

TESP

The Electrotechnical Skills Partnership

What makes a good Apprenticeship Training Provider



Introduction

Most employers work in partnership with Training Providers to deliver their apprenticeship programme. A Training Provider will help you:

- Identify the right apprenticeship for your business requirements
- Recruit an apprentice
- Develop a training plan which reflects the apprentice’s and your needs
- Review and assess the progress of an apprentice and provide feedback
- Provide training to support the apprentice with off-the-job learning and the knowledge elements of the programme

The Training Provider you select should give you clear information on the level of service you can expect to receive and also set out what responsibilities you have throughout the apprenticeship. Details of financial arrangements will also need to be clearly explained.

There are some key factors to help you identify a good Training Provider:

1. Ofsted grading

When choosing a Training Provider, a good starting point is to review the report of their most recent Ofsted inspection. The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, including the services provided for education and skills for learners of all ages including apprentices.

Ofsted have 4 grades:

- 1 = Outstanding
- 2 = Good
- 3 = Requires improvement
- 4 = Inadequate.

A good provider should be working at grade 2 or above. When reading the report it is important to focus on the grade for the actual apprenticeship you want (eg building services which covers electrotechnical).

Record of Main Findings (RMF)

| JTL | | |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| Inspection grades are based on a provider’s performance: | | |
| 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires improvement 4: Inadequate | Overall | Apprenticeships |
| Overall effectiveness | 2 | 2 |
| Outcomes for learners | 2 | 2 |
| The quality of teaching, learning and assessment | 2 | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management | 2 | 2 |

| Subject areas graded for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Grade |
|---|-------|
| Building services | 2 |

Some training organisations deliver their training via a sub-contract with other organisations.

If you cannot find the Ofsted report under the name of your training organisation, ask who they have a sub-contract with for delivering training.

Where do I find out?

GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted> then click on the find an inspection report link: <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>

2. Success rates

Success rates are a key Government measure of the quality of a provider's programmes. They measure what percentage of apprentices starting a programme successfully complete (Overall success rates) and then what percentage of apprentices successfully complete within the timeframe agreed at the start of the apprenticeship.

The 'Find an Apprenticeship training organisation' search tool on the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) website at allows you to search for suitable organisations that offer Apprenticeship training within a specified job role, and geographical area. This will allow you to review their previous success rates in Apprenticeship delivery, assess information on their performance and compare them against other training organisations that receive government funding. It also provides links to the training organisations' own website, where you can find out more information. Once you have identified a potential training organisation you can contact them directly.

At present the national overall success rate is 67.3% and the timely success rate is 49.6%. (For example JTL's current success rates are 78% and 64% respectively). All Training Providers will be able to give you their own success rates which you can compare.

Where do I find out?

GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/take-on-an-apprentice> then click on 'find a training organisation' link: <http://nas.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/find-an-apprenticeship-training-organisation.aspx>

3. Recognised qualifications

You will need to achieve qualifications which have been specified and are recognised by the industry. Despite what some providers will say, not all qualifications are appropriate and you will need to establish if the Training Provider you have chosen delivers recognised qualifications.

The Training Provider will list which qualifications they deliver on their website/leaflets. Each qualification should have a unique QAN (Qualification Accreditation Number) so that you can check if it is recognised by looking at the Ofqual 'Register of Regulated Qualifications' website. This contains details of recognised Awarding Organisations and Regulated Qualifications in England (Ofqual), Wales (Welsh Government) and Northern Ireland (Ofqual for vocational qualifications and CCEA Accreditation for all other qualifications).

The site also explains what the qualification is, its level and which Awarding Organisation delivers it. If you want to find out further information about the qualification you can then go to the Awarding Organisation website.

Awarding Organisations design, develop and award qualifications according to government, industry or individual needs. All qualifications are accredited by the relevant regulatory authorities and as such Awarding Organisations are responsible for the quality assurance of both delivery and assessment for all their qualifications, including management of the assessment process (including approved delivery centres) and the provision of learner certificates

In order to deliver, the Training Provider must become an approved centre and must therefore meet and maintain the standards set by the Awarding Organisation. This includes having suitably qualified staff, company policies, robust assessment of learners, suitable training facilities and a robust quality assurance process.

The Awarding Organisation regularly checks the Training Provider to ensure they maintain the standards, and if they do not maintain or fall below the accepted level, the Awarding Organisation will temporarily or permanently remove the training organisations right to deliver the qualification.

Apprenticeships are accredited qualifications that make up a 'framework' and in order to complete the apprenticeship the learner must meet all the criteria. To find out more visit the apprenticeships frameworks online website.

In the electrotechnical industry, the currently recognised electrical installation apprenticeship framework is a Level 3 qualification as determined by SummitSkills and offered by two Awarding Organisations; City & Guilds and EAL. The qualification title is:

Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Installing Electrotechnical Systems and Equipment (Buildings, Structures and the Environment) (QCF)

In addition, the industry is currently finalising development of the new 'trailblazer' qualifications:

- o Level 3 Electrotechnical Qualification (Installation)
- o Level 3 Electrotechnical Qualification (Maintenance).

