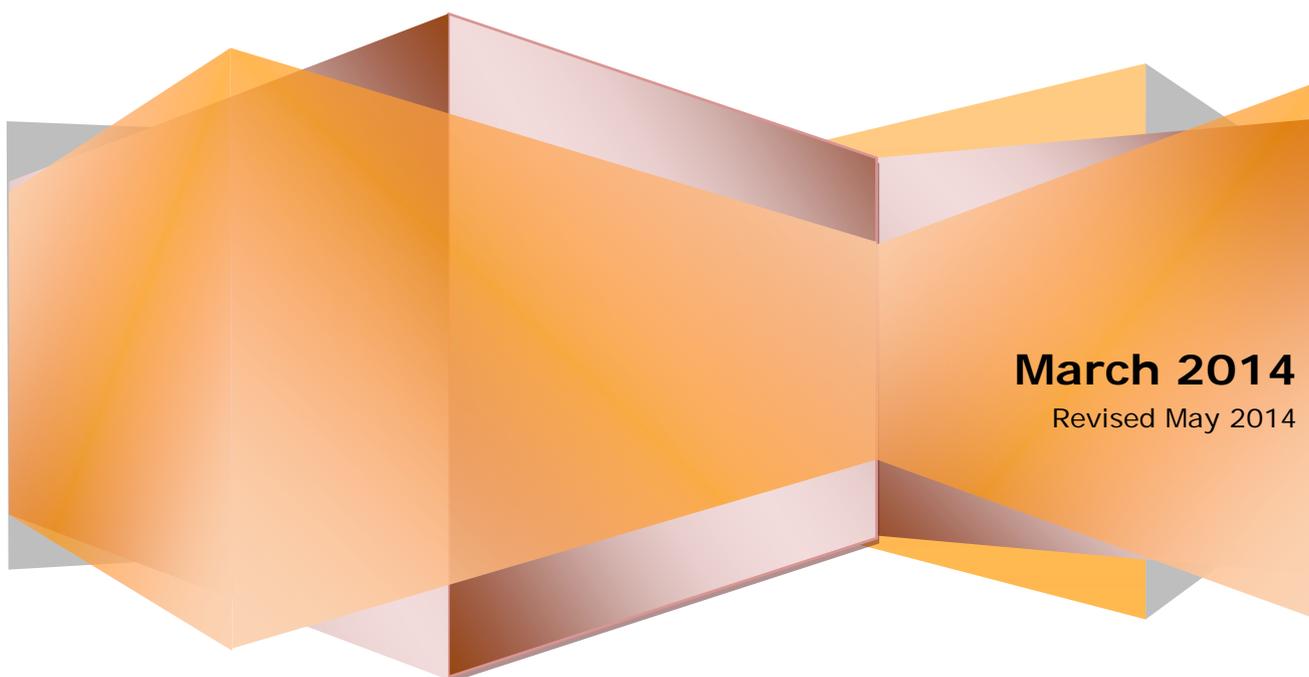


Employer-defined Apprenticeship standards

A toolkit for enablers and facilitators of
Trailblazer groups



March 2014

Revised May 2014

Introduction

Background

In November 2012, the government-commissioned [Richard Review of Apprenticeships](#) made a number of recommendations that would make Apprenticeships more rigorous and more responsive to employers' needs, which the government subsequently accepted. In October 2013, after consultation with employers, the government set out an [Implementation Plan](#) to replace the current Apprenticeship frameworks with employer-defined standards by putting employers in control and giving them a high degree of freedom to develop the standards and assessment approaches in a way that best meets the needs of their occupations and sectors.

To help speed up this process, and to demonstrate how the new Apprenticeships will be developed, the government is endorsing Trailblazer groups of employers and professional bodies from across all sectors. Eight Trailblazers led the way by developing Apprenticeship standards for eleven sector occupations. These standards were government approved in March 2014 and these Trailblazers are now working on the assessment details and other implementation requirements. A further 29 Trailblazers have now committed to creating Apprenticeship standards for a range of occupations with more Trailblazer groups planned to start throughout 2013/14 and 2014/15.

The key period of transition to full implementation of the reforms will be 2015/16 and 2016/17 by which time standards will have been developed for all the occupations where Apprenticeships should be available. The intention is that all new Apprenticeship starts from 2017/18 will use these employer-defined standards.

About this toolkit

This toolkit is aimed at the enablers and facilitators of Trailblazer groups, such as professional bodies, sector skills councils, relationship managers and other consultants.

- It offers a range of tools that facilitators might use to support Trailblazer groups during the first two phases of developing an Apprenticeship standard –commitment and creation.
- It should be used in conjunction with the [Guidance for Trailblazers v2 \(BIS, March 2014\)](#).
- The later phases – implementation and transition – are touched on at the end of this toolkit and will be addressed more fully by a further toolkit later in 2014.

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An overview of the new Apprenticeships

Current Apprenticeships

- Qualification-based framework, informed by employer feedback
- Extensive SASE-defined requirements
- Jargon-heavy NOS structure
- ERR and PLTS requirements
- Portfolio and qualification-dependent assessment methods
- Continuous on-programme assessment
- Knowledge and competence elements separately assessed
- Apprenticeship completion on achievement of qualifications
- Not always linked to professional registration requirements
- Government funding direct to training provider

New Apprenticeships

- Outcome-based, employer-defined standard and assessment
- Small number of government criteria
- Plain English standard
- No ERR or PLTS requirements
- Employer-specified assessment approach
- End-point assessment
- Synoptic assessment
- Graded Apprenticeship achieved if fully competent at end of training
- Must meet professional registration requirements
- Government funding direct to employer¹

New definition of an Apprenticeship

An Apprenticeship is a job that requires substantial and sustained training, leading to the achievement of an Apprenticeship standard and the development of transferable skills.

This definition is underpinned by four principles of future Apprenticeships:

1. An Apprenticeship is a job, in a skilled occupation.
2. An Apprenticeship requires substantial and sustained training, lasting a minimum of 12 months and including off-the-job training.
3. An Apprenticeship leads to full competency in an occupation, demonstrated by the achievement of an Apprenticeship standard that is defined by employers.
4. An Apprenticeship develops transferable skills, including English and maths, to progress careers.

In future, these principles will be used by employers, potential apprentices, and education and training providers to determine when an Apprenticeship is, or is not, appropriate. Only programmes that adhere to these principles will be recognised as Apprenticeships and be eligible for government support.

¹ Funding for English and maths will continue to be paid direct to the training provider.

Key features of the new Apprenticeships and the underpinning standards

Apprenticeship

- Aimed at those aged 16 and above
- Available to new and existing employees, but only appropriate where substantial training is required to achieve competency² in the occupation
- Provides a stretching programme leading to genuine skills gain, rather than the accreditation of existing skills, and will work towards standards that enable them to perform a skilled role effectively
- Duration is a minimum of 12 months
- Offers a minimum of 20% off-the-job training (may be on or off site)
- Provides **English and maths training** focused around the achievement of Level 2
- Subject to **rigorous, independent assessment** against the standard
- **Graded**
- Links to professional registration where applicable



Apprenticeship standard

- **Short** (approx. 2 x A4 pages, excluding assessment annex), **concise, easy to understand** document
- Relates to a **single occupation** identified by employers as requiring apprentices
- Describes the **skill, knowledge, and competency** required to achieve mastery³ of a specific occupation and to operate confidently in any part of the sector
- **Set by employers of all sizes (including small businesses)** to meet their needs, the needs of their sector and the needs of the economy
- Meets professional registration requirements in sectors where these exist
- Specifies any English and maths requirements above the minimum
- Indicates **duration** and **level**

