



Quality Assuring Apprenticeship Provision

Policy

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Quality Assuring Apprenticeship Provision

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Document History

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1. Introduction

This document outlines the policies in place to ensure the quality of University of the Built Environment's higher education apprenticeship programmes. It should be read alongside the University's other Policies and Procedures, and Academic and Programme Regulations, which set out how the University ensures the quality of the academic awards that are included within the apprenticeship programmes it provides.

The University's approach is informed by the regulatory context set out by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

All the apprenticeships delivered by University of the Built Environment are English apprenticeships which have been developed by a subject specific 'trailblazer' group made up of employers and subject specialists under the guidance of the Skills England¹. These apprenticeship programmes are open to all individuals aged 18 years or over at the start of their programme, regardless of disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

An apprenticeship is a job with training. Through an apprenticeship, an apprentice will gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills and behaviours that they need to be competent in their current occupation. The apprentice will gain this through formal off-the-job training (which is the responsibility of University of the Built Environment) and an opportunity to apply these new skills in a real work environment, in a productive job.

The learning phase of the apprenticeship is known as the Practical Period and includes on and off-the-job learning. Some apprentices will also need to study maths and English to meet the requirements to access funding. At the end of the Practical Period, apprentices will pass through a Gateway meeting which is effectively confirmation that they are consistently meeting the requirements of their apprenticeship standard. Following this, they will undertake End-Point Assessment (EPA) which is the final step to completing the apprenticeship.

¹ Standards can be found at <https://skillsengland.education.gov.uk/apprenticeships/>

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The University is responsible for the quality of all aspects of the apprenticeship provision, and this Policy sets out how the quality of its apprenticeship programmes is assured.

2. Programme design and approval

As outlined above, the University delivers English apprenticeships which need to be delivered in line with the published standards which detail the:

- Entry requirements;
- Core and option occupation duties;
- Required outcomes in terms of knowledge, skills and behaviours;
- Qualifications required as part of the apprenticeship programme;
- Assessment plan for the EPA;
- Typical duration of the apprenticeship; and
- Maximum funding that can be drawn down from the tax levy.

The University has an apprenticeship approval process which includes checks to ensure the University is designing the apprenticeship programme in line with the published standards. Before apprenticeship programmes can be delivered they must undergo both business case approval and apprenticeship approval as set out in the Programme Development and Validation Procedure. Where the programme also contains a new academic award the apprenticeship approval can be combined with the academic validation if the additional apprenticeship documentation is provided and there is appropriate expertise on the panel.

Through the apprenticeship approval process the University can ensure that:

- consideration is given to the programme structure and coherence of the programme;
- compliance with the apprenticeship standard and the knowledge, skills and behaviours; and
- confirm the arrangements for the EPA.

3. Initial assessment, admission and sign-up

The University has detailed procedures in place for initial assessment, admission and sign-up to ensure that the employer and apprentice understand the requirements of the apprenticeship programme and that appropriate checks are made to ensure that they can deliver on their commitments and meet the DfE funding requirements.

3.1 Initial assessment

Before an employer can register with the University to deliver an apprenticeship they must complete a Pre-Approval Form via the Employer Portal providing information about their business and which apprenticeship programme(s) they are looking to recruit to.

Following initial checks, the employer completes an Employer Advance Enquiry Form which details the workplace training and support opportunities required for the apprenticeship they are applying for, and an Apprentice Information Release Form which provides all the required information regarding the potential apprentice. The form sets out the competencies that the apprentice will need exposure to, and the employer must state whether these workplace training opportunities can be provided. The Employer Advance Enquiry Form is reviewed by the University Apprenticeship Admissions Team and where applicable, referred to a member of the Apprenticeships Team. If the employer meets the criteria, approval is granted for the apprenticeship pathways to which the employer can recruit apprentices. Following approval of apprenticeship pathways, the employer will then provide the details of the applicant that they would like to register on the apprenticeship programme. Employers are also sent a Health and Safety Questionnaire to complete (see [section 5.5](#) below).

3.2 Application and sign-up

The University sends the applicant a direct link to the applicant portal containing the application form which they are asked to complete.

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Alongside this, applicants are also asked to complete a Skills Self-Assessment Form which allows the University to undertake an assessment of the applicants' prior experience, knowledge and skills which are a requirement of the DfE Apprenticeship Funding and Performance Management rules, and allows the University to judge their prior skills and to check that they will benefit from completing the apprenticeship programme that they are applying for.

On receipt of the completed application form the University will assess the applicant against the entry requirements for the academic award in line with the Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.

The University is committed to an inclusive admissions policy by providing transparent, fair and consistent practice for all individuals. No potential student will be excluded entry to any University programme as a result of discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. For more information, please see the [Diversity, Equality and Inclusion statement \(opens new window\)](#).

