable them to complete their training.

### Can I terminate an Apprenticeship?

An employer has no general power to dismiss an apprentice without giving a reason, regardless of whether the individual has acquired protection under the law from unfair dismissal because of length of service.

A contract of Apprenticeship cannot be terminated on the grounds of redundancy, falling short of closure or fundamental change in the employer's enterprise (*Wallace v CA Roofing Services Ltd* [1996] IRLR 435).

If you do try to terminate the relationship early, you could face a claim for damages for wrongful dismissal due to breach of contract, both for the loss of wages for the rest of the term and for compensation for the loss of training and status (*Dunk v George Waller & Son Ltd* [1970] QB 163, 169).

Once an apprentice has served 12 months and qualified for unfair dismissal protection, an employer could be liable for both wrongful dismissal and unfair dismissal.

Generally, you can only terminate an Apprenticeship if the conduct is such that it makes it impossible for you to carry out the central purpose of the relationship

– teaching the apprentice the trade. There is a much higher threshold for performance and conduct issues than applies in a normal contract of employment. You will be expected to manage performance and absence problems in a manner which results in the apprentice achieving the required standards.

In order to dismiss an apprentice and stay the right side of the law, you must be able to show that you had a reasonable and genuine belief that the dismissal was fair. Reasons would include acts of gross misconduct or continual neglect of duties or serious incapacitation to the extent that it's become impossible for you to teach the apprentice (having followed a fair dismissal procedure).

It is vital that you go through a proper disciplinary procedure when dealing with problems and have sufficient evidence that any eventual dismissal is justified. This will include a proper investigation and an opportunity for the apprentice to appeal. Fair grounds might also include a legal reason that the apprentice can no longer work – for example, if driving is a core part of their job and they lose their driving licence.

### CASE STUDY: UNFAIR DISMISSAL

An employment tribunal may not be impressed if an apprentice is fired for a one-off incident. In the case of *Shortland v Chantrill* [1975] IRLR 208, an apprentice was criticised by a managing director about his work and he swore at the director, for which he was dismissed. However, it was held that the dismissal was unfair; one isolated step of impudence did not warrant the termination of an Apprenticeship which had ten months to run.

### The expiry of the fixed term

Apprentices are normally employed under a limited-term contract, with a defined end date or end event. If their employment is not renewed after this date or event, they will be treated as having been dismissed.

However, because apprentices have the same employment rights as other employees in terms of dismissal under the Employment Rights Act 1996, the apprentice would be entitled to receive a written reason for dismissal and the Acas Code would apply. The dismissal would be for 'some other substantial reason' (SOSR), that is, that an Apprenticeship is a once-in-a-lifetime agreement.



# 8 Running a successful Apprenticeship: supporting apprentices

To ensure the success of your Apprenticeships programme, you need to put the apprentice at the heart of your programme and design and build in effective and appropriate support mechanisms. In particular, very young apprentices with no prior experience of the working world need to receive a form of pastoral care from their line manager or mentor. Providing the right practical support and guidance to an apprentice will help ensure they settle in well, develop with your organisation and help contribute to the success of your business.

## Helping your apprentice to learn the ropes

Research by the Institute for Employment Studies for Acas has found that providing a well-thought-through induction is not only valuable for employers in helping an apprentice adapt to the workplace effectively; it is also a source of support that is generally appreciated by the apprentice themselves. A good induction should aim to:

- Help the young person settle into the business and make them feel comfortable in their new surroundings.
- Provide a good induction to the apprentice's role and how they fit in the wider team.
- Provide practical guidance in areas such as working time, breaks, pay, working conditions, dress codes and health and safety.
- Help the apprentice understand their duties and clearly explain the line of authority, including an introduction to the roles of the supervisors and managers.
- Provide reassurance about where they can go for help if difficulties arise.
- Give the apprentice opportunities to get to know their colleagues and to integrate effectively into the wider workplace culture.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for the apprentice to ask questions.

