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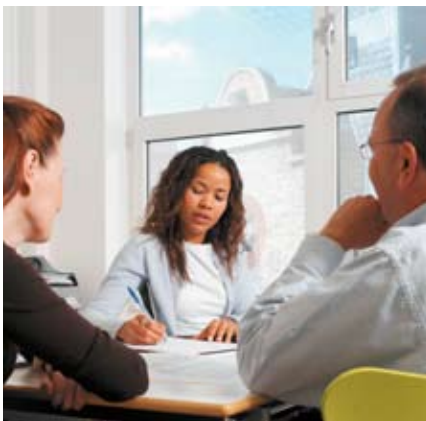


Apprenticeships in the public sector: a short guide for employers

The public sector skills challenge

A skilled workforce is vital for meeting the challenges of the global economy in the 21st century.

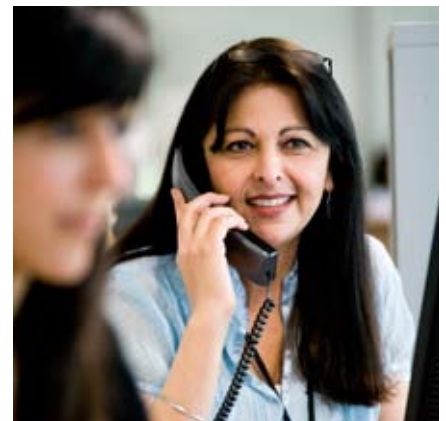
The public sector is no exception to this and, with many critical skills shortages and an ageing workforce, it faces serious skills and recruitment difficulties.



Apprenticeships are considered to be a proven way of dealing with both current and future workforce issues. They enable employers to attract high-quality recruits and improve the skills and productivity of existing employees.

Because of their success, the expansion of the Apprenticeships programme is a high priority for the Government; and over the past few years there has been a huge rise in the number and range of businesses offering Apprenticeships as a way of tackling their skills shortages – **over 130,000 businesses can't be wrong.**

Yet, within the public sector an opportunity is being missed. The sector accounts for some 20 per cent of the national workforce, but employs less than 10 per cent of all apprentices.



Many more organisations could be taking advantage of the benefits that Apprenticeships bring, as a way of unlocking talent within their local communities and ensuring that they have a workforce equipped with the skills it needs for today and tomorrow.

The harder to fill posts this year were in operations centres, customer service, IT and fleet services. We hope to grow our own vehicle technicians – once they are fully trained they don't leave for 30 years until they retire.

Police Service

The case for Apprenticeships

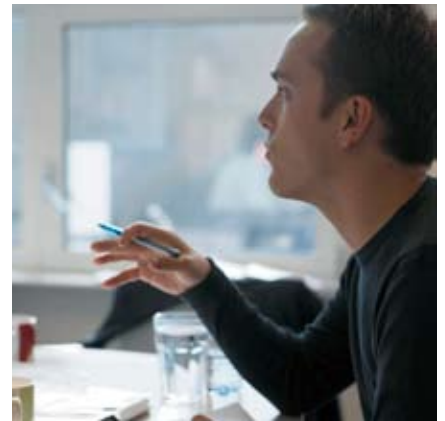
There are economic and social reasons for the public sector to employ Apprentices. They are a way of:

- developing the skills of local people;
- bringing young people into the workforce;
- involving the local community in the delivery of local services;
- training the organisation's current workforce and growing the workforce of the future; and
- increasing staff morale, productivity and retention.

Apprenticeships are relevant to a whole range of organisations and roles within the public sector, including Local Government, the Armed Forces, the NHS, the Civil Service, the Criminal Justice sector and the Education sector (schools, colleges and universities).

This pack contains information on Apprenticeships, including:

- a list of common myths about Apprenticeships within the public sector;
- advice on how to recruit an apprentice; and
- employer case studies showing Apprenticeships in the public sector in action.



We did a workforce audit and found just 3 per cent of people working for the authority were in the 16–24 age group and over a third were aged over 50. The Apprenticeship programme will help us to increase the number of young people employed by the council.

Local Authority

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Apprenticeships in the public sector: common myths

Apprenticeships aren't relevant to the public sector as they are focused on 'traditional industries' such as manufacturing.