Applicants that are under 19 years old and do have an accepted Level 2 maths and English qualification will be required to achieve Level 2 maths and English Functional Skills qualification as part of the apprenticeship and will need to obtain Level 2 in initial and diagnostic assessments prior to being made an offer on the programme but will be required to complete Functional Skills qualification as outlined in [section 5.2](#) below. Applicants that are 19+ years old are not required to have accepted equivalent Level 2 maths and English qualification. However, the DfE will fund functional skills qualifications if deemed necessary by the Employer and apprentice.

Alongside the academic award entry requirements there are also a number of other criteria linked to DfE funding requirements that the University will check against before the applicant is admitted to the programme. In the event of any query or if adjudication is required, the application is referred to the Apprenticeship Funding and Eligibility Panel (AFEP).

If the application is successful the applicant and employer will be asked to complete the sign-up documentation which includes the apprenticeship agreement, written agreement and Training Plan (see section 4 below). The applicant and employer are also provided with a sign-up video which provides further information on what they are committing to on sign-up to the apprenticeship programme.

4. Apprenticeship Training Plan

Before an apprentice can start on an apprenticeship programme with the University there must be a completed and signed Training Plan in place signed by all parties. The Training Plan is a three-way agreement between the apprentice, the employer and University of the Built Environment as the training provider, that explicitly sets out each parties' responsibilities throughout the entire apprenticeship programme. This Training Plan is discussed and agreed with the apprentice and the employer as part of the sign-up process.

The Training Plan is uploaded into the e:Vision portal and the University Apprenticeship Outcomes Officer (AOO) is responsible for monitoring compliance with this statement (see [section 5.4](#) below).

5. Apprenticeship delivery

5.1 Apprenticeship induction

All apprentices are invited to attend an apprenticeship induction which provides specific information relevant to their apprenticeship.

5.2 English and maths

Where an apprentice does not have the accepted prior English and/or maths qualifications at the start of their apprenticeship they are required to achieve Functional Skills English and/or maths qualifications as part of their apprenticeship. Time undertaking English/maths qualifications must be additional to the minimum 20% off-the-job training requirement. Each Functional Skills qualification typically requires 55 hours of additional off-the-job training.

The University currently subcontracts the delivery and support for English and maths Functional Skills to Runway Training. The subcontracting arrangement sets out that Runway Training manages and delivers all aspects of Functional Skills learning including:

- Registering the apprentice with the external awarding body;
- Monitor apprentices progress from start to completion of the Functional Skills qualification;
- Provide monthly risk reports to the University; and

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- Claim achievement for the Functional Skills qualification and provide the University with the award certificate from the external awarding body.

For further details of how the University ensures the quality of subcontracted provision please see [section 5.11](#) below.

Where apprentices have the required English and maths qualifications the University supports students to further develop these skills to a higher level as part of the curriculum, as well as developing the required English and maths skills they need to complete their workplace practice and to progress through the Gateway to EPA.

5.3 Disability and additional needs

The University has a duty to anticipate reasonable adjustments in the design, assessment and support services delivered as part of its apprenticeship programmes to ensure that all students can achieve their full potential and not be disadvantaged because of disability or additional need. A reasonable adjustment is a reasonable variation or alteration made to University processes so that a student with a disability can access the educational opportunities of the institution without compromising the expected academic or professional standards. There is no duty on the University to adjust genuine competency standards.

The University can also make adjustments for short-term health conditions and pregnancy, maternity and paternity. There may however be instances in these circumstances where reasonable adjustments cannot be made and at this point students can consider applying for mitigating circumstances in line with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy, or a break in learning as detailed within the Academic and Programme Regulations.

The University can also access Additional Learning Support Funding via the DfE in order to implement any reasonable adjustments for students with a confirmed support need.

Further information about the University's policy on disability and additional needs is set out in the [Neurodiversity, Disability and Wellbeing Procedure \(opens new window\)](#).

5.4 Apprentice initial review and scheduled progress review process

The University is responsible for all aspects of its apprenticeship programmes including ensuring that students are being effectively supported in the workplace as well as receiving their allocation of a minimum of 20% of their working hours for off-the-job training. To monitor this, each apprentice is allocated an AOO, who undertakes an extensive and wide-ranging scheduled progress review with the apprentice and employer at twelve-week intervals.

Prior to the commencement of the scheduled progress review process AOOs will schedule an initial review normally during weeks 3–6 of the programme. The purpose of the initial review is to get feedback from the apprentice on their first weeks as an apprentice, to provide initial information, advice and guidance and to deal with any queries.

These progress reviews examine the apprentice's progress towards the EPA Gateway incorporating:

- the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to complete the apprenticeship through their off and on the job training; and
- how the apprentice is developing their wider knowledge and skills such as health and safety, safeguarding, employability and English and maths skills; and supporting their general welfare.

