

Levy

EMPLOYER HANDBOOK



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ABOUT US

Together Training has been set up to directly meet the learning and development needs of Apprenticeship Levy paying employers, their Apprentices and staff.

Together Training is a distinctive business resulting from a partnership between Oaklands College and West Herts College. These two high performing colleges are already leading providers of skills to employers in the thriving local economy of Hertfordshire and North London. A governing board has been established to support and challenge leaders and managers.

Currently covering the areas of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and North London.

WELCOME FROM JOHN MCMAHON, MANAGING DIRECTOR

John is the Managing Director of Together Training, appointed in July 2017. Prior to this, John was the Director of Curriculum and Apprenticeships at West Herts College. During this time John has amassed extensive knowledge of the Apprenticeship Levy and the needs of Levy paying organisations. He, together with his experienced team are able to help businesses identify how a wide range of Apprenticeships can provide efficient, cost-effective training solutions.

“Our aim is to provide high quality education and training that allows Apprentices to reach their potential and for employers to access a high level of professional support to enable them to develop their talent pool.

“Our approach is flexible and agile. Our Learning Coaches have up to date industry knowledge which enables Apprentices to develop the highest level of skills needed in a changing and fast moving workplace.

“We work closely with employers and other partners, with a wide network of expertise to achieve the best outcomes for employers and Apprentices.

“We are committed to careers, advice and guidance to allow for a clear pathway for progression and higher qualifications.”



WHAT ARE APPRENTICESHIPS?

Apprenticeships are work-based training schemes designed to help you foster emerging talent in your business. They combine work with study and result in a programme which is truly work-focussed. You can use Apprenticeships to support new employees, or people already in your business when they move into new roles. The technical and professional disciplines on offer range from entry-level qualifications all the way through to degree level.

The Apprenticeship standards were designed by employers in conjunction with a range of other learning providers and industry experts; the result of this collaboration ensures an entirely work relevant qualification and the development of work based skills. Opportunities also exist to match an Apprenticeship to your existing (L&D) activity and succession planning. We would be happy to discuss this with you.

Apprenticeships are available to organisations of all sizes and from all sectors.

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE A*-C or 9-4
Advanced	3	2 A levels or Level 3 BTEC Extended Diploma
Higher	4	HNC
Higher	5	HND or Foundation Degree
Degree	6 & 7	Bachelor's or Master's degree

Part of the Together Training offer is that we support employers and their Learning and Development partners is to advise and guide, which of the Apprenticeships would be the most suitable. We can conduct a skills gap analysis, consult with the organisation about the long term strategic objectives and help you build your teams for now and for the future.

Also we have a dedicated service which ensures we find the very best candidates for your organisation based on the specific requirements of the role together with your organisational culture, aims and location.

END POINT ASSESSMENT/ STANDARDS

End Point Assessment Apprenticeship standards will eventually replace all Apprenticeship frameworks and there are already a number of standards available for use. Apprenticeship standards are specifically linked to a job role within an occupation. Once the Apprentice is judged to have met all of the criteria which includes the formative assessment of knowledge, skills and behaviours, the employer and the provider sign off the learner who then undertakes an End Point Assessment.

English and maths (Level 2) attainment is still a requirement within most standards. We are currently offering Apprenticeships ranging from Customer Service Practitioner Level 2 to Operations/Departmental Manager Level 5. We continuously monitor the new Standards as they are released by the Government and will be expanding our portfolio to meet customer demand.

CAMPUSES & RESOURCES

All of our campuses have facilities for the Apprentice to use to support their learning. Fully registered Apprentices have full access to StudyPlus (study skills support) and an experienced Learning Coach. A range of learning resources will also be available.

Watford Campus

Hempstead Road
Watford
WD17 3EZ

St Albans Campus

Hatfield Road
St Albans
AL4 0JA

Hemel Hempstead Campus

Marlowes
Hemel Hempstead
HP1 1HD

Luton Campus

New Bedford Road
Luton
LU2 7BF

Welwyn Garden City Campus

The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
AL8 6AH

OFFERING

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- Operations/Departmental Manager Level 5
- HR Consultant/Partner Level 5
- Associate Project Manager Level 4
- Team Leader/Supervisor Level 3

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Customer Service Practitioner Level 2
- Business Administrator Level 3
- Business Administrator Level 4
- HR Support Level 3
- Paralegal Level 3
- Procurement Level 4

DIGITAL

- Cyber Security Technologist Level 4
- Network Engineer Level 4
- IT and Telecoms Professionals Level 2
- Infrastructure Technician Level 3

CONSTRUCTION

- Construction Site Supervisor Level 4
- Property Maintenance Level 2
- Facilities Management Supervisor Level 3

EMPLOYER COMMITMENTS

Genuine Job

There must be a genuine job with a skills development programme and the opportunity to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed to achieve the Apprenticeship.

