



University of
Lancashire

Employer Guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships



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Welcome to the University

Foreword

Welcome to the Employer Guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships for the University of Lancashire. As you delve into the pages of this guide, you'll discover a wealth of information about our innovative approach to education. With over 30 diverse Degree Apprenticeship standards and a vibrant community of over 2,000 learners, our commitment to shaping the next generation of professionals is unwavering.

Beyond the numbers, we take immense pride in the transformative journey we've undertaken. The University of Lancashire is the international, multi-campus University tracing its roots back to 1828, and we lead the way in modern learning today.

Our dedication to progress is exemplified by the remarkable revitalisation of our Preston Campus. In 2021 we opened our state-of-the-art Student Centre and University Square, showcasing our commitment to student wellbeing. It also signified the culmination of our £200m Masterplan project, which set out a vision to create a unified, sustainable and welcoming campus in Preston. From the cutting-edge Student Centre to the state-of-the-art Engineering Innovation Centre (EIC), our

campus has been designed to inspire creativity, foster collaboration, and facilitate learning. Social spaces provide not just relaxation, but opportunities for networking and ideas exchange.

If you're looking for an inclusive community, on and off campus, with second-to-none student support, Burnley could be the perfect place for your apprentice. Because we keep our class sizes small, they will be part of a close-knit family of students, tutors, and staff. Our buildings are bright and spacious, and our facilities are cutting-edge. But we're much more than a university campus. Burnley is where academic excellence meets real-life experience and expertise. And it's the place where students, businesses and local people team up to work, learn and grow together. And it's the place to become someone, somewhere that matters.

This encapsulates the essence of our dedication to providing a holistic educational experience that goes beyond textbooks and classrooms. We invite you to explore the exciting avenues that our Degree Apprenticeship programmes and transformed campus have to offer. Your journey starts here, and we're excited to be a part of it.



Our colleagues

One of the key strengths of our Degree Apprenticeship programmes lies in the calibre of our academic staff. We take pride in ensuring that our students are guided by professionals who possess a unique blend of industry experience and academic excellence. This first-hand experience enriches their teaching by infusing real-world anecdotes, practical case studies, and industry-specific insights into the curriculum. As a result, our students gain insights that go beyond textbooks, equipping them with the practical know-how that is essential in today's rapidly evolving business landscape.

Beyond their industry experience, our academic staff are committed to advancing knowledge and contributing to contemporary business thinking through rigorous research. The research undertaken by our academic staff is incorporated into their teaching methods, facilitating evidence-based practice, ensuring that the concepts discussed in the classroom are not just theoretical, but are grounded in empirical findings and practical applications.

Our Mission, Vision and Values

Our Mission

We believe in helping people to seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work and for life.

We are innovative by nature

Combining academic excellence with real-world teaching, we give our people the skills and experience industry needs. That's why our talented graduates are in such high demand across the world. We champion social mobility, working with under-represented groups to ensure that everyone with the potential to succeed at university can do so. Whoever you are, wherever you are in life, there's always a way.

Our Vision

We transform lives by delivering an outstanding educational experience, creating prosperity and opportunity in the communities we serve.

Our Values

Our values reflect who we are as a university and what we stand for. They define the things that are most important to us and nurture a sense of shared purpose. They reflect our ambitious nature, inspire us to constantly improve and to enrich the lives of our students, our colleagues, and the communities we serve.

Achieving Together

We achieve our ambitions through teamwork and collaboration.

Being Proud

We take responsibility for and professional pride in the quality of our work.

Creating Opportunity

We proactively create and seize every opportunity to flourish in education, at work and for life.

Supporting All

Everyone matters. We show support, respect and compassion for our students, colleagues and communities.

Introduction to the Apprenticeship

In today's workforce, staying competitive means having a skilled and adaptable team that not only meets industry standards but also aligns seamlessly with your organisation's needs. This is where Degree Apprenticeships come into play, offering a revolutionary approach to cultivating a workforce that thrives.

Degree Apprenticeships enable learners to gain a qualification while they work, combining academic study at university with on-the-job training. On completion of a Degree Apprenticeship the learner is awarded an undergraduate or postgraduate degree. The programme can take one to six years to complete, depending on the course level.

The learner will spend about 20% of their time studying (six hours per week) and 80% of their time working. This is known as off-the-job training. The total amount of off the job hours will vary and will be detailed in the individualised training plan. This involves structured learning that takes place away from the apprentice's day-to-day job responsibilities. This training is designed to complement the practical experience gained at work and can encompass various activities, such as: attending lectures, workshops, and seminars related to the apprenticeship programme.

An integral aspect of the apprenticeship journey is the End Point Assessment (EPA). This assessment serves as a final evaluation of the apprentice's competencies, marking the culmination of their learning journey. Designed in collaboration with industry experts, EPAs are structured to accurately gauge the apprentice's readiness to excel in their field. This final step provides an objective validation of the skills acquired, validating the immense growth and transformation that the apprentices undergo.

At the core of our apprenticeship programmes lies a commitment to excellence. Our offerings are not only comprehensive but also recognised and accredited by the Professional Statutory

Regulatory Body (PSRB). This alignment ensures that the curriculum is meticulously designed to adhere to the specific requirements of the respective fields, guaranteeing that the skills and knowledge acquired are in line with industry standards.

