

APPRENTICESHIP FAQS:

As a training provider, we understand it is important to gather information about apprenticeship qualifications and their value before enrolling employees into a programme. This frequently asked questions (FAQ) sheet will support you in answering any apprenticeship related questions you may have.

What are apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are training programmes where you can ‘earn while you learn’. They allow you to gain qualifications as well as hands-on experience through a combination of on-the-job and classroom training.

What is the difference between an apprenticeship and a national vocational qualification (NVQ)?

Historically, the term ‘NVQ’ has been related to work-based learning. This term has now changed to new terms such as, ‘diplomas’ and ‘apprenticeships’. For example, If you were thinking to complete a level 2 NVQ in care, this would now be known as a Level 2 apprenticeship standard in care.

What are the benefits for the apprentice?

One of the greatest benefits of doing an apprenticeship is earning money while learning and gaining qualifications. That means you’re employed by a company and getting paid to train.

What are the benefits for the employer?

According to figures from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 77% of employers believe apprenticeships have made their organisations more competitive, 81% say apprenticeships have improved productivity, and 92% believe that apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce.

Does an apprenticeship allow me to progress within my career?

Yes, the journey doesn’t end once you’ve completed your apprenticeship. A study by City and Guilds shows that 33% of employers have seen apprentices reach management position within their company, and over 50% of employers said it took five years or less for an apprentice to reach management position.

How old do I have to be to enrol on an apprenticeship?

You have to be aged between 16 to 64 years. One of the biggest cultural norms that work based training has had to overcome, is that apprenticeships are just for the young. You are never too old to learn!

How long does it take to complete?

Apprenticeships take a minimum of 12 months to complete.

Can the duration of the course be shortened if modules are completed quickly?

Unfortunately, learners must be on programme for a minimum duration of 12 months. They then move into the end point assessment (EPA) which is where they complete their programme and obtain their grade.

What is end point assessment (EPA)?

One of the biggest differences between the old NVQ and the apprenticeship standard is the EPA, which allows a learner to obtain a grading for their qualification. This is a real value to work-based learning as learners are able to be graded through their capabilities.

What is off-the-job training?

Off-the-job training (OTJT) is a requirement of the skills funding agency to demonstrate that an employer has supported the learning of each of their individuals and that they have spent 6 hours of their contracted hours working towards their apprenticeship within paid time at work.

Is the course online or face-to-face?

Apprenticeships can be delivered with a blended approach of online (remote) training and face-to-face visits.

How often will assessments be done?

Assessments can be completed through verbal discussions, written work, and observations of practice. Learners meet with their development coaches every 4-5 weeks for a visit of about 1-2 hours to assess their progression.

Will learners have to work their contracted hours and require separate hours for the training, or will the training hours be included in their contracted hours?

All apprentices will have to demonstrate that 6 hours of their contacted hours have been spent working towards their apprenticeship. This is not necessarily a case of completing their assignments in this time, but could include on-the-job training or shadowing senior members of staff. Learner's visits with their development coach are expected to be within paid working-time, to support the OTJT. There may also be an expectation that learners will complete some work in their own time.

What if I don't have time to manage an apprentice?

Although an apprentice may not have experience in the field, through being an apprentice they are willing to learn and be moulded into the employee you are looking for. A learner on an apprenticeship will also receive support from their development coach which will complement the way in which an organisation wants develop them.

How are apprenticeships paid for?

Levy

In May 2017 the government introduced an apprenticeship tax levy for all employers that have a payroll over £3 million. This is a compulsory levy that all eligible employers pay into. The government also pay into this fund, and an eligible employer can use it only to pay towards apprenticeship programmes.

Non-levy

Employers that don't qualify for paying into a levy are still able to access apprenticeships but they do still have to create a digital apprenticeship service (DAS) account, where they will upload their apprentices. In this instance the employer is invoiced for 5% of the cost of an apprenticeship and the remaining 95% of the cost is funded by the government.

What is the enrolment process?

Each employer may have a different internal procedure for nominating a colleague. It is important that these procedures are followed.

Once nominated by their employers to Impact Futures or The Childcare Company, learners will follow the below process. Applicants will be allocated an education advisor, where they will be given all pre-enrolment instructions which include:

- Completing a basic and key skill builder (BKS) initial assessment
- Completing a skills scan
- Completing a Cognassist assessment
- Completing an application form
- Signing a commitment statement (learner and line manager)
- Completing an information and guidance (IAG) session giving full details of their chosen apprenticeship

Once these tasks have been completed an applicant will be given an apprenticeship start date and they will then be allocated their development coach who will support them throughout their apprenticeship.

What are eligibility requirements for an apprenticeship?

- They are aged 16+
- They are not already in government funded education
- They have a contract of employment, with 16+ working hours per week
- They have been a resident of the EU/UK for a minimum of 3 years

What do the different apprenticeship levels mean and equate to academically speaking?

- Level 2 apprenticeship equates to a GCSE
- Level 3 apprenticeship equates to a A-level or B-tec diploma
- Level 5 apprenticeship equates to a foundation degree
- Level 6 and 7 apprenticeships equates to a bachelor's degree

Lets make an impact and change lives

If your question is not listed and answered above, please contact us using the phone number or email address below:

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