This is not true. There are over 180 Apprenticeships to choose from in over 80 sectors. All relate to a particular job role. A full list is available at apprenticeships.org.uk but, in the public sector, Apprenticeships are often taken in the following areas (known as frameworks):

- Health and Social Care;
- Advice and Guidance;
- Community Development;
- Community Justice;
- Public Services;
- Teaching Assistants;
- Youth Work;
- Customer Services;
- Business Administration;
- Team Leading;
- Management;
- Payroll; and
- Personnel (Support).

Apprenticeships are designed by employers for employers and are therefore tailored to meet the needs of each specific sector, so that the training is practical and relevant to your organisation.

Where there appears to be no suitable Apprenticeship available for your sector, you can work with your sector skills council (SSC) to develop Apprenticeships in new areas. For more information, contact your SSC.

Apprenticeships are only available to young people and the organisation is not recruiting at the moment, so the programme is not relevant.

Not true. Apprenticeships are now open to all age groups (above the age of 16) including:

- school leavers;
- those who have been working for years and want to improve their skills; and
- those seeking a new challenge and wanting to start a new career.

Apprenticeships are a great way of attracting high-quality new recruits from the age of 16 and bringing younger people into an ageing workforce. They are also

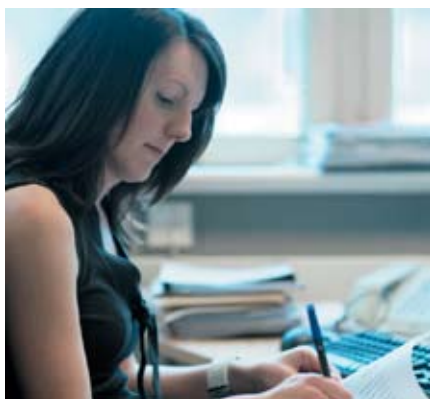


a great way to help existing employees of all ages keep pace with the latest technologies and working practices by updating their skills.

Apprenticeships are a big commitment and it will be a long time before the employer sees any benefits. It's quicker for employees to train for a qualification.

Apprenticeships are much more than a qualification. As well as working towards a vocational qualification, usually at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 (equivalent to five good GCSEs) or NVQ Level 3 (equivalent to two good A-levels), apprentices also gain transferable skills which are applicable across the public sector, such as:

- working in teams;
- problem solving;



- communication;
- using new technology; and
- studying (in most cases) for a technical certificate, which provides further knowledge and understanding of the job.

Apprentices will need a lot of training 'off site'.

Apprenticeships are a mixture of on- and off-the-job training, but the majority of learning will take place in the workplace. The rest can be delivered by a local college or by a specialist training provider. Throughout the Apprenticeship, a learning representative from the training provider will support and guide you.

The workforce of the organisation is highly qualified and so Apprenticeships are not relevant.

Rarely true. Employees with a whole range of skills levels are required in most organisations. Undertaking an assessment of the skills levels of the employees within your organisation to help identify skills shortages and skills needs for the future is a good starting point.

There is no funding available for training.

Funding is available for all public sector employers towards the cost of training each apprentice, paid directly to the chosen training provider. Most apprentices will be employed and paid a salary that reflects their skills, experience, age and ability.

There is too much bureaucracy involved.

There is a need to ensure that the training provided is of a high quality, and that the public funding provided is used for training, but this need not be a bureaucratic process. In fact, Apprenticeships often fit in well and enhance the existing learning and development process within public sector organisations.

It's hard to find a training provider.

Contact your regional Learning and Skills Council for advice: visit lsc.gov.uk or call **0870 900 6800** and ask for the Apprenticeship team within your region.

How to go about offering apprenticeships opportunities.

If you would like to offer Apprenticeship opportunities within your own organisation, the next step is to discuss your exact training requirements with a learning representative.

To do this, contact your regional Learning and Skills Council and ask for the Apprenticeships team, or register your interest on apprenticeships.org.uk.

