



A guide for employers
February 2012



APPRENTICESHIPS THAT WORK

Apprenticeships are an effective means of employers developing their own talent. They also offer a viable alternative to university for people looking for a direct and affordable route to skilled jobs and careers. However, many employers have yet to recognise the full benefits of apprenticeships, even though their value extends to most sectors and occupations.

The CIPD's new guide on apprenticeships gives practical advice on how employers can tailor high-quality apprenticeship programmes that meet their current and future skills needs. These programmes can not only provide an invaluable first step on the employment ladder for young people; they are also a valuable way to develop existing employees' skills and to provide training opportunities and routes into new occupations for individuals throughout their careers.

HR professionals have an essential role in taking the lead in creating and designing apprenticeship programmes, as they are ideally placed to ensure that the programmes fit the current needs of the business and wider workforce and development strategies. They also have a key role to play in supporting managers to most effectively develop and realise the potential of apprentices. Our guide offers real, practical help with all of these tasks.

DEAN ROYLES FCIPD

*Chair of the CIPD Board, Director, NHS Employers
National Apprenticeships Ambassador*

Apprenticeships are a vital part of both the Government's plans to build a sustainable, balanced economy and our education reforms designed to extend opportunity to more young people. Engaging with apprenticeships enables employers to identify and meet their skills needs. That is why we have already helped many more businesses and people in the workforce gain access to high-quality training through apprenticeships and the majority of this growth has been in advanced – 'A' level equivalent – apprenticeships.

But this is just the beginning. Building on this success means helping more businesses, particularly SMEs, to recruit their first apprentice. I also want to see apprenticeships develop as a mainstream route to high-level skills and a path to the professions, with many more people training at levels 4 and 5.

This guide, produced by the CIPD, provides valuable advice to support business in realising these ambitions, helping them establish and run high-quality apprenticeship schemes that are beneficial to employers and individual learners alike.

JOHN HAYES MP

Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning

At BAE Systems, we have a long history of developing our workforce through the apprenticeship scheme to maintain our pipeline of engineering talent. We welcome this guide from the CIPD. It comes at a time when the number of businesses taking on apprentices is expanding, and it provides helpful information for employers planning to introduce apprenticeships for the first time together with practical tips for those running existing schemes.

NIGEL WHITEHEAD

*UKCES Commissioner, Group Managing Director
Programmes & Support, BAE Systems*

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Over the course of 2011 apprenticeships have received a great deal of public interest against a backdrop of rising youth unemployment, increases in tuition fees and greater acknowledgement of the importance of fair access to professions. Steps have also been taken to improve the UK's vocational education and training systems, and there has been an increase in government funding for apprenticeships, especially in England.

However, many of our members have told us that while they are supportive of apprenticeships, they don't think they are right for their own organisations. We felt this was something we needed to address, as a natural extension of the CIPD's public policy priorities around supporting better pathways into work for everyone, regardless of background. But we knew that to make a difference we needed to tap into the thinking of those who successfully implement and deliver apprenticeships on a daily basis and those who protect the interests of the individuals concerned, as well as leading experts of policy development.

To achieve this we put together a working group of private and public sector employers, trade unions, policy-makers and think-tanks. This group met four times over the course of eight months to discuss in depth the content of this guide as it evolved. Their insights helped develop a guide which employers can use to establish apprenticeships as a long-term mechanism for strategic workforce planning and development, build employer capability and ensure funding delivers for employers, society and individuals.

I would like to thank the members of the group for their input, advice, feedback and the interesting discussions. Your support has been invaluable and without it, this guide would not have happened.

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Skills Policy Adviser, CIPD

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FOREWORD

The recent recession has had a significant impact on the UK's employment rates, with overall unemployment increasing. Young people are especially vulnerable in these difficult economic times because their lack of job-specific skills and work experience can affect their attractiveness to employers. In addition to that, the number of young people that are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is rising.

Employers, government and society have to work together to create the conditions that facilitate young people's transition from education to working life. Well-developed pathways that connect initial education with work are a key feature of countries with low youth unemployment. 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. We also believe that collaboration is crucial to success, which is why we have produced this guide drawing on the knowledge and insight of employers, policy-makers and trade unions.

STEPHANIE BIRD

Director, HR Capability, 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:

- information about the practical steps you need to take to set up a successful apprenticeship programme
- background information on 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 human resource planning process and how this can help to grow your own workforce
- practical advice on how to manage, support and supervise your apprentices in order to maximise the benefits for your organisation as well as the apprentices themselves.

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

An apprenticeship is a combination of employment and training (the apprentice obtains a nationally recognised qualification upon completion) for anyone above the age of 16. Employers train

individuals within the context of their organisation, so apprentices contribute to the organisation's productivity while developing their own skills. There are more than 240 apprenticeship frameworks across the UK, covering most occupations and sectors. 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*).

WHY GET INVOLVED: WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR MY ORGANISATION?

Apprenticeships are a unique way to grow your own workforce; they combine on-the-job training in your organisation with off-the-job learning. The learning takes place in context and provides a real understanding of the working world, combining practical skills with theoretical knowledge. They thus offer a career route into your organisation and an invaluable opportunity to grow the skills you need now and in the future. Apprenticeships can also help to improve your organisation's staff retention and engagement, as they can be used to further develop your existing workforce.

BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIPS:

- A more **engaged workforce**: 92% of employers who employ apprentices believe that apprenticeships lead to a more **motivated and satisfied workforce**.
- Lower **staff turnover**, fewer **skills-related vacancies** and reduced **recruitment costs**: 83% of employers who employ apprentices rely on their apprenticeships programme to provide the skilled workers that they need for the future. One in five employers are hiring more apprentices to help them through the tough economic climate.
- Increased competitiveness: 80% of those employers who employ apprentices agree they make their **workplace more productive**.
- A **better image and greater customer satisfaction**: 81% of consumers favour using a company which takes on apprentices.

Source: National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The CIPD believes workforce planning – having the people resources 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.

This guide provides a one-stop-shop support for 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 and key experts.

Our key messages are:

- **Apprenticeships need to be embedded in a workforce planning approach**, as part of a long-term strategy on workforce growth and skills development (see Sections 2, 3 and 10).
- A pre-requisite for a successful apprenticeship programme is **clarity about the role that apprentices play in the organisation** and how they will be supported (see Sections 3 and 10).
- **Winning the support of the existing workforce**, senior management as well as line managers and trade unions, is crucial (see Section 4).
- The **training apprentices receive on and off the job needs to be high-quality and tailored to employers' needs**. 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 in question is very young and has no prior work experience. Alternative and more informal recruitment methods need to be considered (see Section 6).

- It is important to be aware of the legal framework: **Apprentices have the status of an employee and thus have similar rights** (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** (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).

This guide was written by Katerina Rüdiger, Skills Policy Adviser, CIPD.

