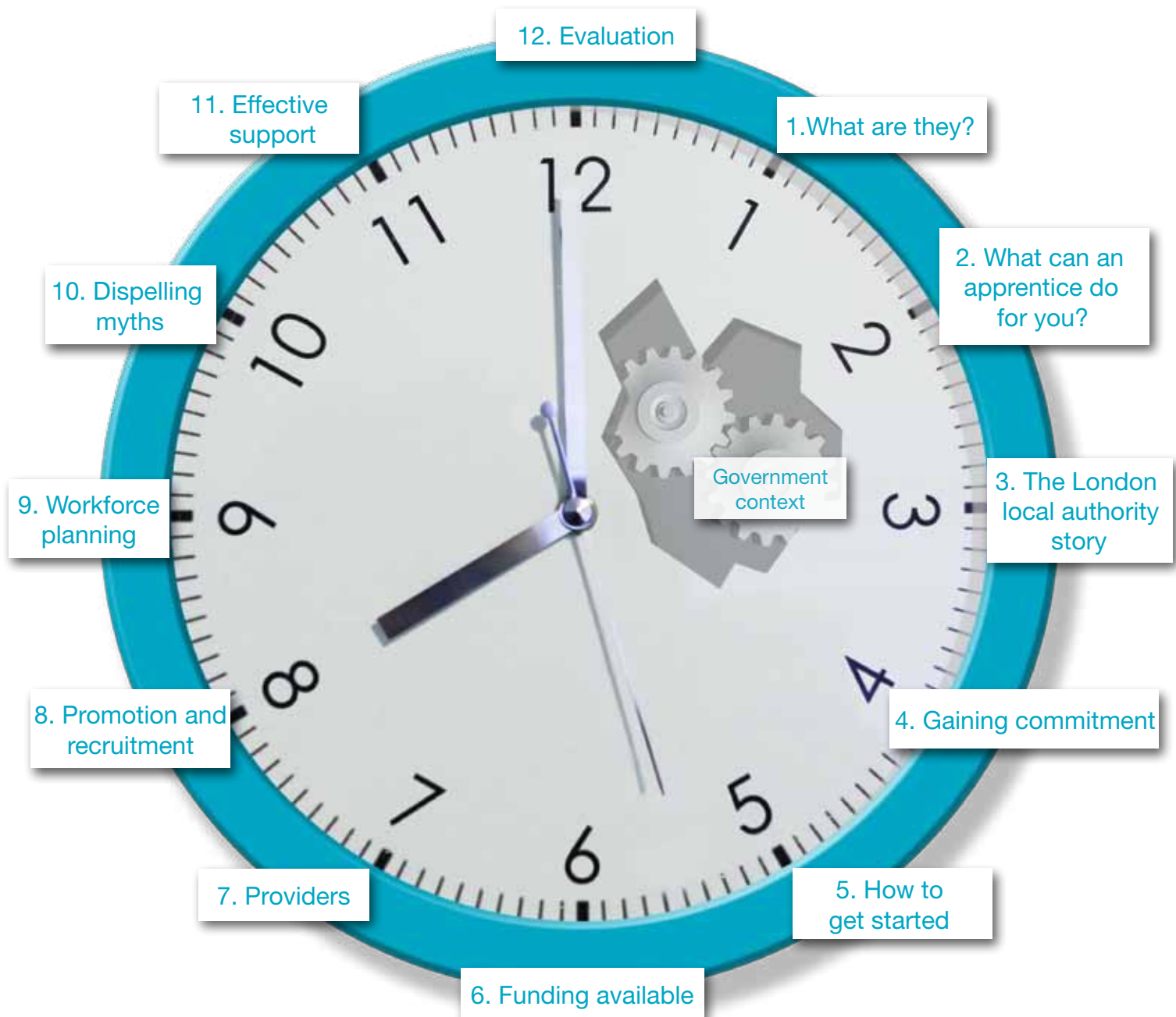


Apprenticeships

An employer's guide to Apprenticeships

Now is the time to think about the future of your work force...



I am pleased to welcome you to the London edition of the Employer's Guide to Apprenticeships, based on an original toolkit developed by RIEP colleagues in the West Midlands.

This online tool is aimed at local government officers who lead and/or support the development and delivery of apprenticeships, either in internal positions or with local businesses, or as part of the supply chain. It provides a wealth of knowledge, practical ideas, and information that can be extracted and passed on to managers or included in local policies. A key objective in London is that apprentices have a positive experience of local government, whether directly employed by a council or not. This guide aims to support that objective by recognising the roles of training providers, trades unions, managers and colleagues and the vital importance of communication with and between all these groups.

The apprenticeships agenda is supported by all the main political parties both through the London Councils Leaders' Committee, and nationally. Apprenticeships will continue to be high profile at government level as employment and skills remain an issue for the country. In London we have a number of initiatives to support employers establish and grow apprenticeship schemes, and we have already exceeded the first year's target for new starts, with over 700 new apprentices in 2009/10.

In London there is a particular need for local government to provide where possible younger people with work experiences given the concern about the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). As money becomes ever tighter, we believe that apprenticeships offer a cost-effective and socially beneficial way of addressing many key issues for London's authorities, both as employers, capacity builders and as leaders of place.

We hope this guide will demonstrate this at a very practical level, and will help all of you working in this area continue to make a real success of apprenticeships for the benefit of young people and the wider community.

Steve Johnson
Corporate Director,
Capital Ambition

As the importance of Apprentices in local government has grown over the past few years the production of this online guide is very timely.

The guide has been adapted by London Councils from the original work produced by Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands (IEWM).

By working closely together with Capital Ambition and employers, supported by sponsorship from the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), this user friendly and practical tool supports you in embedding Apprenticeships as part of your workforce planning.

As the case studies show, Apprenticeships are a proven way to develop the skills of both existing staff and new recruits to deliver improvements in the delivery of local services.

I hope this guide will persuade employers, not currently benefiting from apprentices to take advantage of the World Class Apprenticeship programme and experience increased productivity levels, improved staff morale and retention rates within their organisation.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is here to support you provided by an experienced field force of Employer Services Managers.

Find out more about the NAS:

www.apprenticeships.org.uk 0800 015 0600



Vic Grimes – Regional Director
National Apprenticeship Service

The IDeA, as part of the LGA Group, is delighted to have worked with London Councils and sponsor this online guide to Apprenticeships. Enabling local authorities to share their knowledge and experiences to efficiently deliver Apprenticeship opportunities is vital at a time of limited resources and increasing service demand.

During the development of this guide we discovered good practice and innovation, but there is always something new to learn. The guide's strength is that user-generated content will ensure that it will continue to evolve and stay fresh, offering an end to isolation working and promoting genuine joined-up activity.

You can also register for the Apprenticeships community of practice and access further information by clicking on the link below:

[IDeA Apprenticeships Community of Practice](#)



Martin Stein, Principal Consultant - Talent & Skills Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA)

Acknowledgements

The guide has been adapted by London Councils and Capital Ambition from original work produced by Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands (IEWM) with sponsorship from the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

Thanks to Katrina McGuigan, Improvement and Efficiency West Midlands, for sharing this guide.

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1. What are apprentices and Apprenticeships?

This section outlines the meaning of an apprentice and the Apprenticeship framework.



Now is the time...

1. What are Apprenticeships?

1.1 What is an apprentice?

An apprentice is an individual who undertakes a formalised and accredited training programme, in a work based environment. The training programme must be recognised as an Apprenticeship Framework. The individual can be a new or existing employee and will meet the following eligibility criteria:

- over 16 years of age
- lives in England
- is not in full time education
- must have a contract of employment
- and be paid a salary

1.2 What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a nationally recognised training programme combining work with learning and training, both on and off the job. They combine the development of theoretical knowledge regarding a particular occupation or range of occupations with practical experience gained from doing the job.

There are three components to any apprenticeship: National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), Technical Certificate (the knowledge element) and Functional Skills/Key Skills Certificate. These three elements make up the Apprenticeship Framework. The purpose of incorporating Employment Rights and Responsibilities is to ensure that apprentices have an understanding of their role in the organisation, their legal rights and responsibilities as an employee and the variety of career routes open to them.

NVQ	Technical Certificate	Functional/Key Skills Certificate
This qualification is achieved by the apprentice gaining practical experience and knowledge in the workplace. A level of competence must be demonstrated by the apprentice using a variety of methods, including observations, reflective accounts and professional discussions.	Assessment is undertaken in the workplace by training providers' qualified assessors. This college- or training provider-based qualification complements the NVQ component by providing the underpinning theory.	Assessment is undertaken remotely (via an online portal) or on day release by training providers' qualified assessors. These key skills include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Communication- Application of number- ICT- Working with others- Problem Solving- Improving own learning and performance
Employees' Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)		

There are 3 levels of apprenticeship:

Type	NVQ Level	Equivalent Qualification	Average Length
Apprenticeship	2	5 GCSE passes	9 to 12 months
Advanced Apprenticeship	3	2 A-level passes	2 years (1 year if following an apprenticeship)
Higher Apprenticeship	4	Foundation Degree	3 to 4 years

1.3 The Apprenticeship Framework

There are more than 190 Apprenticeship [frameworks](#) ranging from Accountancy to Agriculture, Construction to Customer Service and Hairdressing to Health and Social Care. Each framework also has a number of pathways within it.

An Apprenticeship framework is developed by a Sector Skills Council (SSC). SSCs are licensed by Government to represent employers in developing National Occupational Standards and design and approve Apprenticeship Frameworks.

Different training providers will offer differing frameworks across localities; it is worth discussing your requirements with your [National Apprenticeship Service Employer Services Manager](#) to see which training providers can meet your needs.



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2. What can an apprentice do for you?

This section gives an overview of the positive impact apprentices can bring to your organisation. It encourages you to consider the organisational and financial benefits of effective Apprenticeships through effective processes.



Now is the time...

2. What can an apprentice do for you?

This section gives you an overview of the positive impact apprentices can make to your authority and community and highlights the wider benefits they bring to your workforce and the return on investment.

Councils can promote Apprenticeships through their roles as:

- Local community leaders in place-shaping: working with partners to increase the provision and take-up of Apprenticeships.
- Major employers: investing in the workforce today to deliver benefits in the future.
- [Procurers of goods and services](#): with the ability to influence the employment and skills practices of suppliers.
- Commissioners of 14-19 learning - provision of skills development and leaders in assisting young people's transition to the labour market.

