# HE Apprenticeship Guidance Document

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## INTRODUCTION

This document provides information and guidance to Curriculum Areas when considering the development of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. Whilst the guidance is not exhaustive, it identifies some of the key features of apprenticeships along with some supporting resources and information.

A planning tool kit is also available to prompt discussion to enable the curriculum development team to explore the various issues in relation to preparation, planning, delivery and assessment of Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.

### HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

Whilst traditional HE curriculum design and development is informed by employer consultation and market intelligence, there is an expectation that Curriculum Areas will work in partnership with business development and employers to develop the higher and degree apprenticeships.

Higher apprenticeships refers to **all** apprenticeships which includes the achievement of academic and vocational qualifications and learning from level 4 up to bachelor's and master's degrees at levels 6 and 7 respectively. All levels can include vocational qualifications and academic qualifications.

**HE Apprentices** must be in paid employment for the duration of their apprenticeship, and will combine working with studying for a work-based, academic or combined qualification. Typically, higher apprentices study part time at college, university or with a training provider, often sat alongside students studying full time for the same qualifications.

All candidates must be employed in a role related to the subject matter of the apprenticeship and be sponsored by their employer. The support of the employer is articulated in an Apprenticeship Agreement. Applications can only be made through the sponsoring employer.

**HADAs** are **work-based** learning programmes. Apprentices are employed throughout the programme, and spend part of their time at College and the rest with their employer. This can be on a day-to-day basis or in blocks of time, depending on the programme and requirements of the employer.

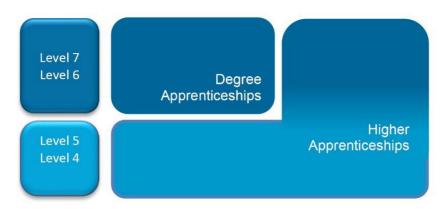### HIGHER APPRENTICESHIPS

**Higher Apprenticeships at Levels 4 – 7** can be associated with a prescribed HE qualification (such as a Foundation Degree, HNC/HND, etc.) or they can be delivered without a formal qualification mandated in the Standard.

## DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

**Degree Apprenticeships at level 6 and 7,** offer apprentices the opportunity to achieve a full Bachelor's or Master's degree as part of their apprenticeship.

Degree apprenticeships combine both higher and vocational education and fully test both the wider occupational competence and academic learning, either using a fully integrated degree co-designed by employers and HEIs, or using a degree plus separate end-test of professional competence.



**Degree apprenticeship** programmes will be structured either as:

**Integrated**
A fully integrated apprenticeship degree course which delivers and tests both academic learning and the vocational skills needed by the job role. (KSBs from Standard)

In an integrated degree apprenticeship, the EPA is integrated into the programme of study and will be carried out by the College. The EPA cannot be carried out by any College academic staff who have taught on the degree apprenticeship. The College must be listed on the RoEPAO to be able to conduct the EPA for their own degree awards.

**Non-integrated**
A degree programme to deliver the academic knowledge requirements, plus additional training to meet the full apprenticeship and a separate test of full occupational competence at the end of the apprenticeship ( for example, delivered by a relevant professional body)

In a non-integrated degree apprenticeship the apprentice will complete an EPA with an additional education provider of the employer's choice. The training provider must be listed on the Register of Endpoint Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO) which can conduct the EPA for specific apprenticeships.

## REGULATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

The regulatory context in which apprenticeships are delivered is very different to that of other higher education provision. In delivering apprenticeships you will be subject to all of the demands of your usual funding and regulatory bodies and may encounter a host of new ones. There are specific funding rules and regulations associated with apprenticeship programmes.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency regulations are also complex and the College must be fully compliant. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency

## THE STANDARD

Employer-led trailblazer groups, including representatives from HEIs, develop and propose draft Standards for approval by the IfA. Participation in a trailblazer group offers the opportunity to be involved at the outset and influence what is contained in the Standard.

The Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) is the key body overseeing development of Standards https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/

To check whether there are any existing Standards for Degree Apprenticeships (or Standards under development) for your area of interest you can check the IfA webpages: https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/

Note what Level the Standard is, the fee band, any specified entry requirements and the qualification/certification associated with the apprenticeship

## END POINT ASSESSMENT

End Point Assessment (EPA) is the synoptic assessment at the end of the programme to confirm that the apprentice has achieved occupational competence.