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1 WHERE DO YOU START? WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

So you have decided that you would like to offer apprenticeships as a career route or as a way for existing staff to progress – but where do you start? Here is what you need to know and the practical steps that will help you to run successful apprenticeships, regardless of your organisation's size or sector. 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 employment contract 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 over 16 years of age who is not in full-time education and who has obtained an employment contract with you. The individual can be a new or existing employee, but we recommend using this to recruit new talent and provide a career route into your organisation.

WHAT MAKES APPRENTICESHIPS DIFFERENT FROM OTHER TRAINING INITIATIVES?

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

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.'

Judith Compton, Assistant Director, UK Commission for Employment and Skills

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: Fuller and Unwin (2010)

HOW DO I ENSURE MY APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME IS HIGH-QUALITY?

As mentioned in the introduction, the quality of the apprenticeships provided is key to successfully addressing your skills needs. There has been a lot of focus on improving the quality standards of apprenticeships. Most recently, policy-makers in England have pledged to monitor more closely employers that run apprenticeship schemes, ensuring

that the programmes include rigorous ‘job-relevant’ learning and training. Public funding could be withdrawn from providers whose apprenticeships fail to meet quality standards.

You may find the following guide useful: *Creating and Supporting Expansive Apprenticeships* by Alison Fuller, School of Education, University of Southampton, and Lorna Unwin, Institute of Education, University of London: <http://www.Isis.org.uk/Services/Publications/Pages/CreatingandSupportingExpansiveApprenticeships.aspx>

The guide presents ideas for increasing the quality of apprenticeship programmes by enhancing the learning potential of the environments in which they take place. It introduces the ‘expansive–restrictive framework’ (see below). It puts forward the idea of ‘expansive’ apprenticeships, which give apprentices the opportunity to stretch their abilities and acquire skills and knowledge that will help them in the future as well as in their current job. Please note that while the guide is generally applicable across the UK, it was produced for England and may not reflect policies elsewhere in the devolved nations.

POLICY MEASURES TO IMPROVE QUALITY IN ENGLAND

- From August 2012, all apprenticeships for 16–18-year-olds must last for at least 12 months.
- The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will also assess whether the requirement for apprenticeships to last for at least 12 months should extend to older apprentices, taking into account they will often start from a higher base.
- NAS will require every apprenticeship to deliver significant new learning so that they are not merely about the accreditation of existing knowledge and experience.
- The Skills Funding Agency will tighten contracts to allow for public money to be immediately withdrawn from training providers where training fails to meet the required quality standards.

Source: National Apprenticeship Service (NAS).

THE 'EXPANSIVE-RESTRICTIVE FRAMEWORK'

Expansive apprenticeships	Restrictive apprenticeships
Apprenticeship is used as a vehicle for aligning the goals of developing the individual and organisational capability	Apprenticeship is used to tailor individual capability to organisational need
Workplace and provider share a post-apprenticeship vision: progression for career	Post-apprenticeship vision: static for job
Apprentice has dual status as learner and employee: explicit recognition of, and support for, apprentice's status as learner	Status as employee dominates: status as learner restricted to minimum required to meet Apprenticeships Framework
Apprentice makes a gradual transition to productive worker and expertise in occupational field	Fast transition to productive worker with limited knowledge of occupational field; or existing, already productive, workers as apprentices with minimal development
Apprentice is treated as a member of an occupational and workplace community with access to the community's rules, history, knowledge and practical expertise	Apprentice treated as extra pair of hands who only needs access to limited knowledge and skills to perform job
Apprentice participates in different communities of practice inside and outside the workplace	Participation restricted to narrowly defined job role and workstation
Workplace maps everyday work tasks against qualification requirements – qualification valued as adds extra skills and knowledge to immediate job requirements	Weak relationship between workplace tasks and qualifications – no recognition for skills and knowledge acquired beyond immediate work tasks
Qualifications develop knowledge for progression to next level and platform for further education	Qualifications accredit limited range of on-the-job competence
Apprentice has planned time off the job for study and to gain wider perspective	Off-the-job simply a minor extension of on-the-job
Apprentice's existing skills and knowledge recognised and valued and used as platform for new learning	Apprentices regarded as 'blank sheets' or 'empty vessels'
Apprentice's progress closely monitored and involves regular constructive feedback from range of employer and provider personnel who take a holistic approach	Apprentice's progress monitored for job performance with limited feedback – provider involvement restricted to formal assessments for qualifications unrelated to job performance

Sources: Fuller and Unwin (2010), (2008)

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. In England this is specified as a minimum of 280 so-called 'guided learning hours' per year. In Wales, apprenticeship frameworks specify the number of on- and off-the-job hours needed. Specific hours are not prescribed in Scotland and Northern Ireland, but it is recognised as important to develop the depth and breadth of understanding and knowledge required to support competence.

The kind of training that employers need to provide depends on the nature and type of the job. Apprenticeships are available in most sectors and industries. There are more than 240 different apprenticeships available in a wide range of industry sectors ranging from engineering to accountancy. There are some guidelines and details that have been established to help with the skills required for your

sector. These are contained in an apprenticeship 'framework'. 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 and occupation concerned.

The training provided depends on the sector and the skills levels of the apprentices (there are a number of different levels of apprenticeships; these vary across the UK so please see table below and check with the relevant body for more details), but what they have in common is that they all comprise the following core components: a competence-based element; a knowledge-based element; transferable or key/core skills (the terminology varies according to nation – likely to include a stronger GCSE English and Maths requirement where 16–18-year-olds have not achieved Grade Cs); and employment rights and responsibilities (see box below). When all of the components have been achieved, the apprentice will receive an apprenticeship certificate and the apprenticeship has finished.

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

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 people require to do the job and include English, Maths and Information Communications Technology (ICT) using practical applications. There is a government commitment to encourage 16–18-year-olds to re-sit English and Maths GCSEs where they do not have grade Cs.

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.

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. 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 box on funding).

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.

FUNDING FOR APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Northern Ireland	Scotland	England	Wales
Fully funded for 16–24, for 25+, 50% funding	A contribution towards the cost of training	16–18 fully funded 19–24 funding for 50% 25+ partial funding	Fully funded regardless of age, though priority groups are 16–18 and 19–24

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 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.

The minimum is generally one year, but 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 is part of what makes apprenticeships such a good tool to train and grow your workforce.

Remember, this is your opportunity to grow your own workforce, 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 fully fledged, confident and productive professional in their selected occupation or trade.

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. A recent study by the University of Warwick Institute of Employment Research found that the costs of apprenticeship training are recouped relatively quickly and that, where investment is nurtured, the returns are significant (Hasluck et al. 2008). Having said this, before you develop your apprenticeship offer

you need to be clear about the direct and indirect investments you need to make. These 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 box on funding), depending on the age of your apprentices and where in the UK you are based.

WHAT KIND OF CONTRACT WILL THE APPRENTICE BE ON?

As an employee, an apprentice should have a contract of employment. Many employers provide additional entitlements such as access to bonuses and overtime payment schemes. Some apprentices may be eligible for additional benefits such as childcare and transport funding. Depending on where you are based, you may need to offer to pay for the apprentices' travel expenses as well, because some of them might find it difficult to get to work otherwise.