You can also talk to your SSC or sector organisation. Over half of the network of SSCs have an interest in the public service sector and five SSCs are dedicated to the public sector:

Government Skills:
government-skills.gov.uk

Skills for Health:
skillsforhealth.org.uk

Lifelong Learning UK:
lluk.org

Skills for Justice:
skillsforjustice.co.uk

Skills for Care and Development (including Children's Workforce Development Council):
skillsforcareanddevelopment.org.uk

For details of all the sector skills councils:
sscalliance.org.uk

For a public sector employer's perspective, contact the Apprenticeship Ambassadors' Network: employersforapprentices.gov.uk

If you would like to order more copies of these leaflets, please visit http://217.160.210.43/lsc_campaignresources/login.asp

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Kent County Council



In 2006, the Leader of Kent County Council (KCC) set out a plan for the next four years which outlines a very clear commitment to prepare the young people of Kent for employment. It includes careers guidance, expanding vocational learning for 14- to 16-year-olds, introducing a Kent Apprenticeship programme called 'Kent Success' and increasing and enhancing business link activity.

The Apprenticeship programme is designed to manage and facilitate the creation of 1,000 Apprenticeship opportunities across the county, both within KCC and in other public and private sector organisations.

The leader of KCC, Paul Carter, said: 'As the largest employer in Kent, KCC has pledged to provide a minimum of 250 Apprenticeship placements to young people by 2010 in an initiative branded as Kent Success.'

The business case is based on the need to encourage young people into the organisation to replace the ageing workforce.

Since October 2006, 128 young people have completed their Apprenticeships in one of six frameworks: Business and Administration, Customer Service, Health and Social Care, Warehousing, Hospitality and Catering, and Early Years Childcare. The majority of trainees have gained permanent employment with KCC.

Now that Apprenticeships are established, KCC are considering other frameworks, such as Vehicle Maintenance, Landscape Services and Printing. KCC, LSC and the Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO) have now formed a strategic board to manage and oversee all aspects of strategy, policy and delivery across Kent.

The Apprenticeship programme will also assist our priority in reducing the number of 16–18 year-olds who are not in education, employment or training.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

The London Borough of Barking and Dagenham is situated in east London on the north bank of the River Thames. It has developed an innovative Apprenticeship scheme in partnership with its Youth Offending and Housing Services, Barking and Dagenham Training Services and its maintenance contractor, Enterprise, which has seen a group of young people on the road to turning their lives around.



Rob Whiteman, Chief Executive of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, said: 'This successful programme has brought many positive benefits to the council and to the young people who participated. As a result, I plan to roll out the programme across the borough to deliver 400 Apprenticeships in the coming years.'

These young people, all of whom have a history of offending, have become part of a cohesive, motivated workforce and are looking to develop their skills through the two-year Apprenticeships programme they are currently pursuing.

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Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

Herefordshire Primary Care Trust has a contract with the Learning and Skills Council to provide Apprenticeships and has been involved in both using and delivering Apprenticeships for 10 years. In Autumn 2008 the Trust's Training Centre had around 90 starts.

The Training Centre initially used Business Administration and Customer Service frameworks and then expanded to include more specialist frameworks including Health and Social Care; Children's Care; Learning and Development; Pharmacy; and Dental Nursing.

The Training Centre provides work-based and other training for employees of the Trust and other organisations operating mainly in the Health and Social Care sectors, such as in-patient Hospital Acute Care, Nursing Homes, Residential Care Homes and Childcare, as well as local Business Settings.



Sheffield Teaching Hospital

Sheffield Teaching Hospital has been proactive in the use and promotion of Apprenticeships for several years. A strong vision, coupled with a drive to implement the programme, has led to significant numbers of apprentices, in the region of 100 each year. Success is due to Apprenticeships being used as a major recruitment route, with substantive posts being held against training positions.

The business case argues that apprentices are a cost-effective way to fill vacancies, and is built on the following factors:

- at the end of their training period, apprentices are ready to work – they understand the hospital's ethos, and have the appropriate entry-level qualifications;
- it reduces agency costs; and
- it reduces recruitment costs.

The Vocational Education Lead stated: 'Appointing apprentices gives added benefits of fulfilling social and corporate responsibility, adds to the economy of Sheffield, and employs people from deprived areas who can walk to work.' It also enables the hospital to acquire a share of the 16–18 school leavers and fulfil the workforce plan.

