

Apprenticeship FAQs for Employers and Learners

Employers

Why Work with Profile?

We are the provider of choice for numerous businesses in the Southeast. Our unique and bespoke delivery model promotes loyal customers and repeat business. We hold the Matrix award for Information, Advice and Guidance. We were graded as a 'good' provider in our full Ofsted inspection in January 2023. We are the KCC chosen provider for the level 3 Teaching Assistant apprenticeship standard.

Who employs the apprentice?

You are the apprentice's employer, and it is therefore your responsibility to pay their wages as you would any member of staff. They are your trainee employee.

How much will it cost me?

The current apprenticeship minimum wage can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Once the apprentice has been on programme for 1 year and is aged 19 or over, the national minimum wage is applicable until the completion of the apprenticeship.

Please see here for more information about national insurance contributions:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-insurance-contributions-for-under-25s-employer-guide/paying-employer-national-insurance-contributions-for-apprentices-under-25>

How many hours does an apprentice have to work?

The minimum recommendation is 30 hours per week. If the apprentice works under 30 hours per week, pro-rata based on a 52-week year, then the minimum duration of the apprenticeship has to be extended, and the apprentice will be on programme for longer.

How do we recruit our apprentice(s)?

As the employer, you are free to recruit your apprentice as you would any member of staff. However, we are able to help with the recruitment by placing your vacancy on the .gov [Find an Apprenticeship](#) service website, the recruitment website *Indeed* and our social media platforms.

Is there a contribution I have to make?

The amount an employer contributes depends on whether you are a Levy or non-Levy paying employer. More information can be found at: -

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds>

Levy payers will contribute the full cost of training, however any additional training costs incurred may be eligible for 90% funding from the Government, subject to meeting their criteria.

For non-levy paying employers, if your apprentice is 16 – 24 years old, then all the training costs are fully funded (as of 1st August 2026). **If your apprentice is 25 years of age or over, this is part-funded, and a 5% employer contribution is required.**

The 5% employer contribution is denoted below and please note that that can be avoided by funding the apprenticeship via levy transfer <https://transfers.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk/>

Apprenticeship Standard	Level	Maximum Funding	5% Contribution
Teaching Assistant	3	£7000	£350
Specialist Teaching Assistant	5	£12000	£600
Early Years Practitioner	2	£5000	£250
Early Years Educator	3	£7000	£350
Early Years Lead Practitioner	5	£9000	£450
Business Administrator	3	£5000	£250
Administration Assistant	2	£4000	£200
School Business Professional	4	£6000	£300

Please note that if we reduce the length and price of the apprenticeship at initial assessment, associated employer contributions will be reduced accordingly.

What incentive payments (grants) are available?

- Currently, there is a £1000 incentive payment available for every apprentice that you employ who is between the ages of 16-18 years old for all employers. In addition to this 19–24-year-olds who have an Education & Healthcare plan or are currently or have been in local authority care, are also eligible for an incentive payment. This is payable in 2 instalments of £500, the first after 90 days and the second after 365 days in learning.
- In addition to that there will soon be a new small employer (non-levy employers only) incentive of £2000 available for hiring a new apprentice aged 16 to 24. The claim date for that opens on the 1st October, and would be claimed via us, and is applicable for employment start dates for up to 3 months before then, so from the 1st July 2026. NB in order to be eligible the apprentice's training cannot commence until the 1st October 2026 onwards, and the rules denote that an apprentice can be employed on the apprentice wage for up to 3 months before the training commences, hence the July/October date differential, but we would suggest no more than one month between those dates. That claim is made via us.
- In addition to this, applicable for new hires of any eligible staff including apprentices from June, there is also a £3000 DWP employer incentive to claim. That is for hiring an aged 18- to 24-year-old that has been claiming Universal Credit and 'actively seeking work' for at least 6 months. That claim would be made between you the employer and the DWP More information about that new DWP £3000 incentive available to all employers for applicable new hires is [here](#) and I would suggest expressing an

interest in the 'Youth Jobs Grant' via the online form within (not apprenticeships as we manage that for you) if recruitment is on the horizon.

Do apprentices require a Contract of Employment?

Yes. As with all your staff, they must have a contract of employment which covers the duration of their apprenticeship. As our programmes are individually designed around your company and your apprentice's needs, the length of programme can vary from 9 months to 24 months, and therefore the contract would need to reflect this. The contract must cover the period from the start to the completion of End Point Assessment and we would suggest an additional 3 months to cover resits or a flexible end date to run until the completion of the apprenticeship. This ensures the apprentice is secure in their employment until they are fully qualified.

Provider Completion Payment:

As a government-funded apprenticeship training provider, 20% of the apprenticeship funding is held back until the apprentice has fully completed all aspects of their apprenticeship. This includes completing their end point assessment. With this in mind, we ask that you support us by doing everything possible to ensure that the apprentice completes all aspects of their apprenticeship, including their end point assessment, or as their employer you may be liable for the loss of funding. This could range from £800 to £2400, depending on the apprenticeship type and level. The withheld funding does not have a requirement for them to pass or fail, but all elements must be completed.

