

**Procuring training for an  
Apprenticeship standard**  
**A guide for employers of apprentices**

**February 2015**



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## Introduction

In *The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan* published in October 2013, BIS stated a commitment to an Apprenticeship reform programme built on a fundamental desire to put employers in the driving seat of developing new Apprenticeship standards. Employers have been given a high degree of freedom to develop approaches that best meet the needs of their occupations and sectors while ensuring that Apprenticeships are seen to be '*high quality, with sufficient content and transferability to justify public investment*'.

A key feature of the new system is that of employers working together to design new standards and assessments for apprenticeships to ensure Apprenticeships are higher quality and more relevant to their industry. Trailblazer employer groups came together with the agreement of BIS – many with the support of sector skills councils, professional bodies, and trade bodies – to create new Apprenticeship standards and associated assessment approaches across a wide range of sectors and occupations.

The government's intention is that all Apprenticeship starts from the 2017-18 academic year are based on these new standards.

## Using this resource

This resource is designed to introduce existing and potential employers of apprentices to the Apprenticeship reforms, with a specific focus on what they need to know to procure design and delivery of training for their apprentices.

This resource will help an employer to understand:

- the changes to apprenticeships as a result of the reforms;
- the apprentice journey under the reforms;
- the training provider landscape;
- models of training
- how to develop a training plan for your apprentice;
- the options available when procuring training delivery for an apprenticeship;
- how training design and delivery is quality assured.

**Important:** This FISSS resource should be used in conjunction with the latest guidance issued by [BIS and the Skills Funding Agency](#) and the latest version of the [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#).

## SECTION 1: The new Apprenticeships

### 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.

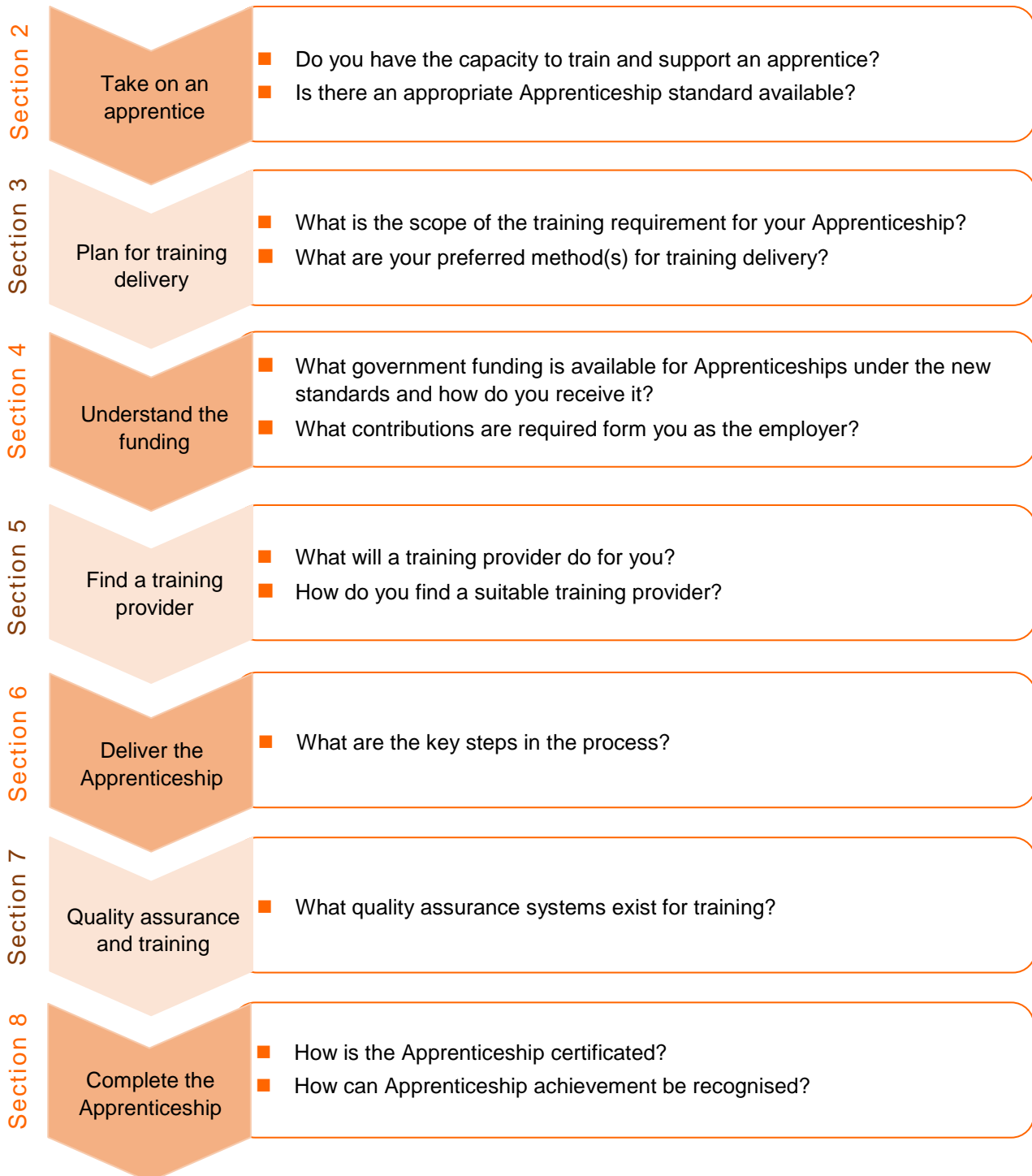
The Apprenticeship programme is well established, already successful and provides proven benefits to both employers and apprentices. The Apprenticeship reform builds on this success by simplifying the systems and putting more power into the hands of employers. Future Apprenticeships will be based on standards designed by employers to meet the needs of their sector. These standards will replace the current frameworks.