Contract of Service

A Contract of Service is essential and their job title must include the word 'Apprentice' for a new member of staff but an existing staff member does not need a new contract. The contract must be at least as long as the Apprenticeship training programme.

372 days duration

An Apprenticeship must last at least 372 days in duration from their first day in learning. Apprenticeships can last for up to four years dependent upon the level you wish your Apprentice to work towards.

20% Off-the-Job Training

Apprentices must spend at least 20% of their time doing Off-the-Job training. The Apprentice records this each week and this forms part of the basis of one to one coaching conversations and is separately audited.

Benefits

Apprentices are entitled to the same holidays as their colleagues, unless special circumstances are identified and other arrangements agreed.

LINE MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Pay the right rates

Apprentices must be paid at least the National Minimum Wage during their placement. Apprentices who are under 19, or who are over 19 and in the first year of their Apprenticeship, must be paid at least the National Minimum Wage for Apprentices. For more information, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

Contract of employment

You should provide a contract of employment which sets out the employment rights, responsibilities and duties. Apprentices must be aware of the organisational policies and will need to read and understand those policies that relate to Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity (including the promotion of British values), safeguarding and the Prevent Duty.

30 hours per week

You must employ Apprentices for minimum of 30 hours per week or extend the length of time the learner remains on programme in line with the hours worked.

Apprentices receive the same benefits as other employees

Apprentices should get the same benefits as other employees, unless employers can otherwise justify not providing such benefits. Failure to do so can lead to potential discrimination claims.

Working in partnership

Employers are required to work in partnership with Together Training to plan and monitor the progress of Apprentices, by attending and engaging in scheduled formal reviews throughout the learning journey. We also ask that employers keep Together Training fully updated with any changes to the Apprentice's duties or any other issues which could impact on their development.

Off-the-Job training

Learners must complete and track Off-the-Job training activities that equate to 20% of their contracted hours. For a full time Apprentice, the Off-the-Job Hours equates to roughly 28 hours a month.

Set objectives

When setting objectives for the Apprentice through the business' usual review processes, it is important that one of the Apprentice's objectives is linked to the successful completion of the Apprenticeship and the development of the skills, behaviours and knowledge they must evidence. It is important that the line manager remains continually aware of the Apprentice's progress throughout the Apprenticeship.

Monitor progress

The line manager will be given access to management information to show the learner's progress and will work with the Learning Coach and Together Training to support the Apprentice's success. The manager will take an active role within progress reviews which are undertaken with the Learning coach and will be asked to reflect on the impact the programme is having on both the learner as an employee and the organisation.

Manage the Apprenticeship

Line managers must ensure they make Together Training aware if there is any risk that the Apprentice will not complete their Apprenticeship on time. For example, if there are issues with performance in role, or if there are critical changes to the role or business.

Agree an action plan

Line managers must use the standard business policies and procedures in managing the Apprentices. The line manager should discuss and agree an action plan with the Apprentice and Learning Coach to ensure ongoing progress, development and exposure to new skills.

Take part in the induction

Line managers should be involved in the Apprentice's induction to the programme, working with Together Training to clearly set out the business expectations.

Support the programme

Employers should provide a contract of employment which sets out the employment rights, responsibilities and duties. Apprentices must be trained in and aware of the organisational policies and will need to read and understand those policies that relate to Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity (including the promotion of British values), Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty.

Feedback to the Apprentice

Line managers should provide regular feedback to the Apprentice on their performance in their job, in order to support their development and ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge for their job role and Apprenticeship.

Use an adaptive management approach

Although Apprentices are to be managed in the same way as any other member of staff, an Apprentice might be a less experienced or young person who may be working in their first job role. If this is the case, the line management of the Apprentice may need a more hands-on approach during their first few weeks at work.

APPRENTICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Be responsible

Apprentices must be diligent and punctual, and must behave in a responsible manner in accordance with the requirements of health and safety, safeguarding, prevent and equality and diversity legislation relating to the learner's responsibilities as an individual.

Attend regular teaching and learning/review activities

The teaching and learning/review activities are determined at the start of the programme between the employer, learner and Together Training. All of these activities need to be committed to by the Apprentice and will enable the Learning Coach to develop individualised and targeted learning plans.

