

GUIDE TO **Mentoring an Apprentice** **in the Workplace**





What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are set to play a crucial role in developing the UK workforce, by helping organisations to increase employee performance, and business productivity. South Staffordshire College see apprenticeships as an invaluable investment in workforce development.

An apprentice's time is divided between working with their employer and undertaking training at, or supported by, the college. All apprentices must have a minimum 6 hours per week of their paid time developing the knowledge, skills and professional behaviors required for the job role.

Apprenticeship Standards contain an independent End Point Assessment (EPA). This is undertaken once it is determined that the apprentice has met all the knowledge, skills and behaviours contained within the standard. The content of an EPA will vary but generally includes a knowledge test, a skills assessment, and a professional discussion to determine competence. The decision for readiness is agreed by the college, the employer and the apprentice.



How to support your apprentice

As well as providing 'on-the-job' training for your apprentice, you are encouraged to provide additional support to ensure the success of your apprentice.

Types of support can include:

- a comprehensive induction
- mentoring or regular one-to-one guidance
- social enrichment and networking opportunities
- performance reviews supported by the college and employer
- mental health and wellbeing support.

Guidance on how you can support your apprentice is provided below. You can download the apprentice support guide, designed by the Learning and Work Institute on behalf of the Department for Education here: bit.ly/3mwCor6 You can also watch this webinar on onboarding and induction: bit.ly/3KTM8nF

‘Off-the-job’ training

‘Off-the-job’ training can be flexible and doesn’t have to mean 1 day out of the workplace every week. It equates to approximately 6 hours per week. You can watch this webinar to learn more about ‘off-the-job’ training: bit.ly/41sCBKT or find out more in the ‘off-the-job’ training guide: bit.ly/3KyObNI

For example, training can take place:

- at the apprentice’s place of work
- at a college or university or with a training provider
- online (apprenticeship training must not be delivered solely by self-directed distance learning)

Or it could be a combination of these options.

The frequency can vary, for example:

- 1 day a week
- part of a working day
- blocks of time

For instance, some apprenticeships begin with a block of training to get the apprentice work-ready

‘Off-the-job’ training must deliver new skills that are directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard.

It includes:

- teaching of theory
- practical training
- learning support and time for writing assignments.

It doesn’t include:

- time spent on initial assessment and onboarding
- maths and English training up to and including level 2
- training to acquire knowledge, skills and behaviours that are not required by the apprenticeship standard
- progress reviews
- training which takes place outside the apprentice’s normal working hours unless paid or given as time off in lieu.

English & maths

Your apprentice may also need to study for English and maths qualifications as part of their apprenticeship if they have not yet met the level 2 minimum requirements.

You must allow your apprentice time to study for this within their normal working hours. Studying for English and maths is not part of the ‘off the job’ training.

Apprenticeships are designed on the basis that the apprentice already has the required level of English and maths, and so not all apprentices require this training.

You can read more about English and maths requirements in apprenticeship standards at level 2 and above: bit.ly/3o93Rzw

Induction

Most employers will offer an induction programme for new employees but as career starters or career changers, apprentices may need additional support to understand their role and responsibilities.

An induction could include:

- one-to-one meetings for the apprentice to meet or shadow key members of the team so that they understand how their role fits with the wider organisation
- information on what is expected of them, for example, dress code, time management and general work behaviours
- details of how the apprentice’s work fits with the wider team and where they can go to for support
- a clear outline of their job role and objectives to help the apprentice understand what is expected of them
- an introduction to company policies rather than asking the apprentice to read them
- regular one-to-one meetings with the apprentice’s line manager
- a welcome handbook which provides a useful glossary of key business terms, organisational charts and key tasks for them to complete in the first weeks
- an introduction to their workplace mentor and/or ‘buddy’.

Partnership

Apprenticeship programmes work in partnership with the employer, mentor and the college. Our teams are ready to answer any questions and offer support along the way. Here at the college we offer mentor induction sessions where we invite you in for training and support in any areas you may need. This can be anything from reviewing the apprentice's performance, how to provide wellbeing support or even just sharing ideas with us. For more information call us on **0300 456 2424** or email us at **apprenticeships@southstaffs.ac.uk**.

Tripartite Reviews

Within every 12 week period the mentor, apprentice and the work based practitioner from the college will agree a time slot to discuss the apprentices performance and support any questions that may arise. This is a great opportunity to share progress and review targets to maximise performance and ensure they are on track towards the End Point Assessment (EPA). It is vital that the employer/mentor is involved in these sessions to allow the college and the apprentice to work consistently on shared targets with one shared goal.

Tripartite reviews support:

- what your business is trying to achieve and their role in achieving those goals
- what skills, knowledge and professional behaviours they need for the role
- areas they need to develop
- how well they are doing
- if there are any performance problems and how to address them.



Wellbeing and safe-guarding

If your apprentice is struggling with mental health, such as anxiety, depression or low mood, they can access the Work Mental Health Support Service for Apprentices at **<https://able-futures.co.uk/>**

The service is free, and funded by the Department for Work and Pensions.

The service provides apprentices with access to mental health experts who provide:

- emotional wellbeing support and advice
- advice on simple workplace adjustments
- successful coping strategies
- a step-by-step support plan

South Staffordshire College is committed to safeguarding the welfare of young people and adults and preventing abuse.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Kim Vaughan. You can contact her on **07741 165 217** or email the safeguarding team at **safeguarding@southstaffs.ac.uk**.

For any questions relating to apprenticeships, please do not hesitate to contact us at **apprenticeships@southstaffs.ac.uk**