Three changes under the Apprenticeship reform are worth highlighting:

1. All apprentices will need to pass a practical end-point assessment. This will be separate to any qualifications or assessments that the apprentice may undertake during training. To ensure independence in the Apprenticeship assessment process, the end-point assessment for an individual apprentice must involve a third party, independent of the training provider or employer, who does not stand to benefit financially from the outcome of the assessment.
2. Apprenticeships in the majority of sectors will be graded. A pass grade means that the apprentice has demonstrated full competency against the standard. There will be at least one grade above pass to recognise exceptional performance.
3. The proposed routing of funding for Apprenticeship training and assessment through employers will give them greater control and purchasing power over their Apprenticeship training. There may be more than one training provider involved in training delivery but an employer will only need to contract with one provider – the 'lead provider' – who will take the lead and ensure that all the training is organised and who will channel the funding on behalf of government.

The employer and lead provider will agree a price for the required Apprenticeship training and assessment. At least one-third of this agreed price must be covered by employer contribution. A core government contribution (CGC) will cover the remaining two-thirds although this will not exceed the defined cap for the Apprenticeship standard regardless of any final price agreed between the employer and the lead provider (see Section 4 on page 13 for further detail on funding).

# Quick-start guide to procuring Apprenticeship training



## SECTION 2: Take on an apprentice

An Apprenticeship may be an appropriate option when you take on a new employee or when one of your existing employees moves into a new role. However, you need to be sure that you have the capacity to provide all the features of a high-quality Apprenticeship (see box below).

### Key features of a high-quality Apprenticeship

- The focus of an Apprenticeship is on equipping an individual with the **new skills and learning** they need for their job role. Training providers must work closely with the employer to ensure that the Apprenticeship meets this requirement, and that the Apprenticeship offered is the most appropriate for the job role, whilst reflecting individual employer and learner needs.
- **Employment** is a fundamental part of an Apprenticeship. It is more than just having a contract of employment. An apprentice must be employed in a job with a productive purpose.
- Apprentices often need additional **employer support** outside of their training programme to ensure their success. Simple measures such as identifying an appropriate 'buddy' or mentor for an apprentice, and making sure all relevant staff are briefed on how to engage with the apprentice can make a difference.
- The **minimum hours of employment** should be at least 30 hours per week. By exception, where the apprentice's circumstances or the nature of employment in a given sector makes this impossible, then an absolute minimum of 16 hours must be met. In such cases, the duration of the Apprenticeship must be extended.
- The **duration of the Apprenticeship** should reflect the typical duration set out in the relevant Apprenticeship standard (although the actual duration may vary). Apprenticeship delivery must be planned to make full and effective use of the duration, including the opportunity for apprentices to embed and extend their learning through repeated workplace practice.
- Apprentices must be paid at least the **minimum wage they are entitled to by law**. The current rate is £2.73 for apprentices aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. All other apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for their age. The lower initial wage for an apprentice reflects the lower initial productivity of an employee undertaking training. The clear expectation is that the wage will increase as the apprentice becomes more productive.
- Core Apprenticeship funding received from the Government **cannot be used to pay Apprentice wages**, as its primary function is to fund learning. Where the training provider or an associated organisation is also the employer, the provider must be able to demonstrate that funds are not being used in this way. Note: Additional incentive payments received by the employer can be used for any purpose.
- The delivery of training must be within the contracted hours of employment, not in addition. Training must be delivered through a combination of both **on- and off-the-job training** methods. It is expected that 20% of the training will be off-the-job.

Adapted from: The statement on Apprenticeship quality 2013 (NAS, 2013)

### Tip

For further Apprenticeship principles, see Section 2 of the [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#).

## Finding the right Apprenticeship

An Apprenticeship has an equivalent education level and can be:

- Intermediate or Level 2 - equivalent to 5 GCSEs (grades A\* - C)
- Advanced or Level 3 - equivalent to 2 A levels
- Higher - Level 4+ and can lead to a foundation or honours degree.

An Apprenticeship typically lasts between one and four years, depending on the level.

Once you are confident that your organisation is ready to offer an Apprenticeship you will need to check whether there is an appropriate Apprenticeship standard for your trade or occupation.

### Tip

For a list of the Apprenticeship standards that have been developed so far, visit the [Gov.uk website](#).

If there is no appropriate standard, you may still be able to register an apprentice under one of the older Apprenticeship frameworks. A list of live frameworks can be found on the [Gov.uk website](#).

## Recruiting an apprentice

You may use your own existing recruitment methods to find an apprentice, or use the support of a training provider.

The government offers a free [Apprenticeship vacancies service](#) that allows employers to register their Apprenticeship vacancies so that they can be viewed and applied for nationally by potential candidates that register the system.

## Further help and advice

Visit the [Apprenticeships section of the Gov.uk website](#).

Contact the National Apprenticeship helpdesk: tel: 0800 015 0400; email: [nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk).

Contact your [sector skills council](#).

## SECTION 3: Plan for training delivery

The amount and type of training that your apprentice will require will depend on a number of factors:

- The requirements of the chosen Apprenticeship standard
- The skills, knowledge and experience already held by the apprentice (their entry point)
- The training facilities and support that you can offer as an employer.

Although a good training provider will help you finalise your particular training requirements, it is worth taking some time beforehand to outline your own requirements and constraints and to understand the options for training delivery before sourcing and procuring training.

### On- and off-the-job training

Apprenticeship training falls into two broad categories: 'on-the-job' and 'off-the-job'.

On-the-job training takes place in the apprentice's normal working situation, whereas off-the-job training takes place within a dedicated learning space at a training provider's premises or at the employer's premises, but away from the workplace.

The *Training delivery routes table* overleaf summarises the key features of each route and the issues that you will need to consider when procuring a training programme that utilises that route.