Allow access and share learning

Apprentices must allow Together Training to access and share their learning records for the purposes of administering the specified Apprenticeship.

Ongoing development

During the programme, Apprentices should consider how they can best develop their skills to enhance their role and have an impact on the business.

Attend scheduled formal reviews

This involves the Apprentice, line manager and Learning Coach. These reviews are an opportunity for all three parties to reflect on the Apprentice's progress and consider the next phase of learning.

Be self-sufficient

Apprentices must take responsibility for their own learning and development and for ensuring that they are working to the best of their ability at all times. Apprentices are expected to undertake their own research, develop their knowledge and skills on a guided but proactive basis.

LEARNING COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

Attend regular teaching and learning/review activities

The teaching and learning/review activities are determined at the start of the programme between the employer, learner and training provider at the start and formulate the initial Individual Learning Plan.

Attend scheduled formal reviews

This involves the Apprentice, line manager and the learning coach. These reviews are an opportunity for all three parties to reflect on the Apprentice's progress and consider the next phase of learning.

Ensure standards

Learning Coaches must ensure the Apprenticeship is achieved to the required standard and on time.

Provide support

Learning Coaches should work in partnership with the employer to best support the Apprentice to reach success, mapping out the Individual Learning Plan to show teaching and learning and workplace mentoring activities on and Off-the-Job. Learning Coaches must provide all the required learning materials for the Apprenticeship.

LEARNER SAFETY

Health and safety

As an employer, you must take all necessary steps for securing the health, safety and welfare of any Apprentice in your care and ensure they are treated no differently than other members of your workforce.

This includes risk assessment, supervision, provision of personal protective equipment and training. If there is an accident that affects an Apprentice, it must be reported to Together Training so obligations to monitor accidents can be met.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is promoting the welfare of children, young adults and vulnerable adults and protecting them from harm, maltreatment and preventing impairment of health or development.

As an employer you will need to be aware of what to do should an Apprentice come to you with a concern. Please refer to our Safeguarding Information at www.togethertraining.co.uk/policies

Our aim is to make sure that you feel confident should you encounter a safeguarding concern, but we do not expect you to deal with it alone. Follow the steps we have advised and contact us as soon as you can – we will then make sure that you and the Apprentice are supported fully.

Prevent

'The Prevent Duty' places a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This includes us as a learning provider and you as the employer. The most widely used medium to influence and radicalise is online activity. Therefore we all have a heightened responsibility to ensure that our policies and practices protect ourselves and our learners when undertaking all kind of activities online.

Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity is about giving everyone a fair chance to reach their potential. It is about ensuring equal access to employment, training and services. Our focus is on the ability, not the disability, of every individual and we will protect your Apprentice from harassment or bullying. If you have any concerns, please let us know.

We are dedicated to promoting British values to ensure young people are prepared for life in modern Britain. We want them to develop a strong sense of social and moral responsibility, developing understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

E-safety

It is likely your staff will be expected to send emails, search the Internet and also use our e-portfolio system. Being online can sometimes leave adults and young people vulnerable and whilst on our programme, we provide guidance on how to keep safe.

APPRENTICE JOURNEY

Initial assessment

We will complete a basic skills assessment and a vocational skills scan to help assess the Apprentices' current levels of knowledge and skills. This will help us to make sure that we support their needs in all aspects of the training programme.

These assessments will be carried out to decide the programme elements the Apprentice is required to complete and will also take into consideration their current job role, experience and current qualifications, e.g. GCSE results. This information will help put together their Individual Learning Plan.

Induction

All employers must give their Apprentices a full induction which clearly explains what they expect from them. This should include:

- Health and safety
- Fire procedures
- Accident and emergency
- Equal opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion policies
- Risk assessments
- Employment rights and responsibilities
- Confidentiality policies
- Individual Learning Plans (ILPs)
- Your company structure
- Complaints procedure
- Safeguarding, Prevent, and complying with our British values and e-Safety policies

Individual learning agreement

The Learning Agreement will form a 'route map' of how the Apprentice will get from the starting point on their learning journey to the end point. It will include all the qualifications they are undertaking within the learning programme together with target dates for short, medium and long term goals that will be agreed with the Learning Coach.

The Learning Agreement will be a live document throughout the course of the learning programme and will be useful to Apprentices, our learning coaches and possibly you, the employer.

Reviews

We will provide each Apprentice with an experienced Learning Coach. The purpose of this is to ensure everything is running smoothly and that both parties are happy. They will complete a review in your organisation every eight weeks. Reviews can take place more regularly if there is cause for concern or if you require more. The Apprentice's line manager should be present for these reviews.