## CASE STUDY: ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, LONDON

For **Bendy Ashfield, Apprenticeship Manager at the Royal Opera House**, ensuring the apprentice induction met the needs of the new incoming recruits meant taking on board feedback from previous apprentices and making changes to aspects of the process, with positive results:

*'The apprentice induction week has been reviewed this year in light of previous experiences. As each Apprenticeship is in a separate backstage department, the various apprentices each year had different start dates. It was found (from discussions with previous apprentices and exit interviews) that a common theme was that they could sometimes feel quite isolated, daunted by the size of the business and complexity of the various departments. Therefore, this year all the new apprentices have been treated as a cohort – with the same start date and spending much of their induction week together.'*

*'This approach helped them form networks with their peers. They were taken around the building as a group and were able to share experiences and views. We made sure we showed them the canteen and allowed them to hang out for a bit, to help them feel more at home in the place. They were also taken to see rehearsals and other departments, making their induction more of an enjoyable experience than just being given "work tasks". They are also introduced to the Apprenticeship Coordinator and the Apprenticeship Manager, as well as their own line manager and their mentor.'*

*'Lunch is also arranged with the second-year apprentices, who offer themselves as an additional resource should they have any questions or problems after the induction.'* **Bendy Ashfield, Apprenticeships Manager, Royal Opera House**

### How do I best support my apprentice?

*'We decided to invest in Apprenticeships as we wanted to offer opportunities to young people and thought HSS was the perfect fit for apprentices. Our people make our company great; we're a friendly, supportive business but our colleagues tell it like it is – perfect for young people starting out in the world of work.'* **Joe Parry, Learning and Development Manager, HSS Hire**

Remember, an apprentice is with you because they want to be – they have made an active choice to learn on the job and a commitment to a specific career, so it is imperative to build on this commitment and give them the appropriate levels of responsibility but also the support they will need to succeed. You can do this by:

- giving apprentices a clear outline of expectations and a safe supportive environment to learn and develop
- encouraging them from the start to own and drive their programme targets and to seek regular feedback to self-assess their performance
- up-skilling and developing line managers so they can coach their apprentice and act as a role model
- putting a workplace learning mentor in place to further enhance the experience, adding and creating a proactive environment that builds on their eagerness, motivation and commitment.

If an apprentice is new to the workplace environment or has a specific learning disability, this should be factored into the programme and additional support provided, for example one-to-one coaching, learning materials

adapted or listening group sessions. Best practice shows that apprentices thrive when they see a joined-up approach and all parties involved working in partnership from the start of their journey.

High-performing programmes are clearly outlined from the apprentice's perspective and adopt a holistic approach, incorporating branding, tone and measures to enhance the experience, not hinder it.

### What level of responsibility would I be expected to give the apprentice?

The level of responsibility you give to your apprentice is your decision; however, you must ensure they have the workplace experience needed to develop the skills and knowledge included in their training programme. You must also ensure they are working within the relevant health and safety regulations for their job role. It will be useful to have regular reviews with the apprentices and, if they are coping well with the task they have to perform, adapt their work plan accordingly.

*'My manager made me visit different departments and try different jobs. It really got me involved. She's really brought me on in leaps and bounds.'* **Apprentice, unionlearn's 'Voice of the Apprentice' network**

### How closely do apprentices need to be managed?

Most apprentices, unless they are part of your workforce already, will be relatively new to the world of work, so the way they are managed is crucial. Just like your other employees, good management and

## THE ROLE OF THE MANAGERS IN GETTING THE BEST OUT OF AN APPRENTICE

The CIPD's Learning to Work programme has produced a guide which draws on a wealth of experience from managers in a range of sectors and sizes of organisation to share best practice on creating a workplace which gives young employees the opportunity to thrive. *Managing Future Talent* makes a number of recommendations designed to ensure young workers feel supported at work, including:

- Communicate, review progress and meet regularly.
- Provide feedback, praise and recognition.
- Provide an appropriate level of autonomy and empowerment.
- Take an interest in the individual.
- Be available to talk if an employee has a question or a problem.
- Be approachable and understanding.

It is likely that these behaviours are especially important in the management and development of apprentices, who, in many cases, are having their first experience of the workplace.

