

Selecting an Apprenticeship Training Provider (ATP)

The changed funding rules have provided new opportunities for ATPs, and many new ATPs have emerged – especially for more popular apprenticeships. While there may be specific requirements for each apprenticeship arrangement, you will always want to work with ATPs who are supportive, who communicate clearly, and (where possible) have a proven track record of successful delivery.

This document forms part of the Apprenticeship Toolkit, and supports managers and employees in selecting the right ATP.

It explores key consideration points, clarifying what options you may have and what you may need to explore / confirm. It aims to answer some key questions:

- What should an ATP do?
- What should you consider when selecting an ATP?
- How do you see a list of ATPs available?

Within this document the following terms are used:

- Apprenticeship – an approved apprenticeship programme (standard or framework)
- Employee – the LSE employee completing the apprenticeship
- Apprentices – a group of people completing an apprenticeship (LSE employees or not)
- Job or Post – the position the LSE employee holds while completing the apprenticeship
- Manager – the person managing the employee completing the apprenticeship and the person with the overall responsibility for the apprenticeship process
- Apprenticeship Training Provider (ATP) – an organisation on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, who is approved and selected to deliver the apprenticeship (for clarify, this is the main ATP, as they are responsible for managing any subcontracted ATPs)

And when reviewing and applying the information in this section, you may wish to refer to:

- The rest of the Apprenticeship Toolkit (available [here](#))
- Appendix A – a process flow chart / infogram showing the apprenticeship process;
- Appendix B – a manager's checklist of things to consider throughout the apprenticeship process
- Appendix C – the list of the documents you may need to use when commencing an apprenticeship
- Appendix D – the summary of rules that apply when using the apprenticeship levy to fund study
- Appendix E – the process in more detail, including who does what and when

This toolkit is in development. If you have questions, comments or feedback, please contact HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk

ATP responsibilities

The ATP will work closely with you to ensure that the apprenticeship programme is tailored for your employee and their post. They will also support you in managing the 20% off-the-job training.

The role of an ATP is to:

- Work in partnership with you to develop and deliver an apprenticeship programme that meets your needs.
- Create a learning plan for the apprenticeship, confirming timescales and learning requirements, preparing for end point assessment.
- Deliver learning to the apprentice.
- Provide ongoing assessment, support and advice throughout the apprenticeship programme to you and your employee.
- Work with you to select an independent organisation to deliver the end point assessment for the apprenticeship (if you have selected an apprenticeship standard).
- Confirm apprenticeship arrangements via a tri-partite Commitment Statement.

They can also assist you in recruiting a new apprentice – detail below.

Finding potential ATPs

- Go to the 'Find Apprenticeships' portal of the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) – findapprenticeshiptraining.sfa.bis.gov.uk/
- Select the appropriate apprenticeship standard or framework (it may help to filter by level)
- Click 'Find a training provider'
- Load your postcode, and confirm that the LSE annual pay bill is more than £3m per year.

This will give you a list of all organisations listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers as delivering this apprenticeship programme. You can click on an ATP's name to get more information, including previous apprenticeship success rates and contact details.

Below is a list of the key consideration points to when selecting an ATP. You should be able to answer the first four points with the information available on the DAS – so to further explore their offering compared to your needs, you should consider:

- Asking your networks for recommendations
- Reviewing ATP websites (links are on the DAS)
- Emailing or meeting with a number of potential ATPs to get for more detail
- Using a formal tender process (depending on the amount / value of training to be delivered)

Points to consider – selecting an ATP

Information available in the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS):

1. *Do they have a suitable delivery method for this apprenticeship?*
2. *Are their satisfaction and achievement ratings acceptable?*
3. *Have they got relevant experience?*
4. *When was their last Ofsted or QAA inspection, and what was the outcome?*
5. *What sort of feedback have previous employers provided about them?*

Further research and questioning required:

6. *Can they deliver the apprenticeship within the required timeframes?*
7. *Can they deliver the programme within the funding available?*
8. *Can they provide a programme outline for this apprenticeship?*
9. *How can LSE specific elements be incorporated into the training programme – for example software, ethics or customer service training?*
10. *How will they manage 20% off the job training?*
11. *How will they track learning, share progress, and let us know of any issues?*
12. *What additional support can they offer?*
13. *Do they have an End Point Assessment organisation identified?*
14. *Will they help with eligibility checks (and recruitment, if required)?*
15. *Will they agree to our documentation (contract for services) and are we happy with theirs (study programme / commitment statement)?*

Information available in the DAS

1. *Do they have a suitable delivery method for this apprenticeship?*

The DAS shows us three delivery options:

- Day release: the employee goes to the ATP on a regular basis – for example, for regular workshops
- Block release: the employee goes to the ATP less frequently but for longer courses – for example, for one week every term
- At your location: the trainer / tutor comes to us, either to have one to one meetings with the employee (some will include the line manager), or to deliver actual training sessions.

