



The University of Bolton Degree Apprenticeships

Employer
Handbook

What is a Degree Apprenticeship?

Degree Apprenticeships combine working with part-time study. Apprentices are employed throughout the programme, and spend part of their time at university and the rest with their Employer.



Apprenticeship Funding

Funding

A company with a wage bill of over £3 million per annum will have a levy fund, which it can utilise to fund apprenticeship training. A company who has a wage bill less than this, can still access Government funding to support the apprenticeship course costs. The government cover 95% of the cost, whilst the company, with what is termed “co-investment”, contribute the remaining 5%. (NB For employers who have a levy fund: if, in any given month, the levy fund does not have sufficient money to cover the month’s bill, they will need to contribute 5% of the residual whilst the government contribute the other 95%).

Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS)

In order to access and manage the funding for your Apprentices, you must have an active account on the DAS.

You can create this at <https://accounts.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk/>

An Apprentice must be set up on DAS at least six weeks before their first day of learning. Failure to set up an Apprentice on DAS by the deadline may result in the Apprentice’s start date being delayed, and may affect any grants that the Employer is entitled to.

For more information on the DAS, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds>

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Funding Rules and Guidance for Employers can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1037430/2122_Employer_Rules_Version_2__To_publish.pdf

All Apprenticeship Standards can be found here:

<https://www.instituteofapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>



Apprenticeship Recruiting and Onboarding Process

Pro-Forma

Once initial discussions have taken place between the Employer and the University, the first step is for candidates and their Employer to complete the pro-forma document, which will ask for specific information including:

- The candidate's work contact details – phone, e-mail and normal working hours
- Contact details of Apprentices line manager / sponsor, who will provide support throughout the apprenticeship
- The Apprenticeship Lead's (the person who is responsible for setting the learner up on DAS) contact details.
- Funding mechanism - Own levy, non-levy or levy transfer – More information on levy status, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pay-apprenticeship-levy>)

Interview Stage

Once the pro-forma is completed, candidates will be invited to interview. At the interview, the Programme Leader will explain the Sign-Up process, course structure, and how funding works. The following will also be completed at interview:

- **Eligibility Checks** - Pre-application eligibility checks will be completed at this stage, which include the candidate's Maths and English qualifications, their eligibility to work in the country, whether they are completing an Apprenticeship elsewhere, and any programme-specific requirements
- **Maths and English Checks** – In order to complete an Apprenticeship, it is an ESFA requirement that the learner holds approved Level 2 qualifications in both Maths and English (equivalent to Grade 4/C or above)

Learners will need to provide evidence of their qualifications at interview. If a candidate does not have these qualifications, they may be invited to attend pre-session Functional Skills Level 2 Maths and/or English course(s) and can begin their Apprenticeship once they have achieved the relevant qualification(s)

- **Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)** - The Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours Initial Assessment (KSB) will be completed at the interview and signed by Employer, Learner, and Tutor. It is designed as a guide to check competence against the skills, knowledge, and behaviours that the Apprentice will develop, and be assessed on, over the duration of the course

The KSB assessment also informs the University of any relevant prior learning completed by the candidate and allows us to assess their suitability for an Apprenticeship. An Apprenticeship must consist of new learning; if necessary, the University will adjust the teaching and/or Apprenticeship price to account for learning already undertaken that would have also been taught as part of the Apprenticeship. If a candidate has significant prior learning, they may not be eligible for the apprenticeship



Application

If successful at interview, the candidate will be sent an On-line application link by their Programme Team.

Sign-Up Paperwork

Once the application is completed, the Apprenticeships Team will then begin to create a candidate's paperwork. All sign-up paperwork must be completed and returned to the Apprenticeships Team four weeks prior to the Apprentice's first day of learning. A candidate's start date may be delayed if the paperwork is not returned on time. The paperwork includes:

- Training Plan
- The Apprenticeship Agreement
- The Employer Agreement
- The Health and Safety Audit

Training Plan

The Training Plan is an agreement between the Employer, the Apprentice, and the University. It covers:

- The planned content and schedule for training
- What is expected and offered by the Employer, the University, and the Apprentice
- How to resolve queries or complaints

Apprenticeship Agreement

This is an agreement between the Apprentice and the Employer, and is used to confirm individual employment arrangements. It gives details of:

- The skill, trade or occupation the Apprentice is being trained for
- The name of the Apprenticeship they will be working towards the start and end dates for the Apprenticeship
- The amount of Off-the-job Training (OJT) the Apprentice will receive

Employer Agreement

The Employer Agreement is a contract between the Employer and the University. It outlines:

- The responsibilities that the Employer has towards the learner and the University
- The total cost of the apprenticeship and the payment schedule
- How the Employer will adhere to ESFA regulations

Health and Safety Audit

The Health and Safety Audit is completed by the Employer and ensures you are compliant with current health and safety regulations and compliance requirements. We may also visit your organisation as part of our Health and Safety checks.



