



EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

There is a distinction made between:

Policy – defined as a broad description of intent; and

Employer engagement - defined here as the practical issues of making contact with employers to raise awareness of Management Apprentice and to raise the possibility of offering training; and

Employer involvement – defined here as the strategic and operational involvement of employers.

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POLICY

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out the commitment of Management Apprentice to provide a curriculum offer which supports the development, for both Level 3 and 5 Managers, of the skills that are necessary for a productive and competitive economy. The core purpose of Management Apprentice is to support people to develop skills in the broadest sense and to encourage talent, knowledge, resourcefulness and creativity. Management Apprentice seeks to deliver skills at levels 3 and 5 in order to support the development of an advanced competitive economy and make us a fairer society, offering equal opportunities for all. We will focus on the progression of learners and deliver the skills and qualifications which individuals, employers and the economy need.

2. SCOPE

This policy covers Level 3 and 5 Management apprenticeships and Functional Skills English and Maths. It covers provision for existing staff or newly recruited staff employed by Levy paying employers. The policy will be implemented within the guidance of ESFA and ILM.

The principles and aims articulated in this policy will inform strategic and business planning decisions in relation to deciding the direction of Management Apprentice developments.

3. OBJECTIVES

The plan contains strategic objectives and employer engagement issues are addressed specifically with relevant sections to “provide a range of learning opportunities, services and support relevant to the needs of individuals and employers”. Management Apprentice will develop its staffing potential, allocate its resources, and design its infrastructures in order to continue to move towards a service which is driven by the needs of its learners and its employers. Our employer facing strategy will drive forward economic growth and equality of opportunity.

3.1 Curriculum offer and range

- 3.1.1 The provision of excellent learning opportunities for Leaders and Managers. Management Apprentice will continue to offer a focused apprenticeship offer and foundation learning which looks to address issues within our client organisation.
- 3.1.2 The provision of a contextualized offer which supports and opens up opportunities for client employees; delivers an entitlement to a level 2 equivalent in functional skills.
- 3.1.3 The provision of a responsive, employer facing curriculum which helps to raise the skills of the nation, giving employers and individuals the skills they need to improve productivity, employability and social cohesion. This will include the provision of a level 3 or 5 Qualification.

3.2 Improving our offer to employers through:

- 3.2.1 Working in partnership with other training providers to offer employers clearer information about training opportunities;
- 3.2.2 Making employers aware of the range of training options through appropriate information channels;
- 3.2.3 Project planning to ensure, for each company, an understanding of underlying business need and an adequate analysis of training needs;



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- 3.2.4 Providing briefings for delivery staff, employers and employees to ensure shared expectations;
- 3.2.5 Providing detailed financial costings to support all training programmes;
- 3.2.6 Offering training packages which respect the needs of the business as a whole and impact positively on the business;
- 3.2.7 Handling enquiries promptly and efficiently and reviewing standards of customer service regularly;
- 3.2.8 Providing student research opportunities and employer focused work-based projects, that will inform business practice and that promote knowledge transfer;
- 3.2.9 Developing flexible lifelong learning to meet both the employer and employee needs;
- 3.2.10 Engaging employers in curriculum development and embedding employability;
- 3.2.11 Engaging employers to support the delivery of the curriculum, including learning and teaching.

3.3 Providing high quality training through

- 3.3.1 Ensuring a high level of current skills when recruiting delivery staff;
- 3.3.2 Ensuring standardisation of operational and delivery practices, including regular feedback to learners and employers relating to progress;
- 3.3.3 Regular performance reviews and observations of the people delivering training solutions;
- 3.3.4 Regular review of the resources available for training.

3.4 Quality improvement through:

- 3.4.1 Regular feedback from both employers who use Management Apprentice services and those who do not, in order to improve perceptions and the overall offer;
- 3.4.2 Acting promptly to respond to feedback and/or complaints in order to improve services;
- 3.4.3 Reviewing outcomes following delivery to identify unmet needs and inform further actions;
- 3.4.4 Managing and maintaining a data base of employer contacts;
- 3.4.5 Measuring employer satisfaction;
- 3.4.6 Continuing to evolve and improve the training offer, offering teaching and learning strategies which motivate, stimulate and encourage the learners as well as meeting the employer's requirements;
- 3.4.7 Regular review of the resources available for training.

3.5 Extending and developing identified specialist areas of Management Apprentice through:

- 3.5.1 Clearly identifying those areas in which Management Apprentice will specialise;
- 3.5.2 Developing strategies for working with employers;
- 3.5.3 Using input from appropriate stakeholders and employers to share good practice and understand each sector's shared business needs;
- 3.5.4 Developing products and services and staffing to address industry expectations;
- 3.5.5 Setting SMART targets and performance indicators which measure and monitor success and lead to an improving trend.