To read *Managing Future Talent* or for more information on supporting and developing young people at work, visit [cipd.co.uk/managingfuture](http://cipd.co.uk/managingfuture)

## CASE STUDY: HSS HIRE – PROVIDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT TO HELP APPRENTICES GROW

HSS Hire – an award-winning supplier of tools, equipment and hire-related services employing over 2,600 colleagues across the UK – is working with Learndirect to provide young people with a rewarding career through Apprenticeships. For Joe Parry, Learning and Development Manager at HSS Hire, providing the right conditions for the young apprentices was vital in ensuring longer-term success:

*'We knew the business would ultimately benefit from investing time and support in the apprentices and we would have ambitious employees capable of making a positive impact. We also knew we could provide apprentices with an industry-leading induction which would equip them with the necessary skills, helping them develop into successful colleagues.'*

In September 2012, HSS Hire decided to run a pilot for apprentices aged 16–18. Joe said: *'We thought this was really important, allowing the apprentices to come into our business and find their future career path. The pilot proved to be hugely successful – from the original 2012 intake, 20 are still with us in full-time roles and our programme has since grown to include over 90 apprentices learning a range of different skills. From this success, we have now embedded the programme within our recruitment process, allowing managers to raise an Apprenticeship vacancy when needed.'*

*'The tangible measure we use to measure the success of the programme is how many apprentices progress to full-time employment within HSS. That is the sole objective of our apprentice programme, getting young people into full-time employment.'*

*'HSS have developed a fantastic working partnership with Learndirect, which has always had the learner at the very centre of everything we do. The key account management and support we receive is excellent. We have continued to constantly improve our Apprenticeship offering and look forward to continuing this journey.'* **Joe Parry, Learning and Development Manager, HSS Hire**

For more information on HSS Hire's Apprenticeships, please visit [www.hssc Careers.co.uk](http://www.hssc Careers.co.uk)

supervision will help the young person to develop more quickly, but this is also about providing support to the individual, in terms of building up their confidence and demonstrating that they can play a positive role in the world of work and become a trained professional. The apprentice's manager should set clear work plans, provide informal coaching, ongoing feedback and evaluate tasks undertaken to aid the apprentice's development.

*'Each of our apprentices has a line manager in their particular department who sits down with them for a catch-up meeting each week, just for half an hour or so. The manager will try to focus on helping the young person adjust to things that could be taken for granted with more experienced workers, such as managing their workload, meeting targets, getting along with colleagues. We encourage them to tell us if they're happy in their role and to let us know of any concerns they have. The idea is to provide motivation and generally to check that they're okay.'* **Chris Wright, Education Producer, Royal Exchange Theatre**

### What do I need to consider when appointing a mentor?

*'My mentor is fantastic. I can go to her about any worries I have and she'll help me explain them to my line manager.'* **Apprentice from unionlearn's 'Voice of the Apprentice' network**

We also strongly recommend that one of your experienced employees acts as a mentor or coach for the apprentice throughout their time with you. A mentor can provide the apprentice with advice and further objective feedback, outside the more formal relationship with their manager. Try to select an employee who is naturally helpful, good with people and has the desire to help a young person in their working life.

*'We want colleagues to come forward to mentor our interns. However, we're clear that it takes real dedication. We need people who are aware of how much time and commitment it takes. Having said that, we also make it clear that, once you do it, you'll want*

*to do it again and again. You get the bug, because it's such a rewarding experience.'* **Nadine Crowe, Corporate Citizenship, Accenture**

### **Could you introduce a buddy scheme?**

A designated 'buddy' can help an apprentice to integrate more quickly and provide support if they encounter any issues which they may not feel comfortable sharing with their line manager or mentor. Many companies use a 'buddy' system, where an experienced worker is nominated to assist the new recruit in all the day-to-day questions that may arise. Buddies provide another layer of informal support, which can also be helpful in preventing young people from feeling isolated.

*'We provide all our first-year apprentices with the support of an apprentice in their second year. It's a great source of friendly advice for a new starter.'*

**James Lawrence, Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Visa Europe**

### **Pastoral care and support**

It is important that apprentices are supported in making the sometimes challenging transition from school or college into work. An apprentice, through naivety or lack of maturity, can fall foul of policies or standards of behaviour in the early days and it is vital that they have a support network in place to guide them through. They will not necessarily know the many things that you take for granted.

