

# Apprenticeship FAQ's

- **What are the age limits for employing an Apprentice?**

*The minimum age is 16 years old and there is no upper age limit.*

- **Are Apprenticeships only available to new employees?**

*No, Apprenticeships can be accessed by existing staff too.*

- **How long does an Apprenticeship typically last?**

*An Apprenticeship typically lasts between 15 – 48 months depending on discipline and level. The minimum duration of any Apprenticeship is 15 months to include End Point Assessment (EPA).*

- **Is there a cost(£) to my department for enrolling somebody onto an Apprenticeship?**

*There is no monetary cost for enrolment onto an Apprenticeship programme at present, but in some cases, there may be a cost to the department if, for example, the Apprentice fails a module, or if an End Point Assessment re-sit is required. It is advisable to gain a full understanding of such costs (if applicable), prior to the Apprenticeship enrolment. Ongoing support and training will need to be given to the Apprentice from a suitably qualified, nominated person (Mentor).*

*The Widening Participation and Apprenticeship Team can provide advice and guidance on the above subject if you are considering utilising the Apprenticeship programme.*

# Apprenticeship FAQ's

- **I want to take on an Apprentice; do I have to liaise with the Widening Participation and Apprenticeship Team?**

*Yes, you must make contact with a member of the Widening Participation and Apprenticeship Team. The team need to check that there are sufficient funds available to finance the Apprenticeship and have an action to complete to support full enrolment onto the programme. The team require the full details of the new Apprentice to be able to track, monitor and support you and the Apprentice during their journey.*

- **How many Apprentices can I have in my department?**

*There is no upper limit to how many Apprentices you can take on, but you must be able to support them with their training needs to include the off the job training.*

- **Is the Apprenticeship Wage different to the National Minimum Wage?**

*The current Apprenticeship wage is £4.81 per hour for all age groups; however this can only be paid to newly employed Apprentices during the first year of their Apprenticeship programme. After the first year on the Apprenticeship programme the Apprentice must then be paid equivalent or greater than the current National Minimum Wage via either an Annex 21 or Band 2 salary.*

- **Can I take on an Apprentice and pay them a percentage of a band until the Apprenticeship is complete?**

*Yes, Annex 21 can be utilised when taking on a new Apprentice.*

# Apprenticeship FAQ's

- **What are Apprenticeship Standards?**

*Apprenticeship Standards were introduced in 2017 and replace the now retired Apprenticeship Frameworks. Apprenticeship Standards were designed by employer groups (Trailblazers) with the intention of raising the standard of Apprenticeships and bringing Apprenticeships more in-line with industry.*

- **What is meant by the term EPA?**

*EPA stands for End Point Assessment. In order to complete an Apprenticeship Standard, the Apprentice must undertake and complete the EPA process. This will take place towards the end of the Apprenticeship when the Apprentice, Line Manager and Training Provider agree that the Apprentice is EPA ready. EPA will involve being independently assessed for Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours against a set criteria. EPA is a mandatory element of an Apprenticeship programme and must be completed.*

- **What are Functional Skills, do I have to complete them?**

*Functional Skills are English and maths qualifications that are completed alongside the Apprenticeship programme if the candidate has not achieved sufficient GCSE grades (or equivalent) at the time of their sign-up. These qualifications are not to be feared and are usually completed in the first year of the programme. It is common for the English and maths to be delivered by subject specialists and there are plenty of resources available to support their completion. Failure to complete Functional Skills however would mean non-completion of the Apprenticeship programme.*

# Apprenticeship FAQ's

- **If I take on an Apprentice, will I lose the member of staff for 1 day per week due to College or University attendance?**

*Maybe, some Apprenticeships require day release attendance; some Apprenticeships occasionally involve block release. Some Apprenticeships can be completed solely in the workplace. It is worth noting however that all Apprenticeships require the Apprentice to spend at least 20% of their time completing off the job training.*

- **Do I have to provide supervision and training for my Apprentice?**

*Yes, Apprentices should be supervised and they should receive training to support them learn the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to complete the programme in full. All Apprentices must have a named mentor at the start of their programme and for the duration thereafter.*

- **I don't have time to train an Apprentice, can I still take an Apprentice on?**

*No, when taking on an Apprentice, a Commitment Statement is signed by all parties where by you agree to provide the necessary support and training required for the individual to successfully complete the programme.*

- **Does my Apprentice have to go to College to achieve the Off the Job requirement?**

*No, Apprentices can achieve the OTJ requirement while in the workplace by documenting all of their learning experiences and CPD each week.*

# Apprenticeship FAQ's

- **I have achieved a degree already, can I enrol onto an Apprenticeship?**

*Providing the Apprenticeship is materially different to the previously achieved qualification and/or significant new learning can be achieved, you can enrol onto an Apprenticeship.*

- **Can my Apprentice take a break during their programme?**

*If an Apprentice takes a period of leave from work, for reasons such as medical treatment or Maternity Leave, then a Break in Learning can be initiated. Once the Apprentice returns to work, a new planned end date will be calculated to ensure the Apprentice has sufficient time to complete the remainder of their programme. If the Apprentice is on a fixed term contract then the contract end date would need extending in line with the revised Apprenticeship end date, once the Apprentice returns to work and learning.*

- **My Apprentice isn't performing, what can I do?**

*If there are performance issues with your Apprentice, these must be discussed in the first instance with the Apprentice and an action plan agreed. If an Apprentice's performance continues to give concern, they may be placed on Performance Management following Trust policy and could ultimately face dismissal.*

- **I have a query or concern about my Apprentice or the programme, who do I go to?**

*The Widening Participation and Apprenticeship Team can offer support, advice and guidance on Apprenticeships and will liaise with the Training Provider if required. Please email [bfwh.apprenticeandworkexperience@nhs.net](mailto:bfwh.apprenticeandworkexperience@nhs.net) in the first instance.*