## Training delivery routes

| Training delivery route                 | Training delivery methodologies   | Cost (high/medium/low)  | Issues to consider  | Procurement  | Quality issues   |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| On-the-job<br>Training in the workplace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical demonstrations</li> <li>• On the job instruction by experienced workers and first-line supervisors</li> <li>• Work shadowing</li> <li>• Written materials</li> <li>• E-learning, audio-visual materials</li> <li>• Coaching</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Project</li> </ul> | <p>Low- Medium</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer staff are relatively cost-effective but not cost-neutral if time is taken away from other activities</li> <li>• Procurement of trainers depending on special skills required</li> <li>• Need real-time equipment and resources available for practice</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Needs to be formalised with dedicated staff time</li> <li>b) Timetabling can be flexible to work demands</li> <li>c) Employer staff might need instruction in training methodologies</li> <li>d) Training is concurrent with performance</li> <li>e) Employer staff are closer to actual work practice and specific techniques</li> <li>f) Additional facilities or resources might be required</li> <li>g) Employers seeking to deliver own training will not access match funding unless registered with SFA</li> <li>h) Need to embed maths and English</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No procurement but own staff may require externally sourced training in delivery and supervision techniques</li> <li>b) Contracted-in trainers must be procured either directly or through a training partner</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Employers who deliver training are responsible for their own quality assurance</li> <li>b) Contracted-in trainers, if self-employed, may not be subject to external quality assurance</li> <li>c) Training partners may provide their own quality assurance</li> </ul> |

| Training delivery route  | Training delivery methodologies   | Cost (high/medium/low)   | Issues to consider  | Procurement  | Quality issues  |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>'Off-the-job'</p> <p>Training delivered away from the workplace either by an external training provider or by the employer's training personnel</p> <p>May take place at an external location or at a dedicated training space at the employer premises</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom learning (e.g. lecture, tutorial, presentation, facilitated discussion)</li> <li>• Simulations, demonstrations</li> <li>• Written materials</li> <li>• Research or applied projects</li> <li>• Field visits</li> <li>• Virtual or e-learning</li> <li>• Directed self-study</li> <li>• Role play</li> <li>• Distance learning</li> </ul> | <p>Medium -High</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will require a training partner</li> <li>• May include apprentice registration costs with awarding organisation if training is linked to a qualifications</li> <li>• Costs might depend on economies of scale – are learners shared across other employers?</li> <li>• E-learning and distance learning will reduce delivery costs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Training is likely to be more generic to the sector rather than specific to a particular employer</li> <li>b) The equipment available may not be same as in the employer's particular work environment</li> <li>c) Learning needs to be translated back into workplace</li> <li>d) Training staff must be vocationally competent and/or active with industry links</li> <li>e) A cross-employer training programme may be less flexible in timetabling</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The provider may be one of a pool of approved providers' identified through an industry or sector body</li> <li>b) To access public funding, the training provider must be one approved for public funding by SFA</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Training provider will provide internal quality assurance. They will also be subject to external quality audits via:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ofsted inspections</li> <li>• Awarding, sector and/or professional body review</li> <li>• Regulation by QAA (see section 7)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) Contractual arrangements should build in quality assurance measures and mechanisms</li> </ul> |

## Employer and provider involvement in training delivery

The degree of involvement of the employer and the training provider in the delivery of the Apprenticeship training programme will vary.

Some employers, particularly smaller ones, who do not have the time or resources to deliver Apprenticeship training, will rely on a lead training provider to organise and deliver the entire Apprenticeship training programme (either on employer or provider premises). The training provider may even recruit apprentices on behalf of the employer. The provider will undertake the agreed training with regular reviews with the employer to share progress. Such training programmes often mean that the provider will deliver off-the-job training to groups of apprentices from a number of employers that will be more generic than tailored to any one employer's requirements or context.

Larger employers often have a discrete strategy for recruiting and training apprentices to meet their particular business needs as well as the requirements of the standard. They will have a greater involvement in apprentice training, delivering all or part of the training in line with their training capacity and working with training provider partners to a greater or lesser degree. If the employer has the internal capacity (such as a training department), they will deliver the whole Apprenticeship programme themselves and will only use training providers to deliver specific elements (such as those that are not 'business as usual' or that require external expertise, such as English and maths).

### Group training association (GTA)

A GTA is a not-for-profit organisation providing access to industry specialist off-the-job training for apprentices who are employed directly by the employers who subscribe to the GTA. A GTA offers employers the potential to benefit from reduced training costs, specialist/bespoke training programmes, business advice, networking opportunities, and other services. ([Find out more](#))

### Apprenticeship training agency (ATA)

The ATA supports employers in sourcing, arranging and hosting Apprenticeships and, crucially, acts as the apprentice's employer, undertaking associated responsibilities such as wages, tax, apprentice training and supervision and places them with one or more host employers. The ATA provides the potential for an apprentice to work across more than one workplace, thus allowing employers to take on apprentices where this would not otherwise be possible, such as where a small employer is unable to offer a full-time or permanent position for an apprentice. The ATA usually outsources the training activity for the Apprenticeship to approved training providers. The employer pays the ATA a fee for the apprentice's services. ([Find out more](#))

#### Tip

Use *TOOL 1: Training needs mapping template* (overleaf) to map your initial training requirements. It can then form the basis for your discussions with training providers.



Double click the pin to use the MS Word version of this tool.

