Apprenticeships

What can an Apprentice do for your business?

An Apprenticeship is one of the most cost-effective ways to develop your business, improve productivity and enhance staff retention whilst reducing training and recruitment costs.

Apprenticeships ensure that your workforce has the practical expertise and qualifications that your organisation needs. The mixture of on and off job learning ensures they acquire abilities designed around your business requirements providing the skilled workers you need for the future.

And remember, Apprenticeships are not just for new employees; subject to eligibility, they can also be an effective way to enhance the skills of current staff.

92% of employers who employ apprentices believe that Apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce whilst over 80% agree they make their workplace more productive.

Employer grants/incentives

A number of grants and incentives are available for businesses and organisations who have not employed Apprentices before. Please contact the College for further details.

Help with Recruitment/vacancy advertising

If you would like to employ an Apprentice but you don’t already have someone in mind for the role, East Kent College can help you to advertise the post. Ask us for an Apprenticeship vacancy template which, when you’ve completed and returned it, will give us all the details we need to advertise the vacancy on your behalf:

- On East Kent College website
- On National Apprenticeship Service website
- Direct to individuals working with our Partnerships team (jobseekers)
- In our campus-based Job shop

We always recommend that you advertise the vacancy as well, in whichever way you would usually advertise for staff.
Workplace Learning

Workforce development is one of the most important considerations for any business. Research has shown that businesses that train their employees are more likely to survive than those that don’t. Providing employees with the opportunity to learn and update their skills will encourage greater confidence and ability, improving performance of the individual and the business.

Workplace learning refers to qualifications undertaken that are linked to the job role and the Workplace, achieved by showing competency against a range of criteria.

There is a number of ways in which these workplace qualifications can be delivered:

- Work-based learning and assessment delivered entirely in the workplace
- Self-study programmes with tutorial support
- Knowledge-based taught courses delivered at East Kent College premises
- A combination of on and off the job training through day release at college

Our teams of specialist trainers will support your employees through their development and qualifications. As the employer you will be regularly updated on the employee’s progress and support will be offered for any additional needs.

At East Kent College we pride ourselves in our use of technology. The employee can complete their qualifications through an E-Portfolio which allows access to the learner, the assessor and the nominated workplace supervisor. The online messaging service from the E-Portfolio and Texting Tools system allows regular contact with the learner to ensure they are on track to achieve their goals as well as providing regular support in the workplace.

East Kent College offers a range of opportunities in the following subject areas:

- Business Administration
- Customer Service
- Retail
- Health & Social Care
- Supporting Teaching & Learning
- Management
- Team Leading
- Accounting
- IT Users
- Hairdressing & Barbering
- Hospitality & Catering
- Bricklaying
- Plastering
- Carpentry
- Painting & Decorating
- Maintenance Operations
- Electrical Installation
- Engineering
- Sign-making
- Motor Vehicle
- Cleaning & Support Services
- Literacy & Numeracy
- Children & Young People’s Workforce

Funding for training

Depending on the level of training, the age and prior qualifications of the trainee, there may be government funding available to support the cost of these qualifications either in part or in full.
Contract/hours

An Apprentice should have a contract of employment and should be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week, for at least the duration of their Apprenticeship (minimum 12 months for 16-18 year olds, full duration depending on the subject area/framework).

Their paid contracted hours should include the hours they are attending study, whether that is day release at the College or tutorial appointments in the workplace. If the Apprenticeship is entirely work-based, it is recommended that the Apprentice be allowed a half-day a week in the workplace to specifically work towards their qualifications (as they do not have the day at College to do so).

Apprenticeship Agreement

Within the contract of employment or as a separate document, there must be an ‘Apprenticeship Agreement’. (This requirement came into force on 6 April 2012 under the ASCL Act 2009 sections 21-36).

The Apprenticeship Agreement must state that the Apprentice will be undertaking an Apprenticeship in a particular skill, trade or occupation. East Kent College have included this Apprenticeship Agreement in the enrolment form.

An Apprentice has the same rights and responsibilities as any other employee (e.g. same holiday entitlement and disciplinary measures).

Salary

There is a minimum salary requirement for Apprentices (£2.65 per hour) and it is the responsibility of the employer to pay the salary. If the Apprenticeship enters a second year and the Apprentice is aged 19 or over at that point, or turns 19 within the Apprenticeship after 12 months, then the pay must be increased to the National Minimum Wage from then on.

Qualifications/delivery

Every type of Apprenticeship (e.g. Business Administration, Catering or Construction) has a ‘framework’ of qualifications and training. An Apprentice must be enrolled on an Apprenticeship framework – a set or ‘framework’ of qualifications and training, made up of the following elements:

- Competency based qualification (NVQ) (often gained in the workplace/on the job)
- Theory based qualification (Technical certificate, often gained in the classroom/off the job)
- Functional Skills (Maths, English & sometimes ICT)
- Employee Rights & Responsibilities (ERR)
- Personal Learning & Thinking Skills (PLTS)
- Guided Learning Hours (GLH) – a guideline number of hours on and off the job training.

Functional skills

Functional skills are a requirement for each framework. If new Apprentices have certificates to prove they have achieved Maths and English at GCSE grade A-C (or equivalent) within the last 5 years, they have effectively completed the Functional Skills requirement.

Otherwise initial assessment skills ‘screeners’ are used prior to enrolment onto the Apprenticeship, to help to assess their ability to achieve the functional skills required.

On the job training

Every Apprentice must have an allocated supervisor/mentor in the workplace. It is the employer’s responsibility to provide sufficient ‘on the job’ training for the Apprentice to learn the skills required for the job. It is also the employer’s responsibility to work with the assessor to provide appropriate tasks for the Apprentice so they can provide evidence of their work for their Apprenticeship.

Work-based or day release

Some Apprentices will complete all of their training and qualifications in the workplace (work-based). Others will be required to attend College one day per week (day release). This will depend on the Apprenticeship framework/subject.

Cost of training

For Apprentices aged 16-18 at the point of enrolment, there is no cost for their training (the government will fully fund their qualifications).

For Apprentices aged 19+ at the point of enrolment, a fee per 12 months applies and it is the employer’s responsibility to pay this. Under no circumstances is it appropriate for the Apprentice to pay the fees themselves.