As part of these Progress Reviews it may be identified that the apprentice needs additional support with their academic studies in which case the AOO can recommend that the apprentice has an academic tutorial with an Academic Support Tutor (see [section 5.8](#) below).

Apprentices are required to complete an off-the-job diary using the University template to detail their off-the-job training activity which is monitored by the AOO as part of the progress review process.

The University uses a centralised system to monitor and track apprentice progress. This system allows progress against each individual element of the apprenticeship to be tracked.

Observations of progress reviews are planned and undertaken in line with the Observation and Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship Provision Procedure.

5.5 Health and safety

The health and safety of the apprentice is the primary responsibility of the employer, except when the apprentice is attending any face-to-face sessions delivered by the University. Information is provided to employers on their responsibilities within the Apprenticeship Employer Handbook.

Employers are also expected to complete an Employer Health and Safety Questionnaire as part of the sign-up process which collects information on the member of staff at the employer who is responsible for the day-to-day management of health and safety of the apprentices at work. Requests for a copy of the employer's health and safety policy, employer's liability insurance and ensures that risk assessments are also undertaken.

5.6 Professional Practice Workshops

The majority of the University's apprenticeship programmes include Professional Practice Workshops, and Technical Advice, which are delivered as part of the off-the-job training and designed to support apprentices in developing the required knowledge, skills and behaviours and to support networking opportunities. These sessions are generally delivered by industry practitioners who are recruited in line with the University's standard recruitment practices and are expected to undertake all compulsory compliance training including safeguarding and prevent and data protection.

The quality of these sessions is monitored through observations undertaken in accordance with the Observation and Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship Provision Procedure.

5.7 Monitoring attendance and engagement

To meet the requirements of the DfE funding rules, the University must keep a record of students' attendance at all Professional Practice Workshops. A separate register is taken at the start of each session, and any explained absence or reasons for lateness noted, reported and followed up. Copies of these registers are retained by the Apprenticeship Team for audit purposes.

Alongside monitoring attendance at sessions the University also monitors apprentice's engagement with the VLE, and where there are problems with attendance and engagement this is discussed as part of the scheduled progress review meetings.

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Any ongoing issues without valid reasons with an apprentice's attendance or engagement will be investigated in line with the University's [Disciplinary Procedure \(opens new window\)](#).

5.8 Apprenticeship Support Tutorials

Apprentices can access additional support with their academic studies by arranging an individual tutorial with an Academic Support Tutor. Academic Support Tutors can provide support with study skills such as referencing, time management and study techniques.

5.9 Technical support

The University has a number of different models for providing technical support for apprentices which are detailed within this section. When designing a new apprenticeship programme careful consideration is given to the appropriate model to use to best support the apprentice to meet the requirements of the apprenticeship standard.

5.9.1 Technical Coach/Reviewer

On apprenticeship programmes where the Technical Coach/Reviewer role is used the role is focused upon guiding and supporting the apprentice, and where needed the employer, to successfully meet the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and to support the apprentices' progress to the EPA. This includes ensuring that the apprentice is inducted into the requirements of the apprenticeship, coaching and supporting the apprentice and undertaking scheduled coach/review sessions to support the apprentice's personal development, completion of the portfolio of evidence and preparation for EPA. In addition, the Technical Coach/Reviewer also liaises with other University staff in relation to apprentice progression and health, safety and welfare.

Technical Coaches/Reviewers are appointed based on their professional experience and knowledge of the EPA and are recruited in line with the University's standard recruitment practices and are expected to undertake all compulsory compliance training including safeguarding and prevent and data protection.

Quality assurance of the scheduled coach/review sessions is undertaken in line with the Observation and Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship Provision Procedure.

5.10 End-Point Assessment

The End-Point Assessment (EPA) is the final assessment that is taken at the end of the apprenticeship programme to determine if each apprentice has met the requirements of their apprenticeship standard. Each English apprenticeship has an EPA plan which sets out the requirements of the EPA and how it must be conducted. EPAs can only be undertaken by an organisation that is approved to conduct the EPA for the particular apprenticeship. To be approved an organisation must be included in the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR). For degree apprenticeships, the EPA can either be integrated or non-integrated with the degree element of the apprenticeship. Where the EPA is integrated, part or all of the assessment will contribute to the credit that makes up the degree award. Where the EPA is integrated the University will be the End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) and will need to be included in APAR. Where the EPA is non-integrated, the University will choose the EPAO from the list of approved EPAOs, however apprentice employers can assist with the selection for their apprentices. EPA activity is subject to external quality assurance which is regulated by the Office for Students for apprenticeships programmes with an integrated EPA.