Apprenticeships are co-designed by groups of employers, professional bodies, and Higher Education Providers (HEP), collectively known as Trailblazers. Trailblazers propose the Apprenticeship Standard, the Assessment Plan, and the EPA.

This Trailblazer approach results in a fully bespoke programme specifically for apprentices, which delivers and tests both academic learning and on-the-job training. An apprenticeship cannot run until Skills England (formally known as the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education - IfATE) fully approves the Standard, the Assessment Plan, the EPA arrangements and until the funding band is confirmed.

Apprenticeships Standards

Each occupation will now have its Apprenticeship Standard linked to a specific occupational level. The new Trailblazer apprenticeships defined by these new standards are rigorous, challenging, and require the apprentice to complete on-programme training and learning to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours. The programme is for a minimum of one year and leads to an End Point Assessment.

Towards the end of the apprenticeship, employers, providers, and apprentices will 'sign off' the apprentice as ready for the End Point Assessment – this is known as the 'Gateway'. This indicates that

both the employer, provider and apprentice believe the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours meet the levels required to attain an apprenticeship.

Several approaches are used for the Gateway, including qualifications, interviews, and a portfolio of work. The assessment plan will specify the approach for that standard.

In the future there will be changes to the model of continuous assessment. It's one of the most significant changes to apprenticeships. The assessment organisation and the assessor must be independent of and separate from the provider and employer's training.

To gain a deeper understanding of these Apprenticeship Standards and their implications for your organisation's growth, we encourage you to explore further at:
Apprenticeship search / Skills England

Additional support for apprentices

We are dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment, particularly for apprentices who may be facing various challenges such as stress, learning difficulties, disabilities, or other barriers to learning. The University recognises the importance of creating opportunities for all individuals to thrive and succeed in their educational journey, regardless of their circumstances.

We offer a comprehensive range of learning support services tailored to meet the unique needs of each apprentice. These services are designed to

help individuals overcome their challenges and make the most of their learning experience. If an apprentice requires additional support during their working day, whether due to a disability, medical condition, or any other specific need, we take the initiative to communicate with the employer. This collaborative approach ensures that the apprentice receives the required support in both the academic and workplace settings.

Whether an apprentice is dealing with a medical condition, a social need, or any other obstacle that might hinder their learning journey, the University steps in to provide the necessary resources, accommodations, and extra time as needed. All learners will also have access to the Wellbeing team offering support such as free counselling. We are committed to ensuring that each apprentice can succeed to the best of their abilities.

Further details on this can be discussed at your Apprenticeship Educator's first visit.

English and maths development

The eligibility criteria for Degree Apprenticeships can vary depending on the specific programme. For a comprehensive understanding of the eligibility requirements for each course, we encourage you to visit the course pages on our website.

However, it is a common requirement for all prospective degree apprentices to possess GCSEs in maths and English at Grade C/4 or an equivalent qualification, such as Level 2 functional skills. We understand that some candidates might not meet this criteria. In such cases, certain courses may offer the opportunity to attain these qualifications during the Degree Apprenticeship.

Functional Skills Guidance for Degree Apprentices

Functional skills in English and maths are essential for success in academic pursuits and professional advancement. The University is committed to ensuring that every apprenticeship programme has a solid foundation in these skills to benefit learners in their chosen profession.

Key Points:

Importance of Functional Skills:

Strong communication and numeracy skills are paramount for success in today's workplace. Proficiency in English supports effective collaboration and presentation, while numeracy underpins critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Initial Assessment: All apprentices undergo an Initial Assessment to evaluate their current competency levels. This assessment informs personalised learning plans to identify skill gaps and ensure continuous improvement.

Diagnostic Assessment: A detailed diagnostic assessment goes beyond the Initial Assessment, providing a comprehensive understanding of learners' strengths and weaknesses in skill components. Based on this assessment, the BKSb platform generates a personalised learning plan that specifically targets areas for improvement, ensuring apprentices receive focused support to address skill gaps.

Ongoing Development: We offer various resources and support mechanisms to facilitate ongoing development in functional skills, including WISER sessions, BKSb resources, LinkedIn learning, and integration of occupational-relevant skills into the degree curriculum.

Guidance and Support: Our dedicated team of Apprentice Educators provides guidance and support to apprentices throughout their journey, including regular progress review meetings to track development and set goals collaboratively.

The University recognises the importance of functional skills in empowering degree apprentices to excel academically and professionally. Through our comprehensive guidance and support, we aim to equip apprentices with the essential skills needed to thrive in their careers and beyond.

Where a professional body, statutory regulator, or EPAO requires Level 2 Maths and/or English, learners will be expected to complete the qualification before progressing through Gateway

Level 2 Functional Skills Qualification

In line with revised DfE guidance effective from February 2025, the University no longer requires Level 2 Maths and English as a blanket entry requirement for Level 4 and above apprenticeships. Entry requirements are now determined based on the occupational role and in agreement with the employer.

Where a professional body, statutory regulator, or End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) requires Level 2 qualifications, or where the employer specifies them, learners will be required to study Functional Skills in Maths, English, or both. This will be delivered through our partnership with Training 2000, which provides comprehensive online courses and support.

Learners not initially meeting Level 2 requirements may still be enrolled, provided no external body mandates them. In such cases, studying Functional Skills during the apprenticeship is optional, subject to agreement and support from the employer.