2.1 Organisational benefits

- Apprenticeships provide a mechanism to build career pathways into [skills shortage areas](#). Apprenticeships are a valuable knowledge transfer tool, providing a method of retaining knowledge. Apprenticeships ensure that knowledge doesn't retire with people when they leave. Utilising the knowledge and skills of existing colleagues and transferring them through mentoring is of value to all involved and is a major motivator for staff.
- An apprentice is good for business. Apprenticeships offer a route to harness talent. If you have trained staff with the right skills for the job they can do a wider range of tasks and take on new responsibilities – this can help to reduce skill shortages, minimise staff turnover and workplace accidents, and increase productivity. Apprenticeships can help your council to raise levels of literacy and numeracy across its services and staff, supporting a [Skills Pledge](#) or commitment to the [GO Award](#).
- Taking on an apprentice is cost effective because they learn while they work and Government funding can contribute to training costs (and in some cases may supplement other employment costs, e.g. Future Jobs Fund).
- Apprenticeships can be linked to entry-level positions. Through effective succession planning, apprentices can progress to senior positions. This can also improve staff motivation and engagement throughout the authority.
- Staff who would not normally be in a position to line manage staff have opportunities to supervise and mentor and develop their own skills.
- Apprenticeship programmes have been shown to improve staff retention and loyalty. 80% of employers report that their apprentices have great retention rates and are steeped in the company's values because of the way they were trained as apprentices. Employees are most likely to leave an organisation in the first 0 – 12 months of service. However placing the individual on a structured training plan that provides qualifications will reduce the likelihood of them leaving. Read [former apprentices stories](#) about how apprenticeships enabled them to grow and develop within a local authority.
- Apprenticeship training has been shown to increase quality of work and [increase efficiency and productivity](#), which can ultimately improve service delivery and/or reduce costs.
- There is flexibility of delivery of the framework to meet employer needs in terms of fitting into work schedules.
- Apprenticeship programmes can help with broader challenges and contribute to Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Multi Area Agreement targets. By placing young people on apprenticeship programmes a positive impact can be made on those not in employment, education or training (NEET) figures and also the aspirations and educational achievement of the local community.

- Offering Apprenticeships can help to promote your authority as an employer of choice. With the ambition of one in five young people going on to do an Apprenticeship they are an essential part of any workforce strategy.
- Young people are an under-represented group within the local government workforce and it is important that councils reflect their community demographics. Engaging with Apprenticeships can help in these areas.
- The Government is providing financial support for Apprenticeships and has set a target for local authorities to recruit an additional 7,500 apprentices nationally. The Local Government Association is also calling for a doubling of the number of Apprenticeships and traineeship opportunities.

2.2 Financial benefits

There are clear financial benefits to employers and their investment in Apprenticeships is repaid many times over.

- 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.
- The National Apprenticeship Service [Return on Investment Calculator](#) estimates the average costs of employing and training an apprentice against the gains that come when their 'additional productivity' impacts on the business.
- Another [study by Sheffield University](#) measured the long term financial benefit of investing in Apprenticeships:
- The [National Apprenticeship Service](#) contributes to the [funding of training](#) involved within apprenticeships.
- [Recruitment for apprentices](#) is cost effective compared to standard recruitment processes and in some cases free. There are a lot of potential candidates who have already registered their interest in apprenticeships at the [Apprenticeship Matching Service](#). Connexions and Jobcentre Plus can also provide candidates.

2.3 Community benefits

- Corporate social responsibility to support and aid unemployed in borough
- Local Strategic Partnership targets to reduce young people not in education, employment or training are the most cited targets across the country.
- Co-ordinating apprenticeships internally and externally will improve and facilitate working towards joint targets with internal and external partners.
- 80% consumers favour an organisation that employs apprentices.



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3. The London Local Authority story

This section gives the background to the London Local Authority role within the area of Apprenticeships.

Now is the time...

3. The London Local Authority story

3.1 Background

Historically, there was a very low proportion of apprentices in London compared to nationally, and this was particularly true of the public sector. This was identified as an issue by the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB) and by London Councils, Capital Ambition and local authorities themselves. At government level, a London Apprenticeship Task Force was established to lend weight to the efforts needed locally to deliver a step change in performance in this area.

The public sector nationally employs 20 percent of the total workforce but fewer than 10 per cent of all apprentices. In January 2009, the Local Government Association (LGA) called on local authorities to create 7,500 new Apprenticeships across 800 service areas by March 2011.

At the same time, baseline figures collected by London Councils in late 2008 showed that London boroughs and their suppliers were collectively hosting approximately 340 apprenticeships.

The London Apprenticeship Task Force initially set a 4000 target for public sector apprenticeships by 2012. Based on the apprenticeships that London boroughs were already delivering, London Councils wanted to set a realistic but stretching target that boroughs would want to sign up to. Setting the target would be in the context of shrinking workforces and resources, the economic downturn and rising unemployment.

London Councils wanted to give boroughs the freedom to set targets that reflected their own economic circumstances. In this context, a pan-London apprenticeship 'ambition' of 2000 was proposed, which equates to 60 apprentices per borough between 2009-12. This ambition was ratified by all local authority Leaders in October 2008, and a formal launch event was held in January 2009 to celebrate this commitment. A [London Borough Apprenticeship Subgroup](#) has been set up to drive through and monitor the action plan.

Following a seminar between Heads of Human Resources and Heads of Regeneration, it was decided that the best way to achieve buy-in would be by making apprenticeship commitments at the most senior level and promoting a corporate approach.

Further information on the London context can be found [here](#).



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Now is the time...

4. Gaining commitment

This section outlines the commitment you need to gain from within your organisation and gives examples of how other local government organisations have secured commitment even throughout these challenging times.

4. Gaining commitment

4.1 Member and Chief Executive commitment

The key argument in terms of gaining commitment from elected members is to promote their role as community leaders. The worklessness agenda is a high priority across all London boroughs. Apprenticeships can offer an opportunity into employment for those facing barriers to work and can be incorporated into Local Employment Partnerships (LEP), economic assessments, Work and Skills Plans and Strategic Partnerships

With Chief Executive and Leader support, the Apprenticeship message can be cascaded across all directorates.

The [Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network](#) champion Apprenticeships to employers of all sizes with the aim of increasing Apprenticeship take-up, particularly in sectors of poor penetration and to help promote diversity/equal opportunities. It links into the London Apprenticeship Taskforce where London local government is represented.

As mentioned [above](#), all Chief Executives and Leaders voluntarily signed up to a pan-London ambition of creating 2000 new apprenticeship starts between 2009-2012. Pledges for internal numbers were made. Contact [London Councils](#) to find out more about your Council's pledge.

4.2 So, how can you gain commitment?

Department for Communities and Local Government has identified that top councils are creating one apprenticeship for every 65 employees; the average is one apprentice per 248 employees. Almost a quarter of councils nationally (only 10% of authorities in London) are doing nothing at all to increase the number of apprentices in their workforce or across their suppliers and partners.

As good practice, London Councils promote that 2% of the entire workforce should be on an apprenticeship programme – this includes new recruits and existing apprentices. In London, this would currently equate to approximately 2300 apprentices in the London local government workforce at any one time (not including Schools based staff).

4.2.1 From Senior Managers

Local authorities are encouraged to adopt a holistic and strategic view on Apprenticeships through their members and senior management teams. Apprenticeships should be included in any strategy or policy covering employment, equality and diversity, regeneration, [procurement](#), wellbeing, children's and young people's services, anti-social behaviour, healthy communities and the 14 – 19 Agenda.

Identify which senior managers have skill shortage areas or are keen on workforce development already through the use of the [ngdp](#), [interns or trainees](#) and speak to them about their views on apprenticeships.

Once you have garnered support in principle from senior managers, discuss this agenda with your colleagues in HR/OD, 14-19, [Procurement](#) and Regeneration. Apprenticeships cross all these work areas and in order to send a consistent message to staff, managers and the public it is good practice to set up either an Apprenticeship Steering Group or plug into any existing forums on worklessness and employment initiatives.

4.2.2 From Line Managers

The following ideas can be used for getting all managers on board or recruiting new line managers to take on apprentices.

- Provide managers' briefing sessions, in conjunction with the National Apprenticeship, Service and some former or current apprentices. If you have any managers who manage, or have previously managed, an apprentice it's a good idea to get them involved to dispel any myths.
- Create an [FAQ](#) for your managers on your intranet.
- Promote the business benefits in internal communications such as staff newsletters and magazines, line manager briefings and the intranet.
- Provide case studies of where apprentices are working well in other departments or similar authorities, e.g. similar political persuasion, similar size or similar geography, with emphasis on the business and workforce planning benefits.
- Put service managers in touch with other service managers who already have apprentices. For example, the ICT Manager from LB Camden can chat openly and honestly to the ICT Manager at Islington about the challenges and benefits of IT apprentices. This is especially useful where there are no exact framework matches such as in Trading Standards or Procurement and where a flexible and innovative approach is needed.
- Offer 1:1 sessions with managers to allay any concerns. A simple conversation with managers and an opportunity for them to feedback their concerns can be fundamental to buy-in.
- Use the [Local Government Apprenticeship Framework Map](#) to identify relevant apprenticeship frameworks to your business and service needs.

4.2.3 From all employees

Some of the same tips as above apply to getting all employees on board with apprenticeships such as promoting them through internal communication mechanisms and raising awareness more generally of the initiative.

A key, and valid, concern from existing employees may be that apprentices will be replacing recently redundant staff or taking work away from colleagues who are already concerned about the security of their post. Ensure that any employment scheme is discussed with your Trade Union representatives or forums to gain their buy-in and allay these concerns.

4.2.4 From Trade Unions

Trade unions were traditionally closely linked with apprenticeships as they worked hard to ensure the welfare of the apprentice in the workplace. Unions still play an important role in promoting learning in the workplace as well as encouraging employers to take on apprentices and make sure they have a fair deal.

The Trade Union Congress (TUC) is currently running a project to enhance their policy and support on this issue including upskilling [Union Apprenticeship Advocates](#).

[Union learn](#) has produced useful reports for its members on how to use collective bargaining to ensure quality apprenticeship schemes are put in place.

Involving the trade unions at an early stage of the Apprenticeship Scheme can help to ensure that you have ongoing support as well as being aware of any potential stumbling blocks later on in the process.

Trade Unions, especially Learning Representatives, will have a wealth of knowledge of how to manage on and off the job training and their insights and support will be valuable in gaining buy-in to your schemes.

4.3 Business case support

Councils will need to construct robust business cases for the creation, growth and sustainability of Apprenticeship programmes.

Some key messages for any Apprenticeship [business case](#) are:

- Community Benefits - Apprenticeships meet the priorities of the community such as tackling local unemployment, worklessness and health issues.
- Financial Benefits - Investments in Apprenticeships can produce savings in sickness absence, recruitment costs, turnover and agency staff spend and anti-social behaviour costs.
- Organisational Benefits – Apprenticeships can rejuvenate your workforce providing new and fresh ideas, mentoring opportunities for other employees and a talent pool for future leaders.

See the links below for examples of how other authorities and industries have approached their business case:

- [Public Sector Case Studies](#)
- [London Councils Business Case information](#)
- [LB Ealing Business Case](#)
- [LB Barking and Dagenham Business Case](#)
- [Managers of apprentices – their stories](#)



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5. Getting started

This section outlines the steps you can take to setting up an Apprenticeships scheme.

