

## Apprenticeships Employer Key Facts

### Apprenticeship training

There is a wide variety of Apprenticeships to meet the individual needs of business. They combine practical and theoretical skills, and are designed to help employees reach a high level of competency and performance.

Most of the training is 'on the job' - working with a mentor to learn job-specific skills at your premises. Additional skills and knowledge are provided by a local College or a specialist training provider. The apprentice earns while they learn.

An Apprenticeship is not a qualification in itself, but a **'framework'** containing a number of separately certificated qualifications and courses, which cover the skills, competence and underpinning knowledge required for a job. A framework would generally consist of:

- A competence based element e.g. NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) / Diploma
- A knowledge based element / Technical Certificate e.g. BTEC
- Transferrable Skills e.g. Key Skills / Functional Skills in Communication, Application of Number, Information Technology, Working with Others & Improving Own Learning and Performance
- Employment Rights and Responsibilities.

Further qualifications or enhancements, in addition to those listed below left, may be included within an apprentice's learning plan in consultation with them and you as the employer.

Apprenticeships can be used to train both new and existing employees.

### Levels of Apprenticeships

There are three levels of Apprenticeships:

- Intermediate – based around NVQ/Diploma at level 2
- Advanced – based around NVQ/Diploma at level 3
- Higher – based around NVQ/Diploma at level 4

An individual may progress from one level to the next or start direct on the Advanced/Higher level if appropriate. There are a limited number of frameworks at the Higher level.

### Duration of an Apprenticeship

The duration of the Apprenticeship will depend on the ability of the individual apprentice, the framework being followed and the employer's requirements, but as a guide an Intermediate Apprenticeship usually takes between 12 – 24 months. For 16-18 year olds the duration will be a minimum of 12 months. For learners over 19, the minimum duration will be 12 months except where there has been prior accredited or recognised learning and in this instance the minimum duration will be 6 months.

### Age of apprentices

Apprenticeships are now open to employed individuals of all ages. The training for young people between the ages of 16-18 is fully subsidised by the National Apprenticeship Service. Employers are expected to make a contribution to the cost of training for apprentices aged 19 years and over.

### Recruitment of apprentices

You may already have an individual in mind for your Apprenticeship vacancy. If you don't there is a national online Apprenticeship vacancies service. This allows employers to advertise their Apprenticeship vacancies free of charge and interested candidates can then apply for your vacancy online – your selected college/training provider can help you with this.

### Contractual issues

Apprentices must have a contract of employment for a minimum of 30 hours and this must include paid time whilst attending their off the job training.

Self employed individuals will not be able to undertake an Apprenticeship.

The current National Minimum Wage for apprentices is £2.60 an hour. The new rate of £2.65, which will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, is set in legislation and will apply to those apprentices who are under 19 or those that are aged 19 and over but in the first year of their Apprenticeship.