

Selecting an Apprenticeship Programme

To support the creation of apprenticeship opportunities, the government is reviewing and updating apprenticeship training programmes. To use the levy funding to pay for a programme, the employee must be studying an approved apprenticeship programme; either an apprenticeship framework (these are currently being phased out), or an apprenticeship standard (slowly replacing frameworks).

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

It aims to answer some key questions:

- The difference between frameworks and standards
- Where can you see detail of apprenticeship programmes?
- How do you know which one to select?

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

Apprenticeship Programmes – Frameworks and Standards

As both frameworks and standards are currently available, there are a large range of programme options. A full list of all apprenticeship programmes is available on the Digital Apprenticeship Service – via the Find Apprenticeship Training portal (see instructions [below](#)), but should you require more detail:

- A list of current apprenticeship frameworks (and information about obsoleting frameworks) can be found at [on the government's website](#).
- A database of current apprenticeship standards can be found on the [Institute for Apprenticeships website](#). This database can be filtered by job family, apprenticeship level, and current standard status.
- In addition to their database of apprenticeship standards, the Institute for Apprenticeships have grouped apprenticeships by job family to show where apprenticeships can be used to progress through a career. These are called [occupational pathway maps](#).

Key points to note about apprenticeship standards are:

- They include a list of the types of jobs an employee may be working in while completing the standard. The OL team have done some work mapping apprenticeships to LSE posts – email HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk for more information.
- They have been developed by groups of employers and industry specialists (collectively called ‘trailblazers’), so should reflect the knowledge, skills and behaviours required in those jobs.
- They clarify how long the apprenticeship should take. To be eligible for levy funding, an apprenticeship needs to last for at least 12 months – but depending on the level of apprenticeship and seniority of role, they can last up to 6 years.
- They clarify the maximum amount of funding available for that standard. This funding should cover the costs for the programme and the end point assessment, but should the ATP charge more than the funding available, LSE would need to make up the difference.
- They include detail on how learning will be assessed, both throughout the programme and at End Point Assessment. The assessment plan is clarified in the detail of the standard, and the end point assessment must be successfully completed for the employee to pass the apprenticeship.
- They can lead towards industry recognised qualifications – but any qualification or membership costs will be charged separately.

In all cases, whilst the apprenticeship itself will not result in a qualification, it will work towards work-based learning qualifications, functional skills and, in most cases when the employee has successfully completed the apprenticeship, they can then apply to sit a relevant work based qualification.

It is therefore good to be specific about what you want, and ideally – but depending on the situation – the employee and their manager would work together to select the appropriate apprenticeship programme.

Finding apprenticeship programmes

- Go to findapprenticeshiptraining.sfa.bis.gov.uk/
- Confirm you are searching for by apprenticeships
- Load a key word, or leave this blank to get a full list of all programmes available
- Use the level filter or key word search to review the apprenticeships available

Frameworks are slowly being replaced by standards, so searching the database of standards on the [Institute for Apprenticeships website](#) may be an easier way to identify options.

If you cannot find a suitable standard or framework for your post, please contact the Organisational Learning team by emailing HR.Learning@lse.ac.uk.

Points to consider – selecting the apprenticeship programme

Apprenticeships must be used to gain knowledge, learn new skills and develop new behaviours. Therefore, when selecting a suitable programme (Framework or Standard), you will need to match the apprenticeship with the job description, with the employee's prior experience and learning. You should also check that the job meets the requirements outlined in the apprenticeship funding rules.

Use the right job description as a comparison

Are you using this apprenticeship to support an employee to develop their current post, or to develop them for a future post? Ensure you have right job description when selecting an apprenticeship, and that all parties are clear what sort of work should be delivered at the beginning of the apprenticeship, how that should improve throughout the apprenticeship, and what sort of work should be delivered by the end. Compare salary banding and apprenticeship level as a sense check. If you are a band 7 manager with several years of experience, you may find the level 5 apprenticeship more applicable to your work than the level 3 team leader programme (detail below)

Compare the content of the apprenticeship programme vs requirements / workload of the post

Does the programme reflect the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours required in the post? What else may be required of the employee during their apprenticeship, and how can it be included in their work?