5. How to get started

Now you have approval to get started and have got managers interested, what do you need to put in place?

5.1 First steps

5.1.1 As a starting point, organisations are encouraged to make contact with the [National Apprenticeship Service](#) for support and guidance. In London, dedicated [Employer Services Managers](#) have been allocated 2/3 boroughs to work with as well as a sector skill lead. Your Employer Services Manager will be able to meet with you to discuss your needs, and those of employers in your area, and identify appropriate routes forward.

5.1.2 Some local authorities are able to provide their own training provision or have established relationships with [training providers](#) but where this is not the case or the framework cannot be covered the [National Apprenticeship Service](#) can help identify a range of providers available to deliver the framework. It will be beneficial to discuss your preferred approach with training providers to ensure your needs are met.

5.1.3 [Sector Skills Councils](#) are the employer-driven organisations that together articulate the voice of the employers of around 90% of the UK's workforce on skills issues. They are:

- Uniquely independent and employer-led
- Uniquely UK-wide, covering 90% of the workforce
- Uniquely able to respond to real industry needs
- Uniquely supported by all major political parties

Most have an Employer Engagement or Apprenticeships Manager for the London and/or South East region and they will have particular expertise in their sectors which you can draw on to persuade and support managers or employers, and also get practical help and suggestions from.

5.2 Employment Terms and Conditions

As previously mentioned, an Apprentice is an employee. Further guidance on the employment status can be found at [Local Government Employers](#) and also the [member's area](#) of the London Councils site. Sample contracts and advice can also be found here.



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Now is the time...

6. Funding available

This section outlines the funding available to support you to deliver Apprenticeship frameworks.

6. Funding

6.1 Is there a cost for employers?

Like all employees, apprentices must still receive a wage and are entitled to earn an amount of no less than £95 a week.

Apprentices do not qualify for the national minimum wage if they:

- are aged 18 or under, or
- are aged 19 or over and are in the first year of their apprenticeship.

Once they have worked as an apprentice for a year, if they have reached the age of 19 and are still working for the same employer, they will be entitled to the national minimum wage (NMW) for their age.

There are different levels of NMW, depending on age. The current rates (from 1 October 2009) are:

- £5.80 (the main rate for workers aged 22 and over)
- £4.83 (the 18-21 rate)

6.2 But what is everyone else paying?

Amongst London boroughs, the apprentice salary ranges from £110 per week up to £300 per week. This will depend on what has been agreed corporately and with Trade Unions.

Some approaches to salaries include:

- Paying the London Living Wage
- Paying Scale 1 of internal salary scales (the job evaluated grade of the apprentice job description)
- Agreeing with the Trade Unions to pay apprentices 80% of Scale 1 salary whilst the apprentice is learning.
- Paying National Minimum Wage
- Paying the TUC recommended minimum of £110 per week.

The average net pay per week across different industries are:

- Hairdressing - £109
- Business Admin - £168
- Retail - £168
- Construction - £174
- Customer Service - £186
- Hospitality - £187

6.3 Increments and progression

It is advisable to review apprentices' pay on a six monthly basis, or in line with internal employee appraisal processes, as well as part of the usual probation and performance management. This would encourage retention and motivation, and reward completion of NVQ units, the technical certificate and progress in the workplace.

Sometimes authorities have agreed rates for certain stages of an apprenticeship. This means apprentices may get pay increases/bonuses when they pass probation, achieve a qualification or reach a certain standard. This helps move the apprentices towards the London Living Wage.

It is also advisable to have different salary scales for Level 2 and Level 3 Apprenticeships to demonstrate the progression and significant increase in responsibility and experience.

6.4 Support from the National Apprenticeship Service

Apprenticeship funding is available from the National Apprenticeship Service. The size of the contribution varies depending on the age of the apprentice and the framework being undertaken. The table below gives an overview of available funding.

Age	National Apprenticeship contribution
16 – 18	100%
19 - 24	50%
25 +	Contribution for specified places

This funding is paid direct to the training providers. Large employers with a direct contract with the National Apprenticeship Service may receive the funding themselves where they also deliver the training in-house

For 19+ and 25+ apprenticeship places, the employer pays the remaining 50% of training costs unless a different funding structure is agreed/negotiated with the training provider.

Funding is not currently available from NAS for Higher Apprenticeships. Although as new Higher Apprenticeships develop there may be some contribution from NAS and HEFCE. It is often the case that this will be funded by the employer and it is worth a discussion with the training provider/higher education institution and Sector Skills Council as there may be some negotiation in some instances over the costs of the training.

6.5 Linking to other funding initiatives

The Apprenticeship agenda has cross party political support and the government has invested a great deal of resource to support communities to tackle youth unemployment and provide work experience opportunities.

A number of authorities have utilised initiatives such the [Future Jobs Fund](#), Area Based Grants, [section 106 agreements](#) and Working Neighbourhood Renewal fund to increase the number of apprentices within the organisation.



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Now is the time...

7. Training Providers

This section summarises the role of the training provider who will deliver the qualification element of the Apprenticeship framework.

7. Training Providers

7.1 What is the role of the training provider?

A training provider is usually a local college or specialist training organisation responsible for an apprentice's off-the-job training. When you take on an apprentice, the training provider will appoint an assessor who will work with you to make sure that the training is well planned. Once the apprentice starts the assessor will follow their progress and deal with any issues that may arise.

The training provider is responsible for managing and delivering all the training and support required for the Qualification Framework. They will also carry out an induction on to their training programme, monitor and support the apprentice during the probation period, carry out regular reviews and provide additional support where necessary for the apprentice to achieve their qualification.

Providers can also take responsibility for advertising the apprenticeship vacancy and can advertise the vacancy on [Apprenticeship Vacancies Online](#) or work with you to find and assess candidates in the initial sift.

7.2 How do I choose a training provider?

Your Employer Services Manager at the National Apprenticeship Service can help identify appropriate training providers for the frameworks that you need. It is good practice to interview 2 or 3 training providers to get an idea of the different models of delivery and assess which is most suitable for your managers and their business needs.

Some useful questions to ask when you interview providers are:

Partnership Working

1. How do you deliver the elements of the apprenticeship framework?
 - a. NVQ (e.g. onsite, offsite, online)
 - b. Technical Certificate
 - c. Key Skills (e.g. delivered yourself, subcontracted)
2. How would you go about working in partnership with us?
3. From your perspective, what would we need in place to ensure we were providing a successful placement for an apprentice?
4. How would you work with us in selecting the non-compulsory NVQ units most appropriate to the role in our organisation?
5. We would want you to be involved in aspects of the recruitment and selection process, how would you approach this?
 - a. Job Descriptions
 - b. Advertisement
 - c. Assessment
 - d. Selection
6. What added value support and development do you provide to apprentices?
7. And supervisors/managers?
8. How involved are you in progression and signposting of apprentices once the scheme is complete?

Quality and Monitoring

9. What are your Ofsted grades and when was your most recent inspection?

10. Is your organisation committed to achieving, and has a plan working towards, Training Quality Standards? (mainly FE Colleges have this at present)
11. Does your organisation hold any of quality standards such as IIP, or ISO?
12. What is your success rate in the specific sector skills area we are recruiting for?
13. What are your retention and completion rates for the full framework?
14. What are these rates against the national and regional average?
15. How would you propose we manage the caseload of apprentices and monitor their progression?
16. How would be monitor and evaluate the success of the scheme?
17. What is your staff vetting procedure?
18. What CPD do you have in place for trainers and teachers?

Additional Requirements

19. Please provide two company references for apprenticeships or related activity already delivering
20. Do you employ any apprentices yourself or encourage other work based learning employment initiatives such as internships and work placements?

7.3 How often do apprentices attend college or training sessions?

This varies from programme to programme. Some of the training can be in the work place and other sessions could be in the college or with a learning provider. Depending on the type of job being done, or the elements of training being undertaken, it could be one day a week or a block release.

The Technical Certificate and Key Skills will be delivered during off-the-job training sessions arranged by the Training Provider. This may be on a day release basis, normally one day a week; many learning providers deliver the required training within the office environment where appropriate. Occasionally apprentices may be required to attend college on additional days for exams, catch up sessions etc. However, you will be informed of these in advance.

7.4 Getting added value from your Training Provider

The training provider will also meet with you and the apprentice to complete a review. This will normally take place every 8-12 weeks at your workplace. These will include the apprentice, the training provider and the apprentice's supervisor/manager.

The purpose of the review is to discuss the progress being made by the apprentice in relation to their training programme and development at work. It will help to link together targets set by you and the requirements of the NVQ and vice versa. The training provider will set targets for coursework and assignments, celebrate achievements and discuss any areas for concern.

Many training providers offer added value sessions such as Health and Safety certificates or additional IT qualifications.

Training providers will also have inbuilt mechanisms for those apprentices that require extra literacy, numeracy, behavioural or emotional support. Make sure you discuss these issues with the training provider as well to see where they can draw on the expertise of their organisation.

The Apprenticeship Manager/Co-ordinator may also instigate monthly/quarterly meetings with the key contact at the Training Provider to go over each apprentice and ensure everyone is up to date with their progress and any issues that may arise.

7.5 Group Training Association (GTA's) and Apprenticeship Training Association (ATA's)

Group Training Association (GTA)

The model involves a group of employers in a particular industry sector recognising the need to create a pool of Apprentices from which they can hire an Apprentice or Apprentices. Each Apprentice is employed full time by the GTA and has a Contract of Employment. The employers recognise that no single organisation can employ an Apprentice full time, but choose to pay a negotiated amount into the Apprentice pool and call off Apprentice time for the agreed number of days /weeks/months in the year

In this way the pot of money supporting the Apprentices is sufficient to pay them all the year round, and it is up to the employers to call off time commensurate to the amount of time they have agreed to buy from the GTA pot.

[Apprenticeship Training Association \(ATA\)](#)

The lead organisation of an ATA, for example a Further Education College, employs the Apprentice, who has a Contract of Employment. . The lead organisation, just like a recruitment agency, seeks to hire out the Apprentice to interested organisations on a daily/weekly/monthly rate. The ATA has to break even, which can be difficult because margins are tight. Innovative models, in addition to the daily, weekly, monthly charge out rate (including administration / management costs) include such ideas as charging a 'finders fee', also known as temp. to permanent arrangement fee eg. if the employer really wants to employ an Apprentice they pay, say 10% of the first year salary, by way of an introduction fee, into the ATA.



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Now is the time...

8. Promotion and recruitment

This section supports you to consider the value of promoting local government as an employer and shares best practice of promotion and recruitment processes.

8. Promotion and recruitment

8.1 Promoting local government

This guide can be used to help local authorities to positively promote themselves as an employer of choice through Apprenticeships, successfully challenging poor perceptions, particularly amongst young people.

The LGA Group provides a website resource promoting career opportunities in local government: www.LGcareers.com.

Utilise your Young People Networks and any social networking presence they, or your Corporate Communications team, might have already such as Facebook or Youtube.

