



# Employers' Apprenticeship Toolkit

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A GUIDE FOR ASPIRATIONAL BUSINESSES



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# 1 Apprenticeships deliver for ambitious businesses

Thousands of businesses like yours are using apprenticeships to help them grow. Whether they are recruiting new talent into the business or developing existing staff, these businesses have chosen apprenticeships to build the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to succeed.

Here are some potential results:

- £400 a month reduction on office costs
- Successfully implemented a new customer management system in six weeks
- 20% improvement in staff retention saving £2,500 per person in recruitment
- £90,000 added to the bottom line through better productivity

What's more, apprenticeships themselves are going through their biggest overhaul in a generation. No longer just for young people, they help staff of all ages and levels progress in work. They can include degrees or chartered status and provide a valuable pathway to develop the right staff, your way – no matter what sector your business is operating in.

## What does that mean in practice?

Businesses are in the driving seat. You know the staff training requirements for your business to evolve and grow. You know which job roles are a priority for development, and you understand the knowledge, skills and behaviours people need to do their jobs effectively.

So, you're in the best position to choose from over 400 new **Apprenticeship Standards** and pick the ones which give you and your customers confidence that your staff are **competent** in their role.



## How can this guide help my business?

This guide is for ambitious businesses based in East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. It aims to explain how apprenticeship training can link to your business's aspirations, so you can:

- Attract and develop the best local talent
- Support existing staff gain the skills needed to move through your organisation
- Bring specialists into your company to grow and explore new markets

As the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, we are keen to support businesses like yours employ and develop people in this region. We believe apprenticeships now provide a breadth of opportunity to employers that has not been available previously. We hope this guide spells out those opportunities in a clear, impartial manner.

If you need general advice on developing and growing your business then contact the [South East Business Hub](https://www.southeastbusiness.org.uk).



[www.southeastle.com](https://www.southeastle.com)



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## 2 How can apprenticeship training support my business plan?

Most businesses have some idea of where they want to be in 3-5 years, even if it's not always a formal written plan. But many don't have a skills development plan to support their ambitions – despite the fact that companies with comprehensive training programmes have over 200% higher income\* per employee than those without.

Apprenticeships are comprehensive, formal training programmes heavily subsidised by the government. They provide a cost-effective solution to developing your staff and business.

**Here are three ways apprenticeships can support business growth and efficiency:**



### I want to attract the best local talent to work for my business

- 1 Degree apprenticeships?**  
Encourage new recruits to your business with the offer of debt-free degrees.
- 2 Career changers**  
Support career changers into a new, local job where individuals feel valued and engaged.
- 3 Can't afford the training?**  
There are financial incentives for employing young people as apprentices.

#### Case Study:

The Holiday Inn in Rochester has employed apprentices for over four years.

"Long-term our apprenticeship programme shows commitment from us as an employer that we're investing in our staff. We have many examples of staff going from positions such as waitresses to supervisors and duty managers.

"Having external training ensures the professionalism we require. It's fantastic for staff morale, it's fantastic for staff loyalty and it reduces turnover and you're getting staff that are trained to progress."

Watch [the video](#) about Rochester's Holiday Inn apprenticeship programme.

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## 2 How can apprenticeship training support my business plan? (continued)

### I want to develop my existing staff so we are more efficient

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- 1 Identify where training can improve practice**  
Apprentices improve business productivity by £10,280 (per year) once qualified.\*
- 2 Prepare for future challenges**  
The world of work moves fast. Train your staff to use new techniques or equipment.
- 3 Professional industry qualifications included**  
Save money by putting staff through chartered status as part of a subsidised apprenticeship.

#### Case Study:

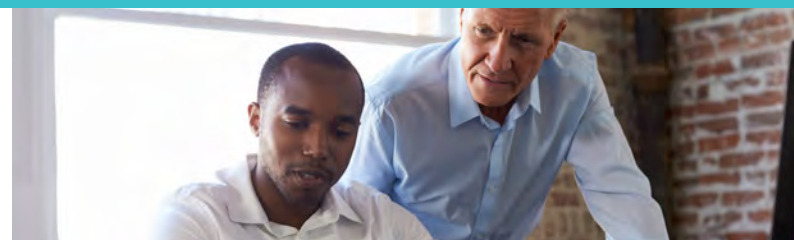
Anderson Group is an Essex-based construction company that has recruited apprentices for over 10 years, some of whom have won national awards.

"It's an education throughout the company, not just for those that are undertaking their apprenticeship as knowledge gets passed on about new techniques, procedures and technology.

"Clients look at you as a company investing in individuals and that goes a long way when you're putting in tenders.

"Most definitely they are the managers of the future."

Watch [the video](#) about Anderson Group's apprenticeship programme.



### I want to expand and need people with the ability to support growth

3

- 1 Reward loyal staff by expanding their remit**  
Motivate existing staff to learn new skills that support multitasking or a move into a new career.
- 2 Use apprentices for marketing and sales**  
Bring new staff into your organisation to learn skills specifically related to supporting growth.
- 3 Employ then place apprentices**  
Rotate people around departments, before placing them in a team that is the best fit for their skills.

#### Case Study:

East Sussex Healthcare Trust has a number of apprentices.

"Running an apprenticeship programme within our organisation has added value to the team that we have by allowing apprentices to give ideas about situations that we would ordinarily take for granted.

"Apprenticeship training provides an opportunity to look at your own business and to see which areas are undervalued or under skilled and then to support those members of staff that are keen and motivated to progress. Apprenticeships will enable your business to flourish."

Watch [the video](#) about East Sussex Healthcare Trust's apprenticeship programme.

View more apprenticeship videos about local companies on the South East LEP [YouTube channel](#).