Assessment Annex

- Concise, employer-defined, high-level assessment approach
- Describes a **synoptic**⁴ **end-point assessment** appropriate to the content of the standard and assessing across the whole standard
- Assessment incorporates both theoretical and practical elements
- Grading outline

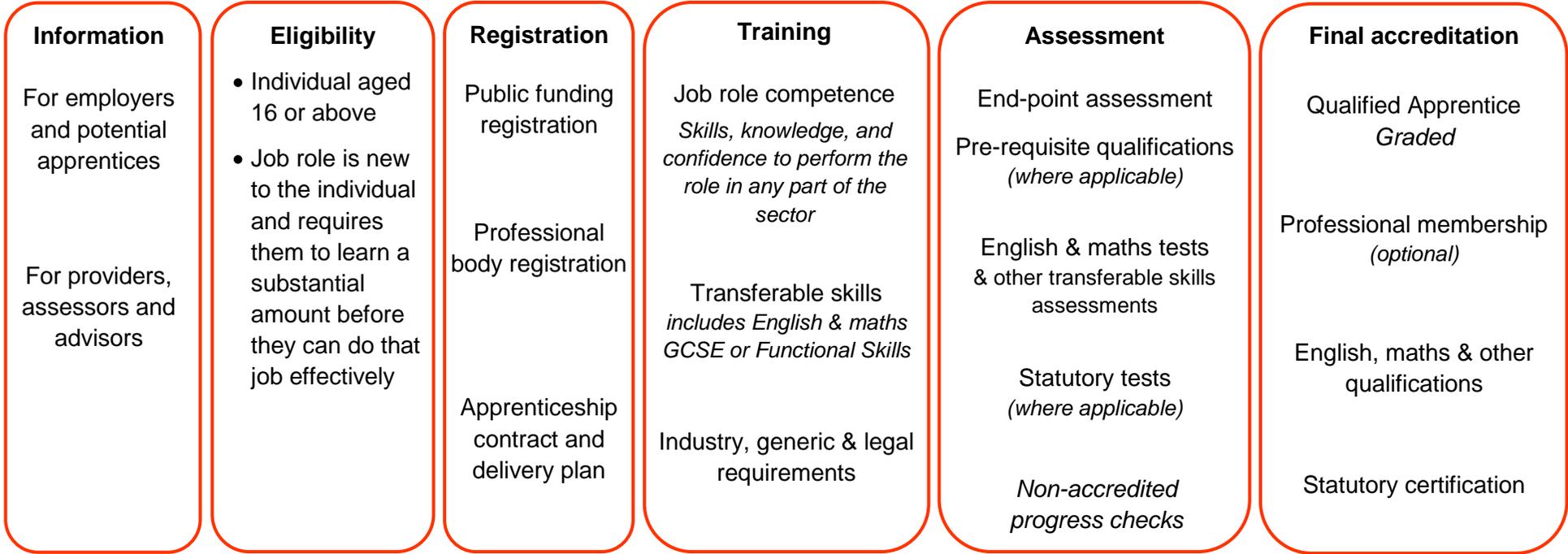
Must meet a small number of government-set criteria to ensure rigour and value

² Competence is about applying skills (and knowledge) to achieve a work function

³ Mastery of an occupation means that the skills learnt by an apprentice must be sufficiently transferable for them to adapt quickly to undertaking the same occupation in another company in the same sector, functioning effectively after minimal instruction on new equipment, or working practices.

⁴ Synoptic assessment combines assessment across the breadth of the standard, and requires apprentices to show their ability to integrate and apply their skills, knowledge and understanding

The new Apprenticeship journey



.....

Links to National Apprenticeship Service

.....

Links to national registration system

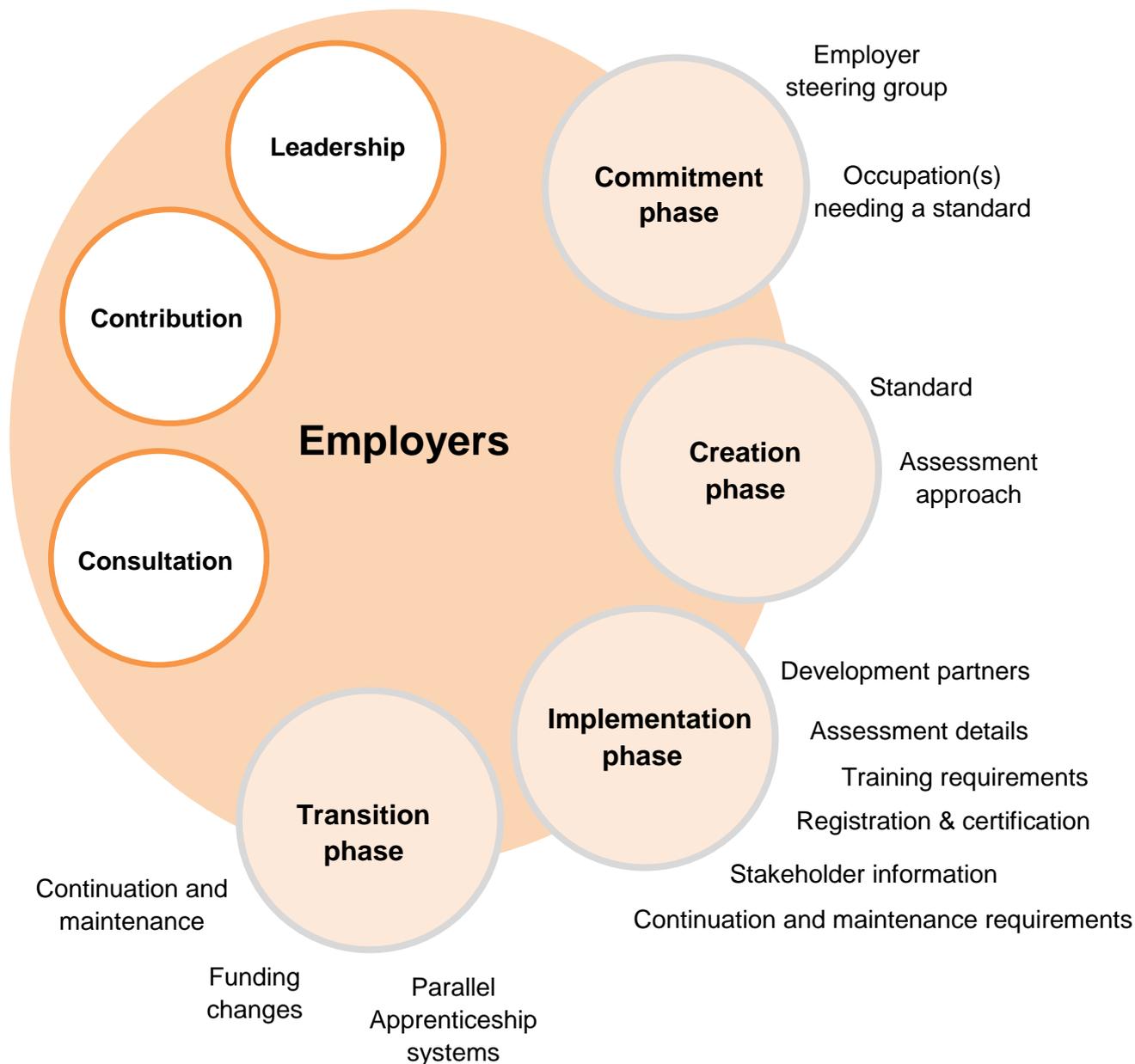
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Links to national certification system

Development and implementation of the new standards

Three levels of employer commitment

Four phases of development



This remainder of this toolkit provides facilitator/enabler tools to support each of the employer commitment levels and the development phases.

Employer commitment and participation

Extensive and active employer commitment and participation is required throughout the development and implementation of an employer-defined Apprenticeship standard – and the government will require evidence of this commitment before development of the standard can begin.

