

What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are employment opportunities with on-the-job training leading to nationally recognised qualifications, developed by industry. An Apprenticeship offers real opportunities for people to develop skills and contributes towards the council realising its City for All ambitions.

Apprenticeships can be offered as professional development to existing staff within their roles or to bring new Apprentices into the business.

Apprenticeships offer a route to develop both existing talent and harness fresh new talent, to help ensure that organisations have the practical skills and qualifications they need now and for the future. They can support the Council with succession planning, developing career pathways and future proofing our workforce. A recent survey by the National Apprenticeship Service found that 96% of employers reported benefits to their business from hiring apprentices.

Types of Apprenticeships

There are three types of Apprenticeship with seven levels, any of which can be used at Westminster.

1. Intermediate Apprenticeships

Lead to a Level 2 nationally recognised qualification that is equivalent to five good GCSE passes. 12 months in length (minimum). The majority of apprenticeships will last between 12-15 months.

2. Advanced Apprenticeships

Lead to a Level 3 qualification that is equivalent to two A-level passes. These are 18 months in length (minimum).

3. Higher and Degree Apprenticeships

Level 4, 5, 6 and 7 apprenticeships are equivalent to foundation degree, degree and master degree levels. These are 24 months or more in length. The work and qualification will demand more from the apprentice in terms of knowledge and skills and will therefore come with a higher salary than that payable for intermediate apprenticeships.

The level of the apprenticeship will be determined by the Apprenticeship Standard and the required skills, knowledge and behaviours relevant to the role. The Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) Apprenticeship Team will be able to advise on the appropriate Apprenticeship for the role. There are a large number of Apprenticeships Standards that can be used to support the development of apprentices within Council services including:

- Business and administration
- Catering and hospitality
- Childcare and education
- Construction
- Creative and design
- Digital
- Engineering and manufacturing
- Health and science
- Legal, finance and accounting
- Protective services
- Sales, marketing and procurement
- Social care
- Transport and logistics

You can find full details of all of the Apprenticeship Standards on the [Institute of Apprenticeships website](#)

Apprenticeships as professional development for existing staff

Apprenticeships can be used to development existing staff within their roles, providing them with the enhanced skills, knowledge and behaviours to develop their careers to the next level. This can be either within the technical area or in a core skill area like leadership and management, project management or finance.

The Apprenticeship training and assessment will need to be completed within the scope of the officers role and sufficient time will need to be allowed to complete the necessary 20% off the job training. There will be no change to the member of Terms and Conditions of employment.

Recruiting an Apprentice

The Westminster Apprenticeship Academy (WAA) delivered in partnership with the Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) and the Westminster Employment Services (WES) recruit our apprentices and manage the Apprenticeship training and assessment. The WAA also support the apprentices and their managers for the duration of the Apprenticeship.

When a service identifies opportunities to recruit an apprentice within their service area, they should obtain agreement from the budget holder to recruit an apprentice considering the costs to be incurred outlined below. They should then prepare a Job Description and in discussion with the WAA Team, agree the type of Apprenticeship most appropriate to the job role. The WAA Team will manage the end-to-end recruitment of the apprentices, involving the recruiting manager in Recruitment Days, short-listing and interviews.

Apprentices are employed on a Westminster 36 hours a week fixed term contract for the duration of their Apprenticeship and are line managed by the team in which they are employed. Part time Apprenticeships can be considered but these should be discussed with the WAA Team.

Apprentices will be entitled to 26 days leave plus Bank Holidays per calendar year pro-rata to the length of the contract and Statutory Sick pay will apply where applicable. In relation to sickness absence, the apprentice must contact their manager by telephone before 9.30am on the day they are due to attend work. Apprentices will need to agree holidays

with their manager in line with the Council's Annual Leave Policy. This should not be taken during training or college term time unless in exceptional circumstances.

Apprentices are subject to the same probationary periods as all other WCC employees. A formal review between the line manager and apprentices should take place at week 8 and apprentices are subject to a probationary period of 3 months. Should no issues be raised, the Apprenticeship will continue. Should performance issues arise at the assessment these must be discussed fully with both the apprentice and WAA Team.

Apprenticeship Training and Assessment

The Westminster Apprenticeship Academy team will organise the formal external training aspects of the apprenticeship. This amounts to 20% of the apprentice's time, to ensure that national standards are met. As part of the Apprenticeship, managers will be required to release apprentices for 20% off the job learning. Depending on the particular type of Apprenticeship, this may be 1 day per week or block release learning.

The WAA team will arrange for apprentices to enrol in the relevant courses and provide ongoing support. Managers will be responsible for organising any on-the job training required during the remaining 4 days at work. Apprentices should complete the same induction as permanent members of staff including attending the corporate induction, completing mandatory e-learning packages on information management and inclusivity in the workplace and attending the two-day Westminster Way programme. Apprentices should also complete any local induction to their service.