8.2 Outreach recruitment

8.2.1 Open days

Open days offer an excellent opportunity to promote the variety and nature of work opportunities available within a local authority. It can showcase the council and its workforce and should be considered for both young people and their parents. It is a good idea to make open days interactive by involving tours and workshops as well as chances for candidates to speak to members of staff and see what they do.

Open days can be tied into recruitment processes. For example, the morning session would cover the different apprenticeship roles available. The afternoon would harness the interest of those who attended in the morning by providing initial screening interviews, with the aid of Connexions, and literacy and numeracy assessments, with the aid of a Training Provider. This approach would cut down on recruitment and selection time, provide a streamlined process for candidates and allow the recruitment process to focus on candidates who are committed to your apprenticeships.

8.2.2 Career/Recruitment fairs

A more targeted approach to school and college students would be more beneficial in order to support them in understanding that local government should be considered as a career opportunity following their studies. It is recommended that career fairs at Year 9-Year 13 inclusive are attended for maximum awareness-raising of apprenticeships at all stages of educational choice. As places in higher education become more difficult to access, Apprenticeships can be promoted as an attractive alternative to a degree, especially at the higher levels, and/or where they link into professional qualification routes.

This can be done in partnership with local businesses to encourage a borough approach to supporting the community. Regeneration/Economic Development teams will be involved in employer engagement events and have local business contacts too.

Job Centre Plus and Connexions often organise recruitment/career fairs for their target audience; link in with your local JCP and Connexions services to make the most of these opportunities.

Think carefully about your target audience: the community and voluntary sector also host recruitment and careers fair that you can tap into. The [Black Training and Enterprise Group](#) and the

[Employers Forum on Disability](#), for example, run targeted career events as well as offering advice and experience in appealing to underrepresented groups.

8.2.3 Outreach in the community

London Borough of Havering have launched a [toolkit](#) detailing the low cost, but effective, outreach work they undertook to promote their Apprenticeship Scheme in 2009/10.

Innovations include:

- Inviting candidates to McDonalds for breakfast and a chat about apprenticeships
- Uploading all application forms and information onto USB bands.
- Targeting bus stops in regeneration areas and chatting to local young people
- Joining up with Connexions for promotional activity in local shopping centres

8.2.4 Attracting atypical apprentices

Consider:

- Who are your target groups?
- Which parts of the community do you want to impact with your apprenticeship initiatives?
- Will the recruitment and selection process need to be adjusted for these groups?

Consider working with:

- Local voluntary and community groups who work with young people and/or have experience in these areas and activities you can join onto.
- Voluntary and community groups who run pre-apprenticeship programmes/entry to employment programmes
- Colleagues in the Local Authority have a wealth of experience at engaging atypical learners such as your Leaving Care Team, Youth Offending Team or Teenage Pregnancy Co-ordinators. Use their contacts and existing networks/activities to promote your scheme.
- Your Training Providers and local Colleges may already have initiatives to increase under representation in different industries and can use this knowledge for apprenticeships.

8.3 Working with Partners

8.3.1 Connexions

[Connexions](#) is an organisation which provides information and advice for young people aged 13 – 19 across a range of areas such as money, health and careers. This service seeks to support young people to consider future career pathways and promotes vacancies to young people.

It is encouraged that employers make links with their local Connexions to promote opportunities within the council. Connexions can help by promoting apprenticeship vacancies to their clients and providing application form and interview support to potential candidates. They can also provide mentoring and support once the apprentices have started. The LB Havering [toolkit](#) identifies how Connexions were able to target all local NEET young people directly with information about their scheme.

8.3.2 Jobcentre Plus

You may already have strong working relationships with your local Job Centre through [Local Employment Partnerships](#) but if not it is important to be aware of initiatives such as [Backing Young Britain](#) and [Work Inspirations](#) which aims to support young people into employment and provide work experience opportunities. It is worth speaking with your local job centre to find out how you

could improve partnership working in the future and how they can signpost potential candidates to your Apprenticeship vacancies.

8.4 Branding

Branding your Apprenticeship scheme is a great way to give it an identity and appeal to your target audience.

A number of authorities have already produced promotional material:

- [LB Barking and Dagenham](#)
- [LB Kingston](#)
- [LB Ealing](#)

National Apprenticeship Service branded materials such as posters, brochures and logos are available to [order and download](#) to complement your recruitment campaign.

8.5 Job Profiles and Application Forms

The job profile is key to getting the right person in post. When developing the apprentice job profile it's important to ensure it does not deter, and remains attractive, to young people.

The profile should be concise, not too wordy and in language that young people understand.

Don't forget the good practice you use for other recruitment campaigns such as making the job descriptions accessible for candidates with learning disabilities or stating your positive action towards underrepresented communities.

For example:

- Include only the requirements that are essential to the apprenticeship not essential to the job, otherwise you might needlessly exclude candidates with potential but not experience. Are minute taking skills/experience essential criteria? Can't these skills be taught to an apprentice?
- Be flexible; minor changes can make big differences.
- Be extra mindful of jargon – will young people with no work experience understand the job profile? Test it out with any existing apprentices or young people you know!
- Concentrate on what the job is to achieve, rather than how it is achieved. For example, if you need someone to produce reports, insisting on the ability to touch type may exclude a capable candidate who is blind or has Repetitive Strain Injury, but who could meet the criteria using voice-activated software.
- Concentrate on the skills that are necessary to do the job rather than qualifications. Potential candidate's education may have been interrupted, but that candidate could have acquired skills. For example, rather than insisting on 5 A-C GCSE's, ask for the ability to read, compose and understand written reports. Remember that the training provider will carry out literacy and numeracy assessments to ensure candidates can undertake the NVQ and Technical Certificate. Therefore a standard of English and Maths will be required and tested later on.
- Be clear about what candidates must do to [complete the application form](#). We all know local government application forms can be lengthy but be realistic about how many criteria young people with little/no work experience can reasonably answer on an application form and adjust your process accordingly.

Sample job descriptions can be found in the [Members Area](#) of the London Councils web resource.

8.6 Advertising

As described above, there are various ways to promote your apprenticeship scheme without having to advertise in the 'usual' places and spend money.

When you are putting your advert together (whether for the web or print), remember:

- Use wording that will actively encourage your target audience to apply. This could range from a simple statement that you are an Equal Opportunities employer, to saying that you welcome applications from 16-18 year olds/disabled people because they are currently under-represented in your workforce.
- While most young people look for work in the same way as everyone else, think about widening your approach. Consider press, local radio, websites, social networking sites, word of mouth and outreach.
- Be prepared to make your advertisement available in a range of formats, e.g. large print, e-mail.
- Advertise online and signpost everyone to your website and online application form.

8.6.1 Age Criteria

Your Apprenticeship Scheme may use the [positive action](#) clause from the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 to justify recruitment of 16-24 year olds for the apprenticeship scheme and increase under represented young people in the workforce.

The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006: Positive action (Regulation 29). This permits positive action in certain circumstances. It can be relied upon in the absence of evidence showing that a particular age group is under-represented in jobs or trade organisations. The positive action should "prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to age" among the relevant section of people to whom the positive action relates.

Each local authority would have to demonstrate with evidence that restricting the age range of applicants was a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim. A local authority may have an objective of increasing the numbers of young people it employs, or be seeking to address high levels of youth unemployment in their community and therefore can use age limits. Advertising in certain places and tailoring adverts to young people also helps to achieve this.

8.6.2 Geographical restrictions

Restricting applications to those from a particular geographical area is potentially discriminatory if the targeted area has few minority groups. The effect of imposing this provision, criteria or practice could put particular groups at a disadvantage and therefore be indirectly discriminatory, e.g. against particular racial groups.

Indirect discrimination is capable of being justified if the provision, criteria or practice is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Local authorities who wish to restrict the ability to apply for an apprenticeship job to a certain geographical area will therefore have to assess whether they would have been able to achieve the same outcome by using different methods. For example, advertising only in local newspapers or job centres in the desired location have the same effect.

The Local Government Act 2000 could be used to justify the restriction to geographical area through the power of wellbeing.

Promotion of well-being

(1) Every local authority are to have power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve any one or more of the following objects—

- (a) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area,
- (b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and
- (c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area.

Advertising only locally and working with local job brokers also helps achieve this aim.

8.7 Apprenticeships Vacancies System

[Apprenticeships Vacancies](#) is an online service provided by the National Apprenticeships Service that matches apprentices with prospective employers. Employers and training providers can advertise vacancies and potential apprentices can search, apply and then manage their applications for Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship opportunities anywhere in England. The service is totally free.

8.8 The assessment

Training Providers will undertake initial literacy and numeracy assessments with your candidates to ensure that they are capable of completing the studying elements of the apprenticeship framework. You can work with your training provider to decide on the appropriate attainment levels for these assessments as well as discuss extra literacy and numeracy support that may be available for candidates who are borderline.

Some local authorities also use [group assessments](#) to assess the candidates rather than base selection solely on the interview. Assessing based on potential and focussing on important work skills such as teamwork and communication can show different sides to different candidates and give a more rounded view of them as potential employees.

8.9 The interview

It is important to appreciate that some apprentices may have no previous work experience and have never attended an interview before. Consider how you approach the interview to create a balance between a supportive environment with appropriate challenge. The interview should be formal – apprentices are employees after all. Consider rephrasing traditional interview questions. You can [click here](#) for examples of questions to ask when interviewing an apprentice.



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9. Workforce planning

This section provides support for identifying career pathways in skills shortage areas allowing you to effectively manage your succession planning and workforce strategy.

Now is the time...



9. Workforce planning

This section provides support for identifying career pathways in skills shortage areas within your workforce, allowing you to effectively manage your succession planning and workforce strategy.

9.1 What is Workforce Planning?

“Systematic identification and analysis of what an organisation is going to need in terms of the size, type, and quality of workforce to achieve its objectives. It determines what mix of experience, knowledge, and skills is required and steps to get the right number of right people in the right place at the right time”. Definition (Business dictionary.com)

Intelligence-based forward planning to ensure the supply of skills and talent is essential for any successful organisation. Current pressures on resources increase the need for an efficient, effective and productive workforce. Workforce Planning is about have a strategic plan in place to manage this process.

Capital Ambition are working on a project to improve capacity and capability amongst HR teams in London boroughs in workforce planning. [Presentations and tools are available](#).

Different stages of workforce planning include:

- identifying the age profile of the organisation
- identifying potential skills shortages due to retirement
- forecasting service demand in growth areas
- identifying gaps
- developing and embedding workforce strategies.

National advice, guidance and information on workforce issues can be found [here](#).

9.2 Why plan the workforce?

The [Local Government Workforce Survey 2009 – England](#), outlines the top ten occupational areas most frequently reported with recruitment difficulties and some of the measures in place across the UK to combat them. For a more detailed report on the recruitment and retention difficulties in London, see [Capital Ambitions Recruitment and Retention Barometer](#).