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, so they should be paid a wage. Pay rates vary between sectors, regions and between different employers and they are subject to an annual review. There is an apprenticeship National Minimum Wage (NMW) which applies to all 16–18-year-olds and to those aged 19 and over in the first year of their apprenticeship. The current rate is £2.60 per hour (as at 1 October 2011), subject to an annual review. Please ensure you check to see if there are any sector-specific minimum wage rates in relation to your business (check with your relevant public body responsible for apprenticeships).

However, most employers pay their employees significantly more than the NMW, depending on their sector and industry. Typically employers pay a

lower start rate and increase pay after six months of service or when an apprentice is more likely to be demonstrating competence in their workplace. The average weekly pay for apprentices was £170 per week in 2007, when the last detailed survey of apprentice pay was carried out. Some apprenticeships are paid considerably more – the average pay for electro-technical apprentices is £210 per week. Other apprenticeships pay up to £350 a week.

APPRENTICESHIP PAY: THE UNION'S VIEW

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.

'There are clear legal, moral and business reasons for employers to pay apprentices a decent wage,' says **Fred Grindrod** from **unionlearn** with the **TUC**.

As their skills develop, apprentices' pay should increase accordingly. *'Those employers that run successful apprenticeships build apprentices' pay up towards the rate for the job as the apprenticeship nears its completion,'* says **Mary Myles** of **UNISON**.

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.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE APPRENTICESHIP?

You've invested in your apprentice and they have developed the skills and knowledge relevant to your organisation and the job you require them to perform. 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

PAY, COMPLETION RATES AND QUALITY OF 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. Those employers that pay the highest pay have the highest rate of retention after the completion of the apprenticeship. So if you invest in your apprentices at the beginning by paying them above the legal minimum wage, you will be more likely to reap the benefits in terms of commitment and high-quality work later.

However, in some cases this may vary:

'Apprentices are trainees and the wage reflects the contribution employers make to their socialisation and skills formation,' says **Tess Lanning** from the **Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)**. *'If it's a good-quality programme that offers significant opportunities for young people to learn, less pay is justified. But if the apprenticeship is a way of providing existing employees with a qualification, it's not.'*

always be possible, but we strongly recommend that you think about options to integrate the apprentices into your workforce as part of your workforce planning and ideally **before** you offer apprenticeship placements. You should see recruiting apprentices not as a short-term fix for imminent skills needs – although they can help to address these too – but as a long-term way to grow your own workforce (see further details in Section 10).

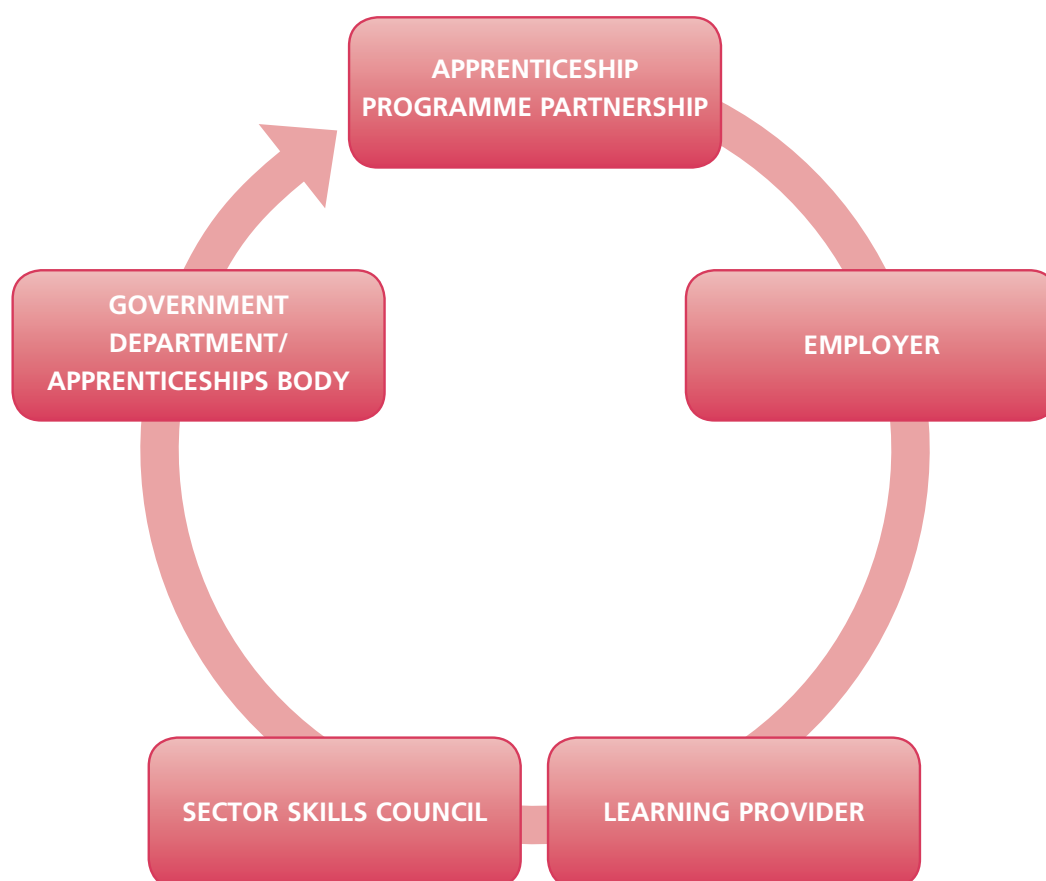
WHAT PAPERWORK IS REQUIRED?

Apprenticeships generally don't require much paperwork from your side because, unless you are delivering the training yourself, you will work with a training provider or local college that will help you with the relevant documents. If you have any doubts about this, contact your relevant agency (see box on support available across the UK).

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*
www.apprenticeships.org.uk	www.careerswales.com	www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk	www.nidirect.gov.uk

*At present DEL is the funding department for apprenticeships. However it is planned to dissolve the department, probably by June 2012, and its functions will transfer to other departments.

APPRENTICESHIPS PARTNERSHIP MODEL



SME CASE STUDY: K&M MCLOUGHLIN DECORATING LTD

K&M McLoughlin Decorating Ltd has a 140-strong workforce and 22 of these are apprentices. The company has invested heavily in training: their recent investments include an on-site training centre with a full-size mock-up of a two-bedroom flat. K&M McLoughlin Decorating Ltd see investing in apprentices as a way to receive bespoke training for their skills needs, while at the same time fostering high employee engagement and workforce commitment because the apprentice will feel part of the company and continue to 'grow with it'.

This positive attitude to training has helped the company to win contracts and, as a result of these improvements in business performance, it could hire 40 additional painters and decorators to work on four major contracts. One of their contracts is for work on the Olympic site, and the feedback the company got from this client is that their training programme really helped them to stand out amongst competitors.

