



Apprenticeships

EMPLOYER (Non-Levy)

GUIDE

FOR RECRUITING AND EMPLOYING APPRENTICES

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INTRODUCTION

This is a guide for you as an employer, to help increase your understanding of the apprenticeship system and to provide a useful source of additional information.

As a non-Levy payer, you will have an annual pay bill of under £3 million. Non-Levy paying employers will share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with government - this is called 'co-investment'. Some employers will be able to train apprentices at no cost to themselves as the Government will fully fund the training.

Apprenticeships are a fantastic way to bring fresh talent into your business, taking new recruits and moulding them into your workforce of the future. Providing you with the opportunity to grow your own talent with the support of West Herts College.

At West Herts College we are keeping up to date with all of the apprenticeship innovations and advising employers on the best options for employing apprentices to suit their business needs. This coupled with our student talent pool and Skillmakers initiative makes West Herts College a one stop solution for apprenticeships.

WHAT ARE APPRENTICESHIPS?

An apprenticeship is a way for young people and members of your workforce to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and a real future. Apprenticeships usually last around 15 months but depending on the sector and level, some can last up to four years.

Apprenticeships are available to businesses of all sizes and from all sectors.

| Name | Level | Equivalent educational level |
|--------------|-------|---|
| Intermediate | 2 | 5 GCSE A*-C or 9-4 |
| Advanced | 3 | 2 A levels or Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma |
| Higher | 4 | HNC |
| Higher | 5 | HND or Foundation Degree |
| Degree | 6 & 7 | Bachelor's or Master's degree |

THE BENEFITS

Hiring an apprentice is a productive and effective way for any business to grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce. There has never been a better time to employ an apprentice.

Economic benefits

Apprenticeships boost the skills of the workforce making apprenticeships highly valued in the UK economy and central to future business growth and productivity.

Quality Services

There is a skills system in place that offers a range of quality services to employers. These include:

1. **Business organisational analysis to help identify opportunities**
2. **Recruitment and selection**
3. **Assessment**
4. **Training and skills assessment**

Improve your bottom line

Apprenticeships deliver real returns to your bottom line, helping to improve productivity and competitiveness. Training apprentices can also be more cost effective than hiring skilled staff, leading to lower overall training and recruitment costs.

Fill your skill gaps

Apprenticeships deliver skills designed around your business needs, providing the skilled workers you need for the future. They also help you develop the specialist skills you need to keep pace with the latest technology and working practices in your sector.

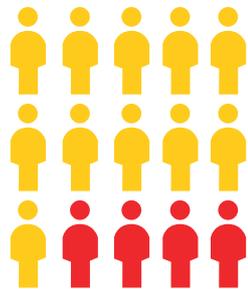
Motivate your workforce

Apprentices tend to be eager, motivated, flexible and loyal to the company that invested in them. Remember, an apprentice is with you because they want to be – they have made an active choice to learn on the job and have a commitment to a specific career.



78%

of employers say apprentices make their businesses more productive



73%

of employers say that staff morale is improved by apprentices

FUNDING

An incentive payment of £1000 is available to all employers taking on an apprentice aged 16-18 (or aged 19-24 with an Education Health and Care plan or care leaver). Payments are made via West Herts College and passed on to you the employer: £500 after month three and £500 after month twelve of the apprenticeship programme.

If you are a small business (with fewer than 50 employees) there will be no cost to you for training an apprentice aged 16-18 (or aged 19-24 with an Education Health and care plan or care leaver).

If your business has more than 50 employees you will pay only 5% of the training cost of each apprentice. Businesses of this size pay for all ages, with no remission available for 16-18 year olds.

Employers of apprentices under the age of 25 do not pay secondary Class 1 (employer) National Insurance contribution for their apprentice.

The training cost for each apprenticeship standard varies and West Herts College will provide this information to you.

WE MAKE IT SIMPLE

It will not come as any surprise that there is a certain amount of red tape. However, we are well versed in making the whole process as simple as possible for you, so that you can get on with the job of training your apprentice and keep red tape to a minimum.