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# 3 Apprenticeship facts

## Apprenticeships have changed.

### Who can do them?

- Anyone aged over 16
- Graduates and non-graduates
- New or existing staff
- Individuals that have a right to work in the UK

### Business impact\*

- 96% of employers using apprenticeships say their business has benefited
- 83% of employers using apprenticeships rely on them to provide the skilled workers needed for the future
- 80% of employers using apprenticeships say they reduce staff turnover
- 76% of employers using apprenticeships say they increase overall productivity
- 59% of employers using apprenticeships say that training is more cost-effective than hiring skilled staff

Apprenticeships are a great investment. They last at least a year and provide staff with an opportunity to learn a whole role, on-the-job, supported by your business and by an external training partner. They can bring the newest ideas and innovations into the working of a company and can help generate an extremely loyal workforce.

Apprenticeships are not a quick fix. If you're looking to give your staff refresher training in only one or two elements of their job, apprenticeships are not the right route. However, if you want to grow your own skilled staff over the longer term, then why not consider how apprenticeships could work in your company.



## Types of role

- |                               |                                  |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ▪ Accountant                  | ▪ Graphic Designer               |
| ▪ Agriculture Manager         | ▪ Laboratory Assistant           |
| ▪ Architect                   | ▪ Nuclear Technician             |
| ▪ Automation Engineer         | ▪ Nurse                          |
| ▪ Aviation Operations Manager | ▪ Mechanical Engineer            |
| ▪ Brewer                      | ▪ Passenger Transport Operations |
| ▪ Care Worker                 | ▪ Personal Trainer               |
| ▪ Chartered Manager           | ▪ Pharmacy Services              |
| ▪ Chartered Surveyor          | ▪ Project Manager                |
| ▪ Chef                        | ▪ Senior Leader (CEO)            |
| ▪ Customer Advisor            | ▪ Software developer             |
| ▪ Cyber Security Technologist | ▪ Solicitor                      |
| ▪ Digital Marketer            | ▪ Teaching Assistant             |
| ▪ Engineering construction    | ▪ Textiles Production            |
| ▪ Finance Officer             | ▪ Veterinary Nurse               |
| ▪ Food Technologist           | ▪ Warehouse Operative            |

.... And many, many more!

## Subsidised training can lead to:

- Certificate of competency
- NVQs, HNCs and HNDs
- Degrees and Masters' Degrees
- Chartered or Professional Status
- English and Maths GCSE equivalents
- Health and Safety certificates
- Specific industry qualifications at your request
- Equality and diversity in the workplace

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## 3 Apprenticeship facts (continued)

### Your commitment

- Apprenticeships are at least a year long
- Work in partnership with a government-approved training partner (or be approved yourself)
- Give your employees at least 20% of paid time in off-the-job training
- Be prepared to pay towards some of the training costs (most businesses pay just 5%)
- Pay wages to your apprentice that will attract and retain quality staff
- Assign a mentor and line manager to support their learning

### What you should expect in return

- Improved productivity
- Improved staff attraction and retention
- Improved customer satisfaction and repeat business
- Improved ability to meet future challenges
- Ultimately, a substantial return on your investment in training

### Financial incentives

- No employer N.I. contributions for an apprentice under 25
- £1,000 to support 16-18 year olds and 18-24 year old care leavers or those with a disability\*\*
- Free English and maths training for those that need it
- Industry training at a fraction of the cost of paying full cost
- Employ less than 50 people? There are no training fees for eligible apprentices
- Apprenticeship minimum wage is £3.90/hour in the first year or for under 19s, although most employers pay their apprentices at a higher rate



### Tools and links:



Test your knowledge of employing apprentices



The benefits of apprenticeships to business CEBR Report (2015)



The Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers

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# 4 The Apprenticeship Levy

The government asks large businesses to pay an Apprenticeship Levy. The purpose of the levy is to encourage large businesses to employ and train staff using apprenticeships. The levy also generates funds to subsidise the cost of apprenticeship training for smaller businesses.

## Does my company pay the levy?

- Yes, if you have an annual payroll of over £3million
- Approximately 2% of businesses in the UK pay the levy
- Levy-payers pay 90% of the apprenticeship training costs
- The government pays the remaining 10% of the costs

Levy-payers must use the Government's online apprenticeship service to manage apprenticeships and payments.

More information at: [www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds).

## Non-levy payers

- Your company doesn't pay the levy if its annual payroll is less than £3million
- Approximately 98% of businesses in the UK don't pay the levy
- Non-levy payers pay just 5% of the apprenticeship training costs (plus VAT in some circumstances)
- The government pays the remaining 95% of the costs

In future, all employers will use the online apprenticeship service to manage and pay for apprenticeship training. You will be invoiced for your 5% contribution by your training provider.



## Transfer levy funds

Levy-paying organisations are able to transfer 25% of their unspent levy funds to other businesses. This can be to any business (levy or non-levy) or a government approved Apprenticeship Training Agency.

Most organisations that transfer funds do so to help their supply chain or SMEs access training they couldn't otherwise afford. Essentially, a transfer means the receiving organisation does not have to contribute to the cost of apprenticeship training. It also gives the receiver the choice of all the training providers listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers.

## Tools and links:



Estimate my employer levy contribution



Apprenticeship Levy – Policy Paper 2016



Apprenticeship Levy transfer video



What is an Apprenticeship Training Agency?

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## 5 The role of the training provider

Apprenticeship training needs three parties: the person doing the apprenticeship, the employer and a government-approved apprenticeship training provider. The key to successful apprenticeships is to find the right training provider(s).

There are hundreds of private training companies, colleges and universities approved by government to provide the off-the-job training on apprenticeships. It's crucial to choose a provider that understands your ambitions for the business and knows how to get you to where you want to be.

### The training provider has responsibility for the quality of your apprenticeship programme

Some businesses are apprehensive about starting an apprenticeship because they are unsure how best to analyse skills gaps in their company, what their legal obligations are, what's involved or if they'll get tied up by red tape.