## TOOL 1: Training needs mapping template

Use this template to map your initial training requirements. It can then form a basis for your discussions with training providers.

| Training requirement     | Training delivery |             |            |              |                          | Assessment outline  |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Skills</b>            | <b>How</b>        | <b>When</b> | <b>Who</b> | <b>Where</b> | <b>Quality assurance</b> | <i>Derived from the assessment requirements of the standard</i> |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
| <b>Knowledge</b>         | <b>How</b>        | <b>When</b> | <b>Who</b> | <b>Where</b> | <b>Quality assurance</b> |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
| <b>Behaviours</b>        | <b>How</b>        | <b>When</b> | <b>Who</b> | <b>Where</b> | <b>Quality assurance</b> |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |
| <b>Maths and English</b> | <b>How</b>        | <b>When</b> | <b>Who</b> | <b>Where</b> | <b>Quality assurance</b> |   |
|                          |                   |             |            |              |                          |   |

## Case studies

The mini case studies that follow provide an overview of emerging models of Apprenticeship training delivery taken by two sectors and illustrate the importance of considering training when designing the assessment approach.

### Case study 1: Life Sciences and Industrial Science Apprenticeship

For the Level 3 Apprenticeships for the occupations of Laboratory Technician and Science Manufacturing Technician, there will be two phases of training, mapped to the work-based learning guide for the Apprenticeship standard:

1. A Foundation Phase will focus on developing the apprentice's core skills, knowledge and behaviour, specifically around working safely, complying with internal and external regulations and following quality procedures.

This training may take place in the workplace or in a largely simulated working environment and will culminate in *Gateway 1*, a review of skills by suitably qualified and experienced personnel from the employer or their nominated training partner. Gateway 1 will provide assurance that the apprentice has the understanding of the principles of working safely whilst following quality systems within a regulated environment. Evidence of completion of this gateway will be a prerequisite for participation in the formal end assessment.

2. A Consolidation Phase will focus on developing further skills capability supported by further guided learning, eventually enabling the apprentice to work effectively and independently with minimum supervision. The apprentice will work towards a pre-requisite qualification recognised by the professional bodies as suitable for professional registration. This phase culminates in *Gateway 2*. By then, the apprentice will have completed their training and, through on-going assessment, will have generated a range of evidence to show they meet the Apprenticeship standard captured in a competence evaluation log. A suitably qualified and experienced internal assessor from the employer will sign off the competence evaluation log to show the apprentice is ready for the formal end assessment.

Once the apprentice goes through Gateways 1 and 2, they will undertake formal end assessment.

Extracted from: [Life Sciences and Industrial Science Trailblazer: Apprenticeships Assessment Plan](#)

## Case study 2: Financial Services Administrator

For this Level 3 Apprenticeship, designed as an entry-level role into the financial/mortgage advice sector, employers have sought to use existing work-based training and performance assessment wherever possible, and to avoid duplication or the need for adding additional personnel into the assessment process. It is anticipated that costs will be minimised by the use of remote learning and assessment where appropriate (both for training the assessors and for working with apprentices).

Assurance that the apprentice is on track during the Apprenticeship is based on the in-house Performance Management (PM) process, which is a standard, recognised way of working within the Financial Services sector that will provide a consistent and reliable approach for all apprentices:

- The apprentice's line manager uses the PM process, which includes monthly 1:1 meetings to discuss progress on the Apprenticeship, provide feedback and guide development. This process will also track the progress and completion of any required qualifications within the timescales allowed.
- Regular checkpoints between the line manager and the training provider (aligned with the PM process) will take place to ensure that the apprentice is on track and to agree how any issues will be addressed.

The training provider will play an important part in supporting this by:

- ensuring that (prior to starting the Apprenticeship), both employer and apprentice understand the detail of the learning journey and their respective commitments to this;
- ensuring that the requirements of the Apprenticeship are fully reflected in the PM process, with any gaps being filled through their work with the apprentice;
- supporting the apprentice throughout the learning journey, providing advice and guidance on learning strategies and tools that will support the apprentice's preferred learning style and improve their learning agility;
- supporting the line manager in their commitments to the Apprenticeship and providing any training if required.

The training provider will also play a key part in overseeing the end-point assessment process for the Apprenticeship by:

- taking responsibility for organising and coordinating the process;
- contacting professional/awarding bodies or other training providers to secure the services of an appropriately qualified third party 'independent' assessor;
- providing training in the assessment process (including use of tools and application to ensure consistency) for assessors involved in end-point assessment and interview.

This activity would be included in the commercial terms agreed in contracting between the employer and the training provider.

*Extracted from: [Assessment plan for a financial services administrator](#)*

## SECTION 4: Understand the funding reform

A key part of the implementation of the Apprenticeship reform is the transformation of the associated funding system. Several principles underpin this new funding system:

- The employer should have direct access to the government funding.
- Employers must co-invest to access the government funding.
- The price of each apprentice's training will be set by the employer negotiating with the provider rather than set by government.
- A proportion of the government funding will be linked to achievement.
- The funding will provide additional support for the smallest employers and for the youngest apprentices.

The government expects to have the new Apprenticeship funding mechanism fully in place by 2016. During the interim period (covering the academic year 2015-16), the government aims to test as much of the new funding model as possible on Apprenticeships that follow Trailblazer-developed standards. These interim funding rules will apply to the duration of any Apprenticeship where the apprentice starts an Apprenticeship standard between 1 September 2014 and 31 July 2015.

**The remainder of this section provides a brief overview of the interim funding system but it is essential that an employer read the latest version of the [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#) if they wish to start an apprentice on one of the new standards.**

### Features of the interim funding system

The interim Apprenticeship funding rules introduces the following features:

- Freeing up the price and negotiation
- Co-payment and the Core Government Contribution (CGC)
- Incentive payments

A system for the Skills Funding Agency to make funding payments direct to the employer is not yet in place. During the interim period, the Agency will make funding payments directly to the training provider (as it does now) who will then pass it on to the employer.

#### Freeing up price and negotiation

The employer and the training provider will agree a price for the training that the apprentice will need to undertake to complete the Apprenticeship standard. Note that:

- Where there is more than one training provider involved, the employer must appoint a lead training provider.
- Depending on the assessment approach set for the Apprenticeship standard, end-point assessment might be carried out by a separate, independent assessment body and an employer must bear this in mind when considering the total Apprenticeship delivery costs. The (lead) training provider will help the employer liaise with any such independent assessment body.

