

Confirming a Suitable Post

This document forms part of the Apprenticeship Toolkit, and supports leaders, managers and employees when identifying posts that would facilitate an apprenticeship.

It aims to answer some key questions:

- What are the opportunities and restrictions around jobs for employees on apprenticeships?
- What sort of job would support an apprenticeship?
- How much should you pay someone on an apprenticeship?
- How do you match a job to an apprenticeship programme?

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

Points to consider – confirming the post

LSE considers an apprenticeship to be a real job with a structured study programme. Therefore in most of the opportunities for an apprenticeship, the job or work to be done is already confirmed, and we need to ensure we can find a suitable apprenticeship for it.

The following points will aid managers and employees in confirming that their post is suitable to support an apprenticeship. For additional support in selecting a programme to match your role, see Points to Consider – Selecting the apprenticeship programme.

Job requirements

To comply with funding rules, an employee can do an apprenticeship as long as their job:

- Is a 'genuine job' that will continue to exist for at least the length of the apprenticeship (at least 12 months, and likely more, depending on the level of the apprenticeship and the FTE of the post).
- Allows the employee to spend 20% of their working hours on activities related to their apprenticeship ('off-the-job learning').
- Provides the employee with opportunities to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve their apprenticeship. This includes not only the tasks and work within the job, but also the hours – an employee doing an apprenticeship should be working at least 16 hours / week, and ideally 30 hours / week. Any less and the apprenticeship (and where necessary, the employment) may need to be extended, pro-rata.
- Is paid a fair wage for the work being done (see below).
- Requires them to work 50% of their time in England.

More information is available in Appendix D – Apprenticeship levy funding rules.

Job description

If you are using an apprenticeship to develop an employee into their role, you may need to specify what you expect them to deliver / achieve at the beginning of their apprenticeship, compared to where they should be at the end.

The job description should always reflect the role as it needs to be, so for an apprenticeship it could either be added to, to allow 'intermediary steps', or a development plan could be created to reflect milestones where learning will be reviewed, and work output should be progressed. This could support recruitment, by clarifying what skill level you are recruiting for at the beginning of the apprenticeship, and could tie into the review period. It may have salary implications – see below.

When taking either approach, consider how each task could be broken down into smaller areas, and be mindful of the words that reflect the level of responsibility or ownership of the task. Consider when the employee should 'support with' and when should they 'lead

on' a stream of work – and when should they be held accountable for part of a task, and when should they have full ownership of it.

As an example, if a job description requires the post holder to manage a budget (including invoice approvals, reporting and forecasting), it could be varied for an apprentice as follows:

Within the first 6 months of the apprenticeship, the employee should:

- Develop a thorough understanding of the invoice management process, including systems to be used.
- Approve payments up to a level, and understand why and when additional approval is required.
- Have attempted to reconcile budgets to management accounts, raising queries where necessary, and working with their manager to resolve them.

Within 12 months of starting the apprenticeship, the employee should:

- Have picked up full budget management, and be able to sign off payments to an appropriate level for their post.
- Have responsibility for reconciling management accounts on a regular basis, raising and resolving any issues. Spot checks may still be done by their manager.
- Have worked with their manager to review expenditure for the current / previous year, and propose a budget for the following year.

Within 24 months of starting the apprenticeship, the employee should

- Have full budget management, with authority to sign off payments to an appropriate level for their post.
- Have responsibility for reconciling management accounts on a regular basis, raising and resolving any issues.
- Have reviewed spending for the previous year, and identified where better value for money could be attained.
- Have prepared a budget for the following year, including writing a business case where additional budget is requested.

For more information about writing job descriptions, refer to the Recruitment & Selection Toolkit.

Review period

As with any other post, an employee doing an apprenticeship can be subject to a probation period. With an apprenticeship, however, the employment contract may also be fixed term. This could be for several reasons, including:

- The employee is completing a finite piece of work (i.e. a project, secondment, or covering for leave)
- Ongoing employment is contingent on the employee successfully completing their apprenticeship (i.e. attaining a qualification that enables them to practice)
- The post has been identified as one we would use to support apprenticeships, and when having provided work experience to one person, we look to support another. (NOTE funding rules have changed about whether or not this is suitable – check with the OL team before using this as a reason for a fixed term contract).

The length of the review period may vary, depending on the length of the employment contract and the length of the apprenticeship – but in all scenarios, fixed term contracts and varying review periods should be discussed with HR before being offered.

Salary

While the apprenticeship levy covers the cost of the apprenticeship training programme, it cannot be used to fund the salaries of employees doing an apprenticeship, or of their managers (this is in accordance with the Funding Rules).

The funding rules also outline expectations for employees and employers in regards to remuneration for apprentices; but this 'apprenticeship wage' is far lower than School salary scales.

The School is committed to paying the London Living Wage, including for those undertaking apprenticeships, and in most scenarios, the salaries of employees on an apprenticeship will be managed the same way as any other LSE employee:

- The post is evaluated
- The LSE employee is paid according to the relevant policy and salary scale for their job (in line with the LSE Starting Salary Policy).

For avoidance of doubt – an employee undertaking an apprenticeship to enhance their skills whilst continuing to deliver the full requirements of their role, will be paid within the normal salary band for the role.

In some apprenticeship situations, however, it may be appropriate to recognise that the employee doing the apprenticeship will not be able to fully perform all the tasks required of the post. This could be for several reasons, including:

- They are learning the skills and knowledge required to deliver the job in full
- They are spending a significant amount of their working time in a learning environment

Where an employee undertaking an apprenticeship is not yet able to deliver the full requirements of a role until they have completed their apprenticeship, in part or in full, the School may consider varying their salary until they are appropriately equipped to deliver the role. This also recognises that the School is (via the levy) covering the cost for the employee's development programme, and is ensuring their workload aligns with the apprenticeship programme.

Managers will have the discretion to use the saving made during this period to resource the aspects of the role not undertaken by the employee and/or to recognise the contribution of other team members whose workload is impacted by this arrangement, e.g. via a responsibility allowance – thereby providing additional development opportunities to other team members.

These arrangements will allow the School to balance and reflect the contributions of both the employee who is receiving the apprenticeship investment and development related activities, and of their peers who are currently delivering the role requirements in full.