Where do I find out?

EAL website: <http://qualifications.eal.org.uk/qualifications-electrotechnical?pid=66&sid=2242:installing-testing-and-ensuring-compliance-of-electrical-installations-in-dwellings>

City and Guilds website: <http://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/building-services-industry/electrical-installation/2397-installing-testing-and-ensuring-compliance-of-electrical-installation-work-in-dwellings#tab=information>

4. Qualified Staff

All the Training Provider's staff who are involved with the apprentice's training and assessment should hold professional qualifications at the correct level relevant to their job role and the qualification they deliver. They should also have relevant work experience in the industry they provide apprenticeships in. This is not always the case in practice and it is worth checking as some Training Providers sub-contract the review and assessments to other organisations which means that they will be less able to support the apprentice or understand your needs.

The Training Provider should see the original certificates of the staff when they commence employment and hold authenticated copies. The awarding organisations specify what level of qualifications the Internal Quality Assurers and Assessors should hold and request to see copies of the IQA and Assessors' certificates. In addition the IQA and Assessors should update their skills regularly to keep in line with changes to standards and requirements and hold records of continuous professional development.

Where do I find out?

Ask the Training Provider about the qualifications and experience of its staff.

5. Value for Money

You should expect to receive a high quality service from your Training Provider and this will come at a price. However it is essential you get value for money. It is worthwhile asking the Training Provider:

- What funding is received from the Government to support the costs of training?
- What does the Training Provider pay for?
- What contribution, if any, will I be expected to make towards the cost of training?
- Are there any other costs involved, such as registration fees, travel costs and so on?
- How is the Apprenticeship training delivered (eg day or block release)?
- Are there any grants available?

Where do I find out?

Speak directly to the Training Provider.

6. Financial viability

When considering which Training Provider to use, it is important to take into consideration the longevity and sustainability of the provider. The Provider you decide to work with must be of a good quality and standard that will be able to support the learners throughout the length of their apprenticeship. It would be beneficial to know what measures the Training Provider puts in place to ensure they have secure financial arrangements to protect the learners.

Where do I find out?

Speak directly to the Training Provider.

7. Access to funding

When a learner begins an apprenticeship the employer should take into consideration their age as this affects the quantity of Government funding available to support their learning. An approximate guide to this is:

- 16 to 18 - 100% of course fees
- 19 to 23 - Up to 50% of course fees
- 25 or over - Up to 40% of course fees



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For large employers there will be a further reduction to the quantity of funding (within each of the age groups). These figures are approximate guidelines.

Where do I find out?

Skills Funding Agency: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/skills-funding-agency> and speak to the Training Provider

8. Which Provider?

A Training Provider usually holds the apprenticeship delivery contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). You can find the most suitable Training Provider for your business by thinking about:

- Your business area and job role of the programme
- The size and scope of the programme (numbers, geography and age groups)

For example a major contractor who works all around the country may prefer to select a national training provider who can provide the same service and arrangements in all areas whereas this may not be an important factor for a smaller contractor.

Checklist - Questions to ask a Training Provider

| Background and performance history | Check ✓ |
|--|-------------------|
| • What experience do you have in providing training for my business sector? | |
| • How long have you been providing Apprenticeship training? | |
| • What qualifications and experience do your trainers and assessors have? | |
| • Do you currently work with any similar businesses to mine, and can you put me in touch with satisfied clients or offer testimonials? | |
| • Can you give me a copy of your last Ofsted inspection report and your most recent full year success rates? | |
| • What other quality marks, if any, do you currently hold? | |
| • Do you offer recruitment support such as writing job descriptions, screening applicants and so on? | |
| • Do you have any applicants ready to take Apprenticeship training? | |
| Costs and facilities | |
| • What funding do you receive from the Government to support the costs of training? | |
| • What contribution, if any, will I be expected to make towards the cost of training? | |
| • Are there any other costs involved, such as registration fees, travel costs etc? | |
| • What facilities and equipment do you have to support the training, and will I be expected to provide or pay for any? | |
| • How is the Apprenticeship training delivered (for example, will the apprentice be on day release, on site, how often, where at)? | |
| • Are any grants available to me? | |
| Delivery of training | |
| • Which Apprenticeship qualifications are you accredited to deliver? | |
| • How can you help me to recruit apprentices? | |
| • How are individual training needs assessed to make sure my apprentice is on the right qualification? | |
| • How often will you visit the workplace to carry out assessments and review the apprentice's progress? | |
| • Can an apprentice start the Apprenticeship at any time of year or are there restrictions on entry points? | |
| • How much extra work will the apprentice need to do each week on top of their main job and the off-the-job training? | |
| • How will you keep me informed about the progress of candidates? | |