

Apprenticeships can provide a productive and effective way to grow talent, develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce and drive business success. You will find there is lots of support for businesses to help them through the processes to achieve the business benefits and successes apprenticeships can bring.

This simple guide is intended to help you at the various stages of the apprenticeship journey, directing you to key information as well as directing you to the local support services which are available to you.

The apprenticeship journey has been broken down into the following 7 stages. You can click through to any of these stages via the diagram below or you can work through the guide in order.



- > Are you looking for a productive and effective way to grow talent, develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce and drive business success?
- > Apprenticeships can bring benefits to employers and individuals by boosting the skills of the workforce.

## EXPLORE

Apprenticeships could be a solution worth exploring.

- > If you're interested in apprenticeships for your business and you want to get to know more about what they are, how they are funded, what benefits they could bring and how they work, have a read of this short [Guide for Employers](#)
- > Apprenticeships make great financial sense, with employers generally able to recoup costs within two years of completion, and in some cases in as little as six months.

Employers who have an established apprenticeship programme report productivity in their workplace had **improved by 76%**<sup>1</sup>

### Understanding

- > Are you clear about your workforce development plans and how apprenticeships and other forms of training and development could be of benefit to you? If not there is lots of support to help you.
- > You will need to think about:
  - > What your plans are for the recruitment and development of your people
  - > If you need to recruit new staff or, if there are opportunities for existing employees to develop in a new role

## PLAN

Understand your needs

- > Once you have identified your needs you can consider which Apprenticeship Standards (or frameworks) best meet your needs. You can search and review the content of all Standards on the [Institute for Apprenticeships](#) website.
- > There is a range of support available. You could contact your local enterprise partnership, college or training provider.

**Did you know?** Apprenticeships are available for a growing number of job roles. From social media, construction to retail and beauty therapy, you will find Apprentices virtually anywhere.

### Your Needs

- > Choosing the right training provider is critical for your business and the apprentice's learning experience. You need to ensure you have the right apprenticeship programme, and in turn, the right apprentice to suit the needs of your business.
- > Some organisations might choose to run a procurement or mini selection process. Alternatively you can search [Find Apprenticeship Training](#) to identify suitable providers.

## CHOOSE

Apprenticeships could be a solution worth exploring.

- > You may find [these questions](#) from other employers useful when you are selecting a training provider to work with.
- > Perhaps consider shortlisting a couple from Find Apprenticeship Training and ask each a standard set of questions before you consider making any decisions.

All employers can get [government funding](#) towards the cost of training and assessing apprentices. Most SMEs only contribute 10% towards this cost.

### Decision

- > Knowing that apprenticeship standards have been developed by employers from across your industry is a great start but, you can tailor this further in partnership with your chosen training provider.
- > Speak to your training provider about how you can contribute to the programme, to best suit your business needs. This could include:
  - > Ensuring the delivery & learning content is relevant to the job role
  - > Reviewing the order and timing of training
  - > Considering how to meet the **20% off the job requirement**
  - > Thinking about what can be done to embed an apprenticeship culture across your workforce

## TAILOR

an apprenticeship programme for you

- > You will also need to choose an end-point assessment organisation, an independent organisation who will test the skills, knowledge and behaviours at the end of the apprenticeship training.
- > Your training provider will help you with the options or you can search for an [end-point assessment organisation](#) online.
- > You will need to enter into agreements with both your training provider and your apprentice. Have a read of [How to take on an Apprentice](#) which provides you with a useful checklist.

Apprentices will thrive with supportive employers who have a culture which values and rewards staff.

### Commitment

- > Apprentices can be new recruits or existing staff, of any age and in new or expanding roles. If you are recruiting apprentices for the first time or want to improve on recruitment processes, there is help available. You can access [Guidance on Employing an Apprentice](#)
- > Recruitment costs can be expensive so the good news is that there is a free [Recruit an apprentice](#) website that your provider will add your vacancies to. This will expand your pool of suitable candidates.
- > Many employers use word of mouth, local links and networks to promote vacancies, apprenticeships are no different!

## RECRUIT

new fresh talent to your business

- > Your training provider will work with your apprentices to make some early assessments about what support they might need, for example additional English and maths.
- > You could be eligible for [additional funding and support](#), depending on your apprentice's circumstances or if you are a small employer employing fewer than 50 employees.<sup>2</sup>
- > During the apprenticeship you must pay your apprentice at least the [National minimum wage](#).

A 2017 evaluation found that three-fifths (60%) of employers provided their apprenticeships to people who were recruited specifically to start an apprenticeship

### Selection

- > An apprentice does most of their learning every day in their job role and the real work environment. Your training provider will work with you to support the apprentice to progress through activities such as: teaching, mentoring & coaching, off-the-job learning, progress reviews & assessment and, where required gathering qualification evidence.

## DELIVERY

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- > You also have a role in deciding along with the training provider when your apprentice is ready for their final end-point assessments. This is called 'the gateway'.
- > Rigorous and robust end-point assessment (EPA) is essential to give you confidence that your apprentices completing their apprenticeship have achieved the occupational competence set out in the standard as designed by industry. Some of the EPA assessments include a role for you, your training provider will talk you through this if required.

The best thing for me, about being an Apprentice is being able to work with and surround myself with professionals with years of experience which I can learn and develop from." Joe Powell, Software Developer. HMRC

### Involvement

- > When one of your team achieves, the whole team benefits so, having apprentices complete and gain their certificates is a time to celebrate everyone's input.
- > Many employers make the time to revisit their skills needs, look for progression opportunities and create space for new apprentices. With the ongoing development of apprenticeships there may be a new standard available so, it's worth talking to your training provider to make sure you are getting the best solution for your business needs.

## SUCCESS

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- > Apprenticeship success is valued and there are regional and national awards for apprentices and employers every year. It could be you and your Apprentice!
- > Successful employers and ambassadors for others. Look out for local opportunities and organisations to promote and share your story.

The best thing about being an apprentice is that the opportunities to progress are endless!" Lilley Deevey, Crown Worldwide

### Celebration

## What Employers Are Saying

Oliver Mangham, Applications Director at Fairfields (SME) says:

"Apprenticeships help us identify and nurture young talent – they are part of our future. Good, well-rounded engineers are hard to come by and, as a small business, apprenticeships give us a competitive edge by providing the valuable opportunity to train young people the way we want them to be trained, from the beginning!"

Furthermore, at Fairfields, apprentices are some of their most loyal employees, with a 95% retention rate, compared to 40% for graduates.

James Nevin, Partner at Blue Engineering says:

"As a growing business in a competitive industry, our dynamic workforce is our strongest asset, and apprenticeships provide a constant stream of fresh talent. Hiring apprentices is integral to our growth strategy and ensures that we're constantly at the forefront of innovation in structural engineering."

## References

1 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/key-facts-about-apprenticeships/key-facts-about-apprenticeships>

2 - [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/621565/OTJ\\_training\\_guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/621565/OTJ_training_guidance.pdf)

## For further support:

If you are interested in finding out more about employing apprentices or providing traineeships you can get in touch with the National Apprenticeship Service with this [form](#). Alternatively you can call and speak to an experienced adviser on 08000 150 600.

For more details contact the West of England Growth Hub: [wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:wearegrowth@westofengland-ca.gov.uk) 0117 4566955

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