Children’s social workers	Planning Officers
Building control officers	Legal professionals
Adult’s social workers	Mental Health social workers
Occupational therapists	Environmental health officers
Teachers	Trading Standards officers

The top three generic skills gaps are:

Strategic Commissioning	Change Management
Business Process Implementation	

A number of local authorities are recognising that offering Apprenticeships and training initiatives can be a catalyst for change in addressing the hard-to-fill posts and stemming the 'retirement brain drain' where in many professions many senior members of local government staff will be retiring over the next 5 years.

[View case studies on using apprenticeships in skill shortage areas on the Capital Ambition website](#)

9.3 Managing expectations of an Apprentice

It is important to plan to develop staff and transfer knowledge and skills. However you need to be realistic in terms of what you can offer through Apprenticeships when using them to address future skills shortages. If Apprentices are employed on a fixed-term basis you need to be clear that there are no guarantees of future employment and support them to identify areas of their career progression. If you cannot offer on-going opportunities in your organisation, it may be worth seeing if neighbouring boroughs/professional officer networks can help.

9.4 Identifying appropriate Apprenticeship Frameworks

London Councils, the National Apprenticeship Service and the IDeA have worked collaboratively on a [Local Government Apprenticeship Framework Map](#).

This map gives an overview of potential entry level roles for local government. It does not explain the routes to qualification for the various professions covered by local government - this map only details examples of how Apprenticeships can be delivered to meet entry level business needs in different service areas.

This map is for local government officers who need to find out which Apprenticeship frameworks are specific, suitable and can be used for entry level roles in different work areas and Council services.

It is also for National Apprenticeship Service and Training Provider colleagues to familiarise themselves with local government roles.

Both uses will enable us to identify if there is an appropriate apprenticeship framework to use as a staff development tool or to identify an appropriate framework for a new apprentice.

9.5 Alternative Employment Initiatives

Where an Apprenticeship is not suitable to fill a workforce gap, alternatives may include:

- Internships

An internship is an opportunity offered by an employer to potential employees, called interns, to work at a firm for a fixed, limited period of time. Interns are usually undergraduates or students, and most internships last for any length of time between one week and 12 months. Internships can be

part or full-time. They are usually part-time if offered during a university semester and full-time if offered during the summer, winter or Easter holidays, when they typically last 4-12 weeks. They can be paid and unpaid; where unpaid they normally cover travel expenses. The London Borough of Barnet has an established [internship programme](#).

- Year in Industry/Placement Year

Employers can also offer work placements, similar to internships, to undergraduates completing degrees which require a year in industry/work experience. Employers can join up with local universities and offer these placements for specific degree pathways. This can be used as a short term skill shortage fix but can also, as with apprenticeships, promote local government careers to a wider audience.

- Traineeships

Where no set Apprenticeship qualification exists, a traineeship can be created using a similar set-up and support mechanisms. The London Borough of Hackney has created traineeships in Civil Engineering to combat a skills shortage. Trainees undertake a BTEC in Civil Engineering and are supported through the training and on the job learning.

- Work Experience

Work experience is traditionally carried out by students in Year 10 or 11. The placement lasts for 2 weeks and gives students a basic introduction to the service area and world of work. Work experience can be time consuming to manage but can yield great results if managers and team members are prepared to invest time in organising a programme of activities for the work experience students. Work experience can be an excellent way of promoting local government careers to young people and influencing their career choices. The London Borough of Enfield has extended this idea of work experience into a [Summer Work Out programme](#) which covers the 6 weeks summer holiday and is used to identify suitable Apprenticeship candidates.

- Diplomas

The [14-19 diploma](#) is a new vocational qualification, different to GCSE's and A Levels, which provide a mix of class work and hands on experience including work experience, project work and employability skills. There are three levels – Foundation, Higher and Advanced. Subjects covered are:

- Construction and the Built Environment
- Creative and Media
- Engineering
- Information Technology
- Society, Health and Development
- Environmental and Land-based Studies
- Business, Administration and Finance
- Manufacturing and Product Design
- Hospitality
- Hair and Beauty Studies
- Travel and Tourism
- Public Services
- Sport and Active Leisure
- Retail Business

Employers can engage with all levels and subjects of the diploma providing work experience, project work, site visits and mentoring. Involvement in the diploma by local government employers will highlight the variety of roles on offer to young people and help promote local government as an employer of choice. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has an established [diploma and employer engagement programme](#).



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10. The challenges and dispelling myths

This section identifies and dispels some of the common myths and misconceptions of apprentices and the Apprenticeship framework in which you can share with appropriate colleagues to encourage understanding of the process.

Now is the time...



10. Dispelling myths

10.1 We need to ensure we get a ‘good fit’ for the organisation/service/team

It is worthwhile recognising that many of the apprentice applicants may not have much work experience or even attended many interviews. It is therefore important that the recruitment process takes this into consideration and does not simply sift out applications based on prior experience.

With organisational fit in mind, you may wish to consider involving line managers/mentors in the recruitment process. As a result rapport can begin to build from day one and who better to judge an individual's suitability for the role than his/her potential line manager or mentor.

The training provider also has a key role to play in ensuring the apprentice is suitable for the organisation. The majority of training providers will wish to assess the potential apprentices in order to ensure they feel confident that they are at the right level of ability to undertake a full Apprenticeship framework. It can be beneficial to include the training providers in the selection process.

Also of prime importance is the three-way relationship between the employer, the apprentice, and the training provider. This strong relationship is able to counter and allay any issues as soon as they arise. Enabling relationships to develop in the first instance should pay dividends in preventing further issues arising which may lead to the feeling of the apprentice not being suitable.

The key relationship really is between the training provider, the employer and the apprentice. Through close working arrangements and general discussions regarding performance and progress there is every likelihood that the apprentice you recruit will be the right person for the organisation, thus enabling many of the [business benefits](#) to be fully realised.

10.2 An apprenticeship isn't right for our organisation/service/team

There is still a great deal of misunderstanding regarding Apprenticeships and what they actually are. Many people still see Apprenticeships as being solely for trade or craft occupations and are not aware that there are now over 190 different Apprenticeship frameworks that cover multiple job roles applicable to local government, from accountancy to youth work. The [Framework Map](#) can help identify suitable frameworks.

Apprenticeships are an integral feature of workforce development plans that support organisational goals. Apprentices are essentially your future senior managers and organisational leaders. Recruiting them from an early age really gives you the opportunity to instil your cultural values and foster a mutually beneficial loyal relationship.

10.3 We can't guarantee a year's work in our organisation/service/team

Apprenticeships do not even need to be time specific. It is entirely down to the employer how they wish to employ the apprentice. There are actually several options open to employers when considering employment terms:

- Recruit onto a permanent contract. The apprentice would begin employment on an Apprenticeship framework and when their Apprenticeship training has finished they remain in post. This approach fully integrates the apprentice into the organisation and ensures all the benefits of the Apprenticeship programme can be realised.

- Recruit onto a fixed-term contract that enables enough time to complete the full Apprenticeship framework. This approach does not guarantee a job role at the end of the Apprenticeship, although the apprentice having finished his/her framework is welcome to apply for posts in the organisation. It is possible to treat them as re-deployees and therefore provide priority interview for vacancies.
- Employed via a third party. This method is widely termed as the [Apprenticeship Training Association \(ATA\) or Group Training Association \(GTA\)](#) approach. The apprentice is in effect employed by a third party organisation and lent out to the host organisation. The employing organisation will charge a management fee for this arrangement similar to a temporary recruitment agency.

10.4 We do not have consistent support across the organisation

Apprenticeships have full support across the political parties. The Government has placed a high priority on the increased provision of Apprenticeships across the public sector.

All London Borough Leaders signed up to the London Councils pan-London target of 2000 apprenticeships by 2012 and have committed to working towards the target.

Experience has shown that a centralised, and joined-up, approach is key to sustainability for apprenticeship programmes. A consistent approach across all departments/directorates also means that all new starters will have the same, good, experience. Efficiencies can be made by delivering schemes centrally as well as providing reputational benefits.

See [Chapter 2 on Business Benefits](#) and [Chapter 4 on Gaining Support and Buy-in](#) for further information.

10.5 We have a restructure/redundancies/recruitment freezes at the moment

Due to the very real benefits that can be derived from Apprenticeship programmes some organisations have continued to prioritise their Apprenticeship programme. Although ideal, this will obviously not be possible in every situation.

Apprenticeships are about building performance capacity within the workforce and the pressures on resources mean that a number of options should be considered when investing in Apprenticeships as part of your workforce strategy including:

- Offering Apprenticeship opportunities to existing staff. Apprenticeships aren't just for new members of staff joining the organisation, as they are open to existing employees too. Offering Apprenticeships to existing employees will not increase the head count, but will provide many of the benefits that Apprenticeship programmes provide. There may be a need to up-skill or redeploy your workforce and apprenticeships, particularly for those aged over 25, can be the ideal programme.
- Ensure that apprentices as entry level roles are included in all new organisational structures. All progressive organisations are aware of the benefits of workforce and succession planning and including apprenticeship roles in this way will ensure your services are fit for purpose in the future and organisational knowledge is not lost.
- Employ via a third party partner organisation. This Total Place approach will not add to your employee head count and will enable you to access apprentices. There will however still be a cost and a management fee will need to be paid to the employing organisation. One clear advantage of this method however is the ability to terminate employment at any point as the apprentice isn't directly employed by you. This could provide you with periphery workers for particular peaks in workflows and provide an alternative to costly agency staff.

- Focus on your organisation as a [procurer of services](#) and potential influencer of the local economy. Local authorities have great potential, either via discussion or contractual obligation, to influence and direct suppliers toward employing apprentices. Some Local authorities have placed Employment and Skills requirements into invitations to tender whilst others have directly influenced organisations to offer Apprenticeship opportunities to young people who are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET) as part of their Worklessness agenda.

10.6 Budgets are tight and cost reductions are needed

[Studies](#) have shown that actually implementing Apprenticeship programmes can deliver cost savings over the medium to long term, and in many cases from day one.