We have a dedicated team to help serve businesses with all aspects of recruiting and training an apprentice, and help with administration tasks.



96%

of employers with an apprentice report benefits to their business



83%

of employers recommend apprentices to other businesses

WHO CAN BE AN APPRENTICE?

- Individuals over the age of 16.
- There is no upper age limit for an apprentice.
- They can be new entrants or use them to grow talent among current employees who need to develop substantial new skills.
- They have achieved the requisite qualifications in English and maths. If they don't have the requisite qualifications on entry they will need to complete Functional Skill qualifications. For most apprenticeships this will need to be achieved by the end of the apprenticeship.

BEFORE YOU RECRUIT AN APPRENTICE

There are some key elements to consider before you recruit an apprentice.

- Ensure your senior management team and business has a belief in apprenticeships and their worth, and are prepared to invest in them.
- Spend time looking at roles that might be suitable for apprentices. You may have specific roles that you could develop into apprenticeships, or a certain facet of the business that is growing and needs support developing.

WHICH APPRENTICESHIP IS SUITABLE?

New apprenticeship standards are being introduced regularly and are designed by employers and cover a single occupation. All apprenticeship standards can be found here: institute-for-apprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/

There may be one or more apprenticeship standard that could be suitable to you, and it is recommended that you spend some time with us, going through the various standards, and undertaking a skills scan so you are certain you have got the right one.

Apprenticeship standards include:

- On and off the job training
- Minimum 20% off the job training
- English and maths - Functional Skills
- On programme assessment that covers theoretical and practical elements to include behaviours, skills and knowledge
- Grading where possible
- No formal requirement for qualifications for some apprenticeships
- End point assessment

HOW DO I RECRUIT AN APPRENTICE?

You can recruit an apprentice in a number of ways:

By yourself

Advertising an apprenticeship in the media and by registering your interest in employing an apprentice with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) website, through a recruitment agency, by word of mouth or by speaking to your local schools and asking if someone is interested when they leave school. You may have had someone on work experience who may be suitable and interested in working for you after they have left school.

Through West Herts College

Using West Herts College as a free recruitment service is by far the most popular option and helps save time and resources on your behalf. We make the process of recruiting a new employee easier as we have access to a large number of students who are studying with us on a range of courses.

Each candidate would go through an initial skills screening and English and maths assessment, ensuring you receive the perfect match for your role, saving you time and money as it is a free service.

We also use the following recruitment channels to advertise the apprenticeship:

- National Apprenticeship Service (Recruit an Apprentice):
We will take the details of your vacancy and advertise it through their website. You will then be sent candidates CVs so you can arrange interviews using your own recruitment procedures.
- GetMyFirstJob:
All of our apprenticeship opportunities are listed on GMFJ. We'll help you ensure your apprenticeship vacancy is advertised correctly.

YOUR COMMITMENTS

Genuine Job

There must be a genuine job with a skills development programme and the opportunity to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to achieve the apprenticeship.

Contract of Service

A Contract of Service is essential and their job title must include the word 'Apprentice' for a new member of staff but an existing staff member doesn't need a new contract. The contract must be at least as long as the apprenticeship training programme.

Pay an apprentice wage

Every apprentice must be paid a lawful wage for the time they are in work and off the job training. Visit [gov.uk/nationalminimum-wage-rates](https://www.gov.uk/nationalminimum-wage-rates) for the latest information on the National Minimum Wage.

30 hours work per week

Apprentices must be offered a minimum of 30 hours work per week to complete their apprenticeship (including any time spent on 'off-the-job' training). However, the majority of apprentices work full-time.

372 days duration

An apprenticeship must last at least 372 days in duration from their first day in learning. Apprenticeships can last for up to four years dependent upon the level you wish your apprentice to work towards.

20% off the job training

Apprentices must spend at least 20% of their contracted hours on off-the-job training, this must be paid.

Benefits

Apprentices are entitled to the same holidays as their colleagues, unless special circumstances are identified and other arrangements agreed. It is not however, unlawful for an apprentice to have different or lesser employment benefits than that of regular employees i.e. pension, healthcare arrangements, gym membership.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Health and safety

As an employer, you must take all necessary steps for securing the health, safety and welfare of any apprentice in your care and ensure they are treated no differently than other members of your workforce.