Employers are not working alone; there are a number of other key stakeholders, particularly professional bodies, who are important at different stages of the development process.

Stakeholders in the development of a standard

| Stakeholder / Role | Employers | Professional bodies | Sector & trade bodies | Training providers, HEIs, awarding bodies |
|---|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Lead development and implementation | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Identification of suitable occupations and roles | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Develop standard and high-level assessment approach | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Develop assessment details and grading criteria | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Outline processes for apprentice registration and certification | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Ensure opportunities for professional registration of apprentices | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Outline awareness and supporting information | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Apprenticeship delivery, recruitment, training | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Managing purchasing, reporting, public funds | ✓ | | | |
| On-going quality monitoring and review | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Three levels of employer commitment and participation

| | Leadership <i>Small number of employers; deeply engaged throughout development and implementation</i> | Contribution <i>Small-medium number of employers; medium engagement; detailed input to key stages</i> | Consultation <i>Large number of employers; low or occasional engagement; wider feedback on development</i> |
|--------------|---|---|---|
| Why? | To drive the development and implementation of the standard using the accepted industry vision and strategy for Apprenticeships | To ensure industry-wide fitness for purpose by providing detailed input to shape the development and implementation of the standard | To maximise communication; to inform and to allow feedback, and to confirm industry-wide recognition and ownership of the standard |
| Who? | Employers who reflect the makeup (geography, type, size) and have the confidence of the sector and who will bring industry expertise to the table Professional/trade/sector bodies and/or industry regulators will be other key members of the group | Wider cross-section of the sector's employers (again, reflecting the makeup of the sector in geography, type and size) Representative selection of stakeholders such as training providers and/or awarding organisations | The wider employer base All stakeholder organisations |
| How? | Via an active, employer-led steering group who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are formally responsible for drafting the standard • liaise and communicate with the government • project manage development and implementation of the standard • engage and work with other key stakeholders (including other sectors when necessary) • strive for industry-wide consensus on all aspects of design and implementation • agree parameters (scope and timing) for wider employer contribution and consultation to ensure industry ownership • facilitate public support and recognition; perhaps via a well-respected employer champion | Via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing or convened employer working groups • roundtable and/or webinar discussions • telephone/email interviews | Via widely advertised and easily accessible communication tools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dedicated telephone/email information lines - updates in professional, trade and sector websites/publications and via employer and stakeholder networks • consult via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - online survey tools; provide paper-based versions for use at meetings of established employer networks; - telephone/email surveys - for short, open-question types of consultation |
| When? | Necessary to initiate development Required throughout process to keep development and implementation on track Heavy demand on employer time and staff | Required prior to embarking on design, for initial research around requirements Necessary during early drafting and development work to provide detailed input Medium-heavy demand on employer time and staff | Required intermittently, e.g. once drafting work for a key stage has been completed Light demand on employer time and staff |

The commitment phase

The goal of this phase is to gather a group of committed employers that will lead and develop an Apprenticeship standard and assessment approach for an identified occupation.

During the Trailblazer period, creation of a standard cannot go forward until the proposed Trailblazer group and the occupation are approved by the government.

Employer leadership: the Trailblazer steering group

An effective and active employer-led steering group – usually supported by employer working groups (see page 30) – is the key to mobilising and maintaining the momentum of the standard development process. The right membership and an early definition and agreement of terms of reference (see page 14) will speed up the steering group's cohesion so that it realises a quality output with minimum conflict and maximum collaboration.

Key questions for an incipient Trailblazer steering group

Briefing the sector and engaging employer commitment

- How will early, sector-wide understanding and buy-in for the new Apprenticeship system be established amongst employers? *Key features include a competence-based standard, end-point assessment, grading, employer management of public funds to purchase training and independent assessment services etc.*
- Will employers recognise that it is in their interest to participate in the shaping of an Apprenticeship standard? *It is an opportunity to influence workforce training and skills development in their sector and to raise the profile of their organisation.*
- How will the wider sector be kept informed throughout the development cycle and how will employer queries be managed? *An online FAQ supported by a dedicated email address and/or phone line (perhaps manned through a sector or professional body) is one way to manage enquiries.*

Membership

- How will the right employer leaders for the steering group be targeted and recruited? What criteria will be used? *The Trailblazer steering group should be led by employers who have the confidence of the sector, bring industry expertise to the table, and represent the views of smaller employers.*
- How will membership of the steering group be managed if it is over-subscribed? *Trailblazer steering groups are expected to consist of 7-10 employers; higher numbers may undermine effective operation and decision-making. Overflow should be redirected into employer working groups, but it will need careful handling to retain the engagement of those employers not accepted into the steering group.*
- How will a wider group of employers, including smaller businesses, be recruited to working groups that can contribute to the development of the standard to ensure that it is widely applicable to the sector? *Trailblazers recognised this as a challenge as most SMEs struggle to resource the level of commitment required and may also lack the confidence to engage.*

- Are the employer members of both the steering and working groups reflective of the sector, particularly with regard to smaller employers? *How do they know?*
- Are prospective members of the groups required to declare additional/conflicting interests? *For example, employers who are also training providers.*
- Is there a formal sign-up process for membership of the groups?
- What criteria will inform the election of the Chair (and co-chairs) for the Trailblazer group? *The Chair must be an employer with good leadership skills and respected by the industry.*
- Has each member of the steering group prepared a paragraph explaining who they are? *This information is needed to establish the group as a Trailblazer with the government, to brief the sector, for press releases, and to help establish the group's credibility.*
- Are professional bodies and/or industry regulators in place as development partners to the steering group to ensure alignment of the standard with any professional requirements for the sector?
- When and how will the expertise of other organisations or advisors be invited into the steering group and/or working groups? *E.g. trade and sector bodies, training providers, awarding bodies, relationship managers or other consultants.*

The Digital Industries Trailblazer steering group originated from the existing Industrial Partnership, which has a wider brief than Apprenticeship reform. The group's membership was developed further to ensure it was representative of the sector (particularly SME representation). The steering group divided the development work between two working groups, each focused on one of the two occupational areas.

Scope of operation

- Does the steering group understand the breadth of activity required to develop and implement a standard? *See the four phases of development diagram (page 7).*
- Are the group members prepared to commit the necessary resources (e.g. time and staff) to manage the group's operational tasks effectively? *See box overleaf for examples of operational tasks. The group must recognise the significant resource commitment that will be required.*
- Will the development work for the standard be undertaken by the steering group or will the work be split amongst working groups?
- Does the steering group recognise that once the standard is government approved, they may need to review their terms of reference and/or their membership before proceeding with developing the assessment and other implementation details? *There is a very different type of expertise and employer involvement and required for the activities that contribute to the implementation phase (see page 37).*

Key tasks for a Trailblazer steering group during the commitment and creation phases

1. Prioritise the occupation(s) that will go forward for Trailblazer development.
2. Apply for acceptance as a Trailblazer project for the selected occupation(s).
3. Create and monitor a project plan to manage the development of the standard within the required timeframe.
4. Create and follow a communication plan to facilitate sector briefings to raise awareness and support for the standard.
5. Commission and manage the employer working groups that will undertake the research and detailed development work for the standard.
6. Initiate pan-sector communication and collaboration for joint development work where there is occupational crossover with other sectors.
7. Engage with experts as necessary to support the creation of the standard and the assessment approach.
8. Oversee wider consultation with sector employers and stakeholders to establish industry-wide consensus for the draft standard and the assessment approach.
9. Undertake and respond to wider consultation with sector employers and industry stakeholders to establish industry-wide consensus.
10. Prepare and submit an industry-endorsed business case to support any deviation of the standard from government-defined approval criteria.
11. Communicate with the government as required throughout the Trailblazer period.
12. Quality assure, sign off, and submit the draft standard and the assessment approach for government approval.