For example:

- If this is a development apprenticeship (helping the employee prepare for their next role) do you have opportunity for them to take on additional work / responsibility so that they can put their learning into practice? Should you consider projects or [Projects as Learning](#) (PAL) days?
- Would the employee benefit from having a [mentor](#) while they are on the programme?
- How flexible is the course content, and are there units in the apprenticeship that they need, or may benefit from completing? This is particularly relevant if the employee is working towards a qualification (see below).
- Should you consider a higher or lower level apprenticeship to get the specific arrangements you want? For example, the level 4 Software Developer apprenticeship includes specific coding languages that may be covered in the

apprenticeship – the level 3 Software Development technician does not, so the employer can identify which languages should be taught via the apprenticeship.

- You may also want to compare the apprenticeship entry level requirements (and potentially the end point assessment details) with the job description, and the employee’s CV, prior qualifications, and experience to ensure outputs are aligned.

Check the level of apprenticeship vs band of role

There are currently four levels of apprenticeships:

- An intermediate apprenticeship (level 2) is equivalent to 5 GCSEs A*- C
- An Advanced apprenticeship (level 3) is equivalent to 2 A Levels
- A Higher apprenticeship (levels 4,5,6 & 7,) is equivalent to a foundation degree and above
- A Degree Apprenticeship (levels 6 & 7) is equivalent to a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree.

Apprenticeship Terminology	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	GCSE (A*-C)
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor’s or master’s degree

NOTE - you can do an intermediate or advanced level apprenticeship to learn new skills, even if you already have higher level qualification. As an example, someone who has done a level 7 accounting qualification (e.g. ACCA’s), could do a level 3 team leader qualification if they would like to prepare for a management job.

Compare the end point assessment arrangements with the requirements and workload of the post.

How will the learning be delivered and assessed? This ties into ATP selection – but it should also be considered at programme selection stage – as ideally the content of the course would align with the working method (e.g. practical learning for practical roles).

Compare the apprenticeship entry level requirements and outcomes with the employee’s prior learning

This needs to be done by the ATP, employee and the line manager, either as part of selecting an apprenticeship programme, or throughout the employee selection process, or when all parties / elements are agreed. There are some tools and documentation that will assist with this:

- English and maths skills. All apprenticeships require functional English and maths skills – some will require more advanced comprehension. The ATP will support assessment, and can provide training, if required. The [LSE Language Centre](#) can also help with assessments and support, otherwise contact the OL team for introductions to LSE contractors who can assist with this.
- Prior learning & previous experience. Each apprenticeship has entry level requirements that should be met prior to commencing the apprenticeship – often a number of GCSE’s at a certain level – but there is allowance for employers to be flexible on entry level requirements for each apprenticeship. The Apprenticeship Application form should be used to state both the entry requirements of the apprenticeship, and to confirm how the employee (and their line manager) agree that the employee meets these requirements:

- If the apprenticeship is initiated by the employee / their manager, they should adapt the application form to reflect the requirements of the apprenticeship programme.
- If the apprenticeship is a School initiative (e.g. a management development programme), the application form may be set by the OL team.

The HR team can support mapping / matching activities – contact your HRBP for additional information.

Check the cost and length of the apprenticeship programme vs length of the role and opportunity for return on investment.

Even though the levy covers the cost of the training programme, there may be some hidden costs to manage, including balancing the 20% 'off-the-job' learning, and ensuring the employee has suitable work to align with their programme. When this is facilitated, will there be suitable return on investment? For reference, we have collated a list of potential benefits of apprenticeships in the 'Opportunity' section of the Apprenticeship Toolkit.

Will this programme lead to suitable qualification / memberships?

Qualifications and memberships cannot be funded by the apprenticeship levy – but it would be beneficial to consider from the outset if any qualifications or memberships would be beneficial, as this may shape the work, projects or units covered in the programme. It may also impact who is selected as the End Point Assessor (see the summary of points to consider when selecting an Apprenticeship Training Organisation).

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