All Apprenticeships are assessed by an End point Assessment (EPA) organisation. Except in the case of **integrated apprenticeship programmes**, the EPA is separate to the HE Award for the programme and the apprentice may be eligible for a HE Award without passing the EPA and potentially vice-versa. However, in order to draw down the full funding for the Degree Apprenticeship it is essential that the EPA is completed; multiple withdrawals (ie: failure to complete the EPA) could trigger an ESFA audit and could affect the College's registration.

EPAs can take a variety of forms, from tests and exams to presentations. One key part of almost all EPAs is the Apprentice's Portfolio and Learning Log and the apprentice will normally be asked to talk through the portfolio with the assessor and explain how they have developed their skills, knowledge and behaviours over the course of the programme.

Only organisations on the Register of end-point assessment organisations are eligible to conduct independent end-point assessment of apprentices. All registered End Point Assessors in England can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-end-point-assessment-organisations

Whilst employers can choose the End Point Assessor used for their apprentices, Curriculum Areas will need to consider who they wish to work with for the EPA for their programme and will need to engage with the EPA organisation(s) under the ESFA regulations.
In some cases the College will consider undertaking the EPA provision as part of its standard assessment processes, more information about integrated degrees can be found here:
https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/resources/

Curriculum Areas should note that EPAs can take place up to 3 months after an apprentice's portfolio and classes have been completed and in order to continue drawing down any

money from the Levy during those 3 months, the Curriculum Area will need to continue to engage the apprentices in relevant activities. These may include revision, EPA preparation, future careers sessions etc. These will need to still account for 20% of the apprentice working week (off-the-job-training).

### EPA Gateway
The confirmation as determined by the employer in consultation with the College that the apprentice is occupationally competent, and ready to undertake the EPA. The apprentice must have passed their degree and be able to evidence Level 2 in English and maths.

In your curriculum planning documentation you will need to show how the impact of your curriculum design will be measured to indicate that apprentices have learned what you intended (e.g. learning outcomes). You can provide an outline the process for gateway – including the apprentice and employer – and the end-point assessment method.

Learning outcomes will indicate what the apprentices need to be able to do at the end of their programme.

### On-programme Assessment
In addition to the End Point Assessment, whether and a mandated qualification is included in the programme or not, Curriculum Areas will need to give specific consideration to:
  i. the nature of assessments (formative/summative purposes)
  ii. the appointment of External Examiners (if required), and
  iii. any professional body (PSRB) requirements

## 20% OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING

The 20% off-the-job training is calculated using the apprentice's contracted employment hours across their whole apprenticeship – equivalent to around one day per working week.

The policy requires apprentices to spend a fifth of their week on activities related to their course that are different to their normal working duties. Your learning and teaching strategy needs to recognise this and, equally importantly, so does your auditable record of activity.

Curriculum Areas will be responsible for ensuring that all of their records are kept up to date on EBS and OneFile and for ensuring apprentice, engagement and 20% off-the-job training records are being kept accurately and updated regularly. Evidencing the 20% off-the-job training evidence is becoming more critical for ESFA compliance and a Learning Plan, indicating where apprentices will get their 20% off the- job training, for the duration of their programme, must be submitted alongside the ASCS before they commence their studies.

The College will submit one single return to the ESFA for all Apprenticeship programmes across the College. The information in the ILR may be subject to compliance checks during the academic year and must therefore be supported by the evidence requirements set out in the funding rules for off the job training.

It is important that this field accurately reflects the planned amount of off-the-job training undertaken by the apprentice. Any changes to the values entered in this field during the apprenticeship may be subject to further compliance checks.

**What is off-the-job training[1]?**
The ESFA has defined off-the-job as '*learning which is undertaken outside of the normal* day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of an apprenticeship.'

Training can be delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work <u>but not</u> as part of their normal working duties.

