

SCHOOLS GUIDE TO THE NEW APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

1. What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job with an associated skills development programme. It allows individuals to earn while they learn, gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. Various levels of apprenticeship are available:

Apprenticeship	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grades A* to C
Advanced	3	2 A level passes
Higher	4, 5, 6 & 7	HNC / HND / Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 & 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

2. Employer Responsibilities

An apprentice must be in an actual job role, working towards an approved framework or standard, with an induction into their role and on the job training.

Length of contract/working hours

Apprenticeships for new roles may be for a fixed term until the apprenticeship standard is achieved.

Existing employees at any level could be following an apprenticeship framework or standard as part of their career progression. Apprenticeships last for a minimum of 12 months up to 4 years, with 20% of training time spent off the job. They are based on a minimum duration of 30 hours per week, including the 20%. For individuals who work less than 30 hours, the length of the apprenticeship can be extended. Apprentices must receive the same benefits as other employees.

3. What is off the job training?

Learning outside the normal day-to-day working environment, that is directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard or framework. It may include training provided at the apprentice's usual place of work, but not delivered as part of their normal working duties.

Off-the-job training may include: Lectures; role play; simulation exercises; online learning; shadowing; mentoring; taking part in skills competitions; learning support; time spent writing assessments or assignments.

Off-the-job training does not include: English and Maths (up to level 2); progress reviews or on-programme assessments needed for an apprenticeship framework or standard; training outside an apprentice's paid working hours.

4. Apprenticeship Frameworks and Standards

Frameworks - a series of work related vocational and professional qualifications with work based and classroom based training. These are being gradually phased out and will be replaced by employer-led standards by 2020.

Standards - standards relate to specific job roles, and set out the core skills, knowledge and behavioural competencies that an individual must evidence that they meet. Standards are being developed through employer-led trailblazer projects. The approved list, which is regularly updated, can be viewed here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/607590/Apprenticeship_standards_April_2017.pdf

NOTE: it is essential that job roles provide the range of opportunities required for an apprentice to evidence the outcomes specified by the Framework or Standard.

Training Providers

An approved training provider is appointed to deliver the formal learning, and manage the gathering of evidence required to achieve any awarding body qualifications included in the programme.

End Point Assessment

Final assessment of a standard must be carried out by an approved End Point Assessment (EPA) organisation that is wholly independent from both the employer and training provider. EPA costs are included in the funding cap for each programme.

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5. The Apprenticeship Levy

On 6th April 2017, the Government introduced an apprenticeship levy, charged at the rate of 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill, and paid through PAYE on a monthly basis.

Each employer has a levy allowance of £15,000, which is not a cash payment. It works in a similar way to the personal tax allowance, and cannot be used to buy apprenticeship training. This allowance means that only employers with an annual pay bill of more than £3 million are liable to pay the levy.

The Apprenticeship Levy will affect **ALL Luton Borough Council community schools, nurseries and special schools** as each individual school's pay bill will be included as part of LBC's Levy calculation because the Local Authority is the contractual employer. ALL Community schools' pay bills will be included regardless of the payroll provider the school uses. This will result in Community/ VC schools being required to contribute 0.5% of their pay bill to the Levy.

Foundation / Voluntary Aided (VA) schools, Free Schools, Academies & Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) will be subject to payment of the Levy if their individual NI'able pay bill, or that of their MAT, exceeds £3m. In these schools and academies the governing body/ trust is the employer, rather than the Local Authority therefore each school/ academy's liability for the Levy will be based on its own pay bill. Foundation / VA schools, Academies and MATs subject to the Levy will manage their own digital account (TAS). This funding can only be used to pay for apprenticeship training and cannot be used for salaries or other support costs.

Government Support

Where the pay bill is under £3 million Foundation / VA schools, Academies and MATs with a pay bill of under £3 million, will not have to pay the Levy, and will not be eligible for the allowance or to access the Digital Apprenticeship Service. However, if they want to offer apprenticeships, they will be able to access funding which only requires them to pay 10% of the training costs of each apprenticeship.

The Government will pay the remaining 90%. If these school/academies have under 50 employees the government will pay 100% of the training costs for any apprentices who are aged 16-18.

