



Employer handbook

Understanding your apprentices'
learning journey

Welcome

At Ebor Academy Trust it is our mission to provide high quality training and education for our learners, resulting in motivated, successful and effective practitioners.

As a Registered Apprenticeship Training Provider we are always delighted to work with employers who have chosen to invest in the professional development of employees through Apprenticeship training and we look forward to working in partnership with you to develop the sector specific Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) required for your employee to be able to make a significant contribution to your school or setting.

Our Commitment

With Ebor Academy Trust as your Training Provider your apprentice/s will receive, as a minimum, training focussed on the specific standards within their programme.

In addition:

We will deliver a broad and dynamic curriculum programme which enables apprentices to engage in a wide range of learning, both knowledge based and practical.

Apprentices will learn about best practice and effective, tried and tested strategies and be supported to apply, reflect upon and understand the impact their learning has on their own practice within your workplace.

Through opportunities to discuss their own organisational practices and the different approaches which are used, we aim to enable all of our apprentices to understand different local contexts and be able to use these to inform thinking about wider national contexts.

We want all of our learners to be able to understand that their organisation's approach reflects the context and needs of the school/setting and its community, and that approaches which work in one organisation may not necessarily work in another but generally the key principles of effective practice are consistent.

All of our programme leads are experienced education professionals, with many years of experience working in schools and early years settings. We also use additional experts where appropriate, to bring to life aspects of our programmes, they will talk first-hand about their own experiences and offer authentic approaches to support apprentices in achieving successful outcomes/impact.

We use a thematic/key topics approach to our curriculum and aim to provide contextual learning opportunities, to enhance

learning. Our curriculum plans clearly set out which standards and strands of standards will be taught and when on each programme these will be addressed.

Where apprentices or employers have expressed a particular interest, or a particular contextual need we will work with both them and you to support and achieve success. Where particular enrichment opportunities may benefit an apprentice we will also work to access these.

It is our intention to develop active learners and encourage questioning, discussion, sharing practice and time for reflection.

It is also our intention that our apprentices, whilst on programme, are supported professionally and personally, through regular Wellbeing, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Prevent check-ins and updates.

We expect high levels of learner commitment, engagement and professionalism throughout our programme and this is clearly communicated to and understood by your apprentice/s.

Our aspiration is that through our training, our apprentices are increasingly identified and recognised as employees of choice.



Sue Hinchcliffe
Director of Apprenticeships

The role of the Employer

Deciding to employ an apprentice or upskill an existing member of staff through apprenticeship training, means you have committed to investing in an individual's professional development not only for their personal benefit, but also that of your school or setting.

Throughout training we will work closely and in partnership with you, but it is essential that employers understand what this commitment involves and their role in apprenticeship delivery.

Apprentices need opportunities to learn both on and 'off the job.' We like to think of these as being 'dedicated development opportunities.'

These dedicated development opportunities, ('off the job learning') should total a minimum 20% of an apprentice's contracted working hours over the duration of their apprenticeship programme.

New ESFA funding rules (from 1 August 2022) state those working 30 hours and more should receive the equivalent of 6hrs per week over their programme duration.

In practice, this means employers need to facilitate 'time' for apprentices to complete 'off the job' training and directed learning activities as well as have access to practical 'on the job' opportunities, which enable apprentices to further develop, deepen and apply that which has been taught.

Whilst on programme, apprentices will spend the majority of their time 'on the job,' gaining valuable skills and knowledge in your workplace. For this reason it is also important that apprentices get opportunities to:

- work alongside/shadow experienced staff
- observe best practice
- access beneficial learning opportunities
- gain job-specific skills
- be allocated a work based mentor to support them in their role.

The benefits of both on the job learning and off the job learning/development time are crucial to the success of the apprenticeship and to successful outcomes for both apprentices and employers.

'Off the job learning' explained further.

Off-the-job training involves and includes any learning which is relevant to the apprenticeship standards and which takes place within the apprentice's contracted working hours.

It can include:

- Teaching of theory – attending training or workshops in person or online e.g. webinars
- Research
- Time spent writing assessments/assignments
- In school training e.g. school based CPD, staff meetings or other development opportunities, including learning how to use new equipment or technologies
- Shadowing/working alongside others gaining new knowledge, skills and behaviours
- Being mentored
- Simulated exercises and role play
- Practical training e.g. working with an expert
- Visiting other schools/settings to observe practice/learning.