Kevin McLoughlin, MD of K&M McLoughlin Decorating Ltd, says:

'In the last 12 years alone, we have trained more than 60 apprentices and now over a quarter of my workforce have been brought in via this programme. Many are now my most experienced supervisors and managers, which proves if you want to prevent a "skills gap" in the industry, you must train internally. I am really delighted and excited that our new school will help even more youngsters get their feet on the employment ladder and teach them skills that will last them a lifetime.'

IS THERE ANY SUPPORT AVAILABLE FOR SMES?

If you are an SME, you might find it more difficult to recruit an apprentice and may not have the structures to develop a full apprenticeship programme. Some governments provide substantial 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. In Wales, you can check with the Welsh Government's 'SkillsPeopleSuccess' hotline on 08456 066160.

More generally, your relevant public agency can provide support with identifying the right apprenticeship framework for you and an appropriate provider to deliver the training. Furthermore, in England, there are group training associations (GTAs) established that can provide shared training resources for employers, many of whom are SMEs. GTAs are established by smaller employers in order to share the costs and administration of apprentice employment and training, helping with training assessments, skills needs analysis, health and safety training guidance and management training.

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 have their own apprenticeships policies 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 the 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 on on-the-job learning from a professional and fair access) and the approach (as part of your workforce strategy, rather than an add-on) you take into account when designing and running your apprenticeships should be the same across the nations, regardless of policy and funding variations.

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS IN SCOTLAND

- In 1994, the Government introduced Modern Apprenticeships. They have been renamed 'apprenticeships' in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; only Scotland has retained the name Modern Apprenticeships.

In Scotland, many apprenticeships are funded through Skills Development Scotland (www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk). The elements of Modern Apprenticeships include:

- Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) – the sector/industry-based vocational element or industry equivalent
- a technical certificate to show 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. There are more than 100 frameworks on offer. The 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 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 aims to provide participants with the opportunity to take part in a Level 2/Level 3 Apprenticeship. ApprenticeshipsNI is open to those who have reached school leaving age, are either entering or already in employment and contracted to work a minimum of 21 hours per week. The apprentice is in paid employment from day one. The apprentices follow 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 over 100 apprenticeships to choose from, which can take between two and four years to complete depending on the level of study. Apprenticeship frameworks are designed by the Sector Skills Councils and industry representative bodies to meet the need of each particular sector.

For those aged 16–24 the department undertakes to pay the full costs of the 'off-the-job' training included in the ApprenticeshipsNI framework for the duration of the apprenticeship. The department contributes 50% for those aged 25 years and over.

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. Research carried out by the British Chambers of Commerce shows that more than two-thirds of businesses that took on an apprentice did so to build the skills capacity of their business, as an 'excellent way to transfer skills from older staff to new recruits', thus retaining the skills set within their organisations (Reid, 2011).

Successful companies such as **Siemens** run apprenticeships because they make good business sense:

'We use a strategic human resource planning process to identify skills gaps up to five years in advance. Apprenticeships are one of the ways to close these gaps. By taking responsibility for the apprenticeships within our businesses, our learners receive tailored training programmes which prepare them for a broad engineering career, meet our business needs and instil company values and a Siemens approach to health and safety.' **Martin Hottass, UK Skills Partner for Siemens plc**

HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER APPRENTICESHIPS ARE RIGHT FOR MY ORGANISATION?

In England alone, more than 100,000 employers offer apprenticeships in more than 190 job roles. Apprenticeships aren't just for traditional crafts professions anymore, but they can help develop vocational expertise in every sector and in many occupations.

CASE STUDY FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

Bellenden, a London-based public relations and communications agency, has recruited for an apprenticeship in business administration. Their apprentice, Kelsey, is enjoying her training in the company, which helps her to develop her communication, writing and admin skills. She says, *'The best thing about my job is the people I work with.'* The company is committed to promoting from within and, when she finishes, she will be able to take over as their office manager.

HOW DO I DEVELOP THE ROLE AN APPRENTICE CAN PLAY WITHIN MY ORGANISATION?

Organisations that run highly successful apprenticeship programmes, such as Rolls-Royce, 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.

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 to your organisation of running apprenticeship schemes.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF EMPLOYING AN APPRENTICE COMPARED WITH THE COST?

Apprentices represent fresh talent that can help you to achieve your organisational goals – by reducing skills shortages and helping you to grow your own workforce. Apprentices are also cost-effective because they learn while working on the job and, in many cases, the Government at least contributes, if not fully funds, the cost of learning.

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. A Level 3 apprentice will generate an additional lifetime benefit to themselves and their employer of £105,000.

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, showing their commitment to deliver high-quality products and services as well as their long-term workforce strategy. Your clients will be reassured that you have the skills to carry out their current and future contracts. To facilitate this in England, NAS provides an apprenticeship certificate for employers who want to advertise to their customers that they employ apprentices.

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 that do not currently have people management responsibilities. Providing you give them the support they need, it will help them to develop their management and leadership skills. It also helps your organisation to develop its identity and organisational values. 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 please go to www.unionlearn.org.uk/apprenticeships

HOW DO I CONVINCE LINE MANAGERS TO TAKE ON YOUNG PEOPLE?

For most organisations the most difficult thing in setting up and recruiting apprentices is to convince their potential line managers of the benefits: they are often reluctant to take on a young person, especially in the 16–18 age group. They may require additional support or training to be able to give the apprentice the pastoral care they need (see Section 8 on supporting your apprentice). In order to address some of the negative perceptions they may have, it is crucial to involve them as early as you can in the recruitment stage (see case study below).

RECRUITING YOUNG APPRENTICES: HOW TO INVOLVE LINE MANAGERS

Capgemini currently has 84 apprentices on programme in the UK, with plans for a further 160 over the next 12 months. These are both Advanced and Higher Apprentices, now working across a number of different technologies and, for the first time, business administration. These apprentices are mostly between the ages of 16 and 19.

Capgemini found it particularly challenging to convince line managers to take on young apprentices. Now they involve line managers as early as they can in the recruitment of their apprentices so managers can 'choose' their own apprentice. For instance, **Capgemini** organised a **public open evening** attended by managers where the teams wanting to take apprentices put on trade stands for any potential applicants to come and find out more about the opportunities available. The objective was to attract applications, but another benefit was that managers and teams who took part in the event were energised by the enthusiasm of the young people who attended.

Recruitment then takes place through a **day of group exercises** instead of formal interviewing techniques, so people can get to know each other and line managers can gain an insight into the personality and behaviour of their potential apprentice. *'This has worked really well,'* says **Andrew Moreton, Apprenticeship Manager at Capgemini UK**: *'If young apprentices get the right care from their line manager, they do really well.'*

HOW DO I COMMUNICATE AN APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME TO THE REST OF THE WORKFORCE?

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 get their buy-in, but also to ensure that this 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.