## Co-payment and the Core Government Contribution (CGC)

Employers **must** make at least a one-third cash contribution for the training and assessment purchased from an external provider. The government will then invest a core government contribution (CGC) of £2 for every £1 made by the employer up to the maximum funding cap for the standard. This is called co-payment.

In the [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#) issued in November 2014, the Skills Funding Agency outlines the funding caps as follows:

| Funding cap | Total value of training and assessment (£) | Co-payment                           |                           |
|-------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
|             |  | Core government contribution cap (£) | Employer contribution (£) |
| 5           | 27,000                                     | 18,000                               | 9,000                     |
| 4           | 12,000                                     | 8,000                                | 4,000                     |
| 3           | 9,000                                      | 6,000                                | 3,000                     |
| 2           | 4,500                                      | 3,000                                | 1,500                     |
| 1           | 3,000                                      | 2,000                                | 1,000                     |

Source: [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#) (SFA, Nov. 2014)

### Notes:

- Where an employer chooses to deliver all or part of the training in-house, the 'in-house' element will not be eligible for the government core contribution. Separate rules cover employers holding a direct grant.
- Where it is required, the government will also fund the full cost of the apprentice undertaking English and maths to level 2 and any learning support.

## Incentive payments

There are three employer incentive payments linked to the Apprenticeship funding:

- **Small employer incentive:** A payment for small businesses with fewer than 50 employees, made three months after the start of the Apprenticeship.
- **16-18 year old apprentice incentive:** A payment for taking on an apprentice aged 16-18 at the start of their Apprenticeship. It consists of two equal payments, paid three and 12 months after the start of the Apprenticeship.
- **Completion incentive:** A payment made when the apprentice successfully completes their Apprenticeship (i.e. passes the end-point assessment, meets the English and Maths requirements, and achieves any qualifications specified within the standard).

To be eligible for incentive payments, an employer **must** have made their required cash contribution for the training and assessment purchased. Employers choosing to deliver all of the training and assessment for the standard in-house will not be eligible for any of the employer incentive payments.



The value of the incentive payments varies according to the funding cap for the standard as shown in the table below.

| Funding cap | Incentive payments |                      |                | Maximum incentive payments (£) |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
|             | Small employer (£) | 16-18 apprentice (£) | Completion (£) |                                |
| 5           | 5,400              | 2,700                | 2,700          | 10,800                         |
| 4           | 2,400              | 1,200                | 1,200          | 4,800                          |
| 3           | 1,800              | 900                  | 900            | 3,600                          |
| 2           | 900                | 500                  | 500            | 1,900                          |
| 1           | 600                | 500                  | 500            | 1,600                          |

Source: [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#) (SFA, Nov. 2014)

The lead provider will receive incentive payments from the Agency on behalf of the employer and should pass them on to the employer within 10 working days of receipt.

The table below provides some examples of the outlay by employers for Apprenticeship training using the interim funding system and illustrates how little this outlay can be, particularly for small employers.

|                                      |                  | Agreed training price £4200<br>(funding cap 2) |                                      |                                     | Agreed training price £6600<br>(funding cap 3) |                                      |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                                      |                  | Small employer, 16yr old apprentice            | Larger employer, 17yr old apprentice | Small employer, 20yr old apprentice | Small employer, 16yr old apprentice            | Larger employer, 17yr old apprentice | Small employer, 20yr old apprentice |
| <b>Employer contribution</b>         |                  | £1400.00                                       | £1400.00                             | £1400.00                            | £2200.00                                       | £2200.00                             | £2200.00                            |
| <b>Incentives</b>                    | Small employer   | £900.00  | £0.00                                | £900.00                             | £1800.00                                       | £0.00                                | £1800.00                            |
|                                      | 16-18 apprentice | £500.00  | £500.00                              | £0.00                               | £900.00  | £900.00                              | £0.00                               |
|                                      | Completion       | £500.00  | £500.00                              | £500.00                             | £900.00  | £900.00                              | £900.00                             |
| <b>Balance of outlay by employer</b> |                  | £500.00 gain                                   | £400.00 cost                         | £0.00 break even                    | £1400.00 gain                                  | £400.00 cost                         | £500.00 gain                        |

**Important funding notes:**

- The £1500 *Apprenticeship Grant for Employers* (available to small employers for an apprentice aged 16 to 24) only applies to apprentices undertaking an Apprenticeship framework and is replaced by the described incentive payments for apprentices undertaking an Apprenticeship standard.
- If the apprentice drops out part way through their Apprenticeship, no further government funding contributions or incentive payments can be claimed. The employer must ensure that they have paid their employer contribution for any training that has already been delivered. The lead provider is responsible for repaying any overpayment of government funding back to the Skills Funding Agency and for reimbursing the employer for any overpayment of employer contributions.

## SECTION 5: Find a training provider

Whilst the Trailblazer employer group sets the Apprenticeship standard and the associated assessment approach, as the employer taking on the apprentice you will decide how that apprentice is trained and which lead training provider you will engage to deliver the training. Your only constraint is that, if you want to access public funding, your lead training provider must be listed on the [register of training organisations](#) held by the Skills Funding Agency.

### Types of training provider

#### Further Education (FE) Colleges

Further education (FE) refers to post-compulsory education (i.e. further to that received at secondary school). FE in the United Kingdom is usually a means to attain an intermediate qualification necessary to attend university or begin a specific career path. This may be basic skills training, vocational qualifications such as NVQ, BTEC, or other QCF listed qualifications. At higher levels, an FE provider may offer HNC, HND or Foundation Degrees. FE is distinct from Higher Education (HE), which is offered in universities, although some FE colleges are able to offer education at this level.