**What contributes towards the 20%?**

| ✓ | ✗ |
|---|---|
| Theory – such as lectures, role-playing, online learning, simulation exercises or manufacturer training. | English and maths (up to level two) which is funded separately |
| Practical training apprentices wouldn't usually do during the week – such as shadowing, mentoring, industry visits or competitions. | Progress reviews or on-programme assessments that are required in the apprenticeship standards |
| Learning support and time spent writing assignments | Training that takes place outside the apprentice's paid working hours |

**English and Maths is not included in the 20% -** Functional skills in English and maths can't be used as off-the-job training, so apprentices completing this will need additional time off on top of the 20%.

**Scheduling issues** - Employers can decide how and when they want off-the-job training to be delivered. It can be for one day a week, for one week out of five or grouped together at the beginning or end of the apprenticeship.

**Employer compliance** - The ESFA has said *'if employers undertake illegal activity, we could completely remove their ability to use their levy funding. If they break the rules, they lose control.'*

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OFF-THE-JOB-TRAINING (A PROGRAMME OF STUDY)

The degree element of the programme where an apprentice achieves a degree, undergraduate or masters that is directly relevant to their apprenticeship. An apprentice must spend the equivalent of 20% of their working week across the duration of the programme in off-the-job training. This has to be outside of the normal day-to-day working environment but during employed time and be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard. It cannot include the learning, if required, for a Level 2 qualification in English and maths. It is measured over the course of an apprenticeship (as opposed to an academic year).

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[1] Adapted from OneFile *20% off-the-job training explained* online guidance.

The work-based element of the programme. The apprenticeship standard sets out the work-based training that the apprentice needs to undertake in order to develop the skills for their chosen career, e.g. engineer, hotel manager. The apprentice must spend 80% of their time undertaking the on-the-job training. If the apprentice does not have Level 2 in English and maths the employer must allow the apprentice time to study for such a qualification during their normal working hours.

## REPORTING

Curriculum Areas will need to keep quantitative records (showing apprentice engagement, results, personal records suspensions withdrawals etc.), these will need to be updated in a timely manner.

Curriculum Areas will also need to keep qualitative records for all learners. A learner log, details of any meetings, skills evidence log, etc., and detailed evidence of nature and frequency of engagement will be required.

Providers/Curriculum Areas will need to give (as a minimum) 12-weekly reviews to employers. This should include statistical data on cohort progress and individual progress as well as any individual issues or needs.

An Evidence Pack will need to be available for every apprentice who undertakes an Apprenticeship programme. Some of the documents that make up the Evidence Pack are specified by the ESFA regulations, others will be College specific, depending on the best ways to present the required data. The documents that make up the Evidence Packs will need to be held by individual Curriculum Areas/Support Services, however the documents that make up the Evidence Pack will need to be standardised across all Curriculum Areas. Exactly the same forms and documents should be available for all Evidence Packs, regardless of the programme.

### Data Management

The on-going collection and return of data about learners and the learning undertaken by the apprentice. Where the data does not support the funding the University has claimed, the ESFA will take action to get this corrected and could recover funds.

The curriculum team must ensure that all employer and apprentice records are kept fully up to date for the monthly Individual Learner Record Returns. The accuracy of these is vital as delays can result in not receiving the levy money for that month and misinformation could result in an ESFA audit and being removed from the Register.

### Special Arrangements for Level 4 and 5 Apprenticeships

Any Curriculum Area that is considering undertaking a Level 4 and 5 Apprenticeship programmes should be aware that the OfS and Ofsted have a joint approach to monitoring and evaluating these. So for example, if an Ofsted inspection occurred before a QAA review then Ofsted would inspect level 4 and 5 apprenticeships as part of the inspection and likewise with a QAA review. However, we do not want to duplicate work for HE Curriculum Managers to produce both a SAR and a SED. Therefore, as the Higher Apprenticeships form part of the HE provision they will sit as part of the APR and SED process. However,

the APR supplement and the SED document should ensure that Ofsted inspection requirements are fully met.

## VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND APPRENTICESHIP PLATFORM

The College will utilise OneFile and where appropriate the supporting VLE to deliver the apprenticeship Standard through impactful teaching and individualised learning whilst maintain quality and standards. The features of the online platforms provide the following functionality:

- E-portfolio
- Course builder
- Reporting suite
- Learning journal
- Evaluation scorecard can be used to monitor progress every 12 weeks
- Resource library to include e-books and workbooks can then be attached to individual apprentices and can be released with date stamps
- Online discussion forums
- Skills Gap analysis
- Learning and assessment activities can be linked to learning outcomes and KSBs
- Observation of behaviours can be recorded through the upload of pictures, videos of professional discussions in the workplace and pieces to camera.
- Portfolio of evidence can be downloaded for gateway
- Progress review meetings can pull through ILP requirements and track progress against each module
- British values, safeguarding can be incorporated in OneFile
- Logging 20% off the job activities
- Attendance recording and monitoring

## REVIEWS

ESFA regulations require a minimum 12-weekly review with the employer and apprentice. Throughout the period of learning and development, and at least every 12 weeks, the apprentice will meet with a curriculum tutor to record their progress against the Standard using through the VLE. At these reviews, evidence of progress and progression will be discussed and recorded by the apprentice. Once the apprentice is deemed competent, the tutor and employer will sign off the relevant section of the standard.

Individualised targets should be set for each apprentice to ensure differentiation in progress, taking account for different personal and professional development needs, goals, employer expectations, and progress in meeting targets. These are then incorporated into their progress review meeting reports. Continuous monitoring through scheduled progress reviews is undertaken with the apprentice and employer every 12 weeks.

Through the online platform, individual apprentice progress is tracked and reviewed to record targets, achievements and to set action plans for the next review period. This will not only capture the development of knowledge, skills and behaviours, but will also provide a context to review and explore the degree to which the apprenticeship provides stretch and challenge for the apprentice. Apprentices, teaching staff, line managers/in-work mentors and employers will be kept informed on apprentice performance at each stage.

## EMPLOYERS

The whole ethos of apprenticeships, and the rationale behind the changes to the system, is that they are employer led. An apprenticeship is a job with a protected educational component and the main customer is the employer rather than the individual apprentice.

That notwithstanding, because the apprenticeship may involve a higher education qualification, you will also have a contractual relationship with the apprentice. The three-way commitment statement between yourselves, the employer and the apprentice is vital in ensuring these relationships work well.

### EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

From the outset, the process and the stakeholder relationships are different to other higher education provision. You will be marketing to employers not individual apprentices. You may have several meetings with an employer who later decides that apprenticeships are not for them. This is very different to the competitive selection for undergraduate places.

- You will need a watertight contract with the employer and this may have to be bespoke.
- You will need to clarify roles and responsibilities between tutors and support staff in your institution and managers and mentors in the workplace.
- The employer will have a view (and make the ultimate decision) on any subcontracted delivery, e.g. with a local college or independent provider, as well as potentially on the digital tools you use for delivery.
- The employer will have a view (and make the ultimate decision) on which organisation undertakes the endpoint assessment (EPA) for the apprenticeship.
- The employer may be working with multiple apprenticeship providers and may expect you to conform to what they find to be good practice elsewhere.
- The employer may have multiple apprentices in different parts of the same university and expect standardisation of approach even in different discipline areas.
- You need to be aware of commercial sensitivities when designing learning activities, particularly where peer review and group work are involved. You may have apprentices in the same cohort whose employers are in direct competition with one another.

### EMPLOYER RECRUITMENT

Consider who your Employers would be. The recruitment model for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships is College to employer rather than being via UCAS for individual recruits.

- How will you assess the level of demand amongst employers for such a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship to establish whether there is sufficient volume locally/regionally?
- What existing contacts do you or the College's Business Development team have with potential employers?
- Are those employers sufficiently large to pay the Apprenticeship Levy?
- How will you develop employer relationships and business opportunities?

## EMPLOYER ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

The QAA guidance states that Higher Education Providers should provide support to advise and guide employers on making effective use of the workplace as a learning environment. This will include providing staff development, training mentors and, where appropriate, workplace assessors as well as providing information and induction for line managers and other staff working with the apprentice. This is something that Curriculum Areas should consider when developing their programme with an Employer.