These costs are spread over the lifetime of an apprenticeship.

From May 2017, the following incentives are available to employers taking on apprentices:

- £1,000 payment to both the employer and the provider for each 16-18 year old they train
- £1,000 payment to both the employer and the provider for each 19-24 year old trained, who has previously been in care or who has a Local Authority Education, Health & Care Plan .

Funds that accrue into TAS digital accounts will expire 24 months after they appear unless they are spent on apprenticeship training.

6. What does this mean for LBC Community Schools?

Community schools will contribute to the generation of Levy funds in the Luton Borough Council TAS (The Apprenticeships Service) account.

2017-18 will be a transition year for this move to funding apprenticeships via the Levy and individual Schools will be able to access up to £7,500 (see 8.ii) of levy funding during the period 1st September 2017 – 31st March 2018. Please note: Funding for apprenticeships is split over the term of the programme, for example a 2-year apprenticeship programme with a £4,000 funding band will incur £2,000 cost per year from the levy allocation. Schools may wish to consider working collaboratively and this might include pooling funding to create a larger, combined resource. This will be reviewed in March 2018 and allocations for 2018-19 formulated on the basis of a school's demand on the Levy alongside their generation of Levy funds as monitored during the transition period.

As outlined in sections 5 and 8.ii) of this document, Levy funding can support training costs only and cannot be used to pay salary

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costs or any additional training costs over and above the cost of the framework or standard. There is no centralised budget to support salary or backfill costs.

As an ‘employer-provider’, LBC aims to deliver most or all, apprenticeship off-the-job training, and, where necessary, sub-contract external providers, particularly for higher level apprenticeships (levels 4-7), according to business need.

7. Apprenticeships Offer / Funding Values

Apprenticeships programmes most commonly used by Schools are:

Apprenticeship	Funding Band
Business Administration Level 2	£2,000
Business Administration Level 3	£2,500
Teaching Assistant Level 2	£2,000
Teaching Assistant Level 3	£2,500
Facilities Management Level 2	£1,500

Funding Bands start at £1,500 and rise to £27,000 for degree level programmes.

The most up-to-date list of approved Apprenticeship Standards can be found at the link supplied in section 4 of this document.

From April 2017 levy funds can be used for degree holders subject to below:

- Employers are able to use funds in their digital account or access government co-investment support to train any eligible individual to undertake an apprenticeship at a higher level than a qualification they already hold, including a previous apprenticeship.
- An individual can be funded to undertake an apprenticeship at the same or lower level than a qualification they already hold, if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills and the content of the training is materially different from any prior training or a previous apprenticeship.

Pre-Levy Apprentices (*Apprenticeship commenced before 1st April 2017*)

Frameworks are slowly being switched off and replaced by Standards created by employers. The government’s plan is that the standards system will completely replace the frameworks system by 2020. There will be a transitional phase where equivalent frameworks and standards will run side-by-side as standards are embedded but government has not yet decided how long this will be. If you currently employ an apprentice on a framework, there will be no change to their programme of study, or to the funding arrangements you have in place.

8. How to get started

i) Consider your current and future business development needs

If you are interested in recruiting new apprentice(s), or wish to use an apprenticeship framework or standard to enable existing employee(s) to develop new skills, knowledge and behaviours, contact the Employer Engagement Officer, Luton Adult Learning, for advice and guidance, in the first instance - Email: lisa.root@luton.ac.uk

ii) Check funding availability and your budget

Apprenticeship funding covers only training and assessment costs. Salary, potential backfill costs and any 10% top up costs incurred must be funded from a school’s own delegated budget. NOTE: schools should check the current overarching allocation with Luton Adult Learning if approaching their £7,500 limit, as unused funding may be available to access.

iii) Ensure sufficient capacity to provide support, and be clear about expectations and responsibilities

New apprentices and existing employees must know what is expected of them, and who will provide support or guidance, as their supervisor and/or mentor. Schools will also have to manage time away from work to achieve 20% off the job training requirement.

When you are ready to proceed, Luton Adult Learning’s Employer Engagement Officer will support your school through the recruitment and employment process (*see flow chart below for contact details*). The Apprenticeships Team will then coordinate the training programme.

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