What happens if the apprentice withdraws from the programme, or is withdrawn by the employer?

Due to the reasons detailed in the penalty clause above, if an apprentice withdraws from the programme without completing their apprenticeship training, Profile will have incurred costs which cannot be covered by the apprenticeship funding. Therefore, a cost recovery fee of £490 may be invoiced to you as the employer. This cost represents the loss of the 20% completion payment, plus administration time, less the cost of the end point assessment.

How long does the apprenticeship last?

The timeframe for an apprenticeship with Profile can vary but must be for a minimum of 8 months but can be up to 24 months depending on the apprenticeship programme, job role and the person's needs and prior knowledge and qualifications.

The apprenticeship standards are split up into two periods: the practical period and the End Point Assessment period. The practical period is the period in which all learning will take place and where the apprentice must complete everything they require for the End Point Assessment including their off-the-job training. Once this period has been completed, there will then be a Gateway review where all parties will confirm the apprentice is ready for the End Point Assessment. The next period is the End Point Assessment. This can last up to 3 months, depending on how long it takes the End Point Assessment Organisation to organise the assessments.

How much time is needed to complete the work involved by the apprentice?

The majority of the work is 'on-the-job' training – this is where the young person is guided and supported in the job role. It is a funding requirement that the employer allows the apprentice 4 to 6 hours per week of their paid, working time to focus on their portfolio assignments, knowledge and skills requirements of their apprenticeship, as detailed in their Training Plan. Additionally, time will be needed for the Tutor to meet with

the apprentice and work through the programme, facilitate assessments, Functional Skills support and set new tasks.

How much time will be needed by the employer to support the apprentice?

This can vary depending on the complexity of the job role and the experience of the apprentice. However, we would expect the apprentice to be supported by a workplace mentor in their role until you are confident they can be left to complete the task competently. As with all new members of staff the level of support is usually more intensive at the start of the Apprenticeship and the Apprentice should be given guidance on how to complete tasks within their role, appropriate behaviour and conduct etc. Whether this is through a formal induction process or not, will depend on individual company procedures. Some of this time will be part of the off-the-job training as they learn new skills in their role.

What resources / equipment will I need to supply?

You would need to supply the equipment and any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the apprentice to complete their job effectively, as you would for any new member of staff.

In addition to this, apprentices require access to a room/area in which they can meet their tutor, either virtually or in person. A good internet connection is essential, as is access to a suitable device e.g. laptop.

Exactly what will be learned by the apprentice?

All apprenticeship standards are different and have different requirements. Level 3 apprentices will be required to achieve Level 2 functional skills in both English and Maths, if not already achieved. Level 2 apprentices must achieve Level 1 functional skills. There are some relaxations around this is the learner has additional needs. **NB if the apprentice is aged 19+ then the decision whether maths and English is included in the programme sits between the employer and apprentice as they are now optional for that age group.**

How will the apprentice benefit my business?

By having an apprentice, you are developing a new member of staff to help with the productivity and growth of your business. The apprentice will develop their skills in your working practices which will be used now and in the future. An apprenticeship allows you to grow your future talent. More information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-guide-for-employers>

What happens if the training provider goes out of business?

The Department for Education will work with a local provider to find the right provision for your apprentice to continue on their programme.

What can an employer reasonably expect an apprentice to do?

An apprenticeship is a real job, so it is expected that the apprentice is supported and given the appropriate level of responsibility for their qualification, understanding and competence. This could be limited when they start the role, but with the right level of support, it is expected that before the end of the apprenticeship they will be a productive member of the team.

How many hours contact with tutor/tutor?

The 'off-the-job' training requirement is dependent on the programme and the level of support required. However, as previously mentioned it is a requirement of the programme that the apprentice is given a minimum of 4 to 6 hours during their paid, working week, away from their normal duties to work on their apprenticeship portfolio and tasks. This also includes work shadowing and in-house training. The tutor meeting is normally every 4 weeks, with email and phone contact as and when required. During the weeks between tutor face-to-face contact, tasks and work is set and access to their Microsoft Teams e-portfolio is unlimited.

Course work - how much and how long to spend on it each week?

This is very difficult to identify as it all depends on the job role, the type of assessment which can be used and the confidence of the apprentice. That said, it should take 4-6 hours each week, for the duration of the apprenticeship, to gather the evidence required for the portfolio. Hopefully, much of your apprentice's evidence will be generated and captured while performing their normal work duties.

Does an apprentice get paid holidays?

Yes. As with all staff, an apprentice will accrue holiday in the same way that all staff do, and they are entitled to take it as per your company's rules.

What should a mentor do?