You needn't worry. Approved apprenticeship training providers can support you before, during and after the apprenticeship. Providers receive government funding to train a more productive workforce, so they are ultimately responsible for the quality of your apprenticeship programme. They must demonstrate how the training meets Ofsted's requirements and the 20% off-the-job training rules.

### Ask the training provider questions - get them to help!

Training is their business – their reputation is on the line. The right provider will walk you through the process and explore who will deliver each aspect of training. Then they will create and deliver a training programme that meets the needs of your organisation and your staff.



### How do I find the right training provider?

You can:

- Search for the types of training you need on the [Find An Apprenticeship website](#)
- Phone training providers directly
- Receive calls from providers or meet them at trade shows
- If you're an ambitious business looking to grow, contact [South East Business Hub](#) for impartial advice and details of local financial incentives.

As with any new supplier, the most important part of finding a good training provider is to ask the right questions.

### You want to check that:

- The provider understands your sector
- Their trainers have the relevant expertise to train your staff
- They will tailor the training to suit your business and individual staff members
- You are satisfied with the provider's achievement and satisfaction rates
- They are clear about what's expected from you as the employer
- They show you the total cost (including VAT and exam fees where applicable)
- They will help you achieve a good return on your investment in apprenticeships



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## 5 The role of the training provider (continued)

### Deliver training with your training provider

You or your staff can deliver some of the off-the-job training of the apprenticeship, in partnership with the training provider, if that's of interest to you. As mentioned, the training provider is responsible for the quality and legality of the 20% off-the-job time. But, you are the experts in your field, so your input could improve the quality of the programme.

Listen carefully to the provider when they explain your involvement. They must be confident your input meets government and Ofsted standards and is broad enough to apply across the industry and not specifically to your company. It won't work in all cases, so talking openly and honestly is advised.

### Employer Provider

If you can't find the right training provider for your needs, there is the option of becoming a government-approved Apprenticeship Employer Provider in your own right. The types of company that do this usually employ over 1,000 people and have large budgets as well as HR and training departments. It is a significant, but rewarding, undertaking.



### Tools and links:



**TOOL 5.1** Training Provider Questions



How to become an approved apprenticeship training provider

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## 6 Local challenges employers face

Employers across the UK often struggle to recruit skilled, experienced staff, but the reasons vary across different areas. In the South East Local Enterprise Partnership region, labour market intelligence\* shows us:

- 1 Vacancy levels remain high, with nearly 400,000 in a calendar year, and are set to increase with large scale housing, infrastructure and population growth projected across the South East.
- 2 The South East LEP area has a large number (167,000) of micro and small businesses (99%), many of which report challenges in finding the appropriate skills.
- 3 Communication skills were the highest in demand by employers (over 76,000 of all vacancies). With team work, organisational and planning skills also highly sought.
- 4 Construction, health, care, education, engineering, logistics, finance and IT sectors are among the highest recruiters locally, yet employers in these sectors also report a lack of suitably qualified candidates.

### How can apprenticeship training help reduce these barriers?

Apprenticeship training is a long-term solution to reducing skills gaps. It develops your people in a specific role through on and off-the-job training. Apprenticeships are a clear priority for the South East LEP but numbers have remained static in the last few years.

As more and more businesses in the South East LEP area engage in apprenticeship training, there will be a higher proportion of people in the labour market to choose from in the future that have the skills employers, like you, are looking for. This will reduce recruitment costs and allow you to secure the labour you need quickly and affordably.



Apprenticeships don't just develop people's industry-specific skills. The key to apprenticeship training is learning through doing. By watching others, undertaking tasks and having a go, soft-skills like communication, teamwork and resilience also improve in apprentices.

### Employer feedback

The Local Enterprise Partnership works with private training providers, colleges and universities to make sure the apprenticeship training they are offering is in line with the needs of local employers now and in the years to come.

If you are struggling to find the right type of apprenticeship training for your business's needs, contact the LEP. We want to understand and share the training needs of employers – making sure local training organisations know what apprenticeship provision should be on offer to support future jobs and the local economy's needs.

Contact the LEP at: [hello@southeastlep.com](mailto:hello@southeastlep.com)

### Tools and links:



South East LEP Skills Strategy 2018-2023



South East LEP Skills Evidence Base and sector reports

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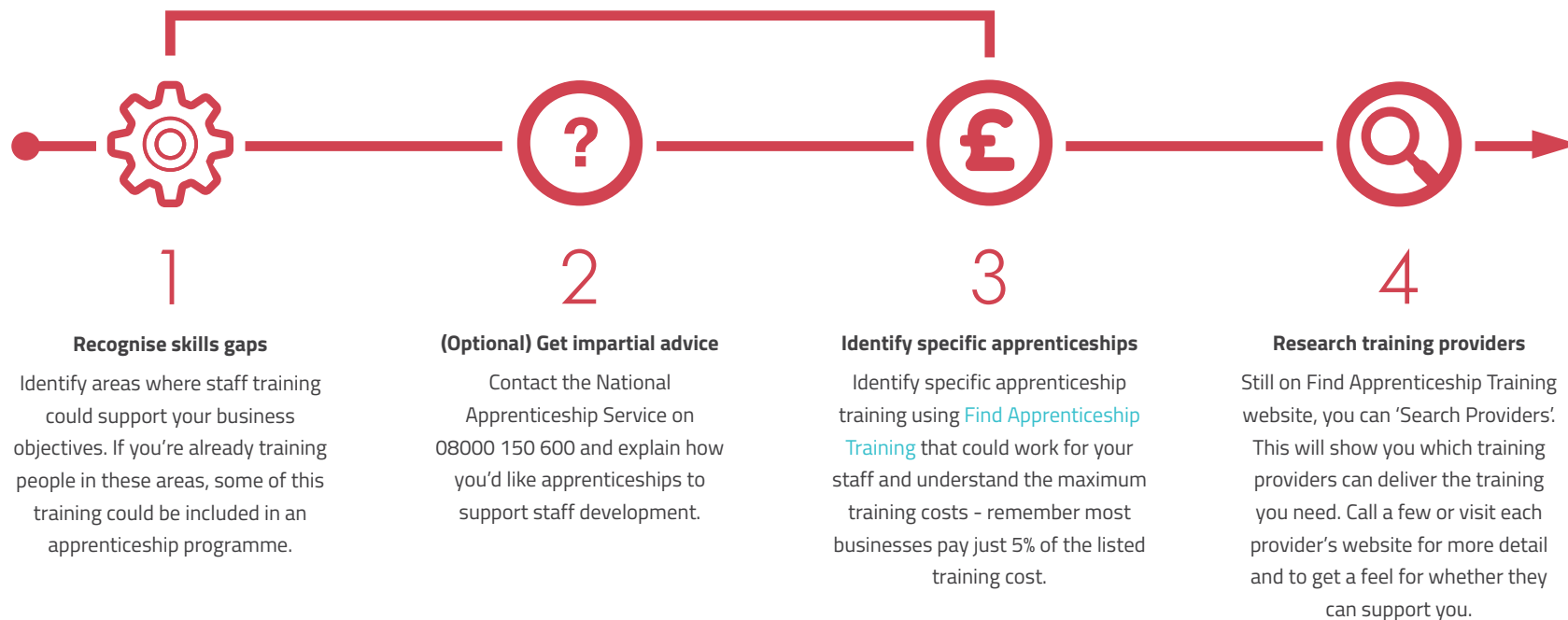
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# 7 Get up and go