3.6 Maintaining the standards originally achieved through ILM and other relevant accreditations in order to guarantee standards:

- 3.6.1 Maintaining a portfolio of evidence against agreed criteria;
- 3.6.2 Keeping up to date with government policy and advice; ESFA; awarding bodies and EPA providers;



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- 3.6.3 Using information to support the strategy, analyse the market and determine the need of key customer groups;
- 3.6.4 Working in partnership, wherever possible, to increase the availability and accessibility of training opportunities;
- 3.6.5 Adhering to our general and specific duties under the relevant equality legislation.

This includes:

- a) analysis of data pertaining to Employer Engagement by gender, ethnicity and disability, relating to participation, success and staffing;
- b) using consultation and feedback to inform practice;
- c) adhering to procurement and partnership regulations.

4. Monitoring and Reviewing

- 4.1 The policy will be reviewed through the Curriculum Development Team and at Board meetings.
- 4.2 The Curriculum Development Team will be chaired by the Managing Consultant who has responsibility for the review of this policy, monitoring its effectiveness and measuring its impact.
- 4.3 The MD will lead on the development and delivery of the agreed strategy and will chair relevant committees and task groups as required.

5. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy is integral to the quality structure. Specific information relating to participants and success in Apprenticeships will be summarised in the regular Executive reports.

6. Management Responsibility

- 6.1 This policy will be overseen by the MD and will be monitored by the Chairman.
- 6.2 The Chairman will be responsible for developing and supporting the mission of Management Apprentice in relation to employer engagement and overseeing progress towards target.
- 6.3 The Managers will take responsibility for ensuring that the principles outlined in this policy will be integrated within their strategic and operational decision-making processes.
- 6.4 The Managers will monitor their performance against the standards set out in this policy and related procedures and will set and meet agreed annual targets.
- 6.5 This policy will be reviewed on a triennial basis.



Employer Engagement

defined here as the practical issues of making contact with employers to raise awareness of Management Apprentice and to raise the possibility of offering training.

Strategic Priority 1

To develop a coherent approach to employer engagement which secures significant additional income stream

Strategic Priority 2

To engage more fully with employers to design new 'products' with their interests in mind and to develop programmes with work-based learning as central elements

Strategic Priority 3

Identify emerging markets appropriate to our potential

Strategic Priority 4

Encourage all staff to increase employer engagement activity and to identify employer engagement activity within their plans

Management Apprentice is well placed to embrace this challenge and to address the need for a demand-led approach in what is likely to remain a vibrant area of employment through employer engagement. Employer engagement is essentially about building confidence in the business among employers – public and private - so that more employers and employees commit to our Apprenticeships.

The MD has responsibility for delivering this strategy, for working with employers to identify their higher-level skills needs, and to develop responsive provision with the aim to build the long-term capability and the capacity of the business to engage with employers.

In particular, there is scope for Management Apprentice via ASK Europe PLC to develop a centralised offer building upon pre-existing provision. This will be delivered through online and blended learning as well as delivery in the workplace, intensive courses, and mentored learning in the workplace.

Management Apprentice has made strategic investment in technology that will allow us to diversify our learning and teaching methods/opportunities in such a way as to respond to employer needs.

Operational Aspects

Our Sales staff will:

- Identify and engage with employers across England, for the generation of new learner starts for Apprenticeships
- Convert existing leads passed on by others, as well as generating own leads via field sales, cold calling, networking etc., to secure new employer accounts and promote us as the Training Provider of choice.
- Attend meetings with decision makers to discuss their training needs for existing staff and new Apprentice recruitment.
- Support with the onboarding process including eligibility screening and enrolment.



Employer Engagement - continued

- Keep up to date with competitor's strengths and weaknesses, evaluating the market and scoping out new opportunities.
- Ensure employer environments comply with Health and Safety requirements.
- Report sales data and forecasts on a regular basis and meet month end sales deadlines.
- Cross sell other products, seizing all opportunities to offer clients a well-rounded service.

Our sales staff will have:

- Experience of working within a field-based Business Development / B2B role within the training industry.
- Understanding of Apprenticeship Standards.
- Proven experience of negotiating / winning / closing new, and repeat business.
- Excellent presentation skills.
- Proven experience of working towards and achieving targets.
- Full, clean driving licence and use of a vehicle.
- Must be flexible with travel across England.