UNISON: BENEFITS THAT AN APPRENTICE CAN BRING TO YOUR ORGANISATION

- They will help you to develop succession planning from within the organisation – thus retaining valuable knowledge and experience.
- Apprentices can bring new skills to the organisation.
- Recruitment of apprentices will develop valuable links between your organisation and local schools, community and voluntary sector organisations.
- Apprenticeships provide in-house training, with a learning plan designed for the organisation, by the organisation.
- Apprenticeships improve productivity by developing better trained staff, making your organisation more competitive and improving standards of products and service provision.
- Apprenticeships are well-structured and require commitment from an apprentice; an apprentice is therefore more likely to be a committed member of your organisation.
- Well-implemented apprenticeship schemes address inequalities in the organisation's age profile.
- Better staff training results in higher motivation.
- Apprenticeships can help you to meet the requirements of Mindful Employer, Investors in People, Positive About Young People, Single Equality Scheme and equality legislation.
- Short-term benefits relate to better customer service and widening the internal talent pool for management recruitment.
- Long-term benefits are linked to reduced labour turnover, lower absenteeism figures and higher employee satisfaction.

CASE STUDY: BARRATT – HOW TO SET UP AND DELIVER SUCCESSFUL APPRENTICESHIPS

Last year, **Barratt**, the home-building company, set up its own apprenticeship programme: the '**Barratt Academy**' is aimed at 16–18-year-olds, which includes both new starts and existing employees. This was initiated in an internal project – 'preparing for recovery' – and in response to a shortage of skilled trades and future talent entering the industry. As a result, Barratt employed 145 apprentices last year, thus running the largest apprenticeship programme in the house-building industry. Through the investment in apprenticeships, Barratt have been able to promote staff from within, save on recruitment and ensure high-quality service delivery. The company has also made it into the Top 100 Employer List 2011, has been Highly Commended in the National Apprenticeship Awards 2011 and has been the Regional Winner of Large Employer of the Year Category for the East Midlands.

Barratt's apprenticeship programme runs for two to three years, with recruitment supported by the Sector Skills Council Construction Skills. Apprentices study for Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications at a quality-controlled Construction Skills approved college and work on-site with skilled tradespeople to learn the vocational skills. In addition to the practical and theoretical learning, they also get regular support (through a buddy, coach and mentor) as well as an Apprenticeship Officer. On successful completion of the first two years, apprentices have the option to progress onto an Advanced Apprenticeship and/or continue onto the Assistant Site Manager Programme. They have shared with us their top tips on how to set up and run a successful apprenticeship programme:

BARRATT'S TOP TIPS

- Get executive buy-in for the programme.
- Involve the business in developing your programme.
- Have a central support person/team.
- Partner with a reputable learning provider.
- Ensure apprentices are given full support throughout their training.
- Encourage local relationships with colleges, contractors, parents and the managing agency.
- Maximise the potential of the young people by providing additional opportunities to learn.

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 to 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.

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.

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 with some of these companies if they 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.

'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 and DfES in Wales).

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

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 either recruit your apprentice directly or ask for some help from your relevant agency. Because many of the apprentices are very young, it will often be the parents that make the decision, so you need to ensure to involve them as well. You will also have to think about how to interview young people who have never had experience of working life, so in most cases traditional recruitment methods might not be suitable. Instead, you could opt for some more informal ways of getting to know them.

WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER 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 with recruitment; their advisers can come to meet you to discuss your needs. Vacancies can be advertised like any other vacancy or employers in England can advertise for free on the NAS vacancy matching service. Currently, the application process is managed by the selected training provider, who oversees the process on behalf of the employer. However, a series of enhancements are being made which will bring employers even greater benefits and reasons to use the recruitment system. The enhancements include:

- giving employers with current vacancies direct access to the system, allowing them to view and track their vacancies and applications
- the ability for vacancies to be displayed on other websites, with links back through to apprenticeship vacancies, enabling the wider promotion of vacancies, raising the profile of employers and attracting a wider pool of potential successful applicants
- large employers, training providers and partners will be able to bulk-upload vacancy details directly from their systems, saving time and resources and enabling a quicker turnaround on posting vacancies
- allowing employers who use their own recruitment sites to track successful individuals who apply from apprenticeship vacancies, removing the need for manual intervention.

In Wales, there is also a Vacancy Matching Service. This is a separate system hosted on the Careers Wales website: www.careerswales.com/16to19/server.php?show=nav.6528

In many sectors, group training associations (GTAs) can help smaller employers who do not have the resources to train apprentices directly. These are not-for-profit organisations providing support on accessing and managing training for groups 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 just offers training to apprentices who are employed directly by an employer.

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.

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 you get the parents on board, who are, especially for the 16–18 cohort, the people who will make the decision about whether your apprenticeship is a good opportunity for their children. You can also establish an image and relationship with your local community, which will help you to recruit talent in the future.

HOW SHOULD YOU SELECT THE CANDIDATE?

How you select your apprentices will depend on the age and previous experience of the candidates. If you are recruiting 16–18-year-olds straight out of school or college, they might have some part-time work experience but that will be different from full-time work. They might not have the same confidence and ability to communicate their skills as more experienced workers. In this case, conventional interview techniques are not really appropriate. Instead, we recommend using more informal approaches assessing their enthusiasm rather than academic credentials and technical skills (please see box below for some examples of more informal methods). However, if you are dealing with older candidates or candidates who have experience of the workplace, you may want to ask some more job-relevant questions.

Essentially, you don't need to redevelop your recruitment from scratch, but look at what you are doing already and adapt it to apprentices. In some cases you might already be recruiting 16-year-olds into other roles in your organisation, so you can take those recruitment methods and apply them to your apprenticeship programme. Even if you currently don't recruit young people, you can adapt your adult recruitment methods to your apprenticeship scheme as it will be key that these are right for your organisation.

One option would be to hold assessment centres where candidates can 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 outcome-based criteria. This will enable you to make a fair selection and choose the right candidate for your organisation without relying entirely on conventional interview techniques.

CASE STUDY: RECRUITING APPRENTICES WITH NO PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE

The property company **Ringley Group**, recently short-listed for a national training award, is an SME working with the London Apprenticeship Company (LAC) to offer apprenticeships for people aged 16–23. They have taken a different approach to recruiting apprentices:

*'There is nothing worse than interviewing a person with no work experience as they have nothing to tell,' says **Ringley's Managing Director Mary-Anne Bowring**, 'so we have developed a speed-interviewing technique whereby we invite up to eight candidates and get them talk to our staff about their holidays. This helps to establish their relationship and communication skills, which will help differentiate between candidates with similar qualifications.'*

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. They also send their candidates up 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.'*

*'We look for passion and commitment in a young person,' says **Andrew Moreton, Apprenticeships Manager at Capgemini UK**. 'The rest we can teach them when they are with us.'*

This is confirmed by **Graham Schumacher, Head of Development Services, Rolls-Royce plc**: *'We recruit for attitude and train for skills and knowledge.'*