Working protocols

- Have formal protocols or ground rules been agreed (and signed up to) that will encourage the sharing of information and viewpoints, support decision-making and consensus, and manage and resolve conflict? *E.g. confidentiality clauses, the Chatham House Rule, giving the Chair final authority*

Roles and responsibilities

- Who will provide the administrative and clerical support to the group? *This includes arranging meetings, setting agendas, producing and distributing paperwork.*
- Who will provide the 'public face' for the group and liaise and communicate with the government, the press, and other external entities? *This is often the responsibility of the Chair or of a designated Employer Champion.*
- Is there a project management plan in place for the overall goal of submitting a high-quality standard and high-level assessment approach by the required deadline? *The project plan should cover who will do what and when, key milestones, progress monitoring, mitigating perceived risks and issues, and quality assurance. (See page 15)*

- Who will define, manage, and take responsibility for any underpinning research requirements? *Examples are collating labour market information, reviewing related/international standards and frameworks, and collecting sector views.*
- Who will coordinate and report on wider employer and stakeholder contributions, consultations and feedback?
- How will potential crossover with other Trailblazer groups be recognised and managed? *Examples of such roles that are already appearing are maintenance engineer and supervisor/manager*

Resourcing

- Are the members of the steering group (and the working groups) fully aware of the significant commitment of staff and time required from them?
- Has a source of funding and/or a budget been found to support the capacity of these groups (and particularly SME members) to engage fully with the development work? *This will be a particularly significant issue after the Trailblazer period when sectors must complete the development of all required standards in time to support new Apprenticeship starts from 2017/18.*

Capturing effective practice

- Is there a process for capturing and evaluating Trailblazer practice to determine what worked well and the lessons learned and to share this with future groups? *This is important. Membership of the steering and working groups is likely to be different when developing the standards for other occupations.*

Suggested agenda items for early meetings of the steering group

- Define the terms of reference for the group (see below)
- Develop an outline project plan including key milestones (see page 15)
- Determine a sector/project communication plan (see page 16)
- Commission working/focus sub-group(s)
- The [Guidance for Trailblazers v2 \(BIS, March 2014\) pp46-47](#) offers a 'Suggested schedule for meetings to agree the standard'.

Terms of reference: suggested content headings

Name of group: [group name]

Date: [date agreed]

Scope

Statement of the group's purpose

Timeframe

General project timeframe

Membership

List the contact details for each member of the group

Organisation Lead representative Email address Telephone numbers

This section may outline how and when members are invited and confirmed

Elected Chair (and co-chairs)

Working protocols

For example, confidentiality agreements, conflict resolution protocols

Accountability

For the steering group, overall accountability is to the Minister of State for Skills and Enterprise

For sub-groups, accountability is to the steering group

State any other accountability for the group as a whole or for individual members

Resourcing

Outline of resources required for successful operation of the group and potential sources of support or funding and who is responsible for resource management and financial control

Operating roles and responsibilities

Key operational roles and who has overarching responsibility for each

Meeting schedule

Date Time Venue Chair Main objectives or agenda items

Meetings may be physical or electronic. The initial schedule may need to change to complete objectives and meet project milestones

Signatures and dates

Annexes

Project plan – see overleaf

Communication plan – see page 16

Project plan outline

| STAGE | Deliverables and outcomes <i>For example:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Groups to be convened</i> • <i>Documents to be produced</i> | Methodology <i>How each outcome will be achieved</i> | Constraints <i>Mitigations for any challenges or risks to development</i> | Milestones <i>Identify and date</i> | Who <i>Responsibility</i> | Costs |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--------------|
| Project management | | | | | | |
| Pre-development research | | | | | | |
| Initial development | | | | | | |
| Revision and review | | | | | | |
| Wider consultation | | | | | | |
| Final review | | | | | | |
| Submission and approval | | | | | | |

Based on Trailblazer practice

Communication plan outline

Time frame: *[dates]*

Overall responsibility: *[Name]*

Overarching strategy

| Objectives | Target audience | Channels | Key messages |
|------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Tactics

| | When | Who | Cost | Details | Status | Action points |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|------|---------|--------|---------------|
| Advertising | | | | | | |
| Advocacy | | | | | | |
| Digital, online and social media | | | | | | |
| Face-to-face events and meetings | | | | | | |

Monthly schedule of activities

| <i>[Month 1]</i> | <i>[Month 2]</i> | <i>[Month 3]</i> |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | |
| | | |

Based on Trailblazer practice

Selecting occupations for Apprenticeship development

One of the first actions for a newly formed Trailblazer steering group – perhaps with the support of an employer working group – is to identify the discrete occupation for which they want to develop an Apprenticeship standard.

Key questions for the group selecting the occupation

- Can the group articulate their understanding of the difference between an occupation and a job? *See box below*

Difference between an occupation and a job

There is some debate on the difference in meaning between an occupation and a job. As yet, there is no accepted definition. However, the following may help:

Occupation

- A general, all-encompassing term for employment
- Not restricted to a particular employer or workplace
- Equates to the idea of vocation
- Encompasses different ranks or hierarchy of 'jobs' from crafts to professions

Job

- A more limited term as it is connected to a particular sub-set of duties/tasks
- Linked to a particular employer, workplace or employment contract

- Is the choice of occupation(s) that will go forward as part of the Trailblazer submission based on an industry-accepted, holistic, and up-to-date occupational understanding of the sector rather than a reaction to perceived immediate sector pressures? *Knowing how each occupation fits into the industry, and its relationship with other occupations, will aid completeness and maximise the currency and transferability of any standards developed. A good occupational map is essential (see box below).*

Information provided by an occupational map

- The size and profile of the sector – and what is in or out of scope for the sector
 - Key trends, developments and drivers within the sector including anticipated changes in employment patterns that signpost future needs or potential gaps
 - Occupations within the sector and the roles within those occupations (titles and descriptions)
 - Links between sector occupations and those in other sectors
 - Typical career or progression routes including Apprenticeship pathways
- Where will the group find the expertise they need to support their understanding of the wider sector? *Sector skills councils and professional bodies have extensive knowledge of this type of work and the best source of existing occupational maps.*

- Are there potential pan-sector links for the occupations for which they intend to develop an Apprenticeship standard? *Pan-sector collaboration to develop a single standard that meets the requirements of all sectors for such occupations will maximise transferability of competence from one sector to another as well as preventing a proliferation of standards.*
- Is the group able to define the occupations requiring an Apprenticeship standard at a sufficiently high level that they encompass a range of job roles? *This will contribute to the desired simplification of the Apprenticeship system by keeping the number of Apprenticeship standards to a minimum.*

The standards developed by the Digital Industries Trailblazer for the occupations of Software Developer and Network Engineer each encompass a range of job roles.

The Trailblazer group recognised the challenges in defining occupational requirements during wider consultations to inform the detailed development of their standards, for example, the significant differences in the wider brief undertaken by jobholders in smaller businesses compared to those in corporate organisations.