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# 7

## Get up and go

(continued)



### Invite preferred provider

Choose a provider or two to visit you and talk in depth about your needs. They will carry out health and safety checks and confirm that your chosen staff members are eligible to receive government funding. They should also discuss how to make the training suit your business.

### (Optional) Recruit and select

If you're recruiting, work with the provider to advertise your apprenticeship vacancies. The provider can help manage and filter applicants. At interview, select the person with the right attributes that you can develop through the apprenticeship.

### Agree and commit

Once you have selected the people going on to an apprenticeship, the provider will run through some initial assessments with them before generating an individual learning plan (ILP). You will agree to the plan and sign an apprenticeship agreement and commitment statement.

### Begin your journey!

Your staff start learning the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be a real asset to your business.

### Ask another employer

If you are not sure if apprenticeship training is right for your business, talk to other employers. You can get in touch with the South East (for Kent, Medway and East Sussex) and East of England (for Essex, Southend and Thurrock) [Apprenticeship Ambassador Networks](#). These are networks of apprentice employers who will give you advice and support from an employer's point of view.

### Tools and links:



**TOOL 7.1** Apprenticeship Ambassador Network contact details



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# 8

## Maximise your apprenticeships

**This part of the toolkit provides more technical content. You can use it as a checklist when planning, designing, recruiting or supporting people through their apprenticeships.**

- a Workforce planning
- b Finance and funding
- c Choosing the right training provider
- d Recruitment
- e Designing training
- f Supporting your apprentice on programme
- g Keeping the quality
- h End-point assessment and progression



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## 8a Maximise your apprenticeships Workforce planning

### 1 Link training to your business plan to identify current and future skills gaps

Think about how staff training could support a 3-5-year business plan. You might identify skills gaps inhibiting current productivity, roles you can't fill or training that staff will need in the future, such as understanding new legislation or using technology.

### 2 Capture all training currently taken by staff

You might already be paying for existing staff to take qualifications that are mandatory in your sector. This training could form part of an apprenticeship at less cost. If staff are paying for their own training it might increase their motivation to stay in your business if it formed part of an apprenticeship instead – in which case they would not pay anything themselves.

### 3 Identify progression opportunities from entry-level to senior management

Does your company have a clear pathway for all staff to progress? It might be that some people leave your organisation because they can't see a clear route to move up the career ladder.

#### Top tip:

Think about how you could take on entry-level apprentices in your business and rotate them through various departments such as reception, sales, account management and finance, during the apprenticeship. As the training comes to an end, they will have a thorough understanding of how the whole business operates and have a better idea where they see their career heading. You can then work with the apprentice to decide which team to place them in long-term and give them more specific apprenticeship training to cement their knowledge should they need it.

Successfully transitioning staff from operational to management roles is a difficult process in many companies. Integrating team leading and management apprenticeships can support this activity.



### 4 Return on investment and Key Performance Indicators

Measure the success of your training with something tangible. You may already use key performance indicators for things like profit, productivity and customer satisfaction. You should be able to see how these indicators improve through apprenticeship training.

Training affects individual performance as well. Setting and reviewing individual targets at apprenticeship reviews can support the performance management process.

Some businesses tie apprenticeship training to specific projects, e.g. finding efficiency savings or increasing sales. These kinds of projects give businesses a direct, financial value related to their training investment.

#### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8a.1** Training Needs Analysis

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# 8<sub>b</sub> Maximise your apprenticeships

## Finance and funding

### 1 Costing

Before embedding apprenticeships into your organisation, it is important to recognise all the costs associated with a comprehensive training programme.

- a) **Training costs** – Non-levy payers pay just 5% of the cost of apprenticeship training. This is between £75 and £1,350 across the length of the apprenticeship. There may be VAT, exam and certification fees on top of this. Ask the provider for the total amount before you proceed.
- b) **Wages** – Employers must pay the person on the apprenticeship their wages for work and training time. The apprenticeship minimum wage is £3.90 per hour in the first 12 months (or if the apprentice is 16-18). However, most employers pay more than this. Think about a wage that will allow you to attract quality candidates to the role but acknowledges someone is learning on the job and not yet fully qualified.
- c) **Mentoring** – You or a member of your team must make time to support the person on the apprenticeship and regularly liaise with the training provider. Think about how this could work within existing processes in your company.
- d) **20%-off-the-job** – The apprentice is training away from their general duties at least 20% of their paid time. This means they are not on their workstation doing their day job. Think about how you will see a return on investment for this time off the job.
- e) **Company costs** – occasionally there are other costs companies face when offering apprenticeships. This could be an increase in insurance for taking on unqualified workers, expenses for overnight off-the-job training, etc. Think about your individual business.