Learners will be allocated to either the short course option or the full course option. **The short course** consists of short revision sessions before sitting the exam. **The full course**, for English, 15 sessions and Maths 17 sessions

Learners will be allocated to the appropriate course based on BKSb Initial Assessment (IA) result and further assessment if necessary.

Learners who have scored between 1.0 and 2.5 on the BKSb IA will go directly to **the full course**.

Learners who have scored 2.6 and above should be invited to a secondary group assessment live on Teams to determine their current working level. If the Tutor deems their working level accurate, they can be invited to **the short course** assuming the learner is confident that the short course is appropriate for them. If a learner is deemed working at a level below the requirement, then they will be invited to the full course.

If a learner scores **below 1.0** on the BKSb IA, they may not yet be ready to work toward a Level 2 qualification unless required by the employer or professional body. We will support the learner to undertake extra activities on BKSb to raise their score to between 1.0 and 2.5. Once they have achieved this, they can progress to complete the full course.

Maintaining Quality and Compliance

Aspect	Responsible body
Overall accountability for the policy of Apprenticeships, the apprenticeship levy, adult skills and careers advice	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) - The UK government is transferring responsibility for apprenticeships and adult skills policy from the Department for Education (DfE) to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). The change was confirmed in September 2025
Apprenticeship standards development, review, and approval	Skills England- (formally known as Institute for Apprentices and Technical Education - IfATE)
Quality of training provision	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsed)
Quality of qualifications in Register of Regulated Qualifications	Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)
Standards of higher education qualifications awarded by degree awarding bodies	Office for Students (OfS)

Accountabilities of bodies

Each of these bodies has a responsibility to ensure value for money when spending public funds. Each body should discharge its duties in line with Managing Public Money and the terms set out in its framework document.

The Department for Education (DfE) has overall accountability for the apprenticeship programme and all aspects of apprenticeships policy and strategy. This includes overall programme governance and operational management of the apprenticeship funding system. Specific functions include operation of the Apprenticeship Service, the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers and the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations, and the funding and auditing of training providers.

The Department is also responsible, where appropriate, for ensuring appropriate and effective governance arrangements are in place with organisations that have a role in the apprenticeships system in England.

Skills England will work to form a coherent national picture of where skills gaps exist and how they can be addressed, working closely with the Industrial Strategy Council and the Migration Advisory Committee unify the skills landscape to ensure that the workforce is equipped with the skills needed to power economic growth, by bringing together Mayoral Combined Authorities and other key local partners, large and small businesses, training providers and unions shape technical education to respond to skills needs, including identifying the training accessible via the Growth and Skills Levy advise on the highly trained workforce needed to deliver a clear, long-term plan for the future economy.

It is accountable for designing and operating approvals and review processes for standards and assessment plans (having regard to the policy criteria set by the Department), and for advising employers on the policy and process for developing standards and End Point Assessments. This includes ensuring all End Point Assessment delivery is quality assured against the requirements set out in its External Quality Assurance (EQA) Framework.

Skills England are also responsible for advising the government on the funding bands for new and existing occupational standards, ensuring that the design of occupational standards and funding band recommendations represent good value for money.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) became responsible in April 2021 for the inspection of apprenticeship provision at all levels. This was recommended in the Review of Post-18 Education and Funding 2019 External, to ensure consistent judgements and approaches across the provision. This means that Ofsted will inspect all apprenticeship training at registered OfS providers and will report its judgements to the (DfE) and the OfS.

The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) is accountable for the regulation of qualifications, examinations, and assessments in England. Where qualifications which are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications are included in an apprenticeship, they will be subject to Ofqual regulation. External Quality Assurance (EQA) of most Apprenticeship End Point Assessments (except for integrated Degree Apprenticeships) is currently moving to Ofqual from other EQA providers. When this transition is complete Ofqual will have responsibility for delivery of EQA, against the Institute's EQA Framework for most occupational standards.

Ofqual will monitor the quality of apprenticeship assessment delivery, rectify issues, and take regulatory or enforcement action where appropriate. Ofqual regulates the End Point Assessments in accordance with its General Conditions of Recognition and its End Point Assessment's specific Qualification Level Conditions. The Institute retains strategic oversight of the EQA system and the Institute's Quality Assurance Committee will maintain oversight of relevant regulatory activity.

The Office for Students (OfS) is the independent statutory regulator of higher education in England. The OfS aims to ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers. This encompasses apprentices on higher education courses at OfS registered providers. The OfS's approach to regulation is underpinned by the functions, duties and powers given to it in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA).

The OfS regulates the higher education provision of providers who are registered on the OfS Register. Training providers wishing to join, and remain, on the OfS Register must meet the conditions of registration, as set out in the OfS's regulatory framework.

The OfS retains oversight of the degree element of degree apprenticeships, focusing on the external quality assurance of integrated degree apprenticeships where the end-point assessment is the degree.

In performing its quality and standards assessment functions, the OfS seeks advice from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in its role as the designated body for quality in England.

Tripartite reviews

Tripartite reviews are conducted between the apprentice, employer and the University to ensure that all parties are clear on the apprentice's progress towards the targets set out in their apprentice training plan.

Tripartite reviews will be held at least every 10-12 weeks throughout the Degree Apprenticeship programme and apprentices and employers are required to engage with each review. A summary of each tripartite review will be agreed with all parties and documented in the apprentice's file and should include any areas of concern and the actions agreed to address these areas of concern ready to be monitored through subsequent reviews. As an employer, we require your full support to provide feedback through our 12-week Tripartite review meetings.