Employer involvement

defined here as the strategic and operational involvement of employers

We believe that engaging and working in partnership with the employer in their employees learning and development assists the learners in their qualification journey and ensures that their training and development is fit for purpose and is an important component in learners' attainment of their goals.

We have a commitment to engage employers in their employees training and development and to keep them informed on their progress and development.

Manager's Responsibility

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that procedures are reviewed annually.

The Operations Director and Team Leaders are responsible for ensuring the adherence of this policy by all employees. Team leaders are responsible for supporting assessors with issues with learners and involving employers as appropriate.

Bid Team

The Bid Team is responsible for marketing the company to employers ready for sales staff to engage with new and existing Employers.

Assessors

Assessors are responsible for involving employers (or their representatives) in progress reviews and maintaining good working relationships with learner workplace mentors.

Individual's Responsibility

Individual employees are required to act in accordance with the policy, to enable employer engagement.

Management Apprentice will engage and work in partnership with employers through our Marketing & Employer Communication Processes:

- Making employers aware of new training and development opportunities for their employees
- Inviting employers to take part in quarterly 'Keep in touch' meetings
- Measuring employer satisfaction through yearly employer surveys
- Offering training packages which impact positively on the business
- Handling enquiries promptly and efficiently and reviewing standards of customer service regularly
- Managing and maintaining a data base of employer contacts

Management Processes

- Acting promptly to respond to feedback and/or complaints in order to improve services
- Continuing to evolve and improve the training offer, offering teaching and learning strategies which motivate, stimulate and encourage the learners as well as meeting the employer's requirements
- Building bespoke training courses to meet the needs of employers.
- Keeping up to date with government policy and advice, External Quality Assurance, awarding bodies and Informing employers of changes relevant to their business



Employer involvement - continued

Delivery Processes

- Working with employer line managers, HR and mentors
- Engaging employers in optional unit choices to ensure the needs of the business are met.
- Completing progress reviews with learners and their line managers
- Setting SMART targets and performance indicators which measure and monitor success and lead to an improving trend.

How can Employers get Involved?

Mock Interviews

Employer Talks

Business Breakfasts and Lunches

Placements

Visits to Site

Projects

Mentoring

Curriculum Support to a Department

Speed Networking

Training Delivery

Recruitment Support

Coaching

Programme Co-Design

Our Co-Design approach enables us to work collaboratively with employers to design, develop and deliver bespoke Levy Apprenticeship programmes.

Prior to commencing delivery, we will engage closely with the Employer to scope the development and training requirements, ensuring we develop and deliver bespoke solutions that align with the Employers priorities, needs, culture and processes (e.g. competency frameworks) and have the maximum impact on performance.

We will work collaboratively with the Employer to analyse current skills gaps and understand skills needs through our Co-Design, identifying those staff to undertake training as per succession planning requirements.

Our Co-Design approach will entail the following key stages to ensure we deliver an Apprenticeship programme that aligns with the Employers key objectives, culture, values, and mission:

- Reviewing the Employer Workforce Strategy and Succession Plans to understand the Employers strategic direction and investment priorities;
- Reviewing relevant internal systems to support Next Generation Standards;
- Analysing department training needs using our innovative Training Needs Analysis tool;
- Working with the Employer to review job descriptions/specifications;



Employer involvement - continued

- Undertaking a Training Needs Analysis to include a full assessment of each apprentice job role, including the selection of relevant programme components and accompanying units/qualifications which meet the needs of the job role;
- Mapping language and models from any existing training and development undertaken (for example the GROW model) with the Standard's syllabus, specification, modules, key learning aims and outcomes, while ensuring the core skills required by the Employers managers are integrated into programme design and delivery. Our programme aligns with the ILM syllabus, specification and Standards.

Analysis

An Organisational Analysis will be undertaken at both organisational and departmental level, to ensure the unique characteristics and priorities of each area of the business are identified and factored into training development and delivery. This will guide the co-design of a bespoke programme that all managers can buy into and support positively.

Understanding and Embedding the Employers Core Values

Our Co-Design process provides opportunities to design and implement bespoke programmes that reflect the Employers organisations unique values and culture. When engaging with employers, we take proactive measures to fully understand the Employer organisational cultures, behaviours, competencies, and vision, identifying shared values and ensuring our services are aligned to reflect these. Through Co-Design processes, we will work with the Employer to ensure the Employer core values are understood and are embedded from the outset of delivery - and beyond.