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH EMPLOYERS

Curriculum Areas should consider how to manage communications with the Business Development team and employers at various levels; whether communicating with company managers in regards to strategy and planning for future apprenticeship programmes, HR, or apprentice line-managers regarding the apprentices' progress and monitoring, and administrative staff regarding Employer ILR returns and apprentice data tracking.

## ELIGIBILITY AND ENTRY REQUIRMENTS

- Entry requirements for an Apprenticeship with a B&FC prescribed HE qualification must follow the College's Admission criteria
- In addition students must satisfy the ESFA rules for apprentice eligibility
- Entry requirements for programmes at Level 4 or 5 without a HE Award or Credit must be suitable for the programme level and be approved at the point of validation.
- A requirement of the ESFA is that apprentices must have a minimum of level 2 in maths and English in order to complete a Levy programme. If apprentices do not have this level of maths and English when commencing their programme they must successfully complete an assessment during the programme. Curriculum Areas should ensure provision is in place to support this.

## INDUCTION AND INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Your curriculum should include a plan for introducing apprentices and employers to the programme. This includes things like telling apprentices what you intend them to learn, explaining to employers how you will meet the 20% off-the-job requirement, and completing the commitment statement. You should also include how the curriculum is intended to meet the apprentice's career aspirations, what milestones they are expected to reach, and how they will be assessed.

## INITIAL ASSESSMENT

The assessment of the initial needs of candidates against the KSBs and learning outcomes to ensure they meet the eligibility statement. The IA assessment stage is likely to include English and maths and enable the applicant to map and identify prior learning (credit bearing or experiential).

The curriculum will need to include an in-depth initial assessment. During this assessment, you will need to record each apprentice's prior learning (starting point or baseline) and how you plan to individualise the implementation of your apprenticeship curriculum. At this stage you do not need to plan what you will do for each apprentice, just include a general overview of the process.

## SUPPORTING INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE APPRENTICE

The employer will be involved in the initial assessment to determine the apprentice's learning baseline against each outcome in the apprenticeship curriculum or standard and to inform the decision to recognise prior learning and determine the impact on an individual apprentice's learning programme and any funding implications. Through the initial assessment, prior experience will be reviewed, along with knowledge and learning to ensure that the apprentices are in a position to successfully enrol onto and complete the apprenticeship.

## RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)

There are complex ESFA rules around RPL[2] for apprenticeship programmes and this can affect the amount of money you can draw down from the Apprenticeship Levy. The funding rules state that levy funding cannot be used to pay for skills training that the learner already has.

The Academic Regulations for Recognition of Prior Learning[3] (RPL) state how such assessment is made and when, and how, RPL is awarded. Where RPL is given, or where there is entry with advanced standing, the funding provided for the apprenticeship programme and the length of time to complete the apprenticeships will be adjusted proportionately.

## INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN (ILP)
The plan which is agreed between the College and the apprentice and features what is due to be studied and when. The ILP is closely monitored to ensure that the apprentice is on track with gaining the KSBs of the apprenticeship standard.

## ENGLISH AND MATHS

As part of the delivery model for all apprenticeships, the College undertakes an initial assessment of all apprentices' functional skills. Maths and English skills are assessed using the BKSB online tool. This enables the college to highlight any additional needs or where adjustments to provision may be required to better meet the needs of apprentices with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. Apprentices without level 2 English and Mathematics will need to achieve this level prior to taking the end-point assessment. Evidence of this will be collated by the College and provided to the end-point assessment organisation as part of the Gateway process. The apprentice will also be supported to become digitally literate where this is important to their role.

Other points to consider in relation to apprenticeship planning and delivery are B&FC regulations and procedures relating to:

- Specific learning support requirements
- Disability support
- Exit from Employment

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[2] Recognising prior learning in Apprenticeship Delivery - 5 steps towards best practice
[3] Please refer to the HE Taught Award Regulations for more information

## APPRENTICESHIP DESIGN AND DELIVERY

### CURRICULUM DESIGN

Your curriculum design must:

 a) sufficient regard must be given to the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSB) requirements of the standard, and how they will be assessed
 b) be based around the requirements of the standard.