This includes risk assessment, supervision, provision of personal protective equipment and training. If there is an accident that affects an apprentice, it must be reported to West Herts College so obligations to monitor accidents can be met.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is promoting the welfare of children, young adults and vulnerable adults and protecting them from harm, maltreatment and preventing impairment of health or development.

As an employer you'll need to be aware of what to do should an apprentice come to you with a concern. Please refer to our Safeguarding information at **westherts.ac.uk/about-us/safeguarding**

Our aim is to make sure that you feel confident should you encounter a safeguarding concern, but we don't expect you to deal with it alone. Follow the steps we have advised and contact us as soon as you can – we will then make sure that you and the apprentice are supported fully.

If you have any questions about safeguarding, please get in touch with Emma Doree, Designated Safeguarding Lead on 07920028361 or email emma.doree@westherts.ac.uk

TRAINING AND ASSESSMENT

There are three key essentials to training and assessment of an apprentice:

1. **The apprentice**
2. **You, the employer**
3. **West Herts College**

Induction

Your apprentice will need an introduction to your company which should include; health and safety training; an introduction and briefing on your company policies and procedures; any expectations you have of them including behaviour, dress code etc.

On-going support and training

It is important to remember that an apprentice in the majority of cases would not have had experience of a professional working environment before, therefore they will probably need additional guidance and support to understand their role, the tasks they will be expected to carry out, and how they fit into your organisation.

Designated supervisor

We recommend a designated supervisor, who is the person responsible for day to day involvement with the apprentice and act as a key contact. Also appoint a mentor to support your new apprentice. This enables this member of staff to develop new skills also.

Commitment Statement

The Commitment Statement forms the basis of the training plan that will be undertaken with you, the apprentice and West Herts College.

It details the who, where and when of training your apprentice. Training will take place in the workplace as well as West Herts College and is recorded in the Commitment Statement and will detail who is responsible for training the apprentice.

20% off the job training

Apprentices must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training. It includes learning new skills and training that is delivered at the apprentice's workplace and in college.

This 20% must be done within contracted working hours and they must be paid for attending. Off the job training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard. It can cover the following:

- **Teaching of theory:** lectures, role play, simulation, online learning, manufactures training
- **Practical training:** shadowing, mentoring, industry visits, team meetings, researching
- **Learning support**
- **Time spent writing assignments or assessments**

Progress review

Progress is reviewed at intervals with you, the apprentice and West Herts College. A progress review report will be documented and a copy will be given to you and the apprentice.

The progress review will include skills, knowledge and behaviours developed, progress of qualification (if required), 20% off the job training log, English and maths skills developed, PREVENT, health and safety, equality and diversity, target setting (SMART), next review date.

English and maths

English and maths are an important part of an apprentice's learning programme. They will need to complete Functional Skills Level 2 qualifications if they don't have the requisite qualifications on entry. Apprentices without English or maths at Level 1 must achieve this level and take the test for Level 2 English and maths before the end of the apprenticeship.

Mentoring

Businesses that have a mentor programme, report it improves job performance and helps staff (and apprenticeship) retention. You should provide regular support to the apprentice throughout their time with the company.

If you are interested in developing mentoring skills within your organisation talk to West Herts College about mentor training your staff.

Wider support

Support is available through additional visits, via email or over the telephone. All West Herts College training and assessment staff have industry relevant skills and experience to support you and your apprentice as part of the package.

West Herts College, offers a number of support services to support apprentices through their qualification:

- **Study Skills Team:** offering one-to-one study sessions, proof-reading their assignments or help them with referencing.
- **Specialist English and maths teachers:** offering apprentices support revising or help going through more complex topics in detail
- **Student Support Team:** are available to talk about financial worries, personal issues or advise on progression opportunities.

Apprenticeships

For further information please visit:
westherts.ac.uk/apprenticeships

T: 01923 275700

E: apprenticeships@westherts.ac.uk

