APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME FEATURES AND BENEFITS

Benefits

Benefits from the employer’s viewpoint:

- Improved productivity: providing the workforce with the skills and knowledge to do the job more effectively.
  - 77% employers believe Apprenticeships make them more competitive
  - 76% say Apprenticeships improve productivity
- Avoid skills shortages: both in terms of replacing an ageing workforce and training staff to a level required to keep abreast of technology.
  - 83% employers say they rely on their Apprenticeship programme to provide the skilled workers they need for the future
- Improve staff retention by offering new staff training and development opportunities.
  - 80% find Apprenticeships reduce staff turnover
- “Grow your own” staff; instilling the values and culture of the company from the outset.
  - 57% report that a high proportion of their apprentices go on to management positions within the company
  - 59% report that training apprentices is more cost-effective than hiring skilled staff, and lowers overall training costs
- Help promote a positive image of the business (i.e. one which invests in its staff).
- Helps to structure a training and development plan for small employers.
- Access to funding towards the cost of training for those staff aged 16+
  - LSC covers 100% training costs for those aged 16-19 and 50% of costs for those aged 20+. The funding available for those aged 25+ has also increased in line with increased demand.

Benefits from the learner’s viewpoint:

- “Learn whilst you earn”.
  - All employed apprentices must receive a wage of at least £80 a week; recent research found that apprentices earn an average of £170 net per week.  

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1 All statistics quoted below are from Populus research conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council, Feb 2008. 
2 BMRB research conducted on behalf of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills: Apprenticeship Pay: 2007 Survey of Earnings by Sector
• Learn a trade to industry standards e.g. in Electrical Installation, Gas, Plumbing, etc.
• Wide range of Apprenticeships to choose from;
  o There are more than 180 Apprenticeships available in approximately 80 sectors of industry and commerce, ranging from accountancy to football, engineering to veterinary nursing, business administration to construction.
• Opportunity for progression onto Level 4/5 qualifications and in some cases Higher Apprenticeships.

**Apprenticeship programme features**
• A competence based element in the form of an appropriate National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).
• Key Skills qualifications.
• A knowledge based element in the form of a Technical Certificate such as a BTEC or City & Guilds (included in most cases).
• Employment Rights and Responsibilities.
Each of these areas have essential and flexible elements, which are detailed below.

**Essential content for NVQ**
The competence-based element must:
• Be assembled from the National Occupational Standards from the employment sector for which the framework is designed and, if required, other employment sectors.
• Normally takes the form of a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ).
• Should be assessed using methods designed to test competence.
• Be at:
  – Level 2 for an Apprenticeship
  – Level 3 for an Advanced Apprenticeship

**Areas of flexibility within the NVQ**
• The content of the competence element may be determined by the Sector Skills Councils, Sector Bodies and their employers.
• The name of the qualification may be varied to suit the employment sector.
• Assessment methods should be determined by the appropriate Sector Skills Council in collaboration with the QCA.
• The knowledge element may or may not be integrated with the competence element at the discretion of the Sector Skills Councils, Sector Bodies and their employers.
Technical Certificate
Technical Certificates were introduced to ensure that the underpinning theoretical knowledge required by a successful apprentice was clearly demonstrated.

Essential components within Technical Certificates
- Must provide evidence that the underpinning theoretical knowledge required by the framework has been demonstrated.
- Normally independently assessed using methods determined by the Sector Skills Council and Sector Bodies and agreed by the QCA as appropriate, e.g. written coursework, final examination and completion of a variety of practical tasks.
- Should form part of a clearly described progression route from Apprenticeship to Advanced Apprenticeship and on to higher education.
- It must be at:
  - Level 2 for an Apprenticeship
  - Level 3 for an Advanced Apprenticeship

Areas of flexibility within Technical Certificates
- May be separately accredited or may be accredited as part of the competence element (NVQ).
- Advanced apprentice may need additional knowledge to progress to higher education, provided that this requirement is clearly stated and the means of progressing is available to apprentices when they start the Apprenticeship.

Essential content within Key Skills
The following elements must be included:

Apprenticeships
- Key Skill of Application of Number at Level 1
- Key Skill of Communication at Level 1

Advanced Apprenticeships
- Key Skill of Application of Number at Level 2
- Key Skill of Communication at Level 2

Key Skills assessment must include an end test, unless an exemption/relaxation applies.

Areas for flexibility within Key Skills
- The range of proxy qualifications that act as an exemption from part of the key skills qualifications e.g. GCSE English (Grade A*-C) exempts a candidate from the test for Communication Level 1 and 2 (full list of proxy qualifications available at [http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_6561.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_6561.aspx)).
• The relaxation requirement and the time limit relating to this relaxation may vary depending on the SSC.
• The Key Skills external assessment – whether it is contextualised to the vocational situation, or embedded into the programme, with all learning materials mapped to the core curriculum.
• Key Skills delivery models within the Apprenticeship programme.

**Essential content within Employment Rights and Responsibilities**
Employment rights and responsibilities must be included for all Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships and require apprentices to understand their responsibilities for equal opportunities, health and safety and the safe learner concept.

**Areas for flexibility within ERR**
The content and assessment of Employment rights and responsibilities is the responsibility of the Sector Skills Councils and Sector Bodies designing the framework, e.g. it can be contained in the Technical Certificate, the NVQ or an induction process.