Exit and progression

At the end of the programme the Apprentice will attend an exit interview with their Learning Coach. This will provide an opportunity for them to give feedback on the programme. They will also discuss opportunities for future career and professional development.

REPORTING ABSENCE

It is the Apprentice's responsibility to inform the employer, their Learning Coach and Together Training of any absence (sickness, long term illness, appointments and holidays).

Absence from Masterclasses

If the Apprentice is not able to attend their Masterclass they will need to let the Learning Coach know immediately. Attendance at all Masterclasses and completion of Off-the-Job Hours training must remain high at all times and if attendance at masterclasses falls below 80% the Apprentice may be at risk. The Off-the-Job Hours must meet the required number of hours per month. You will be notified on a weekly basis by email, of unauthorised absence or lateness by the Apprentice at confirmed events or appointments.

Absence from work

You will need to notify the Apprentice of your procedures for recording holidays and any absences, if they are not already aware.

Absence from assessment visit and reviews

The Apprentice should notify the assessor if they are unable to attend the assessment visit, on the morning of the visit at the latest. Cancelled appointments will flag a risk and you will be notified. The training assessor will record all details of all absences and this will be reported in their review.

Unauthorised absences

If the Apprentice does not notify you and the Learning Coach that they will not be in work or at College, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Authorised absences

If the Apprentice is going to be off sick for more than 21 days, they will need to let their Learning Coach know as soon as possible. There is allocated a period of time to complete an Apprenticeship and long term sickness will have an impact on this. To make sure that no time is lost on the Apprenticeship, the Apprentice will be temporarily withdrawn until they notify their training assessor to advise otherwise. We will then re-start the training.

PREPARING FOR YOUR HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT

It is a requirement for use of government funded training that a health and safety assessment of your workplace is conducted. This will be conducted by an appropriately trained member of staff. The following checklist will help you prepare for this review and reduce any disruption to you and your colleagues. You will be asked to provide:

- Your certificate for Employers Liability Insurance
- Evidence of how you inform staff about the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Fire procedures and first aiders
- Appropriate risk assessments
- First aid kit
- Accident Book
- Log of fire drills and alarm tests
- Clear written policy on equality and diversity, safeguarding and health and safety

Our staff will be able to help you if you have any questions regarding the health and safety assessment. Guidance is available for all employers at www.hse.gov.uk.

Risk assessment

Employers also have a legal responsibility to:

- Perform a full risk assessment
- Acknowledge the inexperience of Apprentices and new employees
- Make sure that Apprentices have appropriate supervision at all times
- Identify potential risks and put procedures in place for minimising those risks
- Ensure that if specific training reduces risks, the Apprentice receives the appropriate training
- Ensure Apprentices do not perform duties which will expose them to undue risks

Induction

All employers must give their Apprentices a full induction which clearly explains what they expect from them:

- Health and safety
- Fire procedures
- Accident and emergency
- Equal opportunities/anti-discrimination policies
- Risk assessments
- Employment rights and responsibilities
- Confidentiality policies
- Individual Learning Plans
- Your company structure
- Complaints procedure
- Safeguarding, Prevent, and complying with our British values and e-Safety policies

Reviews

We will provide you with a Learning Coach. The purpose of this to ensure everything is running smoothly and that both parties are happy. They will complete a review in your organisation every eight weeks. Reviews can take place more regularly if there is cause for concern or if you require more. The employer/line manager should be present for these reviews.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance plays a key role in ensuring the effectiveness of each learning programme. Details of the key individuals and their roles within this process are detailed below.

Learning Coach

Learning Coaches support/guide the Apprentice throughout their learning and assessment in the workplace. They provide guidance throughout their programme, whilst also carrying out formative/summative assessments at key milestones in the learner's development. They are also responsible for signing off qualifications once completed and preparing the Apprentice for their End-Point Assessment.

Functional Skills coaches

Functional Skills coaches are on hand to support the learner if they are required to work towards a Functional Skills qualification. They will stretch and challenge the learner in their English and maths knowledge and application.

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

The IQA is responsible for ensuring the work undertaken by the Learning Coaches and Functional Skills coaches meets the required quality standards as defined by the awarding organisation. The IQA may observe sessions to ensure the quality of learning delivery and assessment.

External Quality Assurer (EQA)

The EQA is employed by the awarding organisation or End-Point Assessment (EPA) organisation to ensure we are meeting the required quality standards. They may on occasion, wish to meet with you or phone you to ask about your experience and whether we are providing the appropriate support. Any meetings with the EQA would be planned