Someone like a mentor or, possibly in larger organisations, the person responsible for managing the apprentice programme, needs to be able to act as an advocate, to step in and have those difficult conversations very early before any formal procedures are triggered. Good line managers with effective people management skills can also fill this role by picking up on any issues in terms of performance, behaviour or attendance as soon as they emerge, rather than waiting until they become a problem. Without this sort of support an apprentice can fall foul of disciplinary procedures because they lack skills, knowledge or self-awareness to turn things around.

*'No doubt that if you're taking on 16-year-olds they're going to need more support. You must really care about the young people you bring in, and be interested in them. Get to know them personally, build a bond and retain that bond all the way through.'*

**David Barlow, Managing Director, Barlows UK Ltd**

# 9 Be ahead of the game: an inclusive approach to Apprenticeships

**Apprenticeships aim to provide access to the labour market to a wide range of people – this helps social mobility and, for your organisation, accessing a wider pool of talent will contribute to business success. It will also help to support your employer brand. So how do you ensure equality and diversity in your Apprenticeship programmes?**

## **How do I improve the gender balance in my Apprenticeship places?**

Currently, there is still a great gender disparity within Apprenticeships, both in terms of pay as well as the way women are represented in certain sectors and occupations. As recent research by unionlearn has shown, men and women continue to train in markedly different sectors; while women are significantly under-represented in high-pay sectors (less than 4%), men on the other hand are under-represented in low-pay sectors (6.9%).

Most employers are now trying to address this by targeting women directly and promoting their sector in schools and with parents to change the image of their profession. We advise that you consider early on within your recruitment strategy how to target women better. Unionlearn suggests that you take the following actions:

- publicising positive images of women in industry
- providing equality and diversity training for recruiters/managers
- mentoring and peer support networks in the workplace
- improving pay and conditions
- prioritising collection of data
- ensuring access to flexible working.

For more information on gender and diversity in Apprenticeships, visit the unionlearn website at [www.unionlearn.org.uk](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk)

## **How do I ensure a greater ethnic diversity in the workplace?**

At the moment there is a high level of under-representation of black and minority ethnic communities in Apprenticeship schemes. Some of this disparity is due to the lack of knowledge about Apprenticeships in communities, but according to the TUC, race discrimination also affects entry to Apprenticeships.

You can help to address this situation by, for example:

- making sure you offer Apprenticeship places to minority groups (the National Apprenticeship Service in England and the respective body in the other three nations will be able to help you to do this)
- going into schools to tell young people about available Apprenticeship opportunities in your organisation
- ensure your recruitment practices are inclusive and don't unknowingly discriminate
- pick from the widest available talent pool.

## **How do I provide better access for disabled people?**

Disabled people continue to face severe barriers to participation and equality across society. You should adopt a positive approach to the employment of disabled people. Some apprentices with disabilities will require reasonable adjustments, which both employers and education providers have a duty to provide under the Equality Act 2010. Examples of adjustments might be information available in alternative formats, physical alterations to premises, more time to complete certain tasks or flexible hours in order to make travel arrangements or attend appointments.

## AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH TO APPRENTICESHIPS – THE ASPIRE GROUP

The Aspire Group is a social business that provides housing, training, neighbourhood and business services. With an already successful history of developing trade-based Apprenticeships, The Aspire Group wanted to extend opportunities to other disciplines and increase the number of apprentices across the business.

However, through improvements to their Apprenticeship offering they also wanted to achieve the additional aim of improving the life chances of the young people involved, 35% of whom come from the top 10% of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the UK and often from families who are reliant on benefits. To do so, The Aspire Group worked with their own social enterprise training company, PM Training, which since 1982 has specialised in providing work-based learning for young people who have been excluded from school or involved in criminality, regardless of academic backgrounds and qualifications.

Work started in earnest in 2011 when a project team was assembled involving individuals from HR development, employment and skills, marketing and communications and partnerships team at PM Training. Throughout the project the group worked with managers to achieve buy-in and identify a variety of opportunities, often amending roles to make them suitable for an apprentice to carry out. With two key figures within the group talking about the project and setting out their expectations, colleagues felt supported and encouraged to get involved.