Apprentice costs

The cost of the Apprenticeship training and assessment varies depending on the Apprenticeship. These can range in cost from £3,000 through to £27,000 but these costs are funded by the Council's apprenticeship levy contributions, subject to Directorate SMT sign off. The salary and employee costs and any additional training that is not part of the Apprenticeship are covered by the Service Area.

Salary rates

Salary rates for apprentices are in line with the London Living Wage, with the annual salary being £19,804 for level 3 and 4 apprenticeships.

FAQs about Apprenticeships

Q1. Where are apprenticeship opportunities advertised?

All Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on the NAS (National Apprenticeship Service) and WAES and WCC websites. The WAA Team will also work with the Westminster Employment Services to promote Apprenticeship to local residents groups/

Q2. Are applications for apprenticeships restricted to people living within Westminster boundaries only?

No, whilst the council actively encourages applications for any posts including Apprenticeships from local residents it is not necessary to restrict applications to people living within Westminster boundaries. The Council policy is to recruit on merit i.e. the best person for the role, and this will apply to the selection of Apprentices.

Q3. What if we need specialist skills to be tested as part of the recruitment process e.g. Microsoft Office skills?

Speak to the WAA Team to discuss this as a requirement within the job description and recruitment process.

Q4. How many days and hours a week will an apprentice work at the council?

Four days per week, the fifth day is spent undertaking formal training unless delivery is wholly work place based or an alternative delivery is agreed i.e.) block learning. In total apprentices will work 36 hours per week, inclusive of training days/hours. In any instance where additional hours are required depending on the demands of the role (which must be reasonable) this must still be contained within the overall total of 36 hours per week, and overtime or time in lieu benefits will not be accrued.

Q5. Who will pay the apprentice?

Apprentice's salaries are paid by the service and administered by WCC payroll on the 20th of each month.

Q6. Whom should an apprentice contact if they want information on their HR policies or procedures (leave, sickness, maternity or paternity leave etc.)?

Apprentices should contact the WAA Team or the Human Resources Business Partner for their Directorate.

Q7. Whom should managers contact if there are issues with an apprentice i.e. poor time keeping or performance etc.?

Managers should contact the WAA Team or the Human Resources Business Partner for their Directorate.

Q8. What happens if for any reason the Apprenticeship needs to be terminated i.e. the person no longer wishes to continue or performance is an ongoing issue?

Either the manager or the apprentice should contact the WAA Team or the Human Resources Business Partner for their Directorate.

Q9. Who will monitor the scheme or programme?

Key performance indicators are agreed between the WAA Team and the Apprenticeship training providers and regular, monthly contract review meetings will take place. If managers or apprentices have any concerns about the service received from their training providers, these should be raised with the WAA Team.

To help us monitor the quality of the scheme and to identify and make improvements to it where necessary, we ask that managers and apprentices respond to requests to complete on-line surveys and attend Apprentice Network and Apprentice Manager Network meetings.

Q10. If an apprentice has a grievance or discrimination, bullying or harassment complaint, how will this be dealt with?

Apprentices should contact the Human Resources Business Partner for their Directorate.

Q11. Who is responsible for undertaking a DBS check if required?

If a DBS check is required by the post because of the nature of duties undertaken, this should be clearly stated when the opportunity is created and this will be organised as part of the recruitment process.

Q12. Do Westminster's rules of conduct and policies and procedures apply to apprentices?

Apprentices are Westminster Council employees and are expected to abide by the Council's code of conduct and all other policies and procedures. This will include the Council's policies on confidentiality, the treatment of information, equality and diversity and health and safety. This should be part of the apprentices' local induction to the team.

Q14. What happens at the end of the Apprenticeship?

Three months before the end of the Apprenticeship there will be a meeting between the WAA Team and the apprentice to discuss what will happen after the end of the apprenticeship. There are a number of different options available subject to the agreement of the apprentice and the manager. These are as follows:

- The apprentice successfully applies for and secures a permanent role at the Council.
- Progression to a Higher Level Apprenticeship.
- Employment at the council ends on completion of the apprenticeship. In such situations, the WAA Team can assist the apprentice with job hunting, CV writing and job interview preparation skills by appointment.

Useful Contacts and Links

For further information on recruiting an apprentice, managers should contact the Westminster Apprenticeship Academy Team by email: apprentices@waes.ac.uk

Or contact Alpa Ruparelia, Organisational Development Advisor, People Services, Westminster Council

aruparelia@westminster.gov.uk 020 7641 7617

Joanne Wason, Apprenticeship and Skills Manager, Westminster Adult Education Service

jwason@waes.ac.uk 020 7641 778

Useful Links

<https://officesharedservice.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/wcc-peopleservices/Pages/Apprenticeships.aspx>

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/apprenticeships>

<https://www.waes.ac.uk/apprenticeship-vacancies>

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>

For further guidance on the apprenticeship recruitment process, please see our [Recruitment Policy](#).