Building a picture of sector occupations, job roles and pan sector links

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | Occupations |
| Why? | To build an up-to-date and accepted understanding of sector occupational areas and the relationship between them: To establish which occupational areas do, or could, benefit from an Apprenticeship standard |
| How? | Analysis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> existing occupational maps (developed by SSCs or other industry bodies) new/emerging occupations and potential gaps differences in breadth of role across contexts and employer size occupational influences such as legislation, regulation and use of technology labour market information feedback from sector employers indicating levels of Apprenticeship buy-in government statistics on apprentice participation and achievement predictive data from UKCES and sector skills council indicating future demand |

Trailblazer outcome: A shortlist of unique, discrete occupations that require an Apprenticeship standard
Occupations should not be too generally defined, as this will make it difficult to agree a standard; nor too specifically, as this may limit the standard's transferability across different sizes of employer, sector areas, and job roles

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 2 | Job roles |
| Why? | To agree sector-wide definitions for the job roles encompassed by each occupation To reduce the number of standards by combining related job roles under a single standard |
| How? | Analysis of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> job adverts, titles and descriptions and person specifications from across sizes/types of employer to understand how the breadth of a role can differ UK/international standards and frameworks including Gold Standards areas of specialisation; levels of performance etc. professional registration requirements feedback from sector employers |

Trailblazer outcome: Each short-listed occupation encompasses one or more job roles for which there are common and accepted titles and role descriptions
Keep job titles/roles sufficiently high level to allow fit across a range of employer contexts and sizes

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 3 | Pan-sector links |
| Why? | To identify other sectors that have similar occupations/job roles and ascertain the potential for developing a single, common standard, thereby: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limiting the proliferation of standards maximising the applicability and transferability of competence |
| How? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish pan-sector communication channels e.g. via BIS or sector/professional bodies Agree process for pan-sector, collaborative development |

Trailblazer outcome: Agreed mechanism for pan-sector collaboration on standard development (covering pan-sector communication, agreement, sign-off, and quality assurance)

Summary record: Occupations needing an Apprenticeship standard

| Occupational or sector area | Current Apprenticeship status <i>'New' OR expiration date of existing framework</i> | Delivery year for standard | No. of pathways | No. of job roles | Job role titles | Training level <i>FE / HE</i> | Pan-sector links | Notes | Priority |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-------|----------|
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

Based on Trailblazer practice

The creation phase

The goal of this phase is to develop a government-approved, employer-defined Apprenticeship standard and high-level assessment approach for an identified occupation.

There must only be one standard and assessment approach for an occupation.

Every standard must meet the following government-set criteria:

An Apprenticeship standard must be a short, concise, and accessible document. It must describe the level of skill, knowledge, and competency required to do a specific occupation well and to operate confidently within the sector.

A standard **must**:

- a. describe what full competence for a specific occupation means so that, on completion, an apprentice will have the skills, knowledge and confidence to perform the role in any part of the sector
- b. be publicly recognised by employers (including small businesses), recognised professional or trade bodies and, where appropriate, higher education institutions (HEIs), as fit for purpose
- c. be suitable for small businesses to use to train their apprentices, if necessary with external training
- d. contain sufficient content, and be pitched at such a level, that a new entrant to the occupation would find it stretching and require at least one year of training to meet the standard
- e. include any skills, and any other requirements, for professional registration if such a system exists in the sector or occupation so that, on completion, a successful apprentice can achieve professional registration

A standard **may**:

- f. specify the level of English and maths achievement required if this is above the minimum requirements for all apprentices
- g. specify any qualifications to be achieved as a pre-requisite to taking the end-point assessment

Additionally, there are specific requirements for all Apprenticeship assessment:

- h. Synoptic end-point assessment:
 - requiring the apprentice to identify and use effectively, in an integrated way, an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories and knowledge from across their training and the standard
 - appropriate to the content of the standard
 - assessing across the whole standard
 - holistic and testing the full breadth of the relevant competencies
- i. Grading: As a minimum, grading will be applied to the end-point assessment, and a pass will demonstrate full competency

Early considerations for the standard

- **New versus old:** Are employers reasonably happy with the existing NOS and Apprenticeship framework? *If so, they may choose to rework these to create the standard. However, there may be more value in starting afresh.*

Many of the first Trailblazers based their respective standards primarily on the existing framework, as it already met employer requirements.

Development work for the Life and Industrial Sciences Trailblazer was informed by existing 'Gold Standards' – industry-endorsed competency framework developed by their sector skills council.

In contrast, employers from the Energy Utilities sector had lost confidence in their current framework, which is seen as obscure and not reflective of employer needs, so this Trailblazer developed a new standard from first principles.

- **Wider influences:** Are related UK and international occupational standards being researched and evaluated? *These can inform and benchmark the development of the standard, even if they are not directly transferable.*

Aerospace was one of the Trailblazers that undertook a detailed review of international standards and historic developments to identify world-class practice that informed the duration of their Apprenticeship and the training it would offer. They intend two phases of training – a 1-year foundation phase involving intensive off the job training focused on developing the apprentice's core competency and a 2-year on-the-job development phase. These will be followed by employer endorsement and final assessment.

- **Functional elements:** How are the key functional elements of the occupational competence – professional skills, knowledge, and (optionally) behaviours – identified and agreed? *Functional analysis is the recognised approach.*
- Does the group need support with the functional analysis of the occupation or job role to draw out the relevant skills, knowledge, and behaviour that demonstrate competency? *Professional bodies and sector skills councils have extensive technical knowledge of standard development.*
- **Stretch:** How is stretch built into the standard? *This might be achieved within the competence statements or as part of the grading approach.*
- **Shared content:** Could some functional elements apply to more than one occupation (e.g. knowledge of health and safety at work, or the behavioural skill of communicating well with customers) and could these be standardised for use in several standards? *Such shared content can help make an apprentice employable across many occupations (or even sectors).*

- **Core and options:** Does the occupation encompass:
 - multiple job roles, whether these are within a sector or pan-sector, e.g. manager or maintenance engineer;
 - areas of specialisation, e.g. hydraulic or water engineer.

Would a core and options approach (see box) be way of building a single, coherent standard? *A standard that offers a core and options allows for transferability of the core skills across roles (and/or sectors) and opportunities for the common delivery, training and assessment of the related Apprenticeships.*

Core and option approach

This approach maps occupational requirements into a matrix to identify:

- a core of functional elements and other requirements that apply to the occupation as a whole and to all pathways – the core must be small enough to be suitable for small businesses to train and assess their apprentices
- optional elements and requirements that relate to one or more of the pathways and that allow an apprentice to focus on a particular aspect of a role.

The Electrotechnical Trailblazer developed a single standard that uses a core and options to define the competencies for the roles of Installation Electrician and Maintenance Electrician.

The Financial Services Trailblazer defined specialist pathway options through the sector's existing suite of professional qualifications.

- **Qualifications:** Do employers require apprentices to achieve particular vocational or technical qualifications to check progress or to train and certify particular aspects of skill or knowledge as a pre-requisite to the end-point assessment? *These should be ones that are well respected or that link to professional registration. Employers may also choose to develop new qualifications to meet industry requirements.*
- **Level:** Are employers able to assign an appropriate level to the standard? *Assigning a level should come at the end of the development process and apply to the occupation as a whole – there should not be different levels within one occupation standard. Ofqual guidance on assigning levels can be found in [Annex E of the Regulatory Arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Frameworks](#).*

Early considerations for the assessment approach

Note: The government will not sign off or publish the assessment annex at the time of initial approval of the standard. This gives employers the opportunity to check that their initial assumptions remain fit for purpose as they develop the assessment details during the implementation phase.

- **Breadth:** Does the assessment approach span the skills, knowledge, and behaviours (where these are defined) that define competency. *Not every functional element needs to be assessed. Each element's criticality (how important it is) and frequency (how often it is used/needed) will help determine whether it needs to be assessed.*

- **Holistic and synoptic:** Will the assessment approach allow the apprentice to identify and use an appropriate selection of skills and knowledge from across the standard in a realistic and integrated way rather than attempting to assess each separately? *This will often require the use of multiple assessment methods (see box overleaf).*

For example, judging the competence of an apprentice IT technician building a working desktop computer from its components may involve practical assessment of the final product (a configured motherboard, working operating system and drivers etc.), observation of the apprentice's speed and accuracy and adherence to health and safety, and oral questioning to check the apprentice's underlying knowledge.