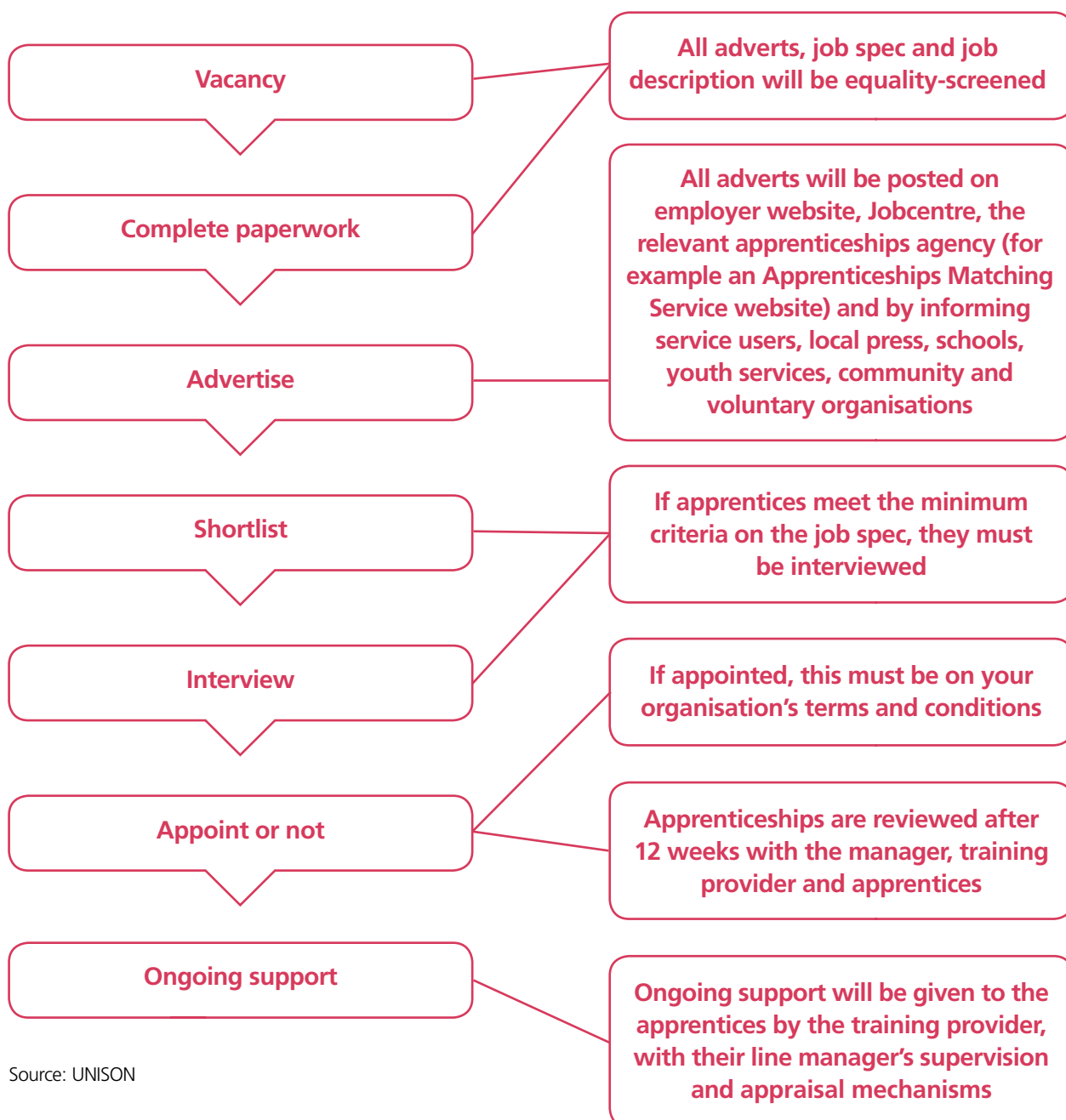
BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT THE APPRENTICESHIP ENTAILS

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.

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:



Source: UNISON

CASE STUDY: ATTRACTING APPRENTICES TO YOUR ORGANISATION – WEST SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

West Sussex County Council recognised the value of apprenticeships and decided to set up its own apprenticeship programme, supported by the unions. Their first challenge was to convince managers across the organisation, but once this was overcome they soon had many applications for various roles (from business administration to care assistant).

HOW DID THEY RECRUIT THE APPRENTICES?

We recruited via the National Apprenticeship 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 and the local government 'Jobs Go Public' website.

WHAT DID THEY 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 through the Future Jobs Fund), 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 road shows, 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 the Connexions Service (careers advice for young people) and other supported employment agencies in our area
- a range of activities during National Apprenticeship Week (February).

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 road shows attracted a lot of attention. Our bespoke literature was also very popular, so much so that we had to re-print. 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 Connexions workers, 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 sign people who we could not directly help onto this – often through a local college or the National Apprenticeship 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!

Elizabeth Flegg, West Sussex County Council

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 covered by a contract of employment and have similar rights to other employees (Employment Rights Act 1996). However, a contract of apprenticeship is also a distinct entity at common law; its first purpose is training and the execution of work for the employer is secondary (*Wallace v CA Roofing Services Ltd* [1996] IRLR 435). This means that apprentices have greater protection under the law than most employees.

Case law interprets what constitutes an apprenticeship quite widely. For example, there was a contract of apprenticeship when a person entered into a tripartite individual learning plan under the electrical industry's modern apprenticeship training scheme (*Flett v Matheson* [2006] IRLR 277).

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 – unlike a contract of service, which can come into being as a result of an oral agreement. 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 criteria should be reviewed to ensure they are not indirectly age discriminatory, such as requiring recent GCSEs. An apprentice can start employment at 15 years old as long as they have left full-time education.

THE APPRENTICESHIPS, SKILLS, CHILDREN AND LEARNING ACT 2009 (ASCLA)

The ASCLA was intended to clarify the relationship between employers and apprentices, rather than relying on case law. This legislation introduces an apprenticeship agreement and specifies that this is a contract of service and not a contract of apprenticeship. But until the agreement is introduced in April 2012 no agreement can be made that qualifies for this status.

The Government is currently updating the act to further prescribe how the form of the agreement should look. For further details please check:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/22/contents>

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. If they are treated differently you could face discrimination claims, including under the legislation protecting fixed-term employees.

WHAT DOES THE APPRENTICESHIP CONTRACT NEED TO CONTAIN?

Apprenticeships are not only a relationship of employment but of learning and teaching. As stated above, the law views it as learning foremost, with any work you get out of the apprentice as a secondary element.

As a minimum requirement, any written agreement should detail what skills the apprentice can expect to learn or the programme of training that will be set up. It should make clear what is expected of the apprentice and what will need to be demonstrated to prove proficiency and pass the scheme. This might, for example, mean obtaining externally-assessed qualifications.

Signatures to this written agreement should be confirmed by independent witnesses to ensure that the signatories entered into the agreement freely and willingly.

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 (In the event of a dismissal during the probationary period, the statutory minimum notice period would apply unless another period was specified in the contract)
- the right to time off to attend college and take examinations
- 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 (such clauses need to be carefully drafted. Best practice is to have the amount to be repaid reduced in proportion to the time actually worked, ie. a sliding scale)
- 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 due to 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 did 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. (The period employees must have been with their employer before they can claim unfair dismissal is to be raised from one to two years from 6 April 2012).