### 2 Incentives and benefits

The main driver for apprenticeship training should be to improve your business performance, staff loyalty and customer satisfaction. However, there are several incentives and additional benefits of apprenticeship training that employers should be aware of.

- a) **£1,000 for employing a 16-18-year-old** – Businesses are given £1,000 over two instalments for employing a 16-18-year-old as an apprentice. £500 at three months and £500 on completion of the apprenticeship.
- b) **£1,000 for employing some 18-24-year-olds** – The 16-18 incentive is extended to businesses that employ 18-24-year-old apprentices that have previously been in care or have a learning difficulty or disability as recognised by an Education and Health Care Plan. This incentive can help you demonstrate you're a [disability confident](#) employer.
- c) **No training costs for small businesses** – If you employ less than 50 people and train a 16-18-year-old or qualifying 18-24-year-old on an apprenticeship, your business does not have to pay any training fees. This means you could access £27,000 worth of training for free.
- d) **No Employer National Insurance contributions** – Any business that offers apprenticeship training to an employee under the age of 25, does not have to pay any Employer N.I. contributions. This saving is almost always more than the 5% contribution to training for non-levy payers. Plus, the more you pay the apprentice the higher the saving.

#### Employer N.I. example:

An independent insurance firm in Hastings employs a 19-year-old on £14,000 per annum to carry out administration work. He is a real asset to the company and wants to progress. As such, they decide to put the 19-year-old on a two-year Insurance Professional apprenticeship. The training will cost £450 per annum, yet they save £769.49 per annum on Employer N.I.

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## 8<sup>b</sup> Maximise your apprenticeships

### Finance and funding (continued)

**e) Mandatory qualification** – If your organisation needs staff to gain certain qualifications, apprenticeships can help. This could be specialist health and safety cards, industry-standard training or chartered status. This type of training may cost thousands of pounds but can often be included in the apprenticeship if it supports the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to pass the programme. Ask your chosen training provider if they can include specific certificates.

**f) Attract top talent** – Many people are interested in working for employers that offer qualifications and training as part of a work package. Your business could offer degree-apprenticeships to support graduate-calibre staff access debt free degrees. With the cost of university rising this is an attractive proposition for ambitious young people.

### 3 Paying your training provider

Levy-paying employers pay for their training through their government online apprenticeship account. A training provider is selected, and payment amount agreed. A proportion of their fee is then deducted from the account each month.

Non-levy paying employers are invoiced for the apprenticeship training by their training provider. You can agree with your training provider how often payment will be taken and at what percentage of the total amount.

Many training providers prefer employers to pay for their apprenticeship training up-front or annually. If you do this, and your member of staff leaves the company or comes off the apprenticeship early, you are legally entitled to a part-reimbursement. Effectively, you should be reimbursed minus the months they were on programme.



### 4 Negotiating training costs

Each apprenticeship programme is allocated a maximum funding band by government. This means if you are a non-levy payer you pay up to 5% of that cost. Anything over that band, you would pay 100% of the difference.

VAT on your 5% and some additional fees may apply, depending on whether you work with a private or public training provider and if you've chosen to add extra qualifications to the apprenticeship.

Many training providers will charge the maximum funding band, but you are quite within your rights to negotiate that amount if you do not think it is value for money. Alternatively, ask if there is additional support that can be provided, such as a day's training for your mentors so they know their role in the apprenticeship or health and safety guidance for all staff.

#### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8b.1** Cost Benefit Analysis Tool



N.I. Calculator



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## 8c Maximise your apprenticeships Choosing the right training provider

At least 20% of your apprentice's time will be spent in off-the-job training. As such, you should be confident that the experience they are receiving is benefiting both the apprentice and your business.

### One place to start

There is no prescribed place to start searching for a training provider, however if you want to search for providers online, visit [Find Apprenticeship Training](#) and search by job title.

A list of relevant apprenticeships will appear with further details and costs. Remember, if you have a payroll of less than £3million per annum, your business only pays a maximum of 5% of that listed price.

Once you think you've found apprenticeship training that is suitable, click the search training providers button. Put in your postcode and look at the provider profiles. You should be able to see how the provider delivers this training, as well as their achievement and satisfaction rates.

### Speak to at least two providers

Phone a couple of the providers to get further details. Check that the provider understands your sector and ask about the trainers' experience. You want to identify how they might tailor the training around your business and support the apprentice whilst they are on learning.

### Provider interview

Invite your chosen provider to your premises. They should carry out a health and safety check, make sure your organisation is eligible for government apprenticeship funding and get further details from you about how you need the training structured.



### Take note:

Good training providers can offer more support than just training. They can be a good sounding board for issues on HR, recruitment, equality and diversity, health and safety and compliance as these are all areas they are audited against and work across many employers supporting.

### Select the provider

If you have found a partner provider, you have approved costs, received the contact details of relevant staff, now agree when and how often payments will take place. Make sure they include VAT and exam and registration fees if applicable.

Ultimately, you are looking to form a long-term partnership with a training provider that can support your business ambitions through apprenticeship training. Be confident the provider is on hand to support you and the apprentice throughout the programme and assist with any difficulties you might have.

### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8c.1** Training Provider Checklist

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## 8d Maximise your apprenticeships Recruitment

Finding the right person to employ as an apprentice is just as important as finding the right training provider to deliver the off-the-job training.

To increase your chances of employing the right apprentice, you should:

### 1 Look for assets you can develop beyond qualifications and previous experience

Apprenticeships are about giving someone an opportunity to prove themselves on-the-job. Over the course of the apprenticeship your staff and the training provider will develop the apprentice into an outstanding member of staff. This means you should assess what attributes you want an apprentice to have on day one and what you are looking to develop during the apprenticeship.