Through our own values and approach to organisational culture (which emphasises Service Excellence, Good Growth, Innovation, Economic and Social Wellbeing, and championing our People and Culture), we believe our staff possess the appropriate attitudes and principles to support the Employer in consistently promoting its own values. To achieve this, we will undertake the following:

- **Apprentice Induction:** We will ensure all delegates attend induction events, where organisational values and behaviours will be explained and modelled. Delegate handbooks and induction packs will reiterate values.
- **Staff Training:** Our Key Account Manager will brief all Training Advisers involved in delivering the programme, ensuring they fully comprehend the Employer core values and can 'role model' these through day-to-day interactions with delegates. Training Advisers will work with Apprentices to revisit core values during reviews, ensuring knowledge, awareness and understanding of the Employer values are embedded from the outset of the scheme and throughout.
- **Equality and Diversity Training:** All staff and delegates will be engaged in Employer linked Equality and Diversity training at induction (forming part of their mandatory training), ensuring they understand and are aware of key concepts and behaviours around positive, inclusive, and respectful working and learning environments.
- **Recruitment Practices:** We ensure delegates understand and are aware of the Employer values from the start of their schemes, ensuring these aligned with those of the Employer organisation.



Employer involvement - continued

Line Manager Engagement

To influence the success of the apprenticeship, it is essential that we take the time to engage with the Line Managers of the learners to help them understand what's involved, their level of commitment, how they can support, and why it will pay dividends in the long run.

We provide simple resources that help them hold quality conversations with their apprentices and make sure they feel appreciated for managing the workload in the team so that the learners don't feel like they're letting the side down.

Line Manager Involvement

- The Line Manager (LM) to join the first meeting with the apprentice and our Coach for approximately half an hour to ensure that all key parties are aware of the requirements of the apprenticeship.
- LM to actively contribute to the regular tutoring/assessment sessions held with the apprentice (but not required to attend the full session). Our Coach will assist the LM by facilitating the sessions
- LM to observe the apprentice undertaking certain activities e.g. giving a presentation. The LM will be required to complete an expert witness evidence form confirming that they observed certain skills and behaviours and the apprentice can include these testimonies in their portfolio of evidence. Our Coach will brief the LM at all stages and provide support where needed.
- LM to attend progress reviews between our Coach and the apprentice. Our Coach to facilitate the sessions.
- LM to support the apprentice in their studies, identifying opportunities for the organisation to develop their skills alongside their learning. Our Coach to manage this process and initiate ideas.
- LM to provide the apprentice with support when identifying their work-based project. The focus of the project will be agreed by the Employer, the apprentice and our Coach. Our Coach to manage this process and initiate ideas.

Induction Workshop for Line Managers

Managers or team members involved with the day to day line management of the apprentices should attend our "Induction for Apprentice Managers" workshop. This induction session will help your managers coach their apprentice through the apprenticeship. The workshop addresses:

- Apprentice induction
- responsibilities as an apprentice manager
- Qualification support
- 1:1s
- PDR
- Coaching v mentoring
- On-the-job training
- support and optional training
- managers toolkit

Induction Workshop for Line Manager Mentors

A Manager that is not the apprentice's line manager should be assigned to mentor the apprentice. The mentor is there to offer support and to use their knowledge, skills and connections to help the apprentice in their new role and help them develop. Mentors should help the apprentice become more self-aware and allow them to take responsibility for solving their own problems.



Employer involvement - continued

This induction session will help line managers act as a mentor for an apprentice. The workshop addresses:

- The tools and techniques of mentoring
- A method for understanding motivation
- Giving and receiving feedback
- What is a mentor and what to do?
- How you can incorporate mentoring into your culture and daily work patterns
- The skills for mentoring
- Learning what makes different people motivated
- Understanding how our own ways of thinking will help or hinder how we work with others
- Getting your message across in a way that is engaging and inspiring
- Developing the skills and confidence to structure feedback conversations
- Providing feedback so that apprentices feel valued and motivated whilst learning
- how to receive feedback constructively

Involvement Through Information

Regular reports are collated using data that feeds from our Bud Software ePortfolio system straight to the learners line manager on a monthly basis or when required. This can be in the form of Pie charts showing an individual breakdown of progress or simply percentages.

Performance is evaluated, measured, tracked and managed by our quality assurance team. It looks at the performance of the learner, on-time attendance, meeting agreed targets, and responsiveness of line manager to the apprentices needs. It allows swift analysis to identify risks and areas that need further actions/development and these are dealt with immediately and successfully by our Account Manager or Coach with the Employer.

Our Coach contacts the Line Manager by telephone on a regular basis to discuss the reports and through involvement the Line Manager feels in control of progress and fully involved. Any issues identified in the reports are resolved jointly with the Line Manager, our Coach and the Apprentice.