The ideal approach will vary depending on the employee / apprenticeship / situation. To help filter results, select the delivery method you would prefer for your apprenticeship, and change if / where necessary.

You may also want to check if the ATP is a 'National' deliverer (useful if your search returns ATPs outside of London).

If you require a specific delivery method, you can seek clarification through the training programme – ask the ATP for a proposed course outline, or programme exemplar.

2. Are their satisfaction and achievement ratings acceptable?

Where they are known, an ATP will list on the DAS:

- Employer satisfaction ratings
- Learner satisfaction ratings
- Achievement ratings (these ratings are for this or similar apprenticeships, and you should compare this against the national average and check the comparison group size)

This register is regularly updated with new apprenticeships, new ATPs and new statistics, so a lack of information does not necessarily indicate bad results. You should still consider an ATP who has no details loaded – but should not consider an ATP with less than acceptable satisfactory ratings, or less than average achievement ratings.

To find the national average achievement rating, find the first ATP with an achievement rating and click on their name. Underneath training options you'll find achievement rates – for the organisation and the national average. You will also see the number of apprenticeships this ATP is basing their average on. You should not consider any ATP with a less than average achievement standard, or an unreasonable number of apprentices (for the apprenticeship) in the comparison group.

3. Have they got relevant experience?

Relevant experience could include:

- Delivering this or similar apprenticeships (should be shown on the DAS);
- Working in HE or similar environments (utilise your networks).

While apprenticeships are still being developed you should be flexible with this measure. While the DAS shows achievement ratings in this or similar apprenticeships, it's unclear if it considers 'similar' to be standards & frameworks, or differing levels of the same apprenticeship. So if you're looking to filter ATPs based on their experience, you should consider:

- There are old frameworks and new standards – have you looked at one, and should you expand your filter to include the other?
- Rather than looking for someone who has delivered the apprenticeship in HE, are there other similar environments to consider?

4. When was their last Ofsted or QAA inspection, and what was the outcome?

Anyone delivering apprenticeships up to degree level will be inspected by Ofsted. Anyone delivering degree or post graduate apprenticeships will be inspected by QAA. Not every ATP lists their rating on the DAS, so you may need to go to their website to check. In addition, Ofsted has confirmed that due to the large number of new ATPs, it may take up to three years for an ATP to be assessed. You should therefore consider ATPs with 1 (Outstanding) or 2 (Good), or with no rating yet (but check with them about their last inspection).

5. What sort of feedback have previous employers provided about them?

From October 2018, employers have been able to use the DAS to provide feedback on ATPs. To search for this information, you need to know the name of the ATP. To access the feedback:

- Go to the main '[Find apprenticeship training](#)' portal and click 'Start'
- Confirm that you want to search for a training provider you know the name of
- Type their name, click on the magnifying glass, and select their profile

Further research and questioning required

6. Can they deliver the apprenticeship within the required timeframes?

There are several factors impacting an ATP's ability to deliver an apprenticeship within our required timeframes:

- Between 2017 and 2020, old apprenticeship frameworks are being phased out and new apprenticeship standards are being introduced. Are they still able to deliver the programme you want?
- Some apprenticeships work in cohorts, others are individual arrangements. What do you want and can the ATP facilitate it?
- If your employee is contracted to work for less than 30 hours / week (including off the job learning) then the apprenticeship may need to be extended to allow them time to learn, and show their application of learning.
- Do you have specific start and end dates you need to comply with (academic year / project dates / employment dates, etc).

7. Can they deliver the programme within the funding available?

The funding band listed on each apprenticeship standard is the maximum levy amount that can be used. If a programme costs more than the funding available, or if there are fees that are not covered by the levy, the employer needs to pay these. You should discuss what is and is not covered in the ATPs programme, and liaise with Organisational Learning (HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk) if you have any concerns.

8. Can they provide a programme outline for this apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship standard and end-point-assessment documentation will confirm learning outcomes for the apprenticeship and how those outcomes will be assessed – but they don't cover how learning will be delivered. Therefore, for each apprenticeship you should ask for a detailed training programme (also called a programme exemplar, or a course / schedule of work).

This training programme should cover:

- If the apprenticeship is made up of any units or modules – and which are mandatory, which are optional and where you have flexibility to select what you want.

- When and how units are covered – what is delivered in a group workshop, what is discussed between the tutor and the apprentice, what is done through e-learning, and what LSE will need to cover through project work / LSE training / discussions with line manager or mentor. This feeds into the 20% off-the-job training noted below.
- What project work you will need to provide for the employee to gain learning / experience.
- Delivery dates – are there workshops to attend, deadlines for work, or meetings to schedule and plan?
- Assessments – although apprenticeship standards lead towards an end-point-assessment, there may be additional assessments or mock assessments throughout the programme.