### 2 Make sure your advert is connecting with a wide pool of talent

Apprenticeships provide an opportunity to diversify your workforce and attract young talent that might not usually consider your industry.

When creating job description and person specification really consider the audience you are looking to engage. Are you using too much jargon, do you have the right expectations?

Many young people, particularly those looking for their first job will have limited experience of the world of work. Using technical jargon or looking for a range of prior experiences might create barriers for the future talent you want to attract.

#### Top tip:

If you want to attract a more diverse workforce make sure the language you use in your job advert appeals to men and women and people from a range of different backgrounds. For example, if your industry is male dominated, it's a good idea to tell applicants that your workplace is inclusive and supportive. This will reassure applicants and help them visualise being part of your team. Ultimately, it will encourage a wider pool of talent to apply for your job and gives you more choice at interview.



### 3 Use the training provider to find and screen applicants

Training providers offer to recruit and screen applicants on your behalf. This can save you a great deal of time, but you should be clear what you are looking for if you use them to do this. Make sure they are looking for applicants from a range of ages and backgrounds.

If you want to do recruitment yourself, don't just rely on jobs boards or even recruitment agencies to attract young people. It is always advised to mix up the places you are advertising. You could consider talking directly to schools, youth organisations and job centres too.

### 4 Explain your ambitions for the apprentice in the interview

Interviews are a two-way process. This is your opportunity to sell your company and the progression routes available to the apprentice. Apprentice wages are often lower than fully-qualified wages, so applicants need to be reassured that you are offering an opportunity that helps them long-term. If they don't get that message they may select a higher-wage, short-term opportunity elsewhere.

### 5 Consider a part-time apprentice

It is possible for an apprentice to work less than 30 hours a week, but in these circumstances the apprenticeship will take longer to complete. If you think this could open opportunities for you to recruit more suitable staff, then ask your training provider about your options.

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## 8d Maximise your apprenticeships Recruitment (continued)

### Extra advice to recruit and retain young people

Here are three additional tips to help you recruit the best young people and keep them on track in the first few weeks:

#### 1 Relaxed recruitment process

You are providing a great opportunity for young people to test their CV, application and interview skills. Some young people won't have had expert help to prepare and may have some anxiety issues about taking an apprenticeship.

Consider what you can do to help them feel relaxed and confident so they can show you their best selves during the recruitment process. Also consider the type of feedback you could give at each stage, even when a candidate is unsuccessful you may have some valuable insight to help them on their journey.

#### 2 Got the job – now buddy up

Some young people may need extra support, particularly in the early days, to settle into the role. Assigning a buddy can be a really great way of supporting a young person. Plus, it gives an existing member of staff more responsibility and a development opportunity. Be careful not to assume anything, check in regularly with the young person and understand how they are feeling and progressing. This will help keep hold of talented staff and give them time to settle in and flourish.

#### 3 Get feedback for your next hire

Talk to young people about your recruitment, onboarding and training processes. Involve them in the design and thinking for your next hire, the insight you will get will really help you to become youth-friendly and create even more quality opportunities

Text supplied by [Youth Employment UK](#).



A youth-led organisation that works with young people, employers and a range of partners to tackle youth unemployment.

Visit [www.youthemployment.org.uk](http://www.youthemployment.org.uk) for further insight.



### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8d.1** Interview Questions



**TOOL 8d.2** Employers Guide to Supporting Care Leavers



**TOOL 8d.3** Employers Guide to Employing Young Apprentices

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## 8e Maximise your apprenticeships Designing training

### Standards or Frameworks?

There are currently two types of apprenticeship programme: standards and frameworks.

Apprenticeship **standards** have been developed by employer groups. They are occupation focused. They provide an emphasis on competency over qualifications. The apprentice must pass an independent end-point assessment, to demonstrate they have the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to do the job.

Apprenticeship **frameworks** have been around much longer and can be more prescriptive. They can still provide the structure you need to deliver an excellent apprenticeship programme, but it can be more difficult to include specific elements of training you may need.

Frameworks are being replaced by standards. It is likely there will be no framework apprenticeships to choose from by January 2020.

### What can be included in the 20% off-the-job training?

Off-the-job training is learning which occurs outside day-to-day work and leads towards the achievement of an apprenticeship. This can include training that is delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties.

The training provider is responsible for the apprenticeship programme meeting the 20% rule, not you. They will decipher what activities you and your colleagues can provide to the apprentice that can be included in this 20% and what they will deliver as the bulk of the training.



### Example:

A manufacturing company employs an apprentice. Her line manager teaches her how to use different functions on a core piece of equipment when there is down time. This activity can count as off-the-job training, even though it is not delivered by the training-provider, as long as it forms part of the knowledge, skills and behaviours she needs to achieve the apprenticeship.

### Types of training provided by training providers

Most training providers will develop a 'blended learning' programme. This means they will teach the apprentices face-to-face and use online tools. This works for lots of employers as it means the online work can be done in quiet periods and counts towards the 20%.

The face-to-face learning takes place as:

- 1 **Day release** – e.g. attending college or private training provider premises every Wednesday.
- 2 **Block release** – e.g. attending university for a fortnight every term.
- 3 **At your premises** – e.g. visiting your apprentices in person at fixed times.

Which methods are used will depend on the training provider you select and the type of apprenticeship training your business needs. For example, construction apprenticeships are often taught away from the workplace due to the health and safety risk associated with the profession.



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## Designing training (continued)

### Curriculum design

When you meet with the training provider discuss in detail what you are looking to achieve from the training. Explain the job role, what training your colleagues could support and how you see the knowledge, skills and behaviours being obtained throughout the apprenticeship period. Mention all qualifications you'd like your staff to obtain too.

This will allow the training provider to produce a structure for the training, with details of dates and objectives. An apprentice must then have an initial assessment.