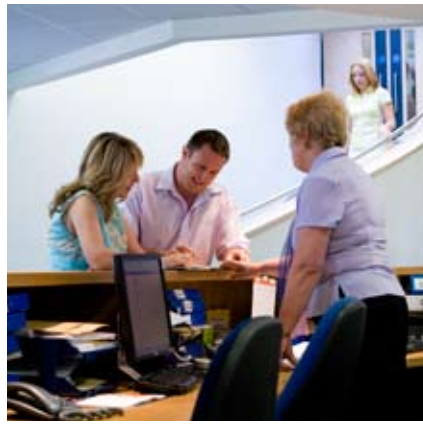
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Department for Work and Pensions

At the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the pathfinder Apprenticeship programme is helping to improve the skills of the existing workforce. DWP already had experience of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), and had internal structures to support these.

The department set up in-house programme delivery in 2007, at three regional sites, with a contract for 80 starts each year. The team worked with the awarding body on the production of leaflets and posters, and advertised the programme on the intranet.



The programme is for existing employees who self-nominate for this training, but service department needs are taken into account when allocating places. As all DWP apprentices are in substantive posts, there are no additional employment costs, other than release time for training. Apprenticeships are seen as being more beneficial, providing a more rounded qualification than NVQs alone.

Initially, three frameworks were offered (Customer Service, Business Administration and Management), and a fourth is now on offer (Advice and Guidance) to DWP employees around the UK. The Apprenticeship programme team is currently negotiating an expansion with the Learning and Skills Council to 1,000 starts over three years for cross-government provision. An additional 10 trainers are being trained, and will be in place early 2009.

DWP will be the in-house provider, but the team may work with some external delivery partners, while continuing to use existing training facilities.

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Ministry of Defence (civilian)

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has a long history of offering civilian Apprenticeships to enable craft and technician apprentices to learn various trade disciplines. Between 100 and 200 places are offered each year to young people and adults, based on business need, and apprentices undertake Standard Based Training which is designed to provide the MoD with craftsmen/women and the technical officers it requires to carry out its business.

Apprenticeships are offered to all age groups and there are currently 12 adult apprentices at the Defence Support Group which is involved in army vehicle repair. Adult Apprenticeships are currently being used to improve the skills of the existing workforce.



The Apprentice Policy Unit said: 'We will recruit semi-skilled people and after a couple of years put them through the adult scheme if they show the aptitude.'

The vast majority of apprentices follow the Advanced Apprenticeship in Engineering at Level 3, which covers vehicle repair, technical services, engineering design, aircraft engineering, engineering maintenance and aeronautical engineering.

For Advanced Apprenticeship technicians, the on-the-job training provides them with the skills required to become a project manager. For craft apprentices, the work is more hands-on in a workshop, repairing, modifying or testing equipment. Some technicians have the opportunity to undertake a Foundation/full degree following completion of their Apprenticeship.



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Durham University

The Apprenticeship programme began in 1999 and the business case is well established. The Assistant Director of Human Resources stated: 'The university benefits from growing its own workforce; training and developing young people for careers with us. The added benefit is that there are cost savings to the organisation.'

The university decided to set up internal provision for training apprentices for the Business Administration from the start. The Assistant Director of HR identifies the benefits of doing this as being able to use in-house trainers who understand the needs and culture of the organisation and being

able to ensure that the quality of training meets the needs of the client department.

'We have good awareness of apprentices across the organisation, with several departments being regular users of this recruitment, training and development route. Success is celebrated with an Apprentice of the Year award, where the Vice Chancellor presents certificates. The Business Administration Apprenticeship is the jewel in the crown.'

As job vacancies arise, the HR department reviews the potential for the post to be offered as an Apprenticeship.



Typically, clerical jobs that are Grade 3 or below are identified as being potentially suitable for apprenticeship positions. All apprentices are employees and are in full-time posts.

Chichester College

Chichester College has a tradition of employing apprentices. A further education (FE) college, it recruits 10 to 15 in-house apprentices annually on a rolling programme, as well as offering a wide range of courses for 800 apprentices in the locality. In-house apprentices follow a variety of courses: Childcare, Business

Administration, Horticulture and Vehicle Maintenance.

The majority of in-house trainees follow the Early Years Childcare framework, working in the nursery which is run on a commercial basis for the children of staff and students.

The rationale for offering Apprenticeships is:

- succession planning;
- it provides young people with an appropriate range of transferable skills, and
- it gives the college an opportunity to be recognised as a responsible employer.