Involvement Through Joint Problem Solving

By way of example, in the event that an Apprentice is not ready for either Gateway Review or EPA, we shall prepare a differentiated action plan to resolve any blockers and undertake such work as may reasonably be required to rectify the situation. This is on a case by case basis. This will involve the Line Manager to jointly develop plans facilitated by our Coach.



Employer involvement - continued

Involvement Through Project Co-ordination

To ensure full commitment to the Project undertaken by the Apprentice the Line Manager will take the role of Project Sponsor. The benefits of the outcome will be 'owned' by the Line Manager hence full co-operation. Our Coach will support the Line Manager in determining the nature of the Project, how to set up the project and will facilitate the ongoing success of it through acting as a Coach to the Line Manager in this area.

Contact

Our Coach will be available to the Line Manager as and when needed. The format of the contact will be agreed and could include telephone, email, face-to-face, conference call, skype, webinar etc. A relationship of mutual trust and respect will be developed.

Account Manager Responsible for Each Employer

Our approach is to work in partnership with the Employer. The requirement is for a long-term programme that will have a transformative impact on the organisations, and to achieve that, we must work together.

This is not to suggest that the Employer will have a significant burden of work resulting from working with us, quite the contrary. We have the skills, systems and resources necessary to deliver all parts of the programme.

We see the Employer role as advisory and as an approval gateway for the content we put forward via our Account Manager. Of particular importance will be the engagement between the Employer and our Account Manager. This link is critical in ensuring satisfaction with the programme as a whole, and provides a clear escalation route for any issues the Employer may identify as needing urgent attention.

We recognise the importance of a stable programme management team and allocate an experienced Operations Manager to lead our administration team. This will establish operational links and ensure robust processes and transparent communications are the norm.

We expect our teams – both delivery and management – to maintain regular contact with client opposite numbers. We do this through regular telephone conversations and face-to-face meetings, particularly in the early stages of the partnership as our programme is bedding-in.

Going hand in hand with these communications will be a regular cycle of reporting in which all performance metrics and future plans for the programme will be set out. These reports will form the agenda for regular meetings forming a key part of our continuous improvement process.

Our relationship links ensure our service listens and is responsive. Our partnerships deliver exceptional outcomes.



Employer involvement - continued

The Learner Journey with the Employer

1. At enrolment Tutors and assessors will meet with the Employer and potential apprentices at the Employers premises to discuss the Apprenticeship. At this session, the tutor/assessor will discuss the employee's current role, previous training and qualifications, current commitments and future career aspirations. All employees will complete Mathematics and English diagnostics and also a skills and role assessment against the Apprenticeship. The tutor/assessor will present the employee with a scheme of work, which is the delivery plan relating to the specific apprenticeship identified by the employer. Apprentices will be taken through the commitment needed to complete the programme and support provided by us throughout the apprenticeship. Specific qualifications achievable and progression opportunities available on completion will be identified.
2. At the Employers premises an Initial Assessment and Diagnostic: All learners complete an assessment of needs, barriers and aspirations: a skills audit; identifying prior learning (including qualifications type and levels); and self-assessment, this agreed with Employer.
3. Individual Learning Plan: Assessment results are fed into the apprentice's Individual Learning Plan and kept on our MIS system. We tailor support/learning to meet individual needs and discuss with Employer.
4. Induction at local premises for the apprentice and Employer: Learners sign up and join an induction setting out the goals and objectives of the programme, addressing any concerns and inspiring individuals to remain committed to the programme. The structure of the learning, access to materials, logins, review of sample eLearning and podcasts and the production of a personal study plan for the coming months will be covered. We agree Learning Criteria and how to build the Portfolio and Reflective Log.
5. Learning Programme at local premises to the Apprentice: Delivery starts here with the initial launch meeting where Employer is involved. This involves group work, discussion of the syllabus and the challenge of the exam, overview of the programme and preparation of a personal learning plan. We facilitate learner interactions and build communities of learners, buddy partnerships and create strategic relationship opportunities. Consolidating knowledge and developing the skills to the next level.
6. Preparation for Gateway Review and EPA (End Point Assessment) at a Centre close to the Apprentices workplace. Complete practice EPA activity and refine Portfolio ready for submission once the Employer has agreed to proceed.
7. Achievement and Progression: Upon the successful completion of the EPA we review Individual Learner Plans and look to develop progression plans that enable the individual to realise their ambitions and career. These plans discussed with HR from the Employer.
8. Celebrate Success at the Clients premises: We know how important it is to recognise and celebrate success, so we will support the Employer within its overall Levy Apprenticeship programme with award ceremonies, achievement updates in companywide material and providing recognition from senior management on internal talent development. We will also help candidates apply for local and national Apprenticeship awards.