Employer feedback

We encourage your feedback to ensure we deliver high quality apprenticeship programmes and continually improve. As an employer you have two opportunities to share your experiences with the University:

- 1 You have the opportunity to feedback through the Apprenticeship Service employer account and the findings from all our employers are presented on the GOV.UK external website - see link - **University of Lancashire - training provider (education.gov.uk)**
- 2 The University collaborates with an external provider to collate your feedback on an annual basis to identify areas of strengths and areas for improvement to inform our self-assessment processes.

Employer complaints

We are committed to providing a high quality experience for all our customers through our teaching and range of professional support services. We encourage a positive environment in which informal contact and feedback from customers, which includes apprentices, their employers/placement providers and commercial customers, is welcomed and where complaints can be dealt with effectively.

In the event of a complaint relating to the delivery of the apprenticeship programme, the employer may contact the Training Providers complaints representative, as follows:

Student Casework Team
Title: Academic Registry
Email: studentcasework@lancashire.ac.uk
Telephone: 01772 896401
Postal Address: Academic Registry, University of Lancashire, Preston, PR1 2HE
www.lancashire.ac.uk/legal/complaints

Employer commitment

Workplace policies

There are some important policies your business will need in order to be compliant with British law. These are:

- Equal opportunities
- Health and safety
- Equality and diversity
- Discipline/dismissal and grievance

Effective business policies must be specific and clear about what colleagues need to do. They should also be appropriate to your business and represent the organisational goals.

Contract of employment

The apprentice must have a contract of employment that covers the entire apprenticeship including the EPA period. This will be individual for each apprentice and requires confirming at the enrolment meeting. The provider, or the employer, must not ask the apprentice to contribute financially to the eligible costs of training, on-programme or end-point assessment. This includes both where the individual has completed the apprenticeship successfully or has left the programme early (this includes where they have left the employer).

Probationary periods

The probationary period will be for a fixed amount of time, and the length should reflect the role, the same as any other employee. There is no fixed timescale for a probationary period. Most standard probationary periods are three months, however, for senior roles there can be a six months' probationary period.

A probationary period can only be used for new employees as a clause at the start of the employment relationship. At the end of the probationary period, you should either confirm the employee's employment, extend the probationary period, or terminate their employment.

An organisation can only extend a probationary period, to allow more time to assess the new employee's performance and suitability, if it forms part of the employment contract. Should it be deemed as the necessary action, then it should be set out in writing stating the reasons for the extension, the areas which need to be addressed and setting targets, with a revised probationary review date.

Working time regulations

Full-time: At least 30 hours per week.

Part-time: Can be agreed upon with the employer, but must be at least 16 hours per week.

Time spent training: Both on-the-job and off-the-job training time counts towards the weekly hour total and must be paid.

Conditions of employment

You must offer apprentices the same conditions as other employees working at similar grades or in similar roles. The apprentice must be included in the PAYE scheme declared in the apprenticeship service account. This includes:

- Paid holidays
- Sick pay
- Benefits such as childcare voucher schemes
- Support such as coaching or mentoring

Minimum wage

The apprentice must be receiving at least minimum wage in line with the national minimum wage requirements. Existing employees cannot have their wages reduced.

Change of circumstances

As the employer, you must inform and provide evidence to the University of any changes to the apprentice's working pattern, if the apprentice leaves their employment or is made redundant. For further information see 'When something changes' on page 23.

Health and Safety

Employers are responsible by law to ensure the Health and Safety of all employees. From the first day of employment, you must consider the job role of your apprentice(s) and assess the potential risks and hazards associated with the environment they are working in, and be supported by ongoing information and training, this will have been discussed prior to the apprenticeship and will be ongoing during employment.



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. It is about protecting vulnerable individuals by offering support, guidance, early intervention, and a collective responsibility of signposting to support services.

We endeavour to ensure that our institution is a safe, cohesive, and inclusive place to study, to work and to visit, and to create a community based on mutual respect, tolerance, and dignity for all.

As part of our safeguarding work, as an HE institution, we have a statutory responsibility under UK law to have due regard to prevent people being drawn into terrorism, the Prevent duty. Educating our students about the risks of radicalisation and extremism is a key objective of our safeguarding work to ensure that they recognise and respond to concerns and know how to access support.

Our work in all aspects of safeguarding, including Prevent, is linked to wellbeing, protection from harm, cohesion, and support, underpinned by the following values:

Individual liberty

- Freedom of speech for all
- The right to make our own choices
- Confidence to be yourself

Mutual respect

- Treating others as you want to be treated
- Respect for each other
- Respect for differences
- Working together tolerance
- Learning about different faiths and cultures
- Listen to other viewpoints
- Learning about diversity

Democracy

- Making decisions together
- The right to an opinion/voice

The rule of law

- Understanding rules and why they are important
- Following rules to develop order

Harrasment and sexual misconduct

While Condition E6 is a requirement for universities, not employers, universities are obligated to implement it by taking steps to prevent and respond to harassment and sexual misconduct. Employers must comply with its requirements by providing training, clear policies, and accessible support for students and staff, and by banning non-disclosure agreements in cases of harassment. Employers have a responsibility to support universities by:

- Ensuring staff and students understand harassment and sexual misconduct through training.
- Providing a comprehensive source of information about harassment policies.
- Implementing clear reporting and investigation procedures for harassment claims.
- Protecting students from abuse of power, including banning intimate relationships between staff and students.
- Restricting the use of non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) to prevent victims from speaking out about harassment.