- **Realistic and rigorous:** Is the assessment approach appropriate for a work setting (or a simulation of the pressures of real work) and will it give every apprentice the same opportunity to demonstrate full competence whatever their working context? *See box overleaf for the principles of high-quality assessment.*

Assessing a standard that uses core and options

There are added complexities to determining an assessment approach for a standard that uses core and options, such as:

- core elements having a different weighting for some job roles (or sectors) than for others, giving rise to different requirements for assessment and/or grading
- how to build in the flexibility to accommodate differing industry or professional assessment requirements while maintaining trust and equivalence – particularly where the standard crosses sectors

Assessment methods

- **Written** (online or paper-based) assessment tasks or tests (including multiple choice) to assess theoretical or technical knowledge
- **Observation** of performance – directly or virtually (such as video or live web cam)
- **Practical** assessment through production of a project, product, or portfolio of work
- **Viva** or oral to assess theoretical or technical knowledge and understanding (professional discussion) or to:
 - supplement performance observation by discussing how/why the apprentice approached a practical assessment the way they did or to address gaps in knowledge and understanding that are not apparent from performance
 - authenticate product evidence by asking an apprentice to explain aspects of the evidence and/or describe the process of how they produced it
 - assess contingencies where it would not be practical or safe to observe the skill or activity, e.g. managing an emergency shutdown of machinery

Principles of high-quality assessment in vocational training

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Standard | A clear standard exists against which attainment can be assessed |
| Authenticity | What is assessed is produced by the candidate and no one else |
| Currency | Evidence of attainment is up to date and relevant to the standard |
| Validity | The assessment method is appropriate to the evidence requirements of the standard |
| Reliability | The method of assessment produces evidence that clearly demonstrates that the standard has been met |
| Fairness | All candidates have an equal opportunity to attain the standard |
| Consistency | The standard is applied consistently to all candidates in all assessment situations |
| Manageability | Assessment can be delivered without excessive strain on resources or candidates |

Grading

- Are employers happy for the Apprenticeship to utilise three-tier grading (Pass, Merit or Distinction) applied to the whole of the end-point assessment or is an alternative preferred? *Three tier grading formalises what already happens when employers informally judge apprentices as 'good', 'better', or 'best' but several Trailblazers have recognised the difficulty of applying three-tier grading to some aspects of their standard, particularly the skill elements. The government has accepted industry-endorsed business cases for alternative grading approaches such as:*
 - *binary grading (i.e. Pass or Fail equating to 'competent' or 'not competent') for the skills elements as the apprentice must either be capable of doing a thing or not. Three tier grading will only be applied to the knowledge and behaviour elements.*
 - *two-tier grading where Pass (competence) is followed by just one additional grade to indicate excellence.*
- Do employers recognise the challenge of determining consistent grading across different contexts and settings without an over-reliance on assessment methods that use a marking scheme (such as written tests)? *Assessment methods that use marking schemes are likely to be inappropriate for many occupations.*
- Does the Trailblazer group have the necessary expertise to determine an industry-appropriate assessment approach? *If not, are there assessment experts such as training providers or awarding organisations that could support them?*

The Aerospace and Automotive Trailblazers put forward an industry-endorsed business case that only binary grading (i.e. Pass or Fail equating to 'competent' or 'not competent') was appropriate for the skill elements of their standards, as the apprentice must either be capable of doing a thing or not.

The government agreed that, for these standards, three-tier grading would only be applied to the knowledge and behaviour elements.

Mapping framework: functional elements and high-level assessment approach

| Functional elements | | | | | Weighting | Method of assessment | Timing | Grading |
|---|--|---|---|----|--------------------------------------|---|----------------|---|
| <p>Using high-level statements, list the functional elements of the standard that, together, define competency.</p> <p>Indicate those that are critical (C), frequently used (F) and/or linked to professional registration (PR). This will prioritise those for assessment and/or grading as part of the assessment approach.</p> <p>Flag elements that could be used within other standards as shared content (Sh).</p> | | | | | Derived from the C, F and PR columns | Not every element needs to be assessed | When assessed? | To what extent does this element contribute to grading? |
| | | | | | | <p>End-point assessment must assess across the whole standard and have a synoptic aspect.</p> <p>The timing and nature of any on-programme assessment should support the apprentice towards competency.</p> | | |
| Sh | Skills | C | F | PR | | | | |
| | List core skills first, then any options | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Sh | Knowledge | C | F | PR | | | | |
| | List core knowledge first, then any options | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| Sh | Behaviours | C | F | PR | | | | |
| | List core behaviours first, then any options | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

Adapted from BIS Trailblazer workshop

Content headings for a standard

No more than 2 pages

Occupation title and profile

Concise statement outlining the purpose of the occupation

Job title(s) and profile(s)

Job title and concise statement of job role for each job covered by the occupation

These will be combined where the occupation and job role are the same

Skills

A list of concise, high-level statements for each functional element, covering what an apprentice should know and be able to do at the end of the Apprenticeship

Knowledge

May be split into core and options to accommodate different job roles pathways or sectors

Behaviours (optional)

Giving each statement a reference number may facilitate cross-referencing with the high-level assessment annex

May be useful to signpost where further occupational detail can be found

Qualifications (optional)

List the name, type, and level of any vocational or technical qualifications required as a pre-requisite to taking the end-point assessment, perhaps to train and certify aspects of skill or knowledge

English and maths requirement (optional)

Statement only required if apprenticeship requirements are set at a higher level than the national requirements

Entry requirements (optional)

These should be sufficiently flexible, particularly in relation to lower initial English and maths skills, to avoid creating barriers for recruiting potential apprentices into the sector

Professional body alignment and registration (required where this exists for the occupation)

Identify alignment with any professional, statutory, or regulatory requirements, including professional codes of conduct or mandatory qualifications

Progression

Brief overview of potential progression, including any links to higher level Apprenticeship standards that may be appropriate.

Learning and Training (optional)

Short statement outlining the training programme requirements

Apprenticeship level

Determined once the standard has been written (it should not drive the content of the standard)

Apprenticeship duration (optional, but recommended)

Minimum of 12 months to ensure the provision of substantial training

Review date

Must be no more than three years after approval

Continued overleaf

Assessment annex

A short document in addition to the 2-page standard and submitted at the same time.

The government will not sign off or publish the annex at the time of initial approval of the standard. This will give employers the opportunity to check that their initial assumptions remain fit for purpose as they develop the end-point assessment details during the implementation phase.

Assessment approach

A high-level description covering the scope of the synoptic end-point assessment that identifies:

- which aspects of the standard will be assessed
- the assessment methods used
- when assessment will take place (this may be over an extended period)

Optionally, may include:

- a high-level assessment mapping framework (see page 21)
- supporting evidence or information collected to inform decisions on assessment – especially where innovative assessment approaches for the sector are being considered

Demonstrate that the end-point assessment:

- is appropriate to the content it is assessing
- assesses both knowledge and skills
- assesses holistically across the breadth of the standard

Grading

A statement specifying the grading approach for the standard.

Based on Trailblazer practice

The standards submitted by the first Trailblazers present the required information in very different ways. The standards were approved in March 2014 and can be found on the [Apprenticeship website](#).

A suggested *Template for the Apprenticeship Standard* is provided in the [Guidance for Trailblazers v2 \(BIS, March 2014\)](#) pp42-45.

The 2-page limit constrains the level of detail that can be provided in the standard.

Aerospace and Automotive Trailblazers are developing an Employer Occupational Brief (EOB) to sit alongside each standard. The EOB consists of Employer Units of Competence (EUCs) – derived from the existing NOS – that provide the next level of detail for the high-level skills, knowledge and behaviours statements in the standard and set out how training and assessment should be delivered.