A mentor is the key person who will be supporting the apprentice in the workplace. They will work with the tutor and the apprentice to ensure that the work is being carried out as required in the workplace. The mentor will also liaise with the tutor to help plan the requirements of the qualification.

Can the apprentice work alone?

It is the responsibility of the company to make sure the young person is safeguarded, and a risk assessment is carried out to ensure that the young person is not put at risk.

Apprentices

How much will it cost me? / Is there a financial contribution I have to make?

There is no contribution payable by you for your apprenticeship funding. If you are aged 16-24 your apprenticeship is fully funded (for employers that do not pay the levy) and if you are 25+ then your employer may have to pay a contribution towards your learning.

What will be the rate of pay while I'm in training as an apprentice?

There are different minimum pay rates depending on how long you have been an apprentice and your age. Go to www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates to find the latest information.

Once you have been on programme for 1 year and are aged 19 or over, the national minimum wage is applicable for your age.

Do apprentices have to be full-time?

No, there is no minimum number of hours for an apprentice to work. However, if you work less than 30 hours per week over the 52 weeks a year, then the minimum duration of the apprenticeship is required to be extended.

Do apprentices have set length contracts?

Not always, but the minimum contract must be long enough for you to complete your learning and end point assessment.

How much time is needed to complete the work for the apprenticeship?

This is very difficult to identify as it all depends on the job role, the type of assessment which can be used and the confidence of the apprentice. That said it should take 4-6 hours each week for the duration of the apprenticeship to gather the evidence required for their portfolio. This does not include the training you will cover whilst 'on the job'.

How much time will my employer have to allow me to complete the apprenticeship?

It is a funding requirement for the employer to allow an apprentice 4 to 6 hours of their time per week to focus on their portfolio assignments, knowledge and skills requirements of their apprenticeship. For example, the time can be allocated on a weekly basis, with one day out of each week set aside, or for one week a month. This will include time for the Tutor to meet with the apprentice and work through the programme, facilitate assessments and set new tasks.

What resources / equipment will I need to supply?

You will not be required to supply any additional equipment or resources. Everything you need will be provided by your employer, found in the workplace or will be provided by the tutor. You will need reasonable access to IT equipment and the internet. This can be discussed with your employer.

What resources will the employer need to supply for me?

Your employer will need to provide you with all of the tools you will need to carry out your job role safely within the company.

Exactly what will I learn during my apprenticeship?

You will be learning about a job role, relevant to your apprenticeship. Your apprenticeship will cover the requirements of the Standard and so you will have to meet certain Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours to gain the skills required to go through to the End Point Assessment.

How will I know I'm on the right apprenticeship / qualification?

We carry out an induction with you and the employer and, through assessments, ensure that you are on the right apprenticeship and level for your job role and ability.

How will the apprenticeship benefit me in the future?

You will be trained in a specific job role; you will have gained work experience; the apprenticeship may lead to full-time employment, to list a few of the benefits.

Why do I have to do Maths and English exams again?

If aged 16 to 18 you will only need to complete Functional Skills in English and Maths if you have not achieved these qualifications at GCSE level 4 (grade C) or above or have not already achieved Functional Skills at the required level, for either a level 2 or level 3 apprenticeship. There are some relaxations around these requirements if you have any additional learning needs.

NB if you are aged 19+ then the decision whether maths and English are included in the programme sits between the employer and yourself as they are now optional for your age group.

How can my current qualifications or exams help me complete the apprenticeship?

You may have prior learning which you could use to help you complete assignments and work towards the apprenticeship. Also, if you have achieved English and Maths at GCSE grade 4/C or above you will not need to retake them for your apprenticeship.

Will Profile find me a job or help find me a job if my employment ends?

Profile do not find jobs for apprentices but will work with you and as part of your apprenticeship. Your tutor will discuss job seeking, CV creation and cover letters etc. Also, if appropriate, you may be able to move to a higher-level apprenticeship.

What happens if I move jobs?

You can continue with your apprenticeship as long as the job you move to is the same or a similar role and the new employer is agreeable and willing to engage with the apprenticeship programme as your new employer. There are restrictions on timing which would need to be thoroughly investigated before any move was made to ensure that funding can continue.

What happens if I need to take time out?

Depending on the circumstances it may be possible for you to take a break in learning. Any break would be for a minimum of a month and should be first discussed with your employer and your tutor as when you return to learning a new end date will be calculated to consider the number of days you were on a break.

What happens if I do not meet deadlines?

It is your responsibility to work with your tutor to meet the deadlines of the tasks set. If you do not, then formal procedures will be put in place by your tutor and employer. If for any reason you cannot meet a deadline, you should communicate with your tutor to discuss the issue.

Can I quit the apprenticeship if I want to?

Yes you can, although it is strongly advised not to as any future funding applied for may be denied and will mean that you cannot achieve the qualification/apprenticeship.

What happens if the training provider goes out of business?

They and the Department for Education will do everything they can to support you and find you another training provider.