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 than is usual 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 on 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 has 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.

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). It may be part of a fair dismissal to show that consultation had occurred and the employer had no place for the qualified apprentice, and why this was so.

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.

8 RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL APPRENTICESHIP: SUPPORTING APPRENTICES

To ensure the success of your apprenticeship 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.

HOW DO I BEST SUPPORT MY APPRENTICE?

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-skill and develop 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, add and create 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 such as one-to-one coaching or 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 clearly outline their programmes from the apprentice's perspective and design 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.

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 that they are managed is crucial. Just like your other employees, good management and 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.

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

CIPD research into employee engagement and line management highlights the following behaviours as key to getting the best out of staff:

- reviewing and guiding
- providing feedback, praise and recognition
- providing appropriate levels of autonomy and empowerment
- taking an interest in the individual
- being available to talk if an employee has a question or a problem
- having a personal/approachable manner.

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 find out more about line management, please have a look at: [cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/role-line-managers-hr.aspx](https://www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/role-line-managers-hr.aspx)

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 the skills, knowledge or self-awareness to turn things around.

HOW SHOULD YOU REVIEW THEIR PROGRESS?

We suggest having regular conversations with the individual, reflecting on progress and their attitude. It would be useful to arrange a stocktake mid-way through the apprenticeship to assess the individual's progress and consider any additional development activities or areas they want to specialise in and progress towards.

WHAT DO I NEED TO CONSIDER WHEN APPOINTING A MENTOR?

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.

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 know many things you take for granted.

MENTORING YOUR APPRENTICE – AN EXAMPLE FROM SCOTTISH UNION LEARNING (STUC)

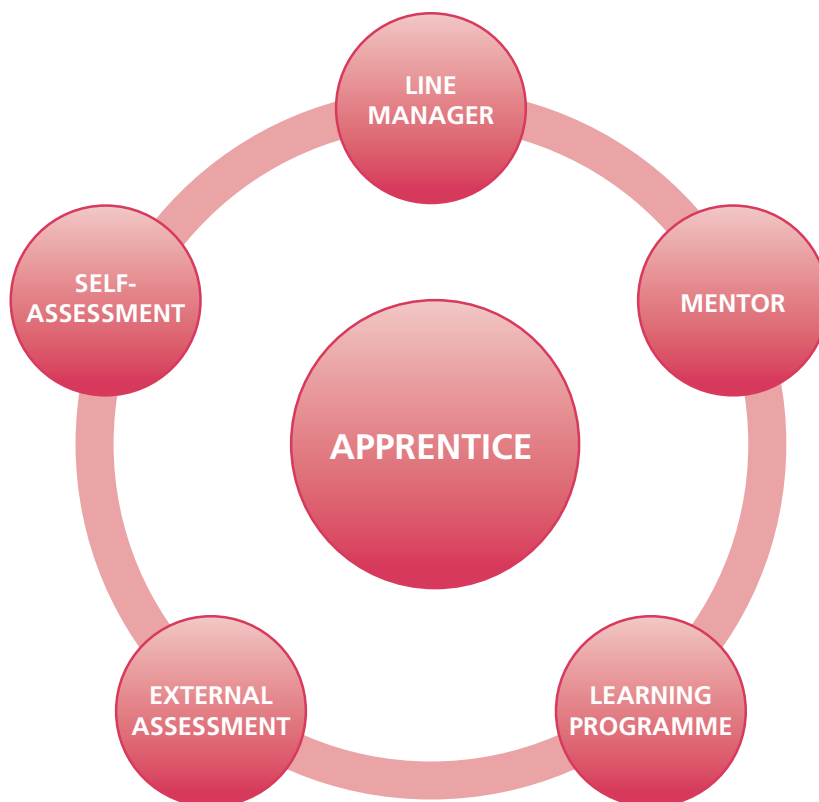
The **Scottish Union Learning Modern Apprenticeship Toolkit** (please see www.scottishunionlearning.com for further details) has some helpful advice on **mentoring** as a way to support your apprentices:

Mentoring is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and it is becoming increasingly popular. It is a **partnership between two people** (mentor and apprentice) normally working in a similar field or sharing similar experiences.

Mentors rely upon having had similar experiences to gain an empathy with the apprentice and an understanding of their issues. **A mentor is a guide who can help the apprentice to find the right direction and who can help them to develop solutions to career issues.** Mentors rely upon having had similar experiences to gain an empathy with the apprentice and an understanding of their issues. Mentoring provides the apprentice with an opportunity to think about career options and progress. **Mentoring is particularly important for apprentices as they are often young people entering the workplace for the first time.** The mentor relationship provides additional support, guidance and pastoral care removed from the apprentice's direct line management chain. A mentor should be someone from outside the apprentice's reporting hierarchy at work. Source: The Scottish Union Learning Apprenticeships Toolkit.

TUC Education offers the 'Mentoring Modern Apprentices' two-day course for all union reps, especially ULRs, covering supporting apprentices in the workplace, training and development, and equal opportunities issues.

For more details about these courses, contact TUC Education in Scotland on 0141 221 8545 or at hcunningham@tuc.org.uk.



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 great gender disparity within apprenticeships, both in terms of pay as well as the way women are represented in certain sectors and occupations. 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.

Unionlearn, the TUC's learning and skills organisation, has helpful material on this at www.unionlearn.org.uk/apprenticeships

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 (BME) communities in apprenticeship schemes. Some of this disparity is due to a lack of knowledge about apprenticeships in certain communities, but according to the TUC, race discrimination also affects entry into apprenticeships. You can help to address this situation by making sure you offer apprenticeship places to minority groups. The National Apprenticeship Service

in England and the relevant bodies in the other three nations will be able to help you to do this.

THE BENEFITS OF GREAT DIVERSITY IN APPRENTICESHIPS

Your organisation may be facing a skills shortage in the future. By opening up apprenticeships to under-represented groups, you can help to close their skills gaps. Promoting diversity in apprenticeships will also contribute to creating a range of skills necessary for successful business. Drawing apprentices from a wider recruitment pool will allow you greater access to skills such as communications, customer-handling, teamworking and problem-solving. It will also help to better reflect your customer base, which will lead to better customer relationships and a better understanding of your market.

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 disabled apprentices will require reasonable adjustments, which both employers and education providers have a duty to provide under the Equality Act 2010. Examples of adjustments might mean making information available in alternative formats, physical alterations to premises, more time to complete certain tasks or offering flexible hours in order to make travel arrangements or attend appointments.

BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDY ON DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND INVOLVING NEETS WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE UNIONS: NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

In 2006 North Yorkshire County Council introduced Real Start, a groundbreaking apprenticeship scheme aimed at addressing key recruitment and policy issues. The first goal of the scheme was to provide employment and career opportunities in local government, targeted at young people, to address workforce demographics.