The Energy and Utilities Trailblazer incorporated a Q-code into their standard to signpost further detail on the role, the Apprenticeship, and video cameos of different workers in the power sector.

Employer contribution and consultation

The Apprenticeship standard must meet the needs of all sizes and types of employer in the sector. This can only be achieved through:

- 1. Contribution:** detailed input from a greater number of sector-representative employers and other stakeholders than can be accommodated within the Trailblazer steering group.
- 2. Consultation:** approval and endorsement of the standard by employers and stakeholders from across the wider sector.

Contribution via employer working groups

Employer working groups are an effective vehicle for capturing detailed employer input, undertaking underpinning research as well as the detailed drafting work for the standard.

- Working groups are convened by, and are accountable to, the steering group.
- Many of the key questions for an incipient Trailblazer steering group apply to newly formed working groups. *See page 10.*
- Each working group should have their own terms of reference? *See page 14.*
- Working groups must be prepared to commit the required (and often significant) time/staff resources to achieve their key tasks? *See box overleaf.*

Several Trailblazers gathered qualitative contributions to inform their development of the standard through half-day sessions with different groups of stakeholders such as awarding bodies and training providers.

Key tasks for employer working groups during the commitment and creation phases

1. Review (and agree) sector occupations and the associated job roles and identify which require an Apprenticeship standard.
2. Research existing UK and international standards and frameworks to inform the development of a world-class competency definition for the selected occupation.
3. Draft the written standard (2 x A4) in clear, simple language. Tasks include:
 - Develop and agree the skill, knowledge, and behaviour statement that define full competence in the selected occupation or job role(s).
 - Identify any core and option or shared components for the occupation.
 - Specify the level of English and maths achievement required and whether this will be above the national minimum requirements for all apprentices.
 - Ensure professional registration requirements for the occupation are accommodated within the standard.
 - Define the level, duration, entry requirements, and progression opportunities for the Apprenticeship.
 - Agree industry-appropriate assessment methods, including pre-requisite qualifications, which comply with government expectations for the assessment approach.
 - Identify the industry-preferred approach to Apprenticeship grading.
4. Work with employer groups from other sectors if required for joint development of core elements for a common standard.
5. Request and consider inputs from experts where necessary to support the development of the standard and the assessment approach.
6. Undertake wider consultation with sector employers and stakeholders
7. Respond to feedback to ensure industry-wide consensus and finalise the standard and the assessment approach.
8. Report progress, decisions and outputs to the steering group as required by steering group protocols.

Wider consultation

For a sector-wide consultation to be effective, it must:

- reach as many employers and other stakeholders as possible;
- be widely accessible and easy for participants to complete.

Normally, this will mean an online survey tool.

Consultation guidelines

- Provide a short overview on the introduction of the Apprenticeship standards as background information.
- Provide the draft standard for which employer feedback is required – either as a separate stand-alone document or extract sections and incorporate them into the survey itself, linked to related questions.
- Keep the number of consultation questions low enough that participants can address them within a reasonable timeframe (between 15 and 30 minutes). Sample consultation questions are provided overleaf.
- Optionally, and if the consultation timeframe permits, provide a hard-copy version of the consultation that can be returned by post. This may:
 - increase participation from employers who do not have access to (or like) online services;
 - facilitate joint responses such as those from meetings of employer leadership groups.
- Maximise employer awareness and participation by advertising the consultation and its deadline for completion widely in professional and trade journals and websites and through employer forums and networks.

The majority of the Trailblazers used online survey tools to facilitate sector-wide consultations on their draft standards. However, the Trailblazer for the Life and Industrial Sciences sector asked for email responses to just four broad-based questions:

- *Could the standard as currently drafted apply to technicians in your workplace? If not, what is missing?*
- *Could the standard be adapted to apply to technicians in your workplace – are the core skills broad enough to be contextualised as appropriate?*
- *If the Apprenticeship was assessed in line with the high-level approach proposed, would you be confident that the apprentice was competent and possessed the core skills within the standard?*
- *Would you be more or less likely to consider offering science apprenticeships as a result of the proposed new Apprenticeship standards?*

Sample consultation questions

For each question, allow for individual comment as well as a Yes/No response

Overarching

- Is the occupation (or job role) profile or description accurate and complete?
- Is the duration of the Apprenticeship appropriate?
- Is the language of the standard clear and easy to understand?
- Do you agree with the statement of entry requirements?
- Is the level of the Apprenticeship appropriate?
- Are the specified qualifications appropriate?

Skills, knowledge, and behaviours

Either broad-based feedback questions:

- Is the high-level list of [skills| knowledge| behaviours] correct and complete?
- OR

Individualised feedback questions via a matrix of:

- How important is [element statement]: vital, important, not important, unknown

Assessment

- Does the proposed assessment approach give you the confidence that an apprentice would be competent in the occupation (or job role)?
- Is the grading approach appropriate?

Gathering data on the participants

At the start or end of the consultation, gather information on the participating organisation, so that the sector response can be analysed. This might include:

- The type of organisation they are: sector employer, non-sector employer, trade body, professional body, training provider, awarding organisation, other.
- The role of the individual completing the survey
- Number of employees generally and/or in this occupation/job
- Number of apprentices generally and/or in this occupation/job
- Geographical region of the organisation
- The sub-sector the organisation operates in

Contact details

Ask for (optional) contact details to allow for follow-up on responses

Optionally, ask additional, wider questions that do not relate directly to the standard but that would inform future developments. Some Trailblazers asked:

- Would you increase your number of apprentices if the standard made the Apprenticeship more responsive to your needs?
- For which other occupations or job roles would you like to see an Apprenticeship standard developed?

Based on Trailblazer practice

Quality assurance checklist for the standard

This checklist can be used by:

- employer working groups during the development of the standard to record progress;
- the steering group to provide a final check before submitting the standard for government approval.

| | |
|--|---|
| The standard | ✓ |
| Is the standard electronic? | |
| Is the standard short and concise – around two sides of A4? | |
| Is the standard written in a clear and simple language? | |
| Does the standard describe full competence for a single specified occupation that is accepted across the industry as unique and discrete? | |
| Is the occupation sufficiently high level that it encompasses a range of job roles? <i>(optional but recommended to reduce the number of standards)</i> | |
| Does the standard start with a concise statement describing what someone who works in the occupation does? | |
| Is the standard informed by research of relevant UK and international standards and frameworks? | |
| Does the standard describe the required knowledge, skills and (optionally) occupationally-relevant behaviours? | |
| Are all knowledge, skill and behaviour statements high level, clear and specific? | |
| Are all the knowledge, skill and behaviour statements measurable and therefore able to be assessed? | |
| Does the standard contain an industry-endorsed mix of core, option and/or shared elements (if applicable)? | |
| Is the standard written at a 'fully successful' level (not above)? | |
| Are all qualifications required as a pre-requisite to the end-point assessment specified – either within the standard or as part of the assessment approach? | |
| Does the standard demonstrate alignment with professional registration requirements (including professional qualifications) for the occupation? | |
| Are the Apprenticeship requirements for English and maths achievement above the national minimum? If so, are these requirements specified? | |
| Does the standard contains sufficient content and is it pitched at such a level that a new entrant to the occupation will find it stretching? | |
| Is the standard attainable and reasonable? | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Is there evidence that different sizes of employer across a range of contexts, including small businesses, will find the standard suitable for training apprentices? | |
| Does the standard recommend the level to which the Apprenticeship relates? | |
| Are the entry requirements for the Apprenticeship stated? | |
| Is the typical duration of the Apprenticeship stated, and is it a minimum 12 months? | |
| Are potential progression routes for a successful apprentice identified including links to higher-level Apprenticeship standards? | |
| Is the review date for the standard no more than three years from the date of approval and will it ensure the standard's continued currency and relevance? | |