Before any apprentice can progress through the Gateway to undertake the EPA both the University and the employer must check that all Gateway requirements as set out in the Apprenticeship Standard Assessment Plan have been met. As part of this process the employer and the University will sign a statement to confirm that all Gateway requirements have been met and the apprentice is ready to take the EPA.

5.11 Subcontracted provision

To cover all aspects of the apprenticeship standards the University may need to subcontract some areas of delivery such as the delivery of functional skills.

Where areas of delivery are subcontracted the University will ensure that the subcontracting arrangement is put in place in line with the [Subcontracting Policy \(opens new window\)](#) which sets out clear criteria in relation to subcontractor selection, due diligence, quality assurance, subcontractor support and performance management.

6. Engagement with industry and employers

6.1 Engagement with industry and employers in programme design and review

Due to the vocational nature of the programmes delivered by the University it is important that the institution maintains close links with industry representatives and employers.

The University invites practitioner and employer representatives as panellists as part of the apprenticeship approval process. These panellists play an important role in providing an autonomous and impartial view of the quality of the apprenticeship programme proposal by drawing on their experience of provision elsewhere and/or identifying its likely fit with sector and employer needs.

The University collects feedback from employers and industry representatives via an annual Professional Engagement and Advisory Forum (PEAF) and employer forums. Both inform the development of the University's curriculum to ensure that it remains in line with industry expectations.

6.2 Employer feedback

Employers can leave feedback on University of the Built Environment apprenticeship programmes via the DfE Employer Satisfaction survey.

Employers can also feed back directly to the University through a variety of mechanisms including the Business Development team, the AOOs or as part of the exit review process when an apprentice completes or withdraws from programme.

6.3 Employer complaints

The University has a formal [Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices \(opens new window\)](#) that may want to raise a complaint in relation to the delivery of services provided by University of the Built Environment.

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The University will investigate any complaints in line with this procedure. Any matters relating to fees and funding should be addressed to the main provider in the event that the main provider is not University of the Built Environment, i.e., where the University is delivering the apprenticeship under a subcontracting agreement.

7. Apprenticeship programme monitoring and review

7.1 Review of performance data

The University's Senior Leadership Team undertakes regular monitoring of apprenticeship data by monthly update of the Institutional Scorecard and through in-depth review as part of the Quarterly Business Review meetings.

At these meetings, the performance of the apprenticeship programmes are monitored against a set of agreed key performance indicators:

- The number of apprentices that undertake their EPA against target.
- The number of apprentices that undertake and pass their EPA against target.
- Percentage satisfaction of apprentice employers against target.
- Percentage apprentice satisfaction in the University's Student Experience Survey.
- Monitoring withdrawal rates per quarter.
- Overall qualification achievement rate against target and retention rates as part of this.

7.2 Apprenticeship programme review

The University also reviews each apprenticeship programme as part of its programme review process as set out in the Programme Monitoring and Review Procedure. As part of this process there will be a scorecard report produced either on an annual or bi-annual basis reviewing the performance of the apprenticeship programme and identifying areas for enhancement which will be captured on the accompanying Quality Enhancement Plan.

7.3 Self-Assessment Review

The University undertakes a Self-Assessment Review (SAR) on an annual basis which reviews how the University's apprenticeship programmes meet the grade descriptors set out in the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework. The assessment focuses on the following key areas:

- Overall Effectiveness
- Quality of Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes
- Personal Development
- Leadership and Management (including safeguarding)

The exercise allows the University to use self-reflection to drive enhancement at both programme and institutional level. The enhancement actions that are identified as part of this review are added to the University Enhancement Plan. The University also prepares a quarterly position statement which provides an update on the enhancement activities identified.

7.4 Apprenticeship Assurance Review Group

Acting on behalf of the Academic Board, the purpose of this Apprenticeship Assurance Review Group is to assess the effectiveness and provide assurance of all aspects of the University's apprenticeship provision to ensure at least an outcome of 'Good' at each OFSTED inspection. This is enacted by implementing a schedule of audit activity to review the delivery of individual apprenticeship standards and thematic reviews of key areas of apprenticeship delivery.

Signed by Chairs Action:



Jane Fawkes

Chair of the Quality Standards and Enhancement

Date:

03/10/2025

Appendix A. Related policies and procedures

Complaints Policy and Procedure for Employers of Apprentices

Observation and Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship Provision Policy

Programme Development and Validation Procedure

Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Procedure

Subcontracting Policy

Appendix B. Benchmarked policies and guidance

[IfA Quality Statement \(opens new window\)](#)

QAA (July 2018) [Quality Assuring Higher Education in Apprenticeships: Current approaches \(opens new window\)](#)

QAA (July 2019) [Higher Education in Apprenticeships Characteristics Statement \(opens new window\)](#)