This assessment is a crucial step in the design of the apprenticeship programme. It helps uncover if the apprentice:

- Has prior learning in the vocation that can reduce the length of the programme
- Has additional learning needs, which might affect how the training is delivered
- Needs to take maths or English qualifications (if they don't have grade 9-4 GCSE or equivalent in those subjects). [Click here](#) for more information about the current GCSE grading system

### Individual learning plan

Once the assessment is complete, the training provider produces an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This is the document that outlines the design of the individual apprenticeship programme.



### Example:

A law firm recruits a new staff member on a Solicitor Apprenticeship programme. The apprenticeship typically takes five years, but one of the new members of staff has a law degree. This is evidence of prior learning and means he does not need to 'relearn' knowledge he has already obtained. As such, the Individual Learning Plan is arranged to support only the new learning he needs. He is likely to complete in two years, instead of five.

### English and maths

If your apprentice hasn't got a grade 9-4 in GCSE English or Maths (or equivalent) they will have to study these subjects alongside their apprenticeship. This is completely free to you and the apprentice and should support their learning. This training is in addition to the 20% off-the-job learning time though, so be sure to ask about these arrangements if it's possible your apprentice will require this training.

### Tools and links:



Live apprenticeship standards and those in development



Apprenticeship off-the-job training rules and examples



**TOOL 8e.1** Off-the-Job Training Slides

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## 8f Maximise your apprenticeships Supporting your apprentice on programme

### 1 Focus on the apprentice

Although good apprenticeship training should consider the needs of and benefits for the business, the main focus should always be on the individual employee. Both the employer and the training provider should make sure they are providing the apprentice with the tools they need to pass their apprenticeship and progress in their career.

### 2 Mentoring and managing

Each apprentice should be assigned a mentor and line manager. This could be the same person but doesn't have to be. Essentially, you want someone at work that the apprentice is comfortable confiding in or talking about their off-the-job training with, and someone that can manage and motivate them to keep learning and succeed in the workplace.

#### Top tip:

Where possible, try and employ two or more apprentices in your company at once, even if they are in different job roles. Apprentices often benefit from shared experiences with fellow apprentices e.g. discussions on building portfolios or completing assessments. If apprentices have someone else in the company that understands their work-training balance it can give them the extra support they need to stay on track.

### 3 Commitment Statement

At the start of the apprenticeship, the training provider will produce a commitment statement. This outlines your commitment as an employer, what is expected of the apprentice and what is expected of the training provider. You must all sign this document, so make sure you understand what you are committing to. This is essentially 'the plan' and outlines how, as a partnership, you can all work together to support the apprentice and deliver improved business performance through training.



### 4 Progress meetings and troubleshooting

The apprentice, training provider and line manager should meet regularly, at least once a quarter to discuss the apprentice's progress. This can be done online or face-to-face but should enable all parties to check the apprentice is on track, discuss the next stage of learning and amend the commitment statement if needed.

As an employer you should also be comfortable calling your training provider if you have ideas to support learning or any concerns about the apprentice. You are working in partnership with your training provider and together you can troubleshoot your worries or talk through up-coming events and opportunities to enhance the apprentice's learning.

### 5 Get involved in apprenticeship competitions

Every year apprentices can take part in local skills competitions that feed into WorldSkills – a skills competition that pits the most talented young people from around the world against one another.

Competitions are great for apprentices as they help them benchmark their progress against their peers and give them drive to become exceptional at their trade. They are great for employers too as they fire up your workforce and can be included in the 20% off-the-job time.

Visit the [WorldSkills UK website](#) for details and contact your training provider to find out about local competitions your apprentices can enter.

#### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8f.1** Employer Obligations

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## 8g Maximise your apprenticeships Keeping the quality

Employers should rest assured that all training providers listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers have been approved by government to deliver apprenticeships. To be successfully included on this list, training providers have met strict criteria that demonstrates they have quality assurance procedures in place to consistently deliver high-quality apprenticeship training.

Alongside this initial check, training providers are also accountable to Ofsted or Advance HE. This means they are often inspected at short-notice, where their training is audited for quality. However, employers should also be checking that the off-the-job training is adding value to the apprenticeship programme. Below we explore how to do this:

### 1 Is learning happening?

Firstly, check with the person on the apprenticeship that they are learning in the off-the-job sessions. This can be done informally and during the monitoring visits with the training provider. You want to be sure that the off-the-job training is helping them improve at their role. Ask them if they are being stretched and challenged to learn more or explore differing ways of undertaking tasks.

### 2 What is the feedback like?

The training provider should not just be giving feedback on how far your employee has come on their apprenticeship. The feedback should help them understand how to keep improving. It should be forward looking.

On most apprenticeship **standards** there is grading criteria. Your employee should understand if they are likely to pass or get a merit or distinction. During their programme, they should be certain they understand what they need to do if they are to obtain a higher grade.



### 3 Is the apprenticeship focused on competency?

It's really important that your apprentice is becoming competent in their job role, not just qualified or ready for their end-point assessment.

On apprenticeship **frameworks** check your apprentice is becoming more able to carry out tasks that are relevant to their job role as the apprenticeship progresses. On apprenticeship **standards** check that your staff are gaining the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are written in the apprenticeship standard.

Each apprenticeship standard also has an assessment plan that outlines how the apprentice will be assessed at the end of their apprenticeship. Check the training provider is preparing your staff member specifically for the types of assessment they will receive, but again make sure that the apprentice is not simply being prepared to pass the test and is truly gaining the attributes they need to lead a successful career.

### Tools and links:



**TOOL 8g.1** What does good training look like



Ofsted Inspection search



Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers

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# 8<sup>h</sup> Maximise your apprenticeships

## End-point assessment and progression

### 1 What's an end-point assessment?

If your apprentice is on an apprenticeship standard, rather than an apprenticeship framework, they will need to take an end-point assessment. This is where the apprentice demonstrates to an independent organisation that they have obtained all the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard.

#### Top tip:

Think of an end-point assessment like a driving test...