Equality, diversity and inclusion

Employers have a duty to comply with all current and future UK legislation and statutory responsibilities. This means that employers should take the necessary steps to ensure their apprentices are always safe. This is not restricted to the workplace but extends to any problems outside of work which may affect the apprentice. If a safeguarding issue is identified, it should be acted upon without delay in accordance with UK law.

Our employers are required to familiarise themselves with relevant government legislation and to ensure that they take appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means in practice at their workplace. Our employers should also have their own safeguarding policy of which apprentices should be made aware.

Employer safeguarding:
safeguarding guide for employers

Equality and diversity

We recognise and value individual difference and have a public duty to promote equality and remove discrimination in relation to race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, and age. As an employer, we expect you to work with us to allow the learner(s) to:

- based on mutual respect and tolerance where all learners feel safe, valued, and supported
- contribute to creating a positive environment where discrimination does not exist

Funding and contracts

While the cost of an Apprenticeship will vary, the funding has been designed to make it easy and affordable for employers to sign up:

If you pay the Apprenticeship Levy, you can put your contributions towards the course costs

If you do not pay the levy or have insufficient contributions, the government will pay at least 95% of the cost

For a full list of eligibility criteria please visit:
Apprenticeship funding rules for employers - Annex A: Eligibility criteria (who we fund) - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Levy payers

If your wage bill is more than £3 million you can put your levy contributions towards the cost of a Degree Apprenticeship.

If your apprenticeship levy pot covers the course costs, you will not need to make any additional payments. If the pot has been exhausted, the government will pay at least 95% of the fees.

Employers and training providers could get £1,000 each for taking on an apprentice who is either:

- aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- aged 19 to 25 years old and has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has been in the care of their local authority

Non-levy payers – co-investment

In the circumstances below the government will fund all of the apprenticeship training and assessment costs, up to the funding band maximum of the apprenticeship.

Employers who do not pay the levy, if at the start of their apprenticeship training the apprentice is aged between 16 and 21 years old (or 15 years of age if the apprentice's 16th birthday is between the last Friday of June and 31 August)

Employers who do not pay the levy and have fewer than 50 employees, if at the start of their

apprenticeship training the apprentice is aged between 22 and 24 years old and has either an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan provided by their local authority and / or has been in the care of their local authority care of their local authority.

If your wage bill is less than £3 million the government will pay at least 95% of tuition fees for any apprentice. We can work with you to develop a payment plan to spread the 5% cost of the Degree Apprenticeship over the duration of the Degree Apprenticeship.

- There is a requirement to set up an Apprenticeship Service Account to reserve the 95% funding.

Employers and training providers could get £1,000 each for taking on an apprentice who is either:

- aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- aged 19 to 25 years old and has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has been in the care of their local authority

Levy transfer

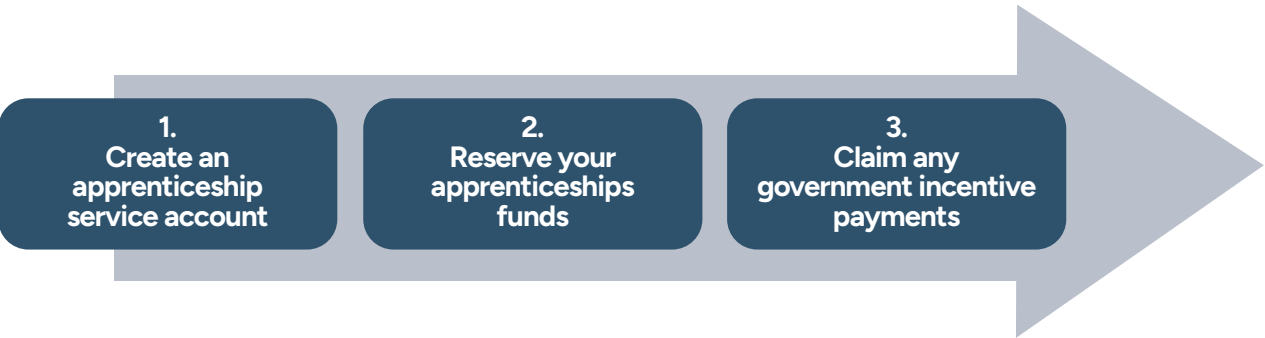
We can help facilitate the transfer of unutilised funds from large organisations' apprenticeship levy to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Large organisations that are unable to utilise their levy can transfer it to SMEs, ensuring that the funds do not get lost and returned to the government. If you are successful in securing a levy transfer, the cost of the Degree Apprenticeship will be completely free. You can contact www.gov.uk/guidance/receive-a-levy-transfer-from-another-business-to-fund-an-apprenticeship for more information.

Once a transfer has been approved by the sending employer, receiving employers will have 6 weeks to accept these funds. If no action is taken, then the transfer funds will no longer be available – receiving employers would then have to apply for a new transfer should this funding still be required.

If the receiving employer has accepted these funds (within the 6 weeks), then they will have 3 months to use these funds, by linking the funds to an approved apprenticeship record. If no action is taken, then the transfer funds will no longer be available – receiving employers would then have to apply for a new transfer should this funding still be required.



Apprenticeship Levy



The set up

You need to create an Apprenticeship account, then you'll be able to get funding to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment costs.

You'll use your account to:

- access and manage apprenticeship funding
- receive a transfer of apprenticeship funds where eligible
- advertise vacancies on find an apprenticeship
- choose an apprenticeship training course
- find a training provider
- select suitable End Point Assessment organisations
- give feedback on apprenticeship training
- give training providers permission to carry out some tasks on your behalf

Details required prior to setting up the Apprenticeship Service Account - www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds#before-setting-up-your-apprenticeship-service-account

Set up the Apprenticeship Service Account - accounts.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk

Employer Incentives

There may be apprenticeship incentives available to you when you employ an apprentice. However, the eligibility can vary depending on several factors such as employer location, size and previous apprentices employed. Please check with your Business Development Officer for the latest employer incentives.

These relate to:

- Small businesses with less than 50 employees
- Employers taking on 16-18 year-old apprentices

Click the link below for more details:

www.lancashire.ac.uk/business/training-and-development/apprenticeship-levy

Apprenticeship Training Services Agreements

Apprenticeship Training Services Agreement (contract)

We will ask all apprenticeship employers to complete an Apprenticeship Training Services Agreement (ATSA) that will detail the employer and University's responsibilities concerning the apprenticeship, legal terms of the agreement and details of the programme and the payment schedule (where relevant). This will also detail sub-contracting details, if applicable.

This ATSA must be completed and agreed before the apprenticeship can commence. Your allocated Business Development Officer will help you to get this setup.

Training Plan – all parties

An apprenticeship training plan contains in-depth details about the programme length including End Point Assessment and content. It also ensures the commitment of all parties to the apprenticeship programme, the role and responsibilities of the employer, learner and the University.

Apprenticeship agreement - between the employer and apprentice

An apprenticeship agreement must be signed at the start of the apprenticeship, or if there are a change to circumstances, eg. extensions/past planned end date as this must cover the whole duration of time on programme. It is used to confirm individual employment arrangements between the apprentice and the employer.

You must sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice.

This gives details of:

- the name of the apprenticeship they're working towards
- the start and end dates, for practical learning period and for End Point Assessment for the apprenticeship
- the planned off the job hours

Support for employers and apprentices

As an employer, you and your learner(s) will be supported by key contacts, these are:

- Apprenticeship lead
- Course leader(s)
- Teaching staff
- Apprentice Educator (AE)*

In addition, your learner will have access to a wide range of information and support through our student support services. We strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with the services available to support your apprentice/s.

We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for its apprentices by aiming to ensure that all learners achieve their academic potential, and that no learner is disadvantaged because of a disability when applying to and/or studying with us. Learners who have disclosed a disability and/or learning difficulty will be provided a Disability & Inclusive Support Advisor, who will review the impacts on their learning, and will assess reasonable adjustments and support. Any support need can be disclosed or reviewed at any point during the duration of their learning. Explore further at: www.lancashire.ac.uk/support/disability.

The role of a workplace mentor is to support apprentices to embed the learning undertaken at the University within the workplace, they will share their knowledge and expertise. The individual may be your apprentice's line manager or a designated colleague with relevant experience. They will provide feedback on their progress and create opportunities for the apprentice to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and behaviours.

*The term educator will be profession specific, for example workplace tutor, coordinator, mentor, assessor, supervisor, and practice tutor.

Apprenticeship Educator

We encourage line managers to engage with the apprenticeship educator to explore how to facilitate opportunities for your apprentice(s) to undertake any relevant off-the-job training. It is expected that every 12 weeks, unless there is justification for an agreed exception on the training plan, tripartite progress reviews take place.

The apprenticeship, University staff member, will also work with your apprentice and their line manager to measure the quantity and quality of their off-the-job training. This is to ensure it meets the needs of both the apprentice and the apprenticeship standard.

Off-the-job training is defined as 'learning that takes place outside the normal day-to-day working environment.' The training must be relevant to the apprenticeship standard, and could include:

- mentoring sessions with a senior colleague
- shadowing experienced staff in a similar role
- completing project/assignment work
- attending industry specific workshops/seminars/competitions
- networking with other apprentices to share good practice
- roleplay or simulation of workplace situations
- writing a reflective account of a workplace experience
- attending training sessions on key industry topics

OneFile

OneFile's learning software is the e-portfolio solution to support the learner journey for employers and learners. It has all the features you need to deliver, manage, and track apprenticeships from initial assessment to the gateway.

Off-the-job training

All apprentices must conduct their off the job learning within their contracted working hours of their contracted hours allocated for off-the-job training. For example, learning undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working practice and that leads towards achievement in the apprenticeship must occur during the apprentice's paid working hours. It can be delivered either in the workplace or at University, depending on the subject studied. It is the learner's responsibility to keep their OneFile timesheets continually up to date.

Your Business Development Officer will agree this with you before the programme begins.

Recording off-the-job training

The recording of the off-the-job training measures learner progress against the taught elements and the relevant standard. OneFile plays a significant part in helping both you and your learner(s) to measure progress.

Engagement with OneFile, the gathering and storage of evidence over time, is vital to learner performance in the final part of the journey, the End Point Assessment.

Here are some good examples of how to implement off-the-job training in your company:

Apprenticeships: off-the-job training - GOV.UK
(www.gov.uk)

Work-based projects

Work-based projects are an important element of our apprenticeship programmes. They provide a valuable opportunity for apprentices to apply academic knowledge to real-life situations and demonstrate a range of skills and behaviours as outlined in the apprenticeship standards.

A work-based project will be agreed between the apprentice, employer and University and will provide apprentices with an opportunity to give a valuable contribution to their organisation. Projects might resolve a particular issue within the business or develop a new process, product, or procedure in the workplace. The project should be something new and not business as usual.

Employers are encouraged to help apprentices to identify a suitable project which will add value back into the organisation.

Apprentices will develop a detailed insight into their organisation and work collaboratively with colleagues, mentors, and project supervisors at the University. Employers are asked to support apprentices during their work-based projects, providing access to relevant people, information, and resources.

Attendance

Learners undertaking a Degree Apprenticeship are expected to have 100% attendance at all timetabled sessions, including online or hybrid delivery where agreed, unless prior approval has been granted by the employer. Attendance is centrally monitored, and where a learner has one unexplained absence, they will receive communications to check on their welfare/improve their attendance. If no response is received and absence continues, the employer will be notified. If a two-week period of zero attendance occurs, a formal review will be initiated, and the learner will be contacted again along with the employer. If non-attendance continues for six weeks, the learner be referred to a Student Attendance Board to consider withdrawal from the programme, following consultation by the Dean of School with the Apprenticeship Educators. Unexplained absence may be treated as a potential safeguarding concern and will be escalated in line with institutional safeguarding procedures. In addition, Apprentice Educators will monitor engagement including the recording of off-the-job hours via OneFile. Failure to evidence engagement in learning for two consecutive calendar months will result in the apprentice being placed on a Break in Learning in accordance with the DfE Apprenticeship Funding Rules

The 12-week tripartite review

A work based educator assigned to your apprentice(s) will conduct a review of progress, every 12 weeks. The review will take place between the apprentice, work based educator, and workplace mentor/line manager. The aim of these tripartite meetings is to review academic progress and progress against the knowledge, skills, and behaviours in the apprenticeship standards. Knowledge will be delivered through formal lectures, skills and behaviours are developed and evidenced in the workplace. In these reviews, the work based educator will encourage you and your apprentice(s) to identify opportunities to apply and demonstrate skills and behaviours in the workplace. They may also encourage the apprentice/s to develop this skill in their work-based projects, steering them towards a project that is outside of their role and comfort zone, and making the necessary connections to allow them to do so.

A typical review will cover:

- academic progress
- work-based progress
- changes in circumstances
- support requirements
- health and safety in the workplace
- safeguarding
- British values
- Prevent
- employer feedback
- learner feedback
- targets for the next 12 weeks

Gateway and End Point Assessments

Your apprentice is working on a programme tailored to meet the criteria of the apprenticeship standard. All apprenticeship standards contain an occupational profile (providing an overview of the role and any specific responsibilities), and will list the knowledge, skills, and behaviours that are to be developed and evidenced as part of the Apprenticeship programme:

- knowledge (knows and understands): is delivered and assessed through the formal degree qualification
- skills and behaviours (able to do and demonstrate): are developed and acquired in the workplace, supported by relevant academic assignments

Although the Higher Education/Degree component of the apprenticeship is assessed throughout the programme, the apprenticeship, as such, is not formally assessed until the end of the programme, during the End Point Assessment process.

You, as the employer, must agree that your apprentice is ready for their End Point Assessment and sign a gateway form to state this.

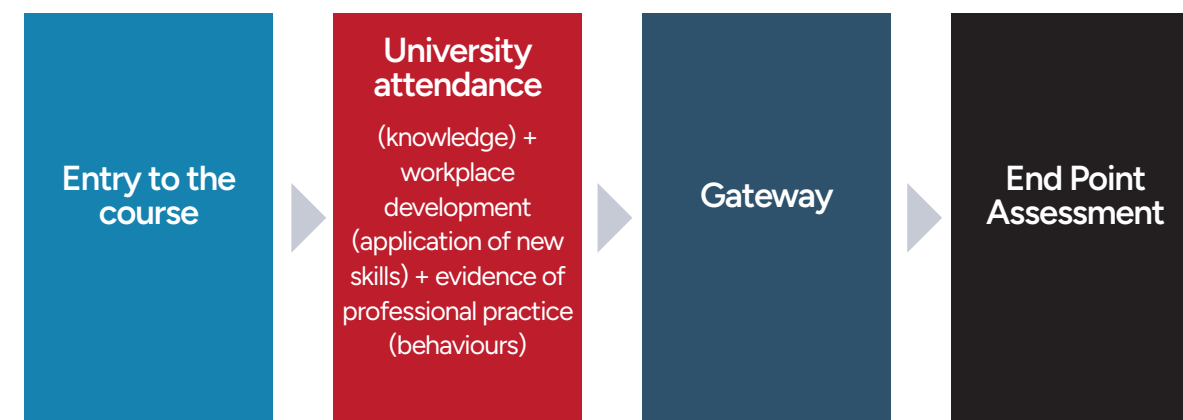
The End Point Assessment assesses occupational competency and ensures that all the knowledge, skills and behaviours have been achieved by the

apprentice. Each assessment plan lists the specific assessment methods of the relevant apprenticeship standard, but they are likely to contain:

- a final-year project that allows the apprentice to demonstrate their application of knowledge, skills and behaviours in a large-scale project
- project presentation (or showcase): a presentation on the outcomes of the project, followed by questioning
- competency-based interview: a structured interview designed to test occupational competency ('tell me about a time you have...')
- Apprentice Development Portfolio: a record of workplace evidence and examples which demonstrate occupational competency against the standard
- professional discussion: a more loosely structured discussion exploring development across the apprenticeship

We organise mock End Point Assessments throughout the final year, allowing apprentices to engage in competency-based questioning and presentation skills.

The following diagram provides a simple road map of the apprenticeship journey:



When something changes

There are many things that can change during the two to six years that the apprentice is on the programme. The following are some of those changes:

Redundancy

The DfE funding rules state that apprentices have the same employment rights as your other employees, and you should follow the process for making staff redundant if you must make an apprentice redundant. Please ensure that you make us aware of any redundancies in writing so they can be recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), and we can advise the apprentice on the options that are available to them to be able to continue with their apprenticeship. We also require formal notification of redundancy and the last day of employment.

Dismissal

Apprentices should be treated in the same way as any other employee. This means that they can be dismissed for misconduct and performance issues. As above, we also require formal notification of dismissal and the last day of employment.

Break in learning

A break in learning (BIL) must be used where the apprentice agrees, with their training provider and employer, to take a break of at least four weeks from their apprenticeship (with or without a break from work) but plans to return to the same apprenticeship programme in the future.

The decision to take a break in learning, the reason for the break and the expected duration must be agreed in writing with the employer. Reasons for a break in learning could include change in work circumstances, lack of engagement with their course, medical treatment, unexpected illness, maternity, paternity, parental leave or leave for other personal circumstances.

The apprentice must be involved in active learning (off-the-job training and/or English and maths) throughout the apprenticeship, from the learning start date to the learning actual end date (i.e. the practical period). If there is no active learning within 2 calendar months, the learner will be placed on a break in learning which does not require the agreement of the employer.

Glossary of terms

Academic calendar – calendar of key dates across the academic year.

Blackboard - Blackboard is the University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), providing an electronic space for staff and learners to interact. It is designed to provide a dedicated site for every module.

Break in learning – is a break in training, that lasts for more than four weeks, where an individual is not currently continuing with their apprenticeship but has told the employer and training provider beforehand that they intend to resume their apprenticeship in the future. A break in learning will be implemented if an apprentice has not engaged with their off-the-job commitments within a four-week period.

Training plan – summarises the obligations of the training provider, the employer, and apprentice for the apprenticeship programme. It will be updated with relevant information throughout the apprenticeship. All parties will hold an accurate and up to date signed copy.

Department for Education (DfE) – agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people, and adults. The DfE- Department for Education has taken on the full responsibility as the ESFA has been disbanded in March 25.

End Point Assessment (EPA) – rigorous, robust, and independent assessment undertaken by an apprentice at the end of training to test that the apprentice can perform in the occupation they have been trained in and can demonstrate the duties, and knowledge, skills, and behaviours set out in the occupational standard.

End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) – an organisation approved to deliver End Point Assessment for a particular Apprenticeship standard. EPAOs must be on the register of End Point Assessment organisations.

Gateway – takes place before the End Point Assessment can start. The employer and training provider review their apprentice's knowledge, skills, and behaviours to see if they have met the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship standard and are ready to take the assessment.

Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) – the set of criteria an apprentice will need to evidence their competency against to prove their readiness for End Point Assessment.

Lectures – a lecture is usually a talk or a presentation by a member of academic staff and is timetabled as a formal part of a module this is an

interactive session where participation is highly recommended, ideally in person.

Learning journal – learners can record learning reflections, attach files, link training activities and map entries to outcomes to track distance travelled against the Apprenticeship curriculum. Learners can apply their skills in the workplace and reflect on learning wherever they are – helping to increase knowledge retention. Tutors can then report on learning journal entries to track engagement, progression and distance travelled.

Module – our courses are divided into modules, which are the subject areas that will be delivered and assessed during a set period (either a semester or year). The modules are individually numbered with the first digit indicating the year or level of study, eg BU1007 is a first-year module and BU2008 is a second-year module.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) Ofsted's role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England do so to a high standard for learners. They undertake physical inspections of education providers and talk with their students, employers, and teaching/support staff to ensure they meet this standard.

OneFile – this is the University of Lancashire's e-portfolio tool. It helps students create and keep together records of learning, progression and achievement that is underpinned by personal, professional, and academic development.

Semesters – the University academic year is divided into three sections.

Seminars – a seminar is also timetabled as a formal part of a module learners are enrolled on. It usually involves fewer apprentices than a lecture and is usually interactive, in that apprentices are expected to contribute, either by preparing an item to present to fellow peers or joining in with a question/answer session arising from a presentation.

Tutorials – tutorials are interactive meetings between a lecturer and a small group or an individual. They are not timetabled as a formal part of a module but are arranged at intervals during a course; sometimes they will be part of a programme, sometimes part of a module.

Turnitin - Turnitin is a plagiarism detection service. The University requires students to submit their coursework through Turnitin where it is then compared to other submitted work, web-based resources, digital books, and e-journals to generate an originality report which highlights similarities in content.



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