Scaling back on apprentice opportunities to reduce costs can be a false economy. An Apprenticeship programme can help with cost reductions specifically by:

- The actual Apprenticeship training is either fully or partially funded by the National Apprenticeship Service, which means existing learning and development budgets can go further or be redirected. For example, if your organisation were to recruit five apprentices that were in the 16-18 age range undertaking a Business Administration framework, your organisation would currently benefit from approximately £22,950 in public funding. It is worth mapping existing training that employees undergo against the Apprenticeship framework. Are you spending money on training that could potentially be covered by an Apprenticeship framework, especially in literacy and numeracy?
- Many Local authorities expend great costs on recruiting agency workers. Do you know how much your current agency spend is? Are any of the agency staff in entry level roles that could actually be undertaken by an apprentice? An apprentice can cost as little as approximately £5,000 per annum, offering a significant saving on agency spend. Apprentices will also provide the added benefit of loyalty, commitment and provide you with skills that will be required to deliver services
- Apprenticeship programmes are an integral feature to any succession planning. Apprenticeships provide the skills required for the future and reduce the risk of hard-to-fill vacancies occurring. What is your annual spend on recruiting to posts? A 'growing your own' approach using Apprenticeships will reduce local wage inflation pressures.
- Having a succession plan in place will cause the majority of external recruitment to be centred around the entry level positions in the organisation. These are the positions that are the least costly to recruit to, especially with the implementation of [cost effective and targeted recruitment](#). In effect recruiting at this level will bear little cost and reduce the risk of costly vacancies occurring higher up in the organisation.
- [Studies have shown](#) that Apprenticeship programmes can increase staff retention levels, reduce absence rates and improve service delivery and efficiency. All of these benefits will help reduce overall costs to your organisation



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11. Effective processes

This section looks at the steps an employer can and should take to provide consistent, purposeful and effective support to an apprentice so that everyone achieves a positive outcome.

Now is the time...



11. Effective Support Mechanisms

Supporting your apprentices and their managers is key to providing a successful experience for everyone.

Apprentices, like all new employees, will need an introduction to your organisation and their role within it.

They will need a manager that will hold responsibility for line managing the apprentice(s) throughout their training. Best practice and learning shows that providing a mentor and a buddy can add real value to the apprentice as well as development opportunities for the mentor/buddy.

Providing additional support for managers is also helpful so that they can understand their role in supervising apprentices.

This section looks at the steps any employer can and should take to provide consistent, purposeful and effective support to an apprentice so that everyone achieves a positive outcome.

Topics covered in this section include:

Preparing your team	Induction
Supporting the supervisor	Reviewing progress
Mentoring	Buddying and Networks
Celebrating Success	Career planning and progression

11.1 Preparing your team

By involving your team in the process you will help to avoid any resentment building up and make them more receptive to your new apprentice. It is advisable that you discuss with them any concerns they may have e.g. additional workload or tasks taking longer. The team should be clear about the nature of an apprenticeship, i.e. that it is a training position, not an additional post in the team. The team should make the apprentice welcome, feel comfortable and part of the team.

The young person will often have come straight from school or college or may have been out of education or employment for some time. The best environment for an apprentice is one in which they can learn and get lots of opportunities to develop new skills and where they feel part of the team. It would be useful if the team could discuss issues and concerns quite openly about taking on an apprentice before they start and that the whole team are given the opportunity to input into discussion and put forward ideas and suggestions for making it a success.

Here are a series of questions that might stimulate discussion.

1. *What was your first job like and how did you feel?*
2. *Were you:*
 - a. *confident, savvy, indestructible?*
 - b. *Shy, vague, naïve, clueless, sloppy, cheeky, rude?*
 - c. *Competent, fully prepared and able?*
3. *What do you think young people are like today?*
4. *What do you think the new apprentice is going to be like?*
5. *What do you think of the concept of an apprentice?*
6. *Do you have any concerns?*
7. *Have you known other apprentice schemes and seen them in action?*

8. One person has been allocated as the supervisor to the apprentice. How can you support them?
9. How do you think work can best be allocated to the apprentice?

Keep Them Informed

A common complaint from employees is that they are not kept well informed about changes in the Council. By telling them about your plans for apprentice recruitment they will feel in the loop from the beginning. It gives them a chance to voice their opinions and feel involved in the process. Let them know why you have decided on apprentice recruitment, how it will benefit the service and team and how you see the role fitting in with the current staff structure.

Apprentice Recruitment

Once you actually get to the stage of apprentice recruitment you want to continue to keep them informed. Ask for their opinions about what kind of apprentice to look for, or where to advertise the role.

Choose some key employees to help sift through applications or join in the interview process. Make sure that you let your employees know how the search is going. Once you have chosen an apprentice be clear about who they are, why you have chosen them and when they will start.

Explain Their Role

Once you have finished your apprentice recruitment you need to clarify their role in the Council. Your other employees will be keen to know how it will affect their own jobs and if they will be required to do any additional work.

Plan this carefully so that nobody feels put upon or undervalued. Ask for people who would be willing to be buddies or those that you think would be most adaptable.

Get to know the details of the apprenticeship framework, including the NVQ, key skills, technical certificate and enhancements required by the framework that the apprentice is undertaking and circulate the information to team members.

Listen To Feedback

From the moment that you decide to offer an apprenticeship, through the apprentice recruitment process and into employing them, listen to your employees. Asking for their feedback and acting on it will not only make them feel involved but can also help you gain an insight into your service.

Your employees often know a lot that you don't and it is useful to pick their brains and use their knowledge. If there is discontent then you need to resolve it before it has the chance to escalate.

11.2 Induction

An induction programme is the first experience a new staff member has of a new organisation after the recruitment and selection process.

The quicker apprentices become familiar with their new environment, improve speed to competency, establish good working relationships with other staff members and understand their role and how it fits into the organisation, the quicker they will integrate and be happy and productive employees.

Inductions need not be a formal process but it does need to be properly managed. First impressions and experiences in the first few days, weeks and months of employment can greatly influence an individual's perception of their work area and the Council as a whole and can in turn influence motivation and retention.

However keen new recruits may be, they may have anxieties about how well they will:

- get on with their co-workers
- understand the standards and rules (written and unwritten) of the organisation
- make a good impression on their new manager or supervisor
- be able to do the job.

A good induction introduces the apprentice not only to their immediate colleagues, but to other workers with whom they may have less day-to-day contact, including trade union representatives, human resources officers, or employee representatives on any staff committee or council. Many Chief Executives are also personally involved in the induction process with an address to a new cohort, and this can be really valuable.

11.2.1 The induction timetable

Corporate Induction

If the first week can tie in with the standard corporate induction, this would be a great opportunity for apprentices to meet other employees from around the Council and start to experience the wider work of the Council. It would also save resources of internal staff carrying out the more general aspects of the induction such as general overviews of the Council, borough tours, meeting Directors etc.

Training Provider Induction

Induction should also include the review, discussion and signing of the Apprenticeship Learning Agreement – a three way agreement between the apprentice, the employer and the training provider which makes it clear what each is committing to until the completion of the Apprenticeship. Each party makes some specific commitments and demonstrates joined up working.

It is important that the apprentices are aware of their learning commitments early on and that the training element of the framework is mandatory for completion of the Apprenticeship, as is the work experience.

Service/Team Induction

Apprenticeships are all about learning through working, so it's vital that apprentices have all the information they need. Team and role inductions can contribute to this by including information about:

- the nature of the job,
- how it fits in with the organisation's purpose and mission,
- who they are going to be working with and why

Human Resources Induction

Apprentices are often new to the world of work as well as new to your organisation. Induction programmes should include all the relevant internal processes concerned with pay and conditions, health and safety and equality.

See sample induction programmes for more detail of what to include:

- [LB Kingston](#)
- [London Councils Best Practice examples](#)

11.2.2 Tips to remember when putting inductions together:

- People, especially young people, can take in only so much information at any given time, and should not be overloaded.
- Setting out the plan of induction at the beginning avoids the problems that can arise in trying to arrange time in the future, when the employee is established in the job
- Don't forget induction needs for part time workers. They may need some time on days, or modified shifts, to cover the induction period.
- Try to let new starters do some practical work, as this will assist their learning and enable them to relate what they are being taught to what they will be doing in their role.
- Careful pre-planning can reduce the problems which may arise for employees with specific learning needs or disabilities, whether in terms of access, equipment or dealing with colleagues.
- Get advice from the apprentices themselves as well as from any voluntary or community groups that may be able to support you and the apprentice or any internal colleagues such as Access to Work Officer or the Learning Disability Partnership team.

The outcome of all this is that the new starter should have a good feel for the organisation, and should continue to feel that they made the right decision in joining an apprenticeship programme.

11.3 Supporting the supervisor

Although the employing organisation is ultimately responsible for applying effective HR processes and procedures to the employment of an apprentice, the absolutely pivotal role in the success of Apprenticeships is that of the supervisor. Employing apprentices inevitably means asking a supervisor – be that a team leader, section head or whatever the title – to take part of the responsibility for supporting the training and development of their new member of staff. The supervisor is in daily contact with the apprentice and is therefore in a position to have a significant impact on the success (or otherwise!) of the Apprenticeship. So what can an employer do to ensure that the supervisor is well equipped to carry out this role?

Training

Before managing any apprentice, supervisors should be encouraged to attend sessions run by Education Business Partnership/Connexions/Training Provider on managing young people. The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham offers accredited work supervisors training and certification. All supervisors can use the experience to secure credits towards real qualifications e.g. NVQ Level 2 Team Leading or CIPD Coaching and Mentoring qualification. The London Borough of Redbridge works closely with its training provider Quest which provides half day workshops for managers on working with young people.

Being prepared

How does good supervision contribute to a successful Apprenticeship? Apprenticeships need to be well planned and structured to support the progressive development and achievement of the apprentice. Supervisors can help with this by:

- ensure they and the team are ready for the apprentice
- ensuring they understand the requirements of the Apprenticeship;
- developing a good working relationship with the training provider;

- ensuring that the apprentice's job role supports the achievement of the NVQ aspect of the Apprenticeship;
- ensuring that the rest of the team or work group is aware of what the apprentice will be doing and how they can offer support;
- using their supervisory skills to give regular, constructive and formative feedback to apprentices about their performance;
- being prepared to contribute to work-based assessment;
- offering the apprentice coaching in key workplace activities and processes;
- contributing to effective induction.

Let's look at each in a bit more detail:

- Ensuring the supervisor and team are ready for the apprentice

Supervisors should arrange in advance for the necessary equipment to be available for the apprentice, e.g. office based apprentices should have a desk, chair, pedestal, telephone and IT equipment. It is less likely that apprentices will be able to work from home, so this should be taken into account in offices where flexible working is the norm.

The IT department requires notice for a PC and telephone to be set up and installed. Some apprentices may require personal protective equipment or a uniform. All of this will need to be ordered as for any new employee.

Giving apprentices a wide range of learning opportunities will help to develop their knowledge and skills in the workplace. Work shadowing is particularly encouraged as a means of enabling apprentices to gain a deeper knowledge of tasks, improve communication within the team and partners, improve understanding of the role of others and to enhance career development.

Ideally an apprentice should have the opportunity to gain a good overview and understanding of the roles of each team or staff member. By doing this the apprentice will feel part of the team and will receive a more positive experience while on the programme.

- Ensuring supervisors understand the requirements of the Apprenticeship

Any supervisor will need to understand something of the nature of the Apprenticeship framework that their apprentice will be following, and how the programme will be managed by the training provider. For example, if there is off-the-job learning as part of the Apprenticeship, when will this happen? How often will the training provider visit the workplace? How much time will the apprentice need to get all their studying done and paperwork organised?