Apprenticeships are about upskilling an individual and reaching occupational competency takes time. Whilst managing off the job learning can sometimes present challenges, many employers and apprentices praise the positive effect off-the-job training has on long term productivity, motivation and engagement.

We are happy to work with employers where necessary to identify off the job learning arrangements that best suit you, your apprentice and your setting.

The role of the Mentor

The value of a workplace mentor to our apprentices is enormous. Evidence suggests that an effective mentor can, through support and supervision, not only help a new employee's orientation into the workplace, but support learners on an apprenticeship to access information, advice and guidance relevant to their learning.

They also work with the apprentice, employer and training provider to ensure that problems are resolved quickly and do not threaten the apprenticeship.

We ask that the workplace mentor:

- act as the main point of contact for us
- be involved in the initial stages of the apprentice's start on our programmes, signing some of the documentation on behalf of the employer
- support the apprentice in the workplace as above
- contribute to reviews of progress
- 'sign off' the apprentice's documentation prior to end point assessment (EPA) and to support and facilitate EPA by our independent end point assessment organisation (EPAO).

We ask mentors who have any concerns about an apprentice/s to contact us immediately so that we can work together to resolve these as quickly as possible.

We ask the employer to identify a mentor who is able to:

- advise, guide and support learners to ensure they get the most benefit from their learning on programme
- communicate and collaborate effectively
- use effective questioning/listening and to challenge as is appropriate
- work with both us, the training provider, and workplace colleagues to help plan and implement structured and meaningful learning and work experiences
- liaise with all to facilitate formative and summative assessment of learners' skills and knowledge
- collaborate with us to review learners' progress and to provide evidence of progress and achievement
- identify and refer issues relevant to learners' progress and well-being, to both us and/or workplace colleagues.

Our role as the Training Provider

As your Independent Training Providers (ITP) we will play a key role in providing your apprentice/s with specific learning opportunities through 'off the job learning' activities.

All of our apprenticeship programmes involve attendance at a number of training events and workshops and during these we will be working to ensure that all of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours specific to the chosen apprenticeship standard are addressed.

Following each training event, apprentices will have specific 'off the job' tasks and assignments to complete, designed to strengthen, enrich and embed focussed learning objectives. These will form part of each apprentice's 'portfolio of evidence' - a requirement for all Apprenticeship Standards.

We will meet with apprentices in your school or setting every 6-8 weeks to support their individual learning on programme, and review their progress every 12-16 weeks to ensure there are no barriers to achievement and success.

We will continually monitor their progress towards achieving their qualification and support them individually to achieve their personal goals and objectives as well as prepare their readiness for successful end point assessment.

This will all be documented in a 'Training Plan' which is basically an individual learning plan and forms part of the Apprenticeship Agreement, which we all sign.

Further information

How long will the apprenticeship programme last?

Our apprenticeship training programmes have a minimum duration of 18 months.

The minimum duration of all apprenticeship programmes is based on apprentices working 30 hours a week or more, including any off-the-job training. If apprentices work less than 30 hours per week, the programme will be extended to ensure learners have completed the necessary hours on programme.

Initial Assessment

We will complete an initial assessment and a 'skills scan' before an apprentice begins learning on a programme in order to assess their prior level of knowledge, skills and workplace specific behaviours. This helps us ensure not only the appropriateness of the training, but also that we can tailor where necessary learning to the needs of individuals, plan targets, as well as track progress throughout the training programme.

These assessments also take into consideration an apprentice's job role, experience and current qualifications, e.g. GCSE results, and help us to understand whether apprentices will need support to achieve English and Maths qualifications.

Induction

During apprentices' induction we will provide information, advice and guidance on their programme and outline the support we offer. The induction is best seen as a process rather than a single event. We will revisit the information introduced at induction throughout our programmes to check and review that apprentices have understood all processes.

Training Plan/Individual Learning Plan

The training plan (an apprentice's individual learning plan), will form a plan of how the apprentice will get from their starting point on their learning journey to the end point. It will include all the qualifications they are undertaking whilst on the apprenticeship together with target dates for short, medium and long term goals. The training plan is individual to each apprentice and will reflect their own and your goals, interests and needs.

The training plan is a live document throughout the course of the learning programme and will be useful to apprentices, our programme tutors/assessors and employers/mentors.

Reviews

Reviews provide opportunities for professional discussions as well as a review of targets and progress. These should be

tripartite meetings between apprentices, tutors/assessors and mentors/employers. They will take place every 6-8 weeks depending on term time dates.

They are an opportunity to discuss learning, progression and to agree long and short term targets for the completion of the qualification.

Portfolio of Evidence

Every Apprenticeship Standard has the requirement to build a portfolio of evidence throughout the duration of the programme. This will be used by our independent End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) to determine whether apprentices have developed the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours to accredit the professional qualification.

Apprentices will be asked to complete observations, provide written accounts, reflective accounts and record professional discussions throughout their programme to build up this evidence.

It is also useful for apprentices to keep and collect copies of any observations carried out, feedback or witness testimonies and photographs, as well as keep a log of any training and anything that can evidence that they are developing and learning.

End Point Assessment.

Anyone working towards an apprenticeship standard must take an independent assessment at the end of training to confirm that they have achieved occupational competence.

Rigorous, robust and independent End-Point Assessment (EPA) is essential to give employers confidence that apprentices can actually perform in the occupation they have been trained in and can demonstrate the duties, knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in the apprenticeship standard.

EPA can take a wide range of forms – it can include assessment methods such as an observation in the workplace, professional discussion, written tests and work simulated exercises. All end point assessments will include a minimum of two separate assessment methods.

Maths and English

If apprentices already have GCSE or a Level 2 equivalent qualification in Maths and English, they do not need to complete this as an element of their apprenticeship.

Those learners who require a qualification at this level, will be supported to achieve L2 Functional Skills qualifications.

Some apprenticeships require Maths, English and ICT. Our apprenticeship programmes only require Maths and English.

Functional Skills provide apprentices with essential practical

skills and understanding in English and Maths which enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in both life and work.

Throughout our apprenticeship programmes, learners will be encouraged and have opportunities to achieve a higher level of English and Maths skills whether they have the required qualifications or not; with resources readily available where appropriate.

All learners will complete an initial and diagnostic assessment related to their current functional skills levels. This will help us to ensure they are working at the required level and to provide support where necessary.

Progress in English and Maths will regularly be reviewed in order to monitor progress and make sure that appropriate support is available.

Absence at Training Days

We ask our apprentices that if they are not able to attend a training event they let their tutor know and insist that attendance during 'off the job training' needs to remain high.

If an apprentice's attendance falls below 80% they may be at risk of not achieving the standards. For this reason we will notify you of all absences or lateness.

Absence from Work

As the employer you will have systems for recording holidays and any absences. We tell apprentices they will be required to follow these procedures for all absences and that failure to comply with employer's procedures could result in a warning or dismissal.

Absence for Review Meetings

Apprentices should always notify us if they are unable to attend a review meeting on the morning of the meeting at the very latest.

Cancelled appointments will again flag a risk and employers will be notified.

Unauthorised Absences

Any absences we are not notified of beforehand, will be recorded as unauthorised. We tell apprentices that their employer may not pay them for unauthorised absences and that should they continue with unauthorised absences, their employer may withdraw them from their apprenticeship or terminate their employment.

Authorised Absences

If apprentices are going to be off sick for more than 21 days, we ask that they, or you, let us know as soon as possible.

This is because apprentices are allocated a period of time to complete their apprenticeship and long term sickness will have an impact on this.

To make sure that they do not lose any time on their apprenticeship, they may need to be temporarily withdrawn and a 'break in learning' put in place. This will remain in place until they notify their training assessor they are fit and well enough to resume work and learning. We will then re-start training.

If at any point apprentices or employers feel a learner is struggling to attend or there are barriers to continuing in learning, please speak to us as soon as possible so that we can discuss the best course of action.

Learning Support

Support for all learners to achieve their full potential is very important to us.

During registration and initial assessment, apprentices have the opportunity to tell us if they consider themselves to have a disability, learning difficulty or any health problems. If they specify any of these the information will only be shared with those directly involved with their learning and used to ensure that wherever possible appropriate support is put in place to enable them to succeed.

Safeguarding

We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for our apprentices and aim to safeguard and protect them from harm including preventing them and those they know from being drawn into terrorism.

In partnership with you, the employer, we have a responsibility to help ensure apprentices' safety and welfare. We recognise apprentices have a fundamental right to equality of opportunity, to be protected from harm, exploitation and discrimination and we, the training provider, will ensure a safe safe spaces in which apprentices can learn effectively.

Apprentices can be confident that any concerns they have will be listened to and acted upon and we will work in partnership with you, the employer, to support and promote apprentices' welfare.

Prevent

Prevent is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. It aims to stop people becoming drawn into or supporting terrorism.

At the heart of Prevent is providing early intervention to protect and divert people away from being drawn into terrorist activity. Prevent addresses all forms of terrorism, but continues to ensure resources and effort are allocated on the basis of threats to our national security

We tell apprentices that if they suspect someone is becoming radicalised or involved in extremism, they should report it to someone - a manager at work, their tutor, a parent or relative or speak to the local police about their concerns.

Useful Contacts Anti-Terrorist Hotline 0800 789 321 Police 101

We ensure that staff and students are aware of the risks of radicalisation and/or involvement in violent or non-violent extremist activities and will support anyone thought to be at risk of becoming involved.

During our programmes, apprentices will witness tutors and trainers promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in teaching and learning, through all opportunities in lessons and in the review meetings.

This is done to raise awareness of the Fundamental British Values (FBV).

British Values

The Department for Education's five-part definition of British values includes:

- Democracy: making decisions together, for example giving opportunities to develop enquiring minds in an atmosphere where questions are valued.
- Rule of law: understanding rules matter as cited in Personal, Social and Emotional development, for example collaborating with children to create rules and codes of behaviour.
- Individual liberty: freedom for all, for example reflecting on their differences and understanding we are free to have different opinions.
- Mutual respect and tolerance: treat others as you want to be treated, for example sharing and respecting other opinions.

As well as actively promoting these values to apprentices, we will embed these into our course work and qualifications.

Further information can be found in our Safeguarding and Prevent policies.

Cyber Bullying and Being Safe Online

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and the internet are great ways to connect with friends, family and to learn new things, but it is also important our apprentices stay safe and therefore we encourage them to make sure they do not share things that could put themselves in danger.

We tell apprentices that if they are worried about how much of their life is online they can take steps to be safer.

Here are some top tips we share to keep our learners safe

online, free from cyber bullying, online grooming and sexting:

- Be careful what you share online
- Check and ensure privacy settings are in place
- Think before you post/respond to posts
- Be careful who you chat to
- Never share or reveal your passwords
- Use a secure password.

Health and Safety

All workers have a right to work in places where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. Health and safety is about stopping all of us getting hurt at work or ill through work. We tell apprentices that their employer is responsible for health and safety, but that they must also help. We share the importance of following Health and Safety Guidance and tell them that if they feel unsafe at work or during training it is important they communicate this to their mentor/tutor who will then escalate to the necessary leading practitioners.

Keeping Safe and Well

We all recognise the importance of staying healthy and we encourage apprentices to take care of both their physical and emotional health throughout their programmes and beyond. We encourage eating the right food and keeping fit, supporting their body to be strong and to help them cope with stress and fight illness. We recognise it can be difficult, but encourage a good amount of sleep (6-8 hours) each night and share the harmful effects of smoking, drinking alcohol and taking drugs on health and wellbeing.

In addition to this handbook; dependant on the apprenticeship programme and start date chosen you will be provided with three appendices:

- The Apprenticeship Standards for which we are providing training
- The Curriculum Overview which details what we teach and when.
- The Training Dates.

We actively encourage and believe that through working in partnership we can – for the benefit of your apprentice, your workplace and the children that you serve – ensure successful outcomes for all.

If at any point you are experiencing difficulties or have concerns regarding your apprentice or our apprenticeship provision, speak to us and we will do our best to help.

■ Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook and for choosing Ebor Academy Trust to deliver training to your apprentice/s.




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