#### Independent training providers

There are a huge number of private training providers in the UK. They range in both size and nature, and training may be just one of the services that these organisations supply. Some large employers have a training arm that operates as a discrete training entity.

#### Universities

A university is an institution of higher education (HE) and research that grants academic degrees in a variety of subjects and it provides both undergraduate education and post-graduate education. 40% of the Apprenticeship standards developed in the first two Trailblazer phases were set at Level 4 and above and are likely to involve delivery by either a university or a college or other institutions that provide complete courses leading to recognised UK degrees validated by a university.

### Help with finding training providers

- Use the government's [Apprenticeship training organisation search facility](#) or [search for learning providers offering a particular Apprenticeship](#).
- Contact the National Apprenticeship helpdesk: tel: 0800 015 0400; email: [nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk).
- [UK Register of Learning Providers \(UKRLP\)](#). Enter a postcode and search radius to identify local training providers. Although the information given is limited, it will confirm contact details.
- [Register of training organisations](#). This MS Excel spreadsheet lists the organisations eligible to receive funding from the Skills Funding Agency to deliver education and skills training services.

Note: The Skills Funding Agency will be providing details of the registration arrangements for assessment organisations in the February – March 2015.

## Evaluating training providers

These websites will help you appraise the quality of individual training providers and determine their potential as partners in the design and delivery of training.

- [The Apprenticemaker online community](#): Join the community to share information and their experience of providers with other existing or budding apprentice employers.
- [Ofsted inspection reports](#): Check the latest inspection report, to see Ofsted's independent review of the quality of provision offered by a further education provider delivering government funded training.
- [FE Choices](#): This Skills Funding Agency website offers performance statistics and learner and employer views for all further education providers that receive government funding to educate and train people over the age of 16.
- [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\)](#): Find reviews of all recognised and listed UK higher education institutions, evaluating the quality of their teaching, facilities and academic education.

**Tip**

Contact your sector skills council, or professional body for help with finding recommended training providers.

## What you can expect from a good training provider

### Identifying training needs

#### A good training provider will:

- Spend time with you to understand your organisational requirements
- Challenge your thinking to help ensure training adds value
- Take time to understand the best methods for training for your apprentices, taking into account available resources (if delivering on your premises) and working patterns
- Explain how the apprentice will be assessed in relation to the overall Apprenticeship
- Share case studies of their work with other clients

### Outlining proposed training

#### A good training provider will:

- Capture your requirements and propose an outline for the training and clarify associated costs before training commences
- Clearly define and agree the learning outcomes
- Ensures content is designed to meet agreed learning outcomes
- Provide a training timeline including progress reviews with you to ensure training needs are being met
- Demonstrate a robust approach to equality and diversity in design (and delivery) which is evidenced in training delivery
- Clarify the success measures for the training and describe their approach to evaluating training

### Delivering training

#### A good training provider will:

- Work with you to understand the training needs of individual learners, where appropriate
- Ensure training is contextualised to your sector and, where appropriate, your workplace
- Ensure there are opportunities to implement the knowledge and skills that are covered in the training
- Encourage personal reflection in the apprentice and as an output, facilitate action planning for the apprentice
- Utilise the most appropriate tools for the content, such as PowerPoint, handouts, e-learning

### Quality assurance

#### A good training provider will:

- Offer robust internal quality assurance process for their training delivery
- Work successfully within required external quality assurance processes
- Evidence changes to training that they have made as a result of internal and external quality assurance reports

#### Tip

Once you have identified potential training providers, use *TOOL 2: Questions to ask a training provider* (overleaf) to help you ascertain their suitability for your needs.



Double click the pin to use the MS Word version of this tool.

## TOOL 2: Questions to ask a training provider

Use these questions to help you ascertain the suitability of potential training providers for your needs.

| Background and performance history  |            |
|---|------------|
| Question  | Your notes |
| Which Apprenticeship frameworks or standards are you accredited to deliver?   |            |
| What experience do you have in delivering Apprenticeship or other training for my business sector?                          |            |
| Do you hold a contract with the Skills Funding Agency?  |            |
| What experience do your trainers (and assessors) have?  |            |
| Can you put me in touch with satisfied clients or offer testimonials?   |            |
| Can you give me a copy of your last Ofsted inspection report and your most recent full-year success rates (see note below)? |            |
| What quality marks, if any, do you currently hold?  |            |

**Note:** Success rates are broadly defined as the number of learners who achieve as a proportion of the number of learners who expected to complete (excluding any learners who transferred onto another course or programme with the same training provider). The figure is provided as a percentage.

Success rates are usually available at different levels. Tier one is the success rate across all training programmes and tier two is the success rate for each sector skills area (for example, retail or engineering). Ask for the tier two success rates for each of the sector areas for which you want training delivery. You should also ask for success rates by geographical region, as performance can often differ considerably.

The minimum level of performance (MLP) required by the Skills Funding Agency is currently 53% for Apprenticeships. However, the national average success rates are higher than this, depending on the sector skills area, and you would certainly want to find a provider that has better than average success rates. Ofsted inspection reports will also contain details of the provider’s success rates in their judgments on outcomes for learners.