UNISON branch secretary Wendy Nichol explained that, *'North Yorkshire was in danger of becoming a retirement community, with young people migrating to big cities for work. Like other local authorities, North Yorkshire had high turnover – 16% last year – and very low rates of recruiting young people. The apprenticeship scheme was established to help the council draw more younger people into its workforce'*.

North Yorkshire's scheme, which has also been adopted by a number of partner organisations such as district authorities and schools, was also intended to target disadvantaged young people, who might struggle to find employment in the normal job market. The programme is targeted at young people between the ages of 16 and 24, although there are no age restrictions, and there are particular efforts to recruit under-represented groups of young people, such as those leaving care, young offenders, those from BME and travellers' communities.

The Real Start scheme was negotiated with UNISON from the outset, and the council and the union continue to work together to monitor the scheme's progress.

The North Yorkshire scheme offers young workers £105.29 per week for the first six months, after which point it increases to £173.48 per week until they reach the competence standard required for the job. At that stage they move on to the full rate of pay associated with the job. They are also entitled to support for travel if it costs them more than £10 a week and are travelling further than 5 miles. It is estimated that the majority of apprentices receive the full rate of pay for the job within the first six months of their apprenticeships. Apprentices also enjoy exactly the same holiday entitlement and sickness benefits as other council employees and full employment status.

The programme offers high-quality training, mentoring and supervision and the high probability of a job at the end of the process. Real Start has been designed to bring significant numbers of young workers into council employment. The programme operates a mandatory recruitment process and all vacancies between salary bands 1 and 4, subject to suitability, are ring-fenced for apprenticeships. *'We wanted to imbed the scheme to match employee vacancies,'* explained Justine Brooksbank, Assistant Chief Executive (HR & OD), so now any vacancy in bands 1–4 must be filled with an apprentice unless there is a good reason why not. *'Young people who qualify for apprenticeships are placed on a waiting list and appointed as vacancies arise.'*

Conscious that many young people leave school without a clear idea of what they want to do, NYCC has developed a comprehensive employability programme to equip prospective employees with the skills required for work, which is complemented by practical work placements – in NYCC establishments and the wider economy. This acts both as a bridge into the apprenticeship programme and a means of preventing placements from failing because young people have made unsuitable career choices.

NYCC will continue to implement recruitment initiatives required to maintain a positive attraction strategy and recruit young people to the workforce and to the local economy.

10 WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE APPRENTICESHIP?

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' 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 (see the Rolls-Royce case study as an example), in line with company practices. One possible route could also be another apprenticeship, at a different level or in another sector or 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 including individuals that have just completed an apprenticeship. Learning can take place in formal settings, by attending organised training events or workshops, 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 organisation and job design.

For more information on high-performance working practices please see: <http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/er21-hpw-case-studies-analytical-report>

CASE STUDIES: APPRENTICES AND PROGRESSION ROUTES IN ROLLS-ROYCE

GURJIT JOHAL – PLANT DESIGN ENGINEER

According to Gurjit Johal, the Rolls-Royce apprenticeship really is the Rolls-Royce of apprenticeships. She explains why. *'It's because it helps develop you both professionally and personally. You're doing work that makes a difference and, at the same time, you're developing skills for life – like teamworking. For example, I worked with another apprentice to collate and update new Manufacturing Instructions. This involved lots of co-ordinating with different departments to get the instructions signed off. It was a big job and we succeeded. We also moved the instructions from manual to electronic records for the first time.'* Fifteen years on, these instructions are still being used – a fact Gurjit is proud of. *'It's nice to have done something of concrete value as an apprentice to say thanks to everyone here for the great training I've received. I've always been strong on the design side but when I started out as a manufacturing/mechanical apprentice, I sometimes found the maths a bit of a challenge. I had fantastic support from the training department, however, and now I'm fully confident in all aspects of engineering, especially maths.'* Gurjit continues, *'I think the best part of the Rolls-Royce apprenticeship is that you're learning from the best to be the best. There's a can-do attitude here that makes you think anything is possible. After finishing as an apprentice, I worked for a year as a process developer in the turbine blade facility. Then I moved to the nuclear engineering business within Rolls-Royce – which was quite a change. At the same time, I knew I could do it. I had a real sense of confidence and belief in myself and my abilities. It's something Rolls-Royce instils in you.'* Gurjit is now working as a nuclear plant design engineer – and loving it. She says: *'The Rolls-Royce apprenticeship lets you gain qualifications to degree level while gaining experience and getting paid. But that's just the start. Even now, fifteen years on, Rolls-Royce continues to develop me. This time for my project management role, where they're helping me attain the necessary qualifications and experience.'* She concludes: *'The Rolls-Royce apprenticeship is so special because it's uniquely supportive. It gives you the ability, tools and experience you need to succeed and provides a great start to a great career.'*

NEERAJ SUNGER – MANUFACTURING ENGINEERING APPRENTICE

'I was worried it might affect my school work but becoming a Young Apprentice at Rolls-Royce was the best decision I've ever made.' The entire Rolls-Royce Apprenticeship Scheme was recently described as 'outstanding' by Ofsted inspectors. This comes as no surprise to Neeraj Sunger. He recently scooped a 'highly commended' in the prestigious Young Apprenticeship of the Year Awards 2009, which he calls the *'proudest moment of my life'*. And he's now joined the Rolls-Royce Advanced Apprenticeship Programme as a Manufacturing Engineering Apprentice. There, he's earning while learning, which includes studying for his NVQ 3 in Engineering Maintenance – and taking one day a week to study for a foundation degree. His dream? That Rolls-Royce will sponsor his full engineering degree and that he'll stay with them as a manufacturing engineer. The retention rate for Rolls-Royce apprentices is currently 98%. Talking to Neeraj, it's not hard to see why. *'The level of guidance, support and knowledge you get as an apprentice at Rolls-Royce is massive. It's the opportunity of a lifetime. So if you get the chance, seize it with both hands.'*

COMMON MYTHS

APPRENTICESHIPS AREN'T RELEVANT FOR MY BUSINESS UNIT.

Not true – there 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 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.

Apprentices certainly do need to be supervised – quite a bit at the beginning. However, 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 16–65 years, so there is plenty of scope to find a suitable person to undertake your role. If the requirement of 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 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.

REFERENCES AND USEFUL LINKS

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USEFUL LINKS

The National Apprenticeships Service in England:
www.Apprenticeships.org.uk/

Apprenticeships in Wales:
www.careerswales.com/16to19/server.php?show=nav.6528

Apprenticeships in Scotland:
www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/

Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland:
www.delni.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsni

To find out more about the apprenticeships frameworks in your sector:
www.sscalliance.org/

To find out what support is available for SMEs:
www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/home

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/employers/apprenticeships/>

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
www.scottishunionlearning.com/apprenticeships

For more employer case studies, have a look at:
<http://apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Employer-Case-Studies.aspx>

For more information and research on skills investments, apprenticeships, high performance working and employer ownerships please have a look at the website of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills: <http://www.ukces.org.uk/>



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