An ATP may need some time to come up with a training programme so you may not use it as selection criteria – but this should definitely be provided before the employee starts their apprenticeship programme.

9. How can LSE specific elements be incorporated into the training programme – for example software, ethics or customer service training?

As the employer, we have some flexibility to negotiate what we want included in the programme – as long as we ensure that all learning links back to the apprenticeship standard or framework.

There are two ways this can be done:

- As part of our contribution to the 20% 'off the job' training.
- As an ATP sub-contractor. The funds are initially paid to the main ATP, so they would pay us for delivering part of the programme. This can be difficult to negotiate, so please liaise with OL if you want to explore this arrangement.

10. How will they manage 20% off the job training?

An apprenticeship paid with levy funds needs to include 20% off-the-job training. There is some formal guidance on the [government website](#) but as well as seeing a detailed individualised study programme, you should be asking:

- How many hours of off the job training do you need to facilitate?
- What learning outcomes do you need to deliver?
- How will off the job learning be recorded?

11. How will they track learning, share progress, and let us know of any issues?

As the manager, you also have responsibilities throughout the apprenticeship programme: to provide learning and experience opportunities, to ensure learning is taking place, and to liaise with account manager and/or the tutor and mentor.

In addition, apprenticeship funding rules and arrangements are regularly being clarified and updated. How each ATP applies those rules and what they expect of you will also vary.

You should understand how each ATP plans to communicate with you:

- Would you prefer paper or on-line learning records – and do they provide that?
- Do you require any regular reporting – what and when?
- How will they let us know if there are any issues?

Apprentices are first and foremost employees, and LSE is responsible for managing their performance, and ensuring they are meeting agreed learning objectives. If there are any issues – either with the employee or with the ATP, liaise with your HR adviser, or Organisational Learning (HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk)

12. What additional support can they offer?

To undertake any apprenticeship, the employee will need to have documented proof of at least functional or L2 English & maths. Where the employee cannot provide this, the ATP should support them to gain it.

In addition, where there is a requirement for IT skills to track employee learning the ATP may offer additional IT skills training. This is particularly relevant for an apprenticeship for a role that does not have an IT element.

As well as the learning preferences and needs of each individual (do they prefer e-learning or face to face), some learners may have more specific support requirements:

- Do they have any learning disabilities to support?
- Does the ATP have any other student support networks that may be helpful?

Some ATPs will confirm their offer on the DAS website, but they are the exception – you would normally need to get this information from the ATP directly.

13. Do they have an End Point Assessment organisation identified?

Apprenticeship standards all work towards an end-point-assessment – and this end point assessment will normally be done by a different organisation to the one delivering the training.

Ideally this assessment would be done by an industry recognised body so that the apprenticeship could result in an industry recognised qualification. For example, if an employee successfully completes a management apprenticeship with a Chartered Managers Institute (CMI) accredited ATP, that employee is eligible for CMI membership.

It is rare, however, that qualification fees (registration / examination / membership) are by the levy – so you should establish costs as early as possible, and prepare to cover them. You could also discuss fees with the employee as you may want to share costs, or use this as a way to incur a bond arrangement.

As the employer, you are entitled to confirm which end point assessment (EPA) organisation you would like to work with. Some EPA organisations are able to offer accredited qualifications or memberships – but you will need this, and confirm if there is any cost attached.

Ensure your ATP is happy and able to work with your preferred EPA organisation – or ask them for a list of the EPA organisations they will work with.

NOTE – as the new apprenticeship standards are rolling out, some are yet to have End Point Assessors confirmed. Double check this with your preferred ATP also, and contact Organisational Learning (HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk) if you have any concerns.

14. Will they help with eligibility checks (and recruitment, if required)?

If you are looking to recruit a new employee for this apprenticeship, the ATP can help us with recruitment – but you should check:

- All apprenticeships should be advertised on the DAS – do they advertise more widely?
- Where can you be involved in the assessment and selection process?
- Will they do thorough eligibility checks, including residential history, previous qualifications, any additional funding entitlements (based on age or postcode) and any additional learning requirements – functional English and maths, etc.
- If there are entry requirements for the apprenticeship, will they check these?

15. Will they agree to our documentation (contract for services) and are we happy with theirs (study programme / commitment statement)?

Depending on the number of employees to go on an apprenticeship (and therefore the amount of levy funding to be invested), you may need to implement a contract for services. If you're unsure, liaise with the procurement team procurement@lse.ac.uk.

The Education Skills Funding Agency has stated that all apprenticeships should have:

- An apprenticeship agreement, confirming the type of apprenticeship and the details of all parties involved.
- A commitment statement outlining the responsibilities for each party.

These would be in addition to enrolment documentation and any course specific documents (programmes).