Three years on and The Aspire Group's project to improve opportunities and improve the lives of young people across the UK through Apprenticeships continues to flourish. Since the project began, 353 apprentices have been supported by the group and a further 418 Apprenticeships were created after encouraging organisations in the group's supply chains to take them on. Each apprentice has a mentor to assist them, and a new induction and development programme was implemented specifically to support the new apprentices coming in. Furthermore, using a social return on investment model to measure the social impact of The Aspire Group's activities on group apprentices, it was estimated that for every £1 spent in 2011/12, a social value of £1.53 was generated. The group has also saved £150,000 per annum on agency costs by introducing a Business Administration apprentice pool. However, the benefits don't stop there, as **Ele Morrissey, Group Head of People and Performance**, explains:

*'The standard of our apprentices is high. Several have won awards at local and national level. We're pleased with their achievements, and it demonstrates the quality of our Apprenticeship programme. We're providing young people with a pathway into sustainable work – around 81% of our apprentices have positively progressed into jobs. However, we're really proud to be successfully supporting the young people in our communities, helping to decrease anti-social behaviour and improve regeneration where it's needed. Our scheme has also broken down intergenerational barriers and encourages different generations to come together, for example trade apprentices undertake work for elderly customers in our sheltered communities. We feel like we're really making a difference while also thinking of our business and what it needs.'*



# 10 What happens after the completion of the Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are a pathway into sectors and occupations and a way for you to address existing and future skills shortages. This is why we encourage you to keep the apprentices after completion of the Apprenticeship. Only then will you be able to reap the full benefits of growing your own workforce.

## What happens after the Apprenticeship?

Most apprentices stay with their employer after the completion of their Apprenticeship, so your investment will result in a committed and valuable workforce. You can tailor the time your apprentice spends with you to teach them the skills and knowledge your organisation needs to achieve its goals, giving you an extra pair of

hands and a flexible resource while they are in training and an experienced staff member after completion.

## In-work progression

As part of your strategic workforce planning you should have specific progression routes for trained apprentices. If appropriate, you could also 'pass'

## CASE STUDY: BRITISH GAS ENERGY ACADEMY – PROGRESSING YOUNG PEOPLE THROUGH THE BUSINESS

British Gas is one of the largest suppliers of energy-related services in the country. In 2013 British Gas made over 9 million visits to customers' homes. Ensuring the service they provide is safe and high quality is therefore vital and British Gas has always been committed to investing in skills and continually developing employees, particularly apprentices.

In 2003 British Gas set up their Energy Academy to renew their commitment to Apprenticeships and provide state-of-the-art facilities to ensure their people have the right skills for the right job. Since opening the Energy Academy, six training sites across the UK have been created – one each in Dartford, Thatcham, Leicester, Leeds, Glasgow and Tredgar in Wales. Together they have trained over 5,000 apprentices and in 2013 British Gas invested over £12 million in their academies.

However, British Gas Energy Academy apprentices are learning far more than just the practical skills. Young people undertaking a Level 3 Apprenticeship with British Gas participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award in order to build their confidence, leadership and communication skills. In addition to taking part in expeditions, apprentices undertake volunteering activity in their local community, from working in a charity shop to helping with the local Scouts or Girlguiding group. Lasting a total of 18 months, the Duke of Edinburgh Award culminates in a graduation ceremony at St James's Palace in London.

For **Simon Eastwood at the British Gas Academy**, prioritising an apprentice's development and progression so that their skills grow with the organisation and are recognised over time is vitally important:

*'We're currently training 1,200 apprentices, and we are looking to create even more. However, most importantly for us, our apprentices want to stay with British Gas. In fact, 95% of our engineers stay with the company five years after they have completed their training. With each representing a £30,000 investment, that's great news for us. Out of our 7,000 technical engineers, half have come through an Apprenticeship programme. It's just what we do, and it's something we've always done. It's part of the business. Because all our apprentices have full-time employment from day one, we are not searching for jobs at the end of an Apprenticeship.'*

*'Apprenticeships supply the skills our people need in order to deliver the best service possible. They are win-win for us and our people. That's why we will continue to invest in them for the future.'*

For more information on the British Gas Academy, please visit [www.britishgasjobs.co.uk/](http://www.britishgasjobs.co.uk/)

them on to an organisation in your supply chain with the double effect of ensuring that your suppliers have the right skills to deliver for you and in some cases you could re-charge the training to the employer in question. Your organisation should also establish a variety of progression routes and help people to advance their career in line with company practices. One possible route could also be another Apprenticeship, at a different level or in another sector/occupation.