| Delivery of training   |            |
|--|------------|
| Question   | Your notes |
| How do other employers in my sector normally structure their Apprenticeships?<br>Are there any good practice lessons to be learned?  |            |
| Can the Apprenticeship be tailored to meet the needs of my business and this particular job role?  |            |
| Will you be the sole training provider or will some elements of the training need to be delivered by other providers?  |            |
| Can you deliver flexibly to suit my business requirements (for example, training out of usual office hours to facilitate any shift work requirements)?   |            |
| Can an apprentice start the Apprenticeship at any time or are there restrictions on entry points?  |            |
| <i>(If you have not already identified your apprentice)</i><br><br>Do you have any candidates ready to take up an Apprenticeship in this role?<br><br>Do you offer apprentice recruitment support such as writing job descriptions, screening applicants etc.? |            |

| <b>Delivery of training</b>  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| <b>Question</b>  | <b>Your notes</b> |
| How are individual training needs initially assessed to make sure my apprentice is able to achieve the requirements of the Apprenticeship?   |                   |
| How much extra study will the apprentice need to do on top of their main job role and the off -the-job training?   |                   |
| How often will you visit the workplace to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deliver training;</li> <li>• carry out formative and/or on-programme assessment;</li> <li>• review the apprentice's progress?</li> </ul> |                   |
| How will you keep me informed of the apprentice's progress?  |                   |
| What role will you (the training provider) and I (the employer) play in the end-point assessment?  |                   |
| How much will you charge for training and assessment?  |                   |
| What are your systems for handling employment contributions to the training cost (and government incentive payments)?  |                   |

Adapted from: National Apprenticeship Service employer guides

## SECTION 6: Deliver the Apprenticeship

### The role of the employer and the training provider

The diagram below sets out the typical tasks required of the employer and the training provider over the life of the Apprenticeship.

|  | What does the employer do?   | What does a training provider do?  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>1. Choose the Apprenticeship</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer selects an Apprenticeship standard for their apprentice and identifies the associated funding cap for the standard.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training providers who already deliver the standard or who work in the industry market their services.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>2. Prepare delivery of the Apprenticeship</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer selects provider(s) to deliver the training (and assessment) of the apprentice, and appoints a lead provider to coordinate, and negotiates a provisional price for these services.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider coordinates with the other chosen providers to ensure the successful delivery of the Apprenticeship training and its assessment.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>3. Confirm funding eligibility</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer identifies or recruits an apprentice (perhaps with the help of the training provider).</li> <li>The employer organises workplace supervision and mentoring and ensures that all involved staff are briefed.</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider checks and confirms eligibility for the small employer and the 16- to 18-year-old apprentice incentive payments.</li> <li>The provider carries out initial screening of the apprentice's learning needs.</li> </ul> |
| <b>4. Finalise Apprenticeship delivery</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer agrees the full training plan and finalises a price with the lead provider for the delivery of the training based on the apprentice's needs.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider confirms the details in a written agreement making sure there are suitable subcontracting and payment arrangements with the other providers (if applicable).</li> </ul>   |
| <b>5. Start the Apprenticeship</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With the apprentice, the employer completes an Apprenticeship agreement.</li> <li>The employer and the lead provider sign a detailed training plan, a learning agreement, and an Apprenticeship service agreement (as applicable).</li> </ul>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider registers the apprentice with the Skills Funding Agency.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>6. Train the apprentice</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer transfers their cash contributions to the lead provider</li> <li>The employer and the lead provider work closely together to develop the skills, knowledge, and behaviours for the apprentice as set out in the standard.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider transfers incentive payments from the SFA to the employer and updates the learning</li> </ul>   |
| <b>7. Assess the apprentice</b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The employer contributes to confirming that the apprentice has completed and achieved the Apprenticeship standard.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nominated assessment organisation delivers the end-point assessment.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>8. Complete the Apprenticeship</b>            |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lead provider confirms the completion of the Apprenticeship with the SFA and other Apprenticeship certification bodies.</li> </ul>  |

Adapted from: [Trailblazer apprenticeship funding 2014 to 2015 requirements for employers](#) (SFA, Nov. 2014)



## Features of the Apprenticeship training journey

There are a number of key features to every Apprenticeship programme. Both the employer and the training provider will contribute to these but the extent to which each do so will depend on their training agreement. A brief overview is given below.

### Initial assessment

All apprentices should follow a short programme of initial assessment before or immediately upon entry to their Apprenticeship programme. The purpose of this initial assessment is to ascertain:

- the apprentice's current abilities, attitudes and aptitudes including any prior learning/experience and maths/English levels
- any learning support and development needs
- preferred learning styles

The results of the initial assessment should be recorded and will be used to help tailor the individual Apprenticeship programme and inform the Learning Agreement (see overleaf) particularly in terms of the programme's aims and objectives and the setting of a realistic expected end date for the programme.

### Induction

The induction is your apprentice's introduction to their training programme. It is essential and there needs to be evidence that an appropriate induction has taken place. It should include the following:

- an introduction to your company's business and services
- an overview of programme content, delivery and all assessment arrangements
- equal opportunities rights and responsibilities
- health and safety requirements
- terms and conditions of learning and employment, including wages, hours of work, holidays, disciplinary and grievance procedures, etc.

### Monitoring apprentice performance on programme

To support the delivery of your Apprenticeship, you will need to plan regular meetings to discuss the performance of your apprentice with your lead training provider and to plan for assessment. Data collection and reporting systems will form a key part of this discussion and you will need to contribute these.

You may find it helpful to agree a calendar of monitoring activities and milestones with your training provider that will also meet the requirements of external stakeholders such as the Skills Funding Agency.

### Mentoring

Positive and supportive management is essential to the success of your apprentice. Assigning an experienced and knowledgeable member of staff as a mentor to the apprentice will help the latter develop more quickly and improve their integration into the workforce.

## SECTION 7: Ensure quality

Employers and providers have a shared role in ensuring the quality of the Apprenticeship training and apprentice success.

The lead provider of the off-the-job training will be held accountable for success by the Skills Funding Agency and other external stakeholders such as Ofsted or QAA (see below). However, the on-the-job training input provided by the employer must be equally effective with both on- and off-the-job training forming a cohesive partnership approach to Apprenticeship delivery.