| | |
|---|---|
| The assessment annex |  |
| Is there a single high-level, end-point assessment approach for the standard? | |
| Does the assessment approach specify what is to be assessed and how it will be assessed? | |
| Does the end-point assessment assess across the breadth of the standard (although it may not assess every element)? | |
| Are all the skill, knowledge, and behaviour elements that are deemed critical or that are frequently used included in the assessment approach? | |
| Is the end-point assessment synoptic, assessing how an apprentice integrates and applies a range of knowledge and skills to demonstrate full competence? | |
| Does the assessment approach cover both knowledge and skills? | |
| Are the chosen assessment methods appropriate to the content of the standard? | |
| Does the assessment approach allow for realistic and stretching tasks (either in a work setting or simulating the pressures of real work) to give an apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate full competence? | |
| Is it clear that the assessment approach assesses different aspects of the standard in a coherent way? | |
| Is there evidence that the proposed assessment approach will be suitable for use across different contexts and sizes of employer, including small businesses? | |
| Is the assessment approach one that can be applied rigorously and consistently by different independent assessors? | |
| Has a high-level statement been provided indicating how the standard will be graded? | |

| Employer and stakeholder support | ✓ |
|--|---|
| Does a recognised and accepted sector vision and strategy for Apprenticeships underpin the standard? | |
| Has the standard been developed by employers who have the confidence of the industry? | |
| Have a representative range of employers (including large, medium and smaller organisations) contributed detailed input to the drafting of the standard and high-level assessment approach? | |
| Have all employers and other stakeholders across the wider sector been consulted on the standard and had the opportunity to feed back on its development? | |
| <p>Where the occupation relates to more than one sector, have Trailblazer groups from all those sectors collaborated to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a common core of skills, knowledge and behaviours? • an assessment approach that maintains trust and equivalence across sectors? | |
| <p>Is there evidence that the standard is judged as fit for purpose by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employers (including small businesses)? • professional and trade bodies? • higher education institutions (where appropriate)? | |
| Is there evidence that a wide range of employers have signed up to the standard and the high-level assessment approach that sits alongside it? | |
| Have letters of support for the standard been provided by at least ten employers (including smaller employers) who are representative of the sector/occupation? | |
| Have letters of support for the standard been provided by relevant professional and trade bodies? | |
| Where employer requirements for the standard differ from government expectations, is an industry-endorsed business case provided to support the request for an exception sign off? | |

Note: Templates for the letters of support from employers and professional bodies can be obtained from BIS Relationship Managers.

The implementation phase: looking ahead

The goal of this phase is to develop the underpinning detail that will enable delivery of the standard as an Apprenticeship.

Assessment details

Objectives include:

- Decide when and how to work with assessment experts
- Develop the detail of end-point assessment and grading
- Define quality assurance mechanisms for assessment aligned with the requirements of the relevant certification body
- Endorse independent assessment organisation(s)
- Determine an industry-agreed procurement process for independent assessment services including:
 - price negotiation following SFA guidelines
 - mechanisms for individual and collective purchasing
 - service level agreements

Training requirements

Objectives include:

- Identify and work with training development partners
- Develop (or endorse partner-developed) work-based learning programmes that:
 - fit with the assessment approach and professional registration requirements
 - offer options for off-the-job training suitable for different industry contexts such as individual and group teaching, coaching/mentoring, distance-learning, e-learning, formative assessment and feedback, guided study, and collaborative learning
 - allow employers to devise individual delivery and assessment plans for each apprentice
 - meet quality assurance mechanisms for delivery aligned with the requirements of external bodies such as Ofsted
- Determine an industry-agreed procurement process for training services including:
 - price negotiation following SFA guidelines
 - mechanisms for individual and collective purchasing
 - service level agreements

Trailblazers will oversee and endorse, these inter-linked stages

and may need to:

- redefine their terms of reference
- utilise the expertise of a range of development partners

Awareness and support information

Objectives include:

- Identify appropriate development partners
- Revise/create IAG materials for potential apprentices, parents, schools and careers advisors that reflect the new standard and integrate with national and industry messaging around Apprenticeships especially in relation to small employers
- Provide guidance for employers, training providers, and independent assessors so that they understand their respective roles within the delivery model for the standard
- Develop guidance for employers to:
 - support their engagement with potential apprentices
 - facilitate individual Apprenticeship training plans
 - demonstrate wider applicability of the standard – e.g. to inform job specs and performance frameworks
- Outline the data needed to support industry-wide skills provision planning

Registration and certification

Objectives include:

- Outline employer/apprentice sign-on agreement process or document
- Agree an industry-recognised system (or align with the national system) for apprentice registration and certification that links to the sector's professional registration processes

Continuation/maintenance requirements

Objectives include:

- Agree long-term creation and review processes for new and existing standards that will ensure that future industry Apprenticeship needs will be met
- Identify with whom responsibility lies
- Determine how the process will be funded

The transition phase: looking ahead

The goal of this phase is to manage the process of moving all Apprenticeship starts from SASE frameworks to the employer-defined standards

| Timetable | |
|---------------------|---|
| March – April 2014 | Apprenticeship funding consultation (ends May 1 st) |
| March – June 2014 | Trailblazer 2 creation phase (29 new Trailblazers plus new occupations from the original 8) Trailblazer 1 implementation phase Trailblazer 3 commitment phase |
| April 2014 | Cut-off for development of new SASE frameworks |
| Autumn 2014 | Apprenticeship funding methodology published |
| Sept 2014 | Trailblazer 3 creation phase All new Apprenticeship development work in the hands of employers and centred on standards |
| End 2014 | First Apprenticeship starts using new standards (small numbers initially as employers test and gain confidence; growing as each standard becomes more established) |
| Dec 2014 | Deregulation Bill comes into effect |
| Feb 2015 | Funding conditions published for Trailblazer-developed Apprenticeships starting in 2015/16 |
| Dec 2015 | Funding conditions published for Trailblazer-developed Apprenticeships starting in 2016/17 |
| 2016 | Employer-routed funding mechanism introduced |
| 2015/16 & 2016/2017 | Increasing numbers of approved standards and associated Apprenticeship starts. Existing frameworks closed as new standards are developed. |
| July 2017 | Standards developed for all occupations where Apprenticeships should be available. |

Parallel running of Apprenticeship systems under both standards and frameworks

The two systems will operate in parallel for a number of years.

Anyone who begins an Apprenticeship under an existing framework will be able to complete it.

Apprenticeship funding changes

The [Funding Reform Technical Consultation](#) ran from March 2014 until 1st May. The intention is to give employers purchasing power for training and assessment services.

Employers co-invest in Apprenticeships with the total government contribution capped (the Maximum Government Contribution) and paid through HMRC.

Transitory funding mechanisms used throughout Trailblazer period.

Funding for English and maths will continue to be paid direct to the training provider.

Continuation and maintenance

Mainstream the new Apprenticeship system with normal cycles of standard creation, monitoring, and review.

New system expected to be 'locked down' for at least 2½ years.

Emerging questions

- Who will generate and maintain the standards after the Trailblazer period? How will the necessary mass employer engagement (particularly SMEs) be achieved and facilitated?
- Who will provide the support service for the standards, answering questions from employers, training providers, and assessment bodies?
- How will employers convert existing framework pathways to new standards (by 2017)?
- How many standards will there be and how will numbers be controlled?
- What mechanism will there be for creating and maintaining pan-sector standards?
- How will existing expertise around developing standards be captured and maintained?
- How will the evidence required for monitoring progress and triggering certification be collected and recorded?
- How will partial achievement of an Apprenticeship be managed (e.g. if apprentice changes jobs, takes a break in learning etc.)?
- Will employers (particularly SMEs) be discouraged from taking on apprentices due to the funding changes?

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