Learning, Support and Assessment

Off-The-Job Training

Off-the-job training (OJT) is the learning received by the Apprentice during their normal working hours, but is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment. OJT can include training that is delivered at the Apprentice's place of work, but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties. It also includes time spent at University.

For learning to contribute to the OJT hours it must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard and teach the apprentice NEW skills, knowledge and behaviours they require to reach competence in their particular occupation.

OJT training does not include activity such as onboarding activities for example; skills assessments, progress reviews, English and Maths support or additional training to acquire skills, knowledge and behaviours that are not required by the apprenticeship standard.

It is the responsibility of both the University and the Employer to ensure that an Apprentice spends a minimum of six hours per week of their employed time completing OJT, for the duration of their apprenticeship, as set out within the ESFA funding rules.

More information on OJT can be found here [Apprenticeships: off-the-job training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/apprenticeships)

Progress Reviews

Progress reviews will take place quarterly, with the initial review being undertaken six weeks after the Apprenticeship commences.

Regular progress reviews will be undertaken to ensure the Apprentice is on track to complete their programme. Progress reviews are a three-party conversation between Employer, Apprentice, and

a member of staff from the University. During reviews, all parties will discuss progress and any issues with teaching and/or the workplace. p. An Apprenticeship must consist of new learning; if necessary, the University will adjust the teaching and/or Apprenticeship price to account for learning already undertaken that would have also been taught as part of the Apprenticeship. If a candidate has significant prior learning, they may not be eligible for the apprenticeship.

Mentors

A mentor is someone from the Apprentice's work place, who is appropriately qualified and can offer support and guidance throughout the duration of the apprenticeship. A good mentor will:

- Have relevant expertise/knowledge/experience, and enthusiasm to share this
- Care about and invest in the Apprentice's development
- Be respectful and provide honest and constructive feedback
- Have reflective listening skills and empathy

Gateway

An apprentice can only complete the End Point Assessment (EPA) once they have met the minimum duration of an apprenticeship, satisfied the gateway requirements set out in the Assessment Plan, and their Employer (in consultation with the University) is content they have attained sufficient skills, knowledge and behaviours. A gateway declaration form will need to be signed by the employer, apprentice and the University of Bolton. (See Annex 1).



End Point Assessment (EPA)

EPA is the final stage of an Apprenticeship. It is an impartial assessment of whether or not the apprentice has developed the skills, knowledge and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard.

The requirements for EPA are set out in the Assessment Plan for the specific standard. Please note, for some programmes of study, the EPA is integrated into the degree and forms credits towards the final degree classification.

Attendance

Apprentices are expected to attend all timetabled University activities and individual attendance will be monitored. Apprentices need to inform their Module Leader if they are unable to attend, and make every effort to catch up on missed work. Non-attendance will be reported to the Employer.

Breaks in Learning (BILs)

A Break in Learning (BIL) will be put into place if an Apprentice is absent from study and/or work for more than four weeks. BILs enable monitored support if required and allow an Apprentice the opportunity to re-join the course rather than having to leave altogether. This is a supportive process and includes input from the Apprentice, their Employer and the University.

Ofsted

Ofsted is the quality assurance body for Apprenticeship provision. It utilises the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), to measure the effectiveness of training provided, for which the University currently is rated as “Good”, following its last inspection in January 2020. For any future inspections, there will be a requirement for both employers and learners to support with information, feedback and potentially work place visits. More information on Ofsted inspections, can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/provider-guide-to-delivering-high-quality-apprenticeships/ofsted-inspection-and-esfa-intervention>

Employer Voice

As an employer you will be invited to provide feedback on your apprenticeship experience with the University of Bolton in a variety of means such as employer forums and surveys. This will enable you to make valuable contributions to how we can improve and develop our apprenticeship programmes.



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