### Quality assurance for further education – Ofsted

The quality of provision offered by further education providers and employers delivering government-funded training are subject to inspection by Ofsted following the principles laid out in the [Common inspection framework for further education and skills](#) and using a four-point grading structure. You can view [recent inspection reports](#) for lead providers on the Ofsted website.

### Quality assurance for higher education – QAA

The key mechanism central to the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)'s role in assuring quality and standards in higher education is the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#). Individual higher education providers use the Quality Code to ensure students have a high quality educational experience.

## Sector-based quality assurance schemes

Some sector or trade bodies operate quality assurance or network links for training providers who specialise in their industry or sector, and may support a National Skills Academy. Below are examples of some of these.

### Tech Industry Gold Accreditation

Providers that want to deliver *Tech Industry Gold* training must go through a rigorous application process that is overseen by a panel of leading tech employers supported by the sector skills council, e-skills UK.

*Tech Industry Gold* is used with companies of all sizes. Large employers, like BT, deliver their own training programmes, while smaller employers work with a select list of Tech Industry Gold Apprenticeship accredited training providers.

### Creative Skillset Tick

For a training programme to be awarded the *Creative Skillset Tick*, it has to undergo a rigorous assessment process conducted by experts working in the Creative Industries.

The *Tick* is only given to those that have the strongest links with industry. This ensures that the courses keep up with the rapid pace of change in the industry, and students benefit from using the latest technologies and working with industry throughout their studies.

### Engineering Council Approval

For the purposes of EngTech, ICT Tech or IEng registration, some Apprenticeship qualifications and programmes are 'approved' by professional engineering institutions for up to five years.

The approval process looks at the overall design, coverage, and assessment strategy of courses and seeks evidence that satisfactory quality assurance arrangements are in place.

## SECTION 8: Complete the Apprenticeship

### Certification

The [Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards \(FISSS\)](#) will be the sole issuer of Apprenticeship certificates.

FISSS are currently developing the new validation and certification process with Trailblazers, including the issue of bespoke certificates that include qualifications taken and employer logos.

Details will be confirmed in due course.

### Recognising apprentice achievement

Recognising apprentice achievement is about more than successful completion and certification. External recognition can be a great motivator for your apprentice employees, as well as raising the profile and reputation of your organisation.

#### Skills competitions

Skills competitions such as the [WorldSkills UK Skills Competitions](#) allow exceptional apprentices to test their skills against other skilled individuals.

They provide opportunities for individuals (or teams) to compete against one another to demonstrate their talent in a particular vocational skill in a controlled environment.

#### Award ceremonies

Some employers or local or sectoral business organisations use awards ceremonies to recognise and celebrate achievements, especially performance which is exceptional.

The annual [National Apprenticeship Awards](#) recognise outstanding achievements of individuals and employers.



Double click the pin to use the MS Word version of this tool.

## SECTION 9

This resource closes with a final checklist of actions for employers who intend to offer an Apprenticeship.

### TOOL 3: Checklist of key actions for employers

| Prior to the start of the Apprenticeship   |   |
|--|---|
| Action   | ✓ |
| Understand Apprenticeships and the implications for your organisation.   |   |
| Identify your Apprenticeship requirement.  |   |
| Understand Apprenticeship funding. Consult the latest version of the <a href="#">Apprenticeship funding rules</a> from the Skills Funding Agency.  |   |
| Appoint a lead training provider.  |   |
| With the lead training provider, confirm your Apprenticeship training requirements and negotiate a price for training and assessment.  |   |
| Check and declare your eligibility status for public funding and incentive payments. Your lead training provider will assist with this.  |   |
| Advertise Apprenticeship vacancies on the <a href="#">Apprenticeship vacancies section of the Gov.uk website</a>   |   |
| Recruit an apprentice. Your lead training provider might assist with this.   |   |
| Agree the payment schedule with your lead training provider. As part of this, consider what will happen if the apprentice drops out before completing the Apprenticeship.                |   |
| Work with your lead training provider to put the structures and processes in place that will ensure that all of the quality requirements of the standard and the Apprenticeship are met. |   |
| Ensure that all agreements with your lead training provider regarding the supply of training (and assessment) are set out in writing, signed and dated and kept on record                |   |
| At the start of the Apprenticeship   |   |
| Action   | ✓ |
| Appoint a workplace mentor for your apprentice.  |   |
| Sign an Apprenticeship Agreement with your apprentice. File it.  |   |
| Sign a Learning Agreement with your apprentice and your lead training provider. File it.   |   |
| With your lead training provider, plan and participate in a comprehensive induction process for your apprentice.   |   |
| With the lead training provider, review the results of the apprentice's initial assessment and agree refinements to the Apprenticeship training programme.                               |   |

| <b>During the Apprenticeship</b>   |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Action</b>  | ✓ |
| Provide high-quality on-the-job training to the apprentice and facilitate required off-the-job training.   |   |
| Participate in any formative or on-programme assessment requirements.  |   |
| Participate in regular progress review meetings with the lead training provider and the apprentice.  |   |
| Comply with the requirements of any sector-based or national quality assurance schemes. Your lead training provider will assist with this.                               |   |
| Ensure receipt of scheduled funding and incentive payments.  |   |
| Look out for ways to motivate and celebrate apprentice achievement through external recognition (skills competitions). Your lead training provider can assist with this. |   |
| <b>At the end of the Apprenticeship</b>  |   |
| <b>Action</b>  | ✓ |
| Agree timing of the end-point assessment with the training provider.   |   |
| Participate in the end-point assessment as required by the assessment plan for the standard.   |   |
| Ensure settlement of final funding payments.   |   |
| Confirm certification of the Apprenticeship and any qualifications.  |   |
| Recognise apprentice achievement through an internal or external awards ceremony. Your lead training provider can assist with this.                                      |   |

**Tip**

Visit the [Apprenticeships section of the Gov.uk website](#) for further information and resources to support you as an employer.

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