If your apprentice is aged 16-18yrs you may want to consider attending a training course in safeguarding children. This will ensure you are aware of your role and responsibilities towards safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children effectively. This includes being able to recognise when a child may require safeguarding and knowing what to do in response to concerns about the welfare of a child.

- Developing a good working relationship with the [training provider](#).

Supervisors who are asked (or perhaps have requested) to have an apprentice in their team or section, should be enabled and encouraged to establish a good working relationship with the training provider before the apprentice actually joins them.

- Ensuring that the apprentice's job role supports the achievement of the NVQ aspect of the Apprenticeship

The key to any successful scheme and the apprentice getting the most out of the apprenticeship is to find a happy balance between having enough responsibility to feel challenged but not so much that they are being used to cover staff roles.

One of the difficulties apprentices sometimes experience is that their job role is too narrow – it doesn't provide all the experience needed to achieve the NVQ. If this is at Level 2, the difficulty may be that the job role is too narrow, without the variety of tasks required by the occupational standards that make up the NVQ. If this is at Level 3, it can be that the apprentice does not have sufficient scope in terms of autonomy and responsibility. Sometimes a discrete job role does not provide this range of demands, but public sector organisations, and in particular local authorities, can be very well placed to provide a wide range of experience to an apprentice through a planned programme of work placements in different job roles and even sometimes different departments. Even if a varied programme of placements is not suitable in terms of the needs of the organisation, it can be very helpful to be able to move apprentices for short periods of time to acquire the experience they need. In doing this the apprentice also has a valuable opportunity to learn more about the organisation and what interests them most, and therefore where their preferred career path may be.

The training provider will explain to the supervisor the range of work opportunities that the apprentice needs to have to ensure that they can develop all the work related skills and competencies needed to achieve all aspects of their qualifications. With this basic understanding the supervisor and the training provider can work together to plan how to enhance the apprentice's job role and range of tasks and responsibilities to ensure this coverage develops in a natural and logical way, responsive to the developing capabilities of the apprentice.

- Using supervisory skills to give regular, constructive and formative feedback to apprentices about their performance

Good supervision involves a significant element of coaching, so supervisors can make a very valuable contribution to an apprentice's learning by giving regular feedback on how well they are doing their job. Apprentices will also of course be getting feedback from their assessor and possibly tutors, but this will only cover aspects of their assessment and training and cannot be as frequent as the support that a supervisor can offer.

- Being prepared to contribute to work-based assessment

The NVQ component of any Apprenticeship, and in some cases any key skills required, are designed to be achieved through the completion of work tasks to the standard described by the qualification. Much of the assessment of the apprentice will therefore be based upon real work products, with information provided through

- the testimony of people working with the apprentice, or
- observation of the apprentice carrying out their job role.

Most of this assessment will be carried out by a qualified assessor – either from the training provider, or possibly from the employer's own staff if they have trained as workplace assessors. But other members of staff can contribute to this process, in particular through witness testimony, so it's important to check with the training provider that they have good processes to support this – for example, they should be able to provide clear checklists or structured witness statement forms, that clearly explain what the occupational standards require of the apprentice, and therefore what they need comments on. Done in this way, staff involvement in assessment can be an interesting and developmental experience for them, but done without support it can be stressful for the individual, without providing the good quality evidence needed by the apprentice.

- Offering the apprentice coaching in key workplace activities and processes

An effective supervisor can offer the apprentice much useful advice and support, as well as direct coaching in the skills and knowledge needed for the job role, and therefore for the Apprenticeship. This is the case even if the apprentice's programme includes off-the-job training and development, as true learning only really comes from applying generic knowledge to specific situations, but this transfer of learning undertaken away from the workplace to specific aspects of the apprentice's work role isn't always an easy process. A supervisor who takes it upon themselves to really understand what the apprentice is learning and then, if needed, coaches them to understand how that learning applies to their own job role, will be a vital link between theory and practice, off-the-job and on-the-job learning, significantly increasing the likelihood that the apprentice quickly becomes competent and confident.

11.4 Reviewing progress

With the Training Provider

Any effective quality process includes the regular opportunity to review progress and adjust forward plans if necessary, so, as you would expect, a training provider's contract with the Government requires them to ensure that an apprentice's progress is formally reviewed at least every three months. The review meeting will involve, as a minimum, the training provider (either the apprentice's assessor or someone with special responsibility for managing and reviewing apprentice progress) and the apprentice. But the whole process can be greatly enhanced by the presence of a knowledgeable and interested supervisor, who can add their own views to the discussion, but also play a central part in agreeing the development and assessment plan for the coming three months, particularly where this involves ensuring that the apprentice has opportunities for some specific workplace experience.

Again, it's important to ensure that supervisors understand that this will be part of their role, so that they feel they can take some time from their other duties to attend these meetings, and also perhaps to discuss in advance with the training provider what times would be most convenient for them.

Three months, however, can be a long time to someone who feels that something isn't quite right, and it may be that issues arise during this time that would be best dealt with quickly.

Face to face meetings

As with other employees, regular face to face meetings are important to catch up regularly on progress and discuss any issues which the apprentice might not feel able to discuss in the office environment. Where a good relationship has developed between apprentice and supervisor it should be possible to identify any problems and perhaps discuss them with the training provider in between formal review meetings.

Probation

The apprentice's contract should include a three/six month probation period. This will cover both their performance in the workplace as well as their progress on their training programme.

You should compile a list of basic competencies/key Council competencies that you will discuss with the apprentice at the face to face meetings you hold. Any concerns regarding performance

should be clearly recorded and mentioned in review meetings with the Apprenticeship Manager/ Training Provider.

The Apprenticeship Manager and/or Training Provider is available to assist should any support with the apprentice be required during the probation period.

Performance Reviews

These should be done in line with corporate HR policy; however separate incremental progressions may be decided for the apprentices to reward progression and completion of qualifications.

11.5 Mentoring

Research indicates that the most effective mentoring relationships take place between two people who have no direct line management or disciplinary relationship, so that the mentee is free to discuss all aspects of their situation without fear of reprisal.

To achieve this sort of relationship as part of the support network for the apprentice requires the involvement of someone beyond the supervisor and assessor. This can be organised in different ways:

- Support from the national online mentoring facility at www.horsesmouth.co.uk. This gives the apprentice the opportunity to ask questions of someone who has been through a similar apprenticeship experience to themselves.
- An organised mentoring programme across the authority with [training and guidance](#).
- Informal mentoring from Apprenticeship Manager/colleagues.

Many local authorities have developed mentoring programmes over recent years, to address a variety of different support and development agendas. For example, many have instigated Mentoring for Diversity, Executive and leadership mentoring programmes as well as mentoring schemes for young employees, trainees and apprentices.

The key challenge for employers therefore is to think about the range of support they want to make available to an apprentice and how they will do this. Potential mentors to consider include:

- Members of staff who understand the pressures of working while pursuing a work-based qualification
- Recent graduates or ex-apprentices who have been through similar training programmes
- Members of staff who are used to working with young people and understand the issues they might be facing such as team members from the Education Business Partnership, Youth Services or from Connexions.
- If you wish to promote your apprenticeship scheme throughout different parts of the authority, engaging managers or officers who are yet to have an apprentice as potential mentors could be a good way of showing them the pedigree of the apprentices available.

Key considerations are that the employer recognises that time has to be made for mentors to meet with mentees, and that potential mentors have the skills needed – patience, empathy, a true interest in supporting learning, and sensitive communication skills (listening and speaking), alongside good organisational skills that ensure a purposeful and productive mentoring relationship. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets has assigned mentors from the Work Based Learning team to each apprentice on the programme. This has greatly helped retention of the young people as well as helping them sort out external problems before they impact on their work and study.

The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has set up a mentoring scheme with local businesses (including BBC, Disney, Coca Cola, JP Morgan, Endemol) where a trained external mentor will meet their apprentice monthly to discuss any issues.

The London Borough of Redbridge has assigned graduates from the National Graduate Development Programme to be mentors to the apprentices. This then covers the CPD elements for the graduates, as well as providing a more age-appropriate and semi-formal mentoring experience for the apprentices.

Employers who are really committed to the success of their investment in Apprenticeships will give careful thought to the training and development requirements of the staff serving as supervisors, coaches and mentors to apprentices – to enhance the Apprenticeship experience and also to bring vital skills to the workplace that will ensure continuous learning for the organisation. Many public sector organisations, including local authorities, have developed organisational coaching and mentoring schemes, making them well placed to extend this support to their apprentices.

11.6 Buddying and Networks

Apprentices and their supervisors may both benefit from buddies and peer support.

Buddying can be defined as a mutual support relationship between employees. A buddying relationship would be equally balanced with no senior partner.

Many councils have buddying schemes in place for new employees. It is helpful for the buddy to be from the same department or service but not from the same team. This will mean that the buddy will know many of the same people and needs of the service but not be directly involved in the day to day work of the apprentice.

A buddy will be responsible for showing the apprentice around the council buildings and local area, discussing any work issues that the apprentice might feel are too small to mention to their manager and generally helping them fit in to Council life.

This is not suggested to be a formal arrangement and may fall by the wayside after approximately 6 months when the apprentice has more support mechanisms within their own team, training provider and cohort of apprentices. Sample Buddying guidelines can be found [here](#).

Peer networks can also be useful tools for apprentices and managers, especially where they may be isolated in terms of location or qualification. [Stoke on Trent City Council](#) have created an Apprenticeship network whereby all apprentices meet on a regular basis to socialise and discuss progress of the Apprenticeship. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets holds curriculum enrichment/residential training days for their apprentices where they can bond as a cohort, get out of the office and work on their team building and communication skills. The London Borough of Hackney holds 3 development days a year for all the apprentices to get together to learn functional and employability skills.

Whether your apprentices are recruited as one cohort or individually, it is still good practice to get them together regularly for development days or review meetings to not only upskill them or gain feedback but to get them to bond as a group and develop their own networks within the Council.

Supervisors of apprentices may also find it useful to have regular meetings amongst themselves with the Apprenticeship Manager to discuss the different issues they have come across and to develop informal networks across the authority of managers who are in a similar position to them.

This could be in the form of an email network or quarterly review meetings/lunches where the managers feedback to the Apprenticeship Manager. The training provider and/or the apprentice mentors could also be involved in this networking/feedback mechanism. The London Borough of Hounslow holds one review day per quarter where the mentors, supervisors and apprentices get together, as cohorts and as a whole, to feedback on their experiences and concerns to the Learn and Earn team

11.7 Celebrating success

Workplaces have all sorts of different way of celebrating success – special rewards, recognition in newsletters or on notice boards, websites, and so forth. Apprenticeship programmes often contain a number of achievement milestones that can be used as the basis for some sort of celebration, providing encouragement to the apprentices and ensuring that all staff are reminded of the organisation's commitment to Apprenticeships and organisational learning. Indeed, some local authorities who engage in Apprenticeships in a number of departments across the organisation have special award ceremonies and prizes for their successful apprentices. London Borough of Bexley held a celebratory afternoon tea for all apprentices past and present during [National Apprenticeship Week](#) and invited the Leader and Chief Executive along to meet all the apprentices.

