

**HARLOW
COLLEGE**



Apprenticeships

YOUR WORKFORCE OF TOMORROW

EMPLOYER GUIDE

Apprenticeships - Good for Business

“Apprentices can help you to fill skills gaps, keep pace with the latest technology and working practices and motivate your workforce, leading to an increase in productivity.”



What is an Apprenticeship?

The Apprenticeship scheme is a government-funded programme enabling people of all ages to train whilst they are working. Apprenticeships are open to anyone over the age of 16 who is not in full-time education and are a nationally recognised qualification. The individual can be a new or existing employee.

Apprentices usually carry out most of their learning on-the-job at your premises with some off-the-job training provided by Harlow College or one of our Partners. Typically, the apprentice will spend 4 days with you at your business and 1 day in training, either on your premises or at college.

There are over 250 different types of Apprenticeships available offering over 1,200 different job roles within a variety of industry sectors ranging from business admin and engineering to veterinary nursing and teaching assistants.

These programmes can not only provide an invaluable first step on the employment ladder for young people; they are also an effective way to develop existing employee's skills.

Apprenticeships deliver skills designed around your business needs providing the skilled workers you require for the future. They also help you develop the specialist skills you need to keep pace with the latest technology and working practices in your sector.

The levels and qualifications of Apprenticeships

There are 3 levels of Apprenticeship:

- 1 Intermediate** Level Apprenticeships - GCSE equivalent
- 2 Advanced** Level Apprenticeships - A Level equivalent
- 3 Higher Apprenticeships** - foundation degree/ NVQ 4 equivalent

The qualifications include a work-based learning qualification such as an NVQ, a relevant knowledge-based qualification such as BTEC or City & Guilds, functional skills which includes practical skills in English, maths and IT, employee rights and responsibilities which covers areas such as health and safety and equal opportunities and personal learning and thinking skills such as team working.

Apprenticeships offer excellent progression opportunities with apprentices able to advance from an Intermediate through to a Higher Apprenticeship.



Why get involved? What are the benefits to your business?

Apprenticeships are a unique way to grow your own workforce. The learning takes place in context and provides a real understanding of the working world, combining practical skills with theoretical knowledge. Therefore, they offer a career route into your organisation and an invaluable opportunity to grow the skills you need now and in the future.

Motivate your workforce

Apprentices tend to be eager, motivated, flexible and loyal to the company that invests in them. Remember, an apprentice is with you because they want to be - they have made an active choice to learn on the job and a commitment to a specific career.

Supporting a training programme for existing employees demonstrates your commitment to staff development and, in turn, more motivated and loyal employees.

Improve your bottom line

Apprenticeships deliver real returns to your bottom line, with Apprenticeships helping employers to improve productivity and be more competitive. Training apprentices can also be more cost effective than hiring skilled staff, leading to lower overall training and recruitment costs. Most employers will reclaim what they've spent fairly rapidly as the productivity of the apprentice increases.

In a recent survey undertaken on behalf of BIS, 91% of employers said they felt the benefits of taking on an apprentice were realised while they were still undergoing their training.

Over 100,000 UK companies offer apprentice places because they understand the benefits that apprentices bring to their business - increased productivity, improved competitiveness and a committed and competent workforce.

Recruitment

We know that recruiting the right member of staff for your company and ensuring that they have the relevant skills and knowledge to do the job you require will be of paramount importance to you.

We provide a free recruitment service for apprentices through a variety of different methods which include the National Apprenticeship website, Job Centre Plus, Harlow College website and local press. You write your own job description, select candidates and make the final decision on who you wish to employ. We will support you every step of the way.

Apprenticeships are available to people aged 16+, so there is plenty of scope to find a suitable person to undertake your role. If the requirement of your role does need someone to have more experience, an Advanced Apprenticeship might be more suitable for your business.

Benefits in numbers

- A more engaged workforce: 92% of employers who employ apprentices believe that Apprenticeships lead to better motivated staff and increased job satisfaction.
- 80% of employers feel that Apprenticeships reduce staff turnover.
- Increased competitiveness: 80% of those employers who employ apprentices agree they make their workplace more productive.
- A better image and greater customer satisfaction: 81% of consumers favour using a company which takes on apprentices.
- 83% of employers rely on their Apprenticeships programme to provide the skilled workers that they need for the future.

(Research conducted in January 2008 by Populus on behalf of the Learning Skills Council)

There is a national minimum wage for apprentices and as long as you meet this you can decide on the wage you pay your apprentice. The salary should be appropriate to the job and employers have told us that when they pay higher salaries this does tend to have a greater impact on their business. You can always review salary during the Apprenticeship as your apprentices skills develop.

An apprentice must be in paid employment for at least 30 hours per week. If you do not need a full-time apprentice then we can discuss other options, including job sharing with another employer in your industry sector.

Once you've employed an apprentice

Whether the apprentice is an existing employee or new to your company there are a number of details that we have to cover with you to get your apprentice started.

There will be some paperwork to complete and we will also carry out a health and safety check on your premises. We will compile an individual training plan for your apprentice and visit them regularly to assess them carrying out their duties. All these visits will be during working time and at a time that is convenient for you and the needs of your business.

Employer's role

- To help apprentices develop their knowledge and skills by providing a wide range of learning and training opportunities
- Allow apprentices to attend off-the-job training sessions at the agreed times
- Help apprentices put into practice what they have learnt during off-the-job training sessions
- Give apprentices time in the workplace to compile their portfolio of evidence
- Initiate a meeting with us if you have any concerns about any aspect of the training delivery
- Attend and give input at your apprentices progress reviews

You will have obligations under the Working Time Regulations with regards to rest breaks and paid holidays, safeguarding and the usual health and safety obligations in-line with all other members of your staff.