### **Continuous learning and development**

It is important that once the Apprenticeship is completed the learning does not stop. Every employee should have a personal development plan and this also includes individuals that have just completed an Apprenticeship. Learning can take place in formal settings, by attending organised training events or workshops, or studying for a formal qualification or being taught to acquire a new skill by your manager or a colleague. They can also be informal, such as coaching others, covering others' work when they are on leave, or offering to take on a new project.

### **A high-performance working organisation**

To make the most of your investment in your employees' skills development, you should also ensure that your organisation has working practices in place that allow individuals to use their skills. These so-called high-performance working practices empower individuals instead of controlling them and therefore increase levels of commitment and organisational performance. They cover a range of practices and an overall approach that includes:

- effective recruiting and resourcing of roles in the organisation
- appropriate skills development and training
- practices to improve the engagement, motivation and morale of the workforce
- ensuring skills and motivation are effectively applied by organisational and job design.



# 11 Common myths

There are many assumptions and misconceptions around Apprenticeships. By doing some myth-busting, it's easy to see how an apprentice is the right fit for your business.

## **Apprenticeships aren't relevant for my business unit.**

Not true – here are more than 240 types of Apprenticeship frameworks covering a range of occupational areas such as customer service, business administration, health and social care, team leading and management, youth work and children's care – so have a look at the list of relevant frameworks in the manager's guide to see which one is suitable for your team. If they don't offer you what you need, you can now also design your own framework and get it accredited by the relevant public body in your nation.

## **I can only employ an apprentice for full-time hours.**

That's fine – the minimum an apprentice is able to work and still remain on the Apprenticeship is 30 hours per week. This time can include their training. Although please note that in Wales there is no minimum anymore and part-time employment is allowed.

## **I'll have to spend a lot of time supervising an apprentice – they're resource-intensive.**

Certainly apprentices do need to be supervised – quite a bit at the beginning. But... as skills and experience increase, the apprentice will be able to work on their own initiative and you'll really start to see the benefits.

## **It would not be suitable to have a 16–19-year-old working in my team; the work could be too complex for them.**

Apprenticeships are available to people aged 16 up to 65 years, so there is plenty of scope in finding a suitable person to undertake your role. If your role does require someone to have more experience, it may be that an Advanced Apprenticeship might be more suitable for your business.

## **I am not used to recruiting young people – aren't they very difficult to manage?**

No, young people aren't necessarily more difficult to manage. Like any other of your employees, you have to invest some time and consideration in coaching them and managing their performance. Young people will need some pastoral care – especially at the beginning when they are new to the working world – but otherwise they're just like the rest of your workforce.

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## Useful links

The National Apprenticeships Service in England: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

Apprenticeships in Wales: [www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

Apprenticeships in Scotland: [www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk](http://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)

Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland: [www.delni.gov.uk/Apprenticeshipsni](http://www.delni.gov.uk/Apprenticeshipsni)

To find out more about the Apprenticeships frameworks in your sector: [www.sscalliance.org](http://www.sscalliance.org)

To find out what support is available for SMEs: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Apprenticeships-for-small-business.aspx](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Apprenticeships-for-small-business.aspx)

To contact a unionlearn or Scottish Union Learning representative and find out more about the union's view on Apprenticeships: [www.unionlearn.org.uk/Apprenticeships](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/Apprenticeships) [www.scottishunionlearning.com/Apprenticeships](http://www.scottishunionlearning.com/Apprenticeships)

For more employer case studies, have a look at: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers)



## Today's young people, tomorrow's workforce

The **Learning to Work** programme is led by the CIPD to promote the role of employers in reducing youth unemployment. The CIPD's purpose is to **champion better work and working lives**, which starts with young people being able to access the labour market.

The overall aim of the programme is to promote the business case for investing in the future workforce. We encourage HR professionals to offer a wide range of access routes into their organisations and ensure their recruitment and management practices are youth-friendly. We also promote direct contact with young people via two youth volunteering programmes, **Steps Ahead Mentoring** and **Inspiring the Future**.

[cipd.co.uk/learningtowork](http://cipd.co.uk/learningtowork)



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