11.8 Planning for the future – career paths and progression

Apprentices who commit to a long period of study and training to achieve their qualification are often keen to progress. The need for the public sector to give careful thought to its current and in particular future skills needs is much discussed within the sector and in the press. Other sections of this guide discuss the need to review carefully the organisation's skills profile and needs before deciding where Apprenticeships can be most relevant and beneficial; as part of this thinking, organisations will also have some thoughts about future skills and staffing requirements, and with careful planning will ensure that successful apprentices can continue to develop.

In most of the occupational roles covered by Apprenticeship frameworks, someone who completes an Apprenticeship is well placed, at the right time, to continue on to the Advanced Apprenticeship – whether that be in a transferable discipline such as customer service or administration, or an industry specific pathway such as care or engineering. The completion of an Advanced Apprenticeship, with all the work experience and achievement of qualifications that that entails, equips an individual for progression in the workplace to a more senior post, or, in some areas of work, for a work-related Foundation Degree/Higher Apprenticeship, a generic management qualification, or perhaps a higher level professional qualification, such as those offered by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply or the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development. Successful apprentices may also be interested in becoming assessors or mentors to new apprentices, thereby helping the organisation enhance its capacity for supporting lifelong learning and development.

To help apprentices prepare for future progression – including further training and promotion to new job roles, it can be very helpful to build on the Apprenticeship planning to help the apprentice maintain a personal development portfolio, encouraging them to take personal responsibility for their own learning plan and continuing professional development, and demonstrating the organisation's commitment to good practice.

11.8.1 Personal Development Portfolios to support progression

Personal development portfolios (or PDPs as they are generally known) are, at their simplest, just ways of organising all the relevant information about a person so that they can reflect on their own

achievements and capabilities and plan for their future, and have all the information they need for prospective employers or to gain admission to further training and education programmes collected in one place. What might a PDP contain? The types of content most commonly suggested are:

- Up-to-date CV
- The plan, notes and evaluation of the induction process to the current job
- Current training plan
- Copies of application forms for courses undertaken
- Course programmes and any evaluation of the benefits or outcomes of the training
- Documents or project work undertaken as part of the apprenticeship which demonstrate a particular skill or made a significant contribution to the work of the department or organisation
- Notes from careers information, advice and guidance sessions
- The results or reports from any profiling tools or diagnostic tests – initial assessment, career suitability, thinking and learning styles, team member profiling etc
- Reflective accounts of work experiences, job placements, job shadowing etc
- Testimonials or letters of appreciation of work from current or previous supervisors or employers, any feedback or letters of appreciation from customers.
- Information gathered about possible future career choices, and an analysis of what steps are needed to equip or qualify the apprentice to move towards those options

It may be that the appraisal process produces useful documentation too.



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12. Evaluation

This section encourages you to develop an evaluation strategy for the Apprenticeship process to support you to identify the real business benefits to encourage sustainability and growth of apprentices in the future.



12. Evaluation

Evaluating apprenticeship schemes is vital in order to demonstrate the business benefits to the authority and ensure their continuation and sustainability.

Think about what are the key drivers for your apprenticeship scheme. What will be the key motivator for managers to enable the expansion of the scheme? What will be worthwhile measuring to demonstrate the added value of apprentices?

Creating an evaluation strategy will ensure that everyone is aware of the approach to evaluation and reasons for doing it. A way of making the evaluation process easier is to ensure that it is clear what is being evaluated and why in the first instance, and develop an evaluation approach which is embedded from the beginning.

Outlined in this section are a range of areas to consider when developing an evaluation strategy for an apprenticeship programme:

12.1 Why evaluate?

Evaluation is an important tool in any organisation for a number of reasons such as;

- to ensure the aims and objectives of the area you are evaluating are met (assuming you have them in the first place),
- to enable you to evidence value for money and return on investment and consider ways for potential savings in the future whether it be financial or people,
- to support you to identify ways to improve in the future,
- to give you a tangible evidence base to develop, sustain or promote a particular area of work.
- to ensure learning is embedded.

In the context of apprenticeships all of the above are fundamental reasons why your apprenticeship process should be evaluated.

This is a challenging time for the public sector and we have ever changing and increasing priorities. The demands of the workforce may change and we need to ensure that we support and develop our people through this. In order to ensure development and/or sustainability of apprenticeships, you need to demonstrate the real [business benefits](#) to your organisation, and having an evaluation mechanism will give you tangible evidence to do this.

12.2 What are you evaluating?

As a starting point the key question is simply what are you evaluating? There are a number of areas to evaluate from the individual apprentice to the process itself.

In order to do this it is important that you set out in the beginning what the aim and objectives are for your organisation. So, in the context of Apprenticeships – what are your organisation's aims and objectives? Basically, why are you doing this? Is it for example...

- To respond to the [London pledge for an additional 2000 Apprenticeships](#) in local authorities.
- To provide an opportunity to the community to address increasing not in employment, education or training (NEET) figures?
- To develop your workforce?

- To address the ageing profile of the workforce?
- To increase diversity and representation within your workforce?
- To address skills shortages?
- To promote your organisation/ the public sector as an employer of choice?
- To gain policy delivery buy-in to encourage suppliers and local businesses to grow the number of apprentices.

You may find that the aim and objectives of developing your Apprenticeship process will link into wider organisational priorities and this will stand you in better stead to gain or maintain [top level/ political buy in](#) and will add weight to your [business case](#).

12.2.1 Examples of Performance Indicators

- Starts: number of people starting an Apprenticeship.
- Completions: Number of Apprentices completing the scheme.
- Diversity: Diversity profile of apprentices against diversity profile of the Borough e.g. gender, disability, ethnicity and age.
- Targeted recruitment: The number of apprentices recruited from vulnerable groups (such as Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), Youth Offending Teams, Children in Care, Single Parents). This will correspond with other Council targets.
- Return on investment: Overall costs and savings of apprentices.
- Services: Variety of NVQ frameworks used and variety of areas/services with an apprentice.
- Retention: Number of apprentices who stay with the Council and those who go into full-time education, employment or training after completion of the scheme.
- Turnover/Retention: Length of time apprentices stay with the Council.
- Progression: Progression/promotion routes and rates of apprentices.
- Absence costs: Sickness absence rate of apprentices compared to the rest of the workforce.
- Recruitment costs: Overall cost of recruiting cohort of apprentices compared to recruitment of other employees.
- Satisfaction: Customer satisfaction (apprentices, line management, colleagues, mentors). Compare team satisfaction/morale (from Employee Satisfaction Surveys) of those teams with high usage of apprentices to those with none – is there a noticeable, marketable, difference?
- Perceptions/Awareness: The extent to which levels of awareness and perceptions in key stakeholders have changed (e.g. internally: service managers and department heads; externally: potential recruits (young people); parents; school staff, etc). Could be measured by penetration of apprentices into different areas in the council, improved perception amongst parents and schools, increased number of schools requesting presentations on apprentices, number of outreach events, careers fairs on apprenticeships, variety of local schools apprentices come from.
- Innovation: Again difficult to measure, but are there any tangible differences in the teams where apprentices are based? What service improvements can be wholly put down to apprentices' ideas and work?

Internal indicators

- Overall: Percentage of Council workforce who are apprentices
- Services: Number of service areas employing apprentices.

External (Organisations within the Borough, excluding the Council)

- Services: Variety of industries apprentices enter.
- Models of Delivery/Funding: Successful methods of attracting businesses to take on apprentices.

12.3 Monitoring the number of Apprentices

It is often the case that employers (particularly larger organisations) cannot give an accurate account of the number of apprentices they have in place, this could be because they do not actually employ the apprentice or each department manages their own apprentices and there isn't a centralised approach to monitoring the figures.

However, support for Apprenticeships within your workforce and local community can be used as evidence for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within Local Area Agreements (LAA), Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA), Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and Investors in People (IiP). Such data will support your strategic workforce planning process by clearly understanding where your Apprentices are and where they will be needed e.g. in skills shortage areas. Some authorities have appointed Apprenticeship co-ordinators to ensure there is a corporate and central point of contact whilst [regional support](#) is also available.

Apprentices should be monitored as a cohort so you can see whether any targeted recruitment is working i.e. are you trying to increase the diversity of your apprentices? Some key measures to monitor include to monitor whether your apprentices reflect the borough community are:

- Age
- BAME
- Disability
- Gender

You may also consider monitoring the following in line with other Council targets and duties:

- Sexual orientation
- Religion/Belief
- Whether the candidate/apprentice was previously NEET
- Whether the candidate/apprentice was previously a Looked After Child

Some apprentices may be sensitive about revealing some of the above, so ensure that the reasons for monitoring and uses made of the information are clearly explained, rather than simply requiring people to fill in a form.

12.4 Manager and team satisfaction

Evaluating manager satisfaction could be the most important evaluation tool you have. If the line managers are happy with the apprentices and the overall support and scheme, then they will continue to recruit apprentices and be natural ambassadors across your organisation.

12.5 Apprentice satisfaction

From the moment that you decide to offer an apprenticeship, through the apprentice recruitment process and into employing them, listen to them. Asking for their feedback and acting on it will not only make them feel involved but can also help you gain an insight into your processes and procedures and allow you to continuously improve.



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Useful Links and Resources

There is so much information available to support employers to increase employment and training opportunities to the community. It can be quite overwhelming if not a little confusing to understand what is available to support you and also what you need to know as an employer.

This section aims to provide a brief overview of the array of support and you can click on the following for further information:

[London Councils Apprenticeship Web Resource](#)

- [Business Case](#)
- [Events](#)
- [London Borough Apprenticeship Subgroup and Action Plan](#)
- [Resources and Useful links](#)
- [Latest News](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Case Studies](#)
- [Members area](#) which includes:
 - o Sample apprentice job descriptions
 - o Sample apprenticeship contracts
 - o Managers Guides
 - o Induction Ideas



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Government context

[Backing Young Britain](#)

[Building Britain's future](#)

[CBI Education and Skills policy](#)

[Public Sector Skills challenge](#)

[BIS Skills for Growth Strategy](#)

[14 – 19 Diplomas](#)

[Public service skills framework](#)

[Local government work force survey 2009](#)

[Marmot Review – Executive Summary](#)

[Neighbourhood Renewal Fund](#)

[Future Jobs Fund](#)

[National Apprenticeship Service](#)

[Apprenticeships Community of Practice](#)

[Workforce Matters Community of Practice](#)

[IDeA Apprenticeships page](#)

[LGE Apprenticeships page](#)

London context

[London Skills and Employment Observatory](#)

[London Apprenticeship Company](#)

[London Councils briefing on the DWP White Paper 'Building Britain's Recovery: Achieving Full Employment'](#)

[London Skills and Employment Board Skills and Employment Strategy for London 'From Recession to Recovery'](#)

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