- 1 The employer and the training provider represent the driving instructor. They teach the apprentice how to be a competent driver.
- 2 The end-point assessment organisation is the test centre. You book an assessment when you feel the apprentice is ready and able to pass their test.
- 3 The end-point assessor is the driving examiner.
- 4 The end-point assessment is the driving test itself. You don't know what the apprentice will be asked to do (3-point turn, parallel parking), but they should be able to carry out any activity asked of them.
- 5 If the apprentice passes the test then they are acknowledged to be fully competent in their profession.

The important point to realise is apprentices can fail an end-point assessment. This protects the quality and rigour of apprenticeship standards and makes sure only competent apprentices pass.



### 2 Choosing an End-Point Assessment Organisation

The employer is responsible for choosing which organisation will oversee the end-point assessment. This is in the same way you chose the training provider. In some sectors, professional bodies are a preferred choice, in others there are a range of awarding bodies, universities, colleges and public sector partnerships.

Although it is your choice, it is advisable to ask your training provider their opinion. They will have good links with certain End-Point Assessment Organisations. This means they are more likely to know what is expected of your apprentice at the end-point and be more confident they are preparing them adequately.

### 3 Sanctioning End-Point Assessment

As the apprentice moves through their training programme, the training provider will be gathering evidence that demonstrates they have learned the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to pass the end-point assessment.

However, it is you, the employer, who must sign-off their readiness to take the end-point assessment. You should speak with your apprentice and training provider to understand if they feel ready to move to end-point assessment, but ultimately you must agree that the apprentice is competent in their role and ready and able to prove it.



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## End-point assessment and progression (continued)

### 4 Recognising achievement and promoting

Apprenticeships are not easy. When your employee passes their end-point assessment they will be proud of their achievements. Recognising their hard work and commitment to their profession is an excellent way to show your appreciation and continue to motivate your staff. You may hold an internal presentation or get involved in apprenticeship graduations around the country.

Once the apprentice has passed their apprenticeships they should be taken out of 'apprentice status' and offered a job role, if one is available.

### Apprenticeship graduation:




There are some apprenticeship graduations for apprentices based in the South East LEP organised by local partners.

These graduations provide a chance for you, your apprentices and their parents to celebrate their achievement in becoming fully competent at their role.

Contact your training provider for further information.



### Tools and links:

-  End-Point Assessment Organisations register
-   **TOOL 8h.1** Is the apprentice EPA ready

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# 9 Action plan



## Before the apprenticeship

- Identify how apprenticeships can support new and existing staff
- Understand the costs and how to measure if training is adding value to your business
- Identify training provider(s) that can become long-term partners
- Advertise using language and channels that will give you a diverse mix of talent applying
- Select applicants that have the right attributes to succeed in a job
- Work with your training provider to make the training as bespoke as possible
- Sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice
- Let the training provider carry out a thorough initial assessment with your apprentice
- Agree additional time off-the-job for English and maths training if required
- Agree on a training schedule. All parties to sign a commitment statement
- Agree payment procedures with the training provider
- Appoint a workplace mentor for your apprentice
- With your provider, plan a comprehensive induction process for your apprentice

**Your staff start learning the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to be a real asset to your business.**

## During the apprenticeship

- Provide high-quality on-the-job learning
- Support the apprentice with their off-the-job training
- Troubleshoot questions and concerns with your provider as early as possible
- Meet regularly with your training provider and the apprentice to discuss progress
- Support the training provider if Ofsted or Advance HE needs to inspect their organisation
- Receive incentive payments where applicable
- Explore opportunities to support your apprentice's experience e.g. skills competitions

## Towards the end of the apprenticeship

- Agree timing of the end-point assessment with the training provider
- Support the end-point assessment process
- Ensure settlement of final funding payments
- Confirm certification of the apprenticeship and any qualifications
- Recognise apprentice achievement through an internal or external awards ceremony
- If suitable, and an opportunity arises, offer a permanent job and promote your employee

## After the apprenticeship

- Reflect on apprenticeship performance, impact on the business and adjust needs for next intake

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## Free, impartial advice

### National Apprenticeship Service

National support on phone or via online services.

**0800 015 0600**

[www.gov.uk/take-on-an-apprentice](http://www.gov.uk/take-on-an-apprentice)



### Local Provider Networks

Contact local training provider networks for information on training providers operating in the South East.

#### Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO)

[www.kato-training.org](http://www.kato-training.org)



#### Essex Provider Network (EPN)

[www.essexprovidernetwork.com](http://www.essexprovidernetwork.com)



#### Sussex Council of Training Providers (SCTP)

[www.sctp.org.uk](http://www.sctp.org.uk)



### SupplyTrain CIC

SupplyTrain is a social enterprise based in the South East that supplies impartial, training and apprenticeship advice to small businesses that need a bespoke service.

[www.supplytrain.co.uk/employ-an-apprentice](http://www.supplytrain.co.uk/employ-an-apprentice)



## Large business support

### Strategic Development Network

SDN supports employers design, deliver and maximise apprenticeship training in their organisations.

[www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/employers/](http://www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/employers/)

[hello@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk](mailto:hello@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk)



## Technical guidance



### Apprenticeship Funding Rules



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## Partners involved in producing this toolkit

**This toolkit is produced by Strategic Development Network (SDN).**

SDN is a team of leading education and skills experts that has worked with over 5,000 apprenticeship practitioners and 600+ employers, LEPs, training providers and end-point assessment organisations.

We help organisations launch, grow, adapt, improve and communicate their apprenticeship and skills provision.



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L&W is an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. We research what works, influence policy, develop new ways of thinking, and help implement new approaches.

We want everyone to have an opportunity to realise their ambitions and potential in learning, work and throughout life. We believe a better skilled workforce, in better paid jobs, is good for business, good for the economy, and good for society. We want learning and work to count.



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## Additional delivery partners



## Delivered on behalf of:

