



# Employer Apprenticeship Handbook

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**“The apprenticeship route  
has helped me reach my  
career goals”**



# About us

This handbook has been developed for employers who have apprentices undertaking an apprenticeship training programme with the Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service. The service is wholly committed to delivering outstanding provision for all of our learners. We have a team of passionate and dedicated staff who will support you and your apprentice every step of the way.

Within Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service we offer a very welcoming, respectful, supportive and safe learning environment where we offer much more than courses. We offer an impartial Careers Service, Volunteer Hartlepool Brokerage Service, Pastoral Support Team, health and wellbeing activities and employment-focused initiatives. We are extremely proud that, as a service, Ofsted has rated us as a Good Provider with outstanding features identified and we are the only service of its kind in the country to secure: Investors in Volunteers, Investors in Careers, Matrix Standard, Investors in People (Silver Award) and the Better Health at Work (Silver Award).

We are an open and listening service and we welcome feedback from all parties on how we can further strengthen our provision.

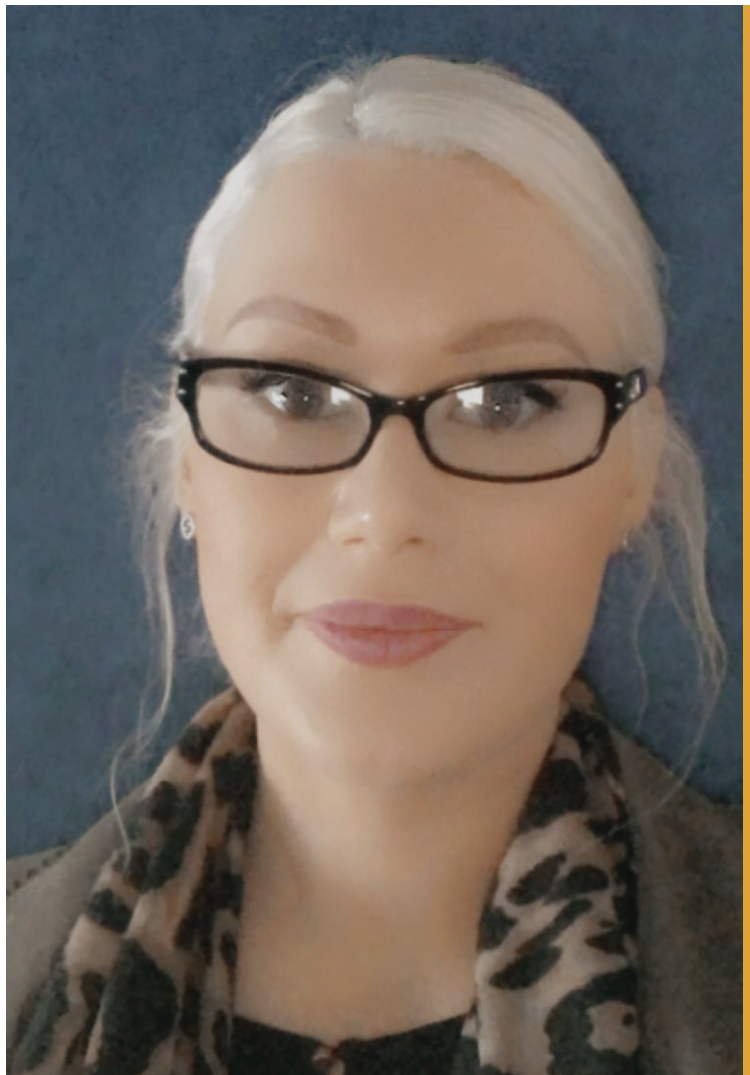
## Welcome from Kristie Burt, Apprenticeship and Business Growth Manager

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On behalf of Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing us to lead your apprenticeship training.

I sincerely hope that you have an enjoyable experience working with us.

I look forward to building a positive and successful business relationship with you going forward.



# What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job with an accompanying assessment and skills development programme. It is a way for individuals to earn while they learn, and gain valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. The apprentice gains this through a mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practice new skills in a real work environment. Apprenticeships benefit employers by boosting the skills of the workforce and helping to improve economic productivity.

## Key facts

Apprentices hold real jobs in your business and spend the vast majority of their time carrying out their mainstream duties.

An apprenticeship takes a minimum of 12 months to complete, based on individual needs and depending on the subject and attainment level.

Apprentices build their skills and competence through a combination of learning activities and off-the-job learning.

## Information, advice & guidance

If you are unsure of the most suitable training programmes for your organisation, then we are happy to support you with this.

We can also conduct a training needs analysis, to help in identifying skills gaps within your company or outstanding mandatory training requirements.

**“I gained full time employment following the apprenticeship programme”**

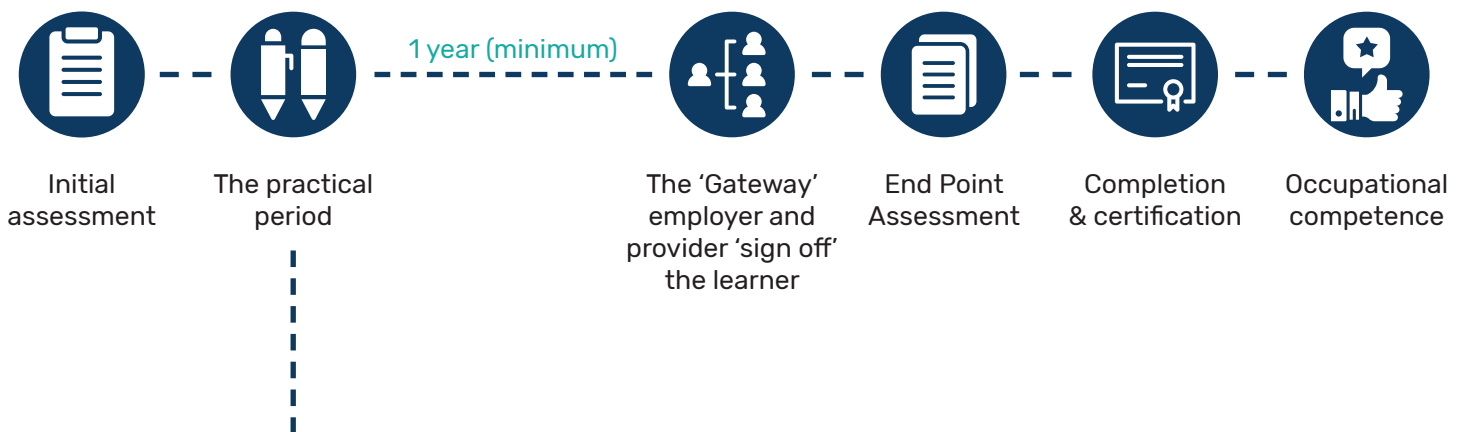


# End Point Assessment

In recent years the Government has changed the way in which apprenticeships are delivered. We have now moved from the traditional Apprenticeship Frameworks to the new Apprenticeship Standards.

Apprenticeships will now include what is known as the End Point Assessment (EPA). The purpose of the EPA is to ensure that your apprentice has been trained appropriately against industry standards and that they are capable of transferring the knowledge, skills and behaviours they have learnt into the real world.

## Timeline of apprenticeship standards



- Gaining the knowledge, skills and behaviours set out by industry standards
- On and off-the-job training including observations, assessments and formal training sessions
- Functional skills

## End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)

An independent organisation must be involved in the EPA of each apprentice so that all apprentices follow the same standard and are assessed consistently. Only organisations on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations are eligible to conduct independent EPAs of apprentices.

# Employer Responsibilities

There must be a genuine job available with a contract of employment long enough for an apprentice to complete their apprenticeship. Employers must pay an apprentice's wage and they must help them gain the knowledge, skills and behaviour they need to achieve the apprenticeship.

## As an employer you will need to:

- Ensure a safe working environment for your apprentice and a culture which is committed to protecting them from potential harm.
- Employers should familiarise themselves with relevant Government legislation and take appropriate steps to understand what safeguarding means within their organisation in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ.
- Ensure that any staff working with or in a position of trust with apprentices are appropriate for the role and do not present any danger or threat.
- Ensure that any people working with young or vulnerable individuals have had an appropriate check with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- If possible, identify a person to co-ordinate safeguarding across your organisation.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the principles that underpin the Prevent duty.
- Seek specialist support if a concern is raised.
- Demonstrate a commitment to British values.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensure apprentices are made aware of your organisation policies on using the internet and technology in the workplace.
- Understand the dangers apprentices may face using technology in the workplace and act to minimise any risks.

## Apprenticeship myth 1

Apprenticeships were traditionally associated with trades such as construction and plumbing. There are now over 1,500 apprenticeship roles in over 170 sectors!



## Contract of employment

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All employees have a contract of employment with their employer. A contract is an agreement that sets out an employee's employment conditions, holiday entitlement, rights and responsibilities. A contract 'starts' as soon as an offer of employment is accepted. Written statements and contracts of employment can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions](http://www.gov.uk/employment-contracts-and-conditions)

## Commitment statement

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You must also sign a commitment statement with your apprentice and the Learning & Skills Service. It must include:

- The planned content and schedule for training
- What is expected and offered by the employer, the Learning & Skills Service and the apprentice
- How to resolve queries or complaints

We will provide you with a copy of a commitment statement

## Apprenticeship agreement

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You must sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice. This gives details of what you agree to do for the apprentice, including:

- How long you'll employ them for
- The training you'll give them
- Their working conditions and
- The qualifications they are working towards

You can write your own apprentice agreement, or download a template at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-agreement-template>

## Keeping appointments

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Progress reviews between you, the apprentice and their assessor will be held every 4-6 weeks along with regular observations and assessments in the workplace. These workplace visits will be arranged and agreed in advance. If you have to change a scheduled appointment, please give the assessor as much notice as possible.

## Apprenticeship myth 2

"You are better off going to university."

For many industries, university is not the fastest entry route.

Apprentices are trained on-the-job and earn while they learn.

# What is 20% Off-the-job Learning?

All learners enrolled on an apprenticeship will be required to spend 20% of their contracted hours on off-the-job learning. This is mandated by the Government as part of the apprenticeship funding rules.

Off-the-job learning is defined as training that takes place outside the normal day-to-day working environment which works towards achieving the apprenticeship. This can include training that is delivered in the apprentice's workplace, but it must not be part of their normal working duties.

The 20% off-the-job training is calculated over the whole period of the apprenticeship and so the weekly hours can be varied as long as the overall 20% is achieved prior to the end of the programme.

## What can be classed as off-the-job?

### Yes

- Shadowing
- Coaching
- Independent research
- Attending masterclass sessions
- Supervision with employer
- Mentoring
- Industry visits
- Writing assignments
- In-house training
- Role play
- Online learning
- Simulation exercises
- Team meetings that involve learning
- Completion of a reflective journal

### No

- English and maths
- Observation
- Progress reviews
- On-programme assessments induction
- Training that does not contribute to the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the apprenticeship
- Training that takes place outside paid working hours



## How can employers plan, track and evidence off-the-job learning?

With our e-portfolio system, you will have a clear record of the 20% training achieved. The system records hours submitted and then calculates the percentage of off-the-job training completed, making it easier for employers, assessors, apprentices and the Learning & Skills Service to view the progress made. This allows everyone involved in the apprenticeship to evaluate if the apprentice is achieving their targeted off-the-job training and progressing at a good standard, allowing the relevant party to step in where necessary and assist the learner.



### Apprenticeship myth 3

“Apprenticeships are only for young people like school leavers.”

Apprenticeships are available for all people aged 16+ making them a great option for anyone wanting to improve their skills or change their career.



# Expectations of an Apprentice

A responsible apprentice must demonstrate commitment to the apprenticeship programme and be prepared to play an active part in their development. Apprentices are expected to act and behave in a professional manner at all times, both at work and within the Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service, which includes a commitment to excellent punctuality and attendance. An apprentice should be respectful to others and commit to achieving their programme.

## Sickness & absence

On the first day of absence an apprentice must personally notify their place of work following the policy and procedure set out by their employer. Should the apprentice be absent on a day they are expected at Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service, or any other time they are due to meet with their tutor/assessor, they must also personally notify their tutor/assessor with as much notice as possible.

## Keeping appointments

Progress reviews between you, the apprentice and their assessor will be held every 4–6 weeks along with regular observations and assessments in the workplace. These workplace visits will be arranged and agreed in advance. If you have to change a scheduled appointment, please give the assessor as much notice as possible.



## Safe working practices

We expect all apprentices to be mindful of their own safety, both in Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service and in the workplace. It is their responsibility to ensure that they do not work in a way that puts themselves and/or others at risk.

# What can I expect from Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service?

## During the apprenticeship



Regular reviews take place to assess the progress of the apprentice and set targets for the next period. The progress reviews are also an opportunity to monitor and respond to any concerns or issues raised. Regular assessment of the apprentice's knowledge and skills based on industry standards is a requirement and assessments can take one of the following forms: observation; portfolio; assignments; exams or discussion.

## Online safety

The internet is a wonderful resource for apprentices and offers great opportunities for connecting and learning. However, there are risks involved and staying safe online is an important issue for learners.

Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service has a range of digital tools which are available to learners to enhance the curriculum and promote educational excellence. We have the responsibility and the right to ensure that our resources can be protected from deliberate or unintentional misuse and damage and expect staff and learners to act in a considerate and reasonable manner.



## Using Quals Direct

Quals Direct is our e-portfolio platform. This is where learners can access resources, submit work, receive feedback and track progress. Employers are given access to this platform to monitor the progress of their apprentice.

**“The apprenticeship has provided me with the confidence and skills needed within the workplace”**

## Prevent / British Values

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Hartlepool Learning and Skills Service values freedom of speech and the expansion of beliefs and ideologies as fundamental rights underpinning our society's values. Both learners and staff have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. However, freedom comes with responsibility and free speech which manipulates vulnerable people or that leads to violence and harm to others goes against the moral principles of the service.

Free speech is not an unqualified privilege; it is subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion. If you have any concerns that a learner may be at risk of radicalisation or involvement in terrorism, they should speak with our designated safeguarding officers:

Kristie Burt:

**[kristie.burt@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:kristie.burt@hartlepool.gov.uk)**

Scott Campbell:

**[scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk)**

Patrick Wilson:

**[patrick.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:patrick.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)**

Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service procedures are in line with Hartlepool & Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP) and in the case of vulnerable adults, the Tees Valley Safeguarding Adults Board. Staff and volunteers must adhere to the following procedure when a safeguarding issue has been raised:

- Inform the Head of Service, Principal Safeguarding Officer and/or Safeguarding Officer immediately.
- Complete and submit a cause for concern form through the Tootoot digital platform or immediately contact the Principal Safeguarding Officer.
- Head of Service, Principal Safeguarding Officer or Safeguarding Officer (or Senior Manager within the Service in their absence) will if applicable contact the following numbers to report the concern and inform the Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer for Children and Young People and/or Adult within the Council as shown within the Safeguarding Structure.

In the event of concerns about children and young people aged under 18 years, call 01429 284284 or email [childrenshub@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk)

In the event of concerns about adults aged over 18 years, call 01429 523390 or email [dutyteam@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:dutyteam@hartlepool.gcsx.gov.uk)

Out of office hours (including bank holidays) - call the Emergency Duty Team for both children and adults on 0870 240 2994

# Glossary of Terms

## Assignments/exams

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Apprentices will be required to produce assignments or complete internally or externally set exams in order to evidence knowledge and understanding. These are the most common assessment methodologies for any college-based qualifications and for Functional Skills.

## Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)

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The ESFA bring together the former responsibilities of the Education Funding Agency and the Skills Funding Agency to create a single agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults, including apprenticeship provision.

## End Point Assessment (EPA)

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The purpose of the EPA is to test that an apprentice is fully capable of doing their job before they receive their apprenticeship certificate. It also helps to demonstrate that what an apprentice has learnt can be applied in the real world.

## End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)

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All apprenticeship standards must contain an EPA. An independent organisation must be involved in the EPA of each apprentice so that all apprentices are assessed consistently. Only organisations on the Register of EPAOs are eligible to conduct independent EPAs of apprentices.

## Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

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The IQA will ensure that the portfolio an apprentice presents meets the required quality standard and that correct training has been delivered towards the EPA. They are also there to support the learner if they wish to appeal an assessment decision.

## Observation

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Observation of an apprentice performing a task, to required standards, in the workplace or within Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service, is a requirement for apprenticeship programmes.

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## **Ofsted**

Funded by the Government, Ofsted is responsible for inspecting and reporting on the quality of training provision for post-16 education, including apprenticeships. As a training provider, Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service is inspected on the quality of our delivery, training and assessment.

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## **Portfolio**

A portfolio contains evidence of tasks completed, consisting of job write-ups, photos, witness statements, etc. These will be assessed against the relevant standards by your assessor.

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## **Progress review**

Scheduled every 4-6 weeks, these reviews are an opportunity to assess the apprentice's progress at work and within Hartlepool Learning & Skills Service and to set targets for the next period. Progress reviews are also an opportunity for all parties to raise any concerns in respect of health and safety, equality and diversity and safeguarding.

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## **Trainer/tutor**

The role of the trainer/tutor is to create an Individual Training Plan (ITP) to suit the programme needs. They, along with the apprentice, will agree and plan training sessions and prepare the apprentice for the End Point Assessment. They will guide, support and encourage the apprentice throughout their apprenticeship.





[www.hartlepool.gov.uk/learningandskills](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/learningandskills)



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