If a qualification is not mandated within the Standard then public funding will not pay for the registration, examination, or certification of a qualification if the programme team choose to embed one within the apprenticeship curriculum

Where there is no previous apprenticeship framework, and no mandated qualifications, the entire curriculum needs to be designed from scratch which provides an opportunity for innovative design

### ALIGNMENT WITH THE STANDARD AND ASSESSMENT PLAN

A fit for purpose apprenticeship curriculum should be constructively aligned to the Standard and Assessment plan to ensure delivery of the KSBs. The aim of an apprenticeship curriculum is to build a confident apprentice that is competent in their work and able and ready to enter end-point assessment.

Below is one approach to designing the curriculum.

 1. Read and re-read the standard and assessment plan, to make sure you understand all of the KSBs and assessment methods.

| KSB from the Standard | Detail of KSB (may come from the assessment plan, and may be referred to as a learning outcome) | End-point assessment method and detail (if known) | Method of training/learning *interpretation of the standard and assessment plan requirements to identify what and how the apprentice could learn the relevant KSB* |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |

This approach can be used to identify:

 i. overlap and duplication, especially when you reach 'Behaviours', as these are embedded across knowledge and skills
 ii. units of learning to identify which elements may enable to apprentice to demonstrate characteristics for a pass, merit or distinction, and to work out how the apprenticeship delivery could be structured.
 iii. how and where to embed maths and English, prevent, safeguarding, equality and diversity, health and safety and equal opportunity into the design.

Once you have completed the table you can check:

- If all proposed units of learning are accessible, with or without reasonable adjustments.
- If there are any pre-existing training resources that would cover certain elements of the KSBs, and if they can be mapped to the blocks of learning.
- Which elements could be carried out in the work place.
- Which elements would be off the job.
- What the employer, programme team and apprentice need to do to ensure effective delivery.

*Examples of how the employer, programme team and apprentice work together to ensure effective delivery:*

- *If the apprentice has to demonstrate an understanding of their business, the employer has a clear role in providing the apprentice with details and training in their organisation structure, purpose, KPIs and so on.*
- *If the apprentice has to demonstrate an understanding of project management techniques then the curriculum area has a role in ensuring the apprentice receives training in different project management techniques, and there may well be a role for the employer to provide the opportunity for an apprentice to practice a project management technique in their job.*

Employer involvement is essential in the development stages to ensure successful delivery and you could use the table above to illustrate your plans for the apprenticeship. Employers will also be involved in the validation stages to ensure that the curriculum design is consistently mapped to the KSBs.

## CURRICULUM DELIVERY

This section is all about the implementation of your curriculum. You will need to create an indicative delivery plan to illustrate the sequence of your delivery – your learning activities, delivery sequence and stretch and challenge activities – these may be flexed to meet the needs of each apprentice/employer.

**Milestones**

Milestones are an important part of your curriculum planning, so you will need to include the milestones and how you will use reports, reviews and assessments to measure learner progress towards them. It is also useful to include how employers will be involved in the process.

Regulators (Ofsted/QAA) will consider how provider's staff engage with employers to plan the initial assessment, training, assessment, reviews and these milestones.

**Types and modes of delivery**

Curriculum Areas will need to consider how best to deliver their programme, potentially across multiple employers (for open cohorts), with different business hours and needs, and how they will engage apprentices in their off-the-job training.
Delivery modes may include:

- Distance Learning (NB: programmes cannot be delivered 100% by distance learning)
- Blended Learning (a mixture of online learning and face-to-face classes)
- Block teaching/workshops
- Regular scheduled classes

Where these modes of delivery are new to Curriculum Areas, support and guidance can be obtained from the HE Directorate.

**Duration**

Standards must last a minimum of one year and degree apprenticeships in particular will last longer, typically up to four years, though there is no fixed maximum duration. The framework or standard documentation will usually set out a typical expected duration. The funding value set for an apprenticeship covers the total delivery costs regardless of the apprenticeship length

## PROGRAMME APPROVAL PROCESS (VALIDATION)

Engage with the HE Directorate early on when devising a concept and business case for a Degree Apprenticeship programme. You may also want to consult with the Business Development Team and your expected employers(s) when developing your programme design.