How much will the training cost?

If the apprentice you employ is aged 16-18 the Government will fund 100% of the Apprenticeship training cost so you only pay their salary. If they are aged 19 or over the training is part-funded so you will need to make a contribution towards the costs.

The contribution towards training for a 19+ apprentice will be discussed with you at the initial meeting. Payments are very flexible so please don't let this put you off. We can look at contributions other than cash to help you reduce the costs. We'll discuss options with you to find the optimum, most cost-effective solution for you.

How long does the Apprenticeship take to complete?

The Apprenticeship programme usually takes 12-24 months to complete, dependent on the level and the framework being followed. In all cases it will be a minimum of 12 months.

How does the on-the-job and off-the-job training work?

The majority of your apprentices' time is spent in the workplace but they will be required to attend off-the-job training throughout their Apprenticeship programme. The off-the-job training could be at Harlow College or on your premises but away from the apprentices usual place of work. Depending on the type of framework that your apprentice is completing, they may need to attend college one day a week but for some frameworks it will be less than this. We will always try to set up a flexible training plan that meets your needs.

You are also responsible for paying your apprentices' wages. Apprentices need a contract of employment which must cover the duration of the Apprenticeship. Apprentices cannot be self-employed or sub-contractors.

Facts & Myths

How much should you pay an apprentice?

There is an Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage (NMW) which applies to all 16-18 year-olds and to those aged 19 and over in the first year of their Apprenticeship (this reverts to the full national minimum wage for 19+ in any second year of their Apprenticeship). The current rate is £2.73 per hour (at October 2014) and is subject to an annual review. You not only pay for the time that the apprentice is in the workplace but also for the time they are away from the business completing relevant training.

This means that an apprentice working 37 hours a week (including training time) will currently earn a minimum of £101.01 (at October 2014), although the majority of employers, of course, pay above this and we encourage you to do the same.

More information can be found in the employment section of the Directgov website: www.direct.gov.uk



What happens after the Apprenticeship?

Most apprentices stay with their employer after the completion of their Apprenticeship, so your investment will result in a committed and valuable workforce.

There is no obligation to renew their contract after the end of their Apprenticeship.

At a Glance

Apprenticeship frameworks currently available at Harlow College

- Bricklaying
- Business Administration
- Carpentry & Joinery - Site Carpentry & Bench Joinery
- Chef & Hospitality Services
- Childcare Learning & Development
- Customer Service
- Electrical Installation
- Engineering
- Hairdressing
- Health & Social Care
- IT - User, Practitioner & Web Design
- Maintenance
- Motor Vehicle Maintenance & Repair
- Painting & Decorating
- Retail
- Sales & Telesales
- Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools
- Team Leader
- Warehouse & Distribution

If you don't see what you need here, then please talk to us.

We are always looking at ways of expanding our offer to suit the needs of businesses and we would welcome hearing from you to discuss your organisation's needs.

Address future skills gaps

Proven way to train your workforce

Programmes are designed around the needs of your business

Recruitment service is provided by Harlow College free of charge

Existing employees can be up-skilled with an Apprenticeship

Nationally recognised qualifications are achieved

Training brings new ideas into your workforce

Investment in your company's future

Cost effective way of growing your own workforce

Experienced industry professionals deliver your apprentices training



Why choose Harlow College?

Our dedicated Apprenticeship team

Harlow College has a great deal of experience in training apprentices and can handle everything from the first enquiry through to completion of the Apprenticeship framework. We pride ourselves on the support we give to our apprentices. We want to be sure they're focused and progressing well - we never forget they're human beings and our support network is second to none.

We're now well above the national benchmarks for Apprenticeships.

- **Harlow College Overall Success Rate 83%** (national average 71%)

Our tutors and staff are experts in their respective fields and routinely keep up to date with the latest technologies and working practices. The College also boasts excellent up-to-date and fully resourced workshop and classroom facilities. Apprentices learn in simulated environments, with real equipment.

Apprenticeship frameworks are highly flexible, so never think you can't get what you need, and as your business evolves, so can the training programme. Our flexibility allows us to deliver training nationally.

We recognise that no two businesses will have the same needs. Hence our consultancy planning service will focus on your specific business needs. There's no obligation - we will help you explore your options.

If you would like to receive more information about a particular Apprenticeship scheme that would be suitable for your company or have any other queries that have not been covered in this booklet please don't hesitate to contact us.



RAY HAWKINS

**Applied Scintillation Technologies,
Operations Director**

"Apprenticeships offer an opportunity for people to gain valuable experience, skills and a better understanding of the variety of engineering and manufacturing processes in the industry. Working with Harlow College has improved our training with a good cross section of theory and practical skills and has presented us with the employees of the future."



PAIGE TENNISON Harlow College Higher Apprentice

"I completed an intermediate Apprenticeship with Harlow College and this gave me the opportunity to try all different routes in engineering, which was a great opportunity for me. I went on to complete an Advanced Apprenticeship and I am now completing a Higher Apprenticeship with AST and I am really enjoying it! My Apprenticeship has given me everything I need to be successful, a mixture of work and learning and the College and AST have supported me all the way."

Harlow College is a leading provider of Apprenticeships to local and national businesses.

Maximising Apprenticeship opportunities for employers and young people.

To find out more

about how an apprentice can benefit your business and how Harlow College can make it happen, please contact the Business Development Team.

call: **01279 867469** or email: **business@harlow-college.ac.uk**