

# SUPPORTING YOUR APPRENTICE

## Parties

Whether you have recruited a new colleague or are upskilling an existing one, this is where all of your planning gets put into action.

There are four parties involved in an apprenticeship:

- Training Provider
- Employer/Line Manager
- The Apprentice
- End-Point Assessment Organisation

## The Training Provider

The provider delivers the learning interventions, with the ultimate aim of preparing the apprentice for the End Point Assessment. The learning interventions will vary depending on the apprenticeship standard being delivered. However, any staff assigned to the apprentice will act as a coach, supporting them with their learning; providing advice and guidance; and communicating with them and you as employer/line manager to ensure the apprentice remains on track with their learning plan.

The Training Provider will coordinate all reviews, and if the learner has any additional support needs, this should be discussed at the beginning of the apprenticeship.

## Employer/Line Manager

In some organisations, the duties listed below may be split out across HR or Learning & Development teams, and in others it could be the owner/general manager. In this instance, we have combined the duties into one team.

This includes duties such as:

- Providing support and guidance during the learning journey, following the structure of the apprenticeship. This includes robust induction and performance reviews
- Set clear expectations and achievable goals and targets to support the learning plan
- Work with different departments as required to support the achievement of the learning plan
- Monitor progress of the apprentice, and engage in regular reviews with the apprentice and the Training Provider
- Encourage regular communications between the Line Manager, Apprentice and Training Provider
- Report any issues or concerns to HR, L&D, Line Manager or Training Provider
- Celebrate any successes either internally or externally through social media, website etc. This not only further promotes the benefits of apprenticeships, but will also boost the self-confidence of the Apprentice and their Line Manager

## Employer/Line Manager Cont'd.

As well as the general duties of being an Employer/Line Manager; you will need to act as a mentor to the apprentice. If you are new to mentoring, there is guidance on our website, and a brief overview is below. When selecting the mentor, the following should be taken into consideration.

The mentor should be:

- A Line Manager or Supervisor
- Qualified or experienced within the sector of the selected apprenticeship
- A good communicator
- Patient
- Able to allocate time to support the apprentice
- Able to attend progress reviews between the apprentice and provider
- Able to facilitate workplace learning in line with the apprentice's learning plan

Mentoring is using your own experiences to help guide and support the Apprentice to realise their own potential. Together you will work towards a set of defined objectives with a view to the Apprentice (mentee) growing their skills, personal development and confidence.

### The Mentor should:

**Build a positive relationship with the apprentice and coach/tutor:** set ground rules of how you will operate in partnership; what you expect from them and how they can help you be an effective mentor.

**Effectively communicate:** clearly explain tasks, expectations, and provide feedback.

**Be patient and understanding:** recognise that apprentices are learning and may make mistakes.

**Be knowledgeable and experienced:** have a deep understanding of the trade or profession.

**Share experience and opportunity:** be open to sharing times where you have learnt through experience. Point the apprentice in the direction of new learning over and above their apprenticeship.

**Be organised and prepared:** get to know the apprenticeship standard and training plan of the apprentice.

**Be committed and engaged:** show genuine interest in the apprentice's development and progress.

**Show adaptability and flexibility:** be open to changing plans and finding solutions to challenges that arise.

**Encourage independence and curiosity:** encourage apprentices to take initiative and make decisions. Allow minor errors, avoid major ones.

**Be ethical and professional conduct:** demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and ethical behaviour in all interactions.

### The Mentor should not:

**Protect from experience:** you are not the problem solver; you guide them towards finding the solution

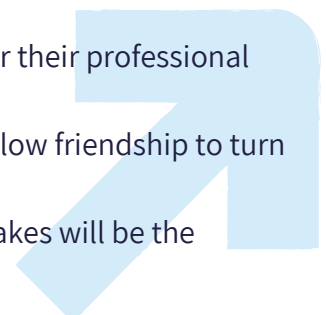
**Take over:** do not do the work for them

**Force:** do not box them into one option or to only follow one direction

**Use undue influence:** don't make the Apprentice feel obliged to follow your influence over their professional decisions

**Lose critical oversight:** your relationship must remain professional and you should not allow friendship to turn into favouritism

**Condemn:** everyone makes a mistake. Do not make the Apprentice feel that genuine mistakes will be the disaster that ends their career.



## Apprentice

The Apprentice must follow the apprenticeship structure as agreed with the Training Provider and Employer/Line Manager; whilst completing their learning plan. They must also put into practice all learning, and work towards their objectives. Across the apprenticeship, all apprentices are required to create a portfolio of evidence (the tool to do this is generally provided by the training provider). This is an important document as it enables an apprentice to evidence their growth when sitting their End Point Assessment.

The training provider will provide specific guidance to each apprentice on their requirements

Please see the Apprentice Toolkit – The Apprenticeship Journey for further information.

## End-Point Assessment Organisation

End-point assessment (EPA) is the final stage of an apprenticeship. It is an impartial assessment of whether your apprentice has developed the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSB's) outlined in the apprenticeship standard. Assessments are designed by employers in the sector and are conducted by independent bodies known as end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs).

It's important that your provider selects an EPAO as early into the apprenticeship as possible, unless you wish to do so, to ensure that your apprentice fully understands the assessment criteria and how they will be assessed. Depending on the assessment methods you may even need to be present or contribute in some way.

You will need to agree and 'sign off' that the apprentice is ready for final assessments (known as the Gateway), it's important that you understand the requirements for this. Your training provider will provide support and guidance on this. It is likely that the EPAO will make contact with you to share information, to agree dates for assessment and ask you to make necessary arrangements (on behalf of the employer) e.g. book a quiet space, make visitor arrangements for an assessor visit. If your apprentice has additional support needs or requires reasonable adjustments, discuss this with the EPAO.