Programmes may be contextualised to the employer business needs. Early in your discussions, you should gather feedback from employers in relation to how the proposed programme will be delivered/structured against the published standard and EPA.

- What recruitment numbers are required for viable delivery of your programme?
- If your employer(s) cannot provide those recruitment numbers as part of a closed cohort, is there an option of having an open cohort?
- What are the additional considerations of this?
- What will your position be if you are unable to recruit enough apprentices to the programme?
- Are your employers aware of this possibility?

Apprenticeship development will follow the principles of the established HE programme development and approval process as set out in Part B4 of the B&FC regulations. Curriculum Areas should contact the HE Directorate early on to discuss the paperwork required for each stage of the validation process.

Please refer t*o B&FC preparing for validation: a guide programme teams.*

## APPRENTICE SUPPORT

Curriculum Areas need to consider how they will support apprentices on work-based learning programmes. The needs of these apprentices may be quite different to College based students and access to support services will need to be made available for those who may never come to the College

- You should consult with HELMs to ensure they are able to provide relevant support to these apprentices, and consider if any specialist support will be provided from within the curriculum area.
- Curriculum Areas will need to give special consideration to how they will support apprentices with disabilities or specific educational needs, particularly if they are studying from a distance. In addition, this is something that Ofsted (for level 4 and 5) and the ESFA will want to see has been well thought about and well supported.

One key support role is that of the *tutor with responsibility for the apprentices.* This is a key role that most Curriculum Areas will need to identify. Curriculum Areas may wish to appoint a single person to undertake these activities or break down the activities across other key staff. Apprenticeship Tutors will need to work with the curriculum team, in order to ensure continuity of practice and for quality assurance purposes.

Examples of key activities are listed below:
- Meeting with apprentices at their induction and undertaking the initial skills assessment*
- Signing off when an apprentice has reached a certain competency level (this could be in knowledge, skills or behaviours)*
- Responsible for all paperwork to go through the gateway
- Guiding apprentices to complete their Portfolio (for their EPA)
- Ensuring apprentices meet the EPA requirements
- Identifying and supporting any apprentices who are struggling with the programme
- Ensure apprentices regularly undertake CPD at their place of work
- Liaison with the employer: minimum 12-weekly reviews and annual employer review
- Regular 1:1 meetings with apprentices
- Monitoring any online activity or class registers to ensure continued engagement
- Monitoring and updating any changes to apprentices records
- Supporting learners if they need to complete Maths and English
- Assisting with processes such as, PMCs, academic misconduct, withdrawals
- Keeping all records up to date (quantitative and qualitative)
- Pastoral role
- Mentoring role
- Organises and sits on the EPA panel (for levels 4, 5 and 6)

The curriculum area may also identify an Internal Quality Assurance to undertake QA processes across the apprenticeship offer.

## RESOURCES

### DOCUMENTATION AND TEMPLATES

- *Apprenticeship Paperwork checks (Quality and Standards)*
- *Apprenticeship Process (Quality and Standards)*
- *B&FC Higher-Degree Apprenticeship Handbook (HE Directorate)*
- *HADA Validation Document (HE Directorate)*
- *Workplace Mentor Guide (HE Directorate)*
- *Higher Education Apprenticeship preparation and planning tool kit (HE Directorate).*

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REGULATORY POINTS OF REFERENCE INCLUDE:

- B&FC Academic Regulations Parts A and B
- QAA UK Quality Code and Advice and Guidance
- Office for Students regulatory framework
- Ofsted education inspection framework (Level 4 and 5 apprenticeships)
- ESFA guidelines and funding rules
- Framework for Higher Education
- QAA Characteristic Statement for HE Apprenticeships

## JISC APPRENTICESHIP TOOLKIT

The Jisc apprenticeship toolkit is aimed at helping colleges and universities make effective use of technology in delivering the new apprenticeship standards whether you have little previous experience or are changing from delivering frameworks. It is aimed at senior managers, staff designing and supporting learning and IT support services. http://degree-apprenticeship-toolkit.data.alpha.jisc.ac.uk/

## UNIVERSITY VOCATIONAL AWARDS COUNCIL (UVAC)

There are various resources and information available from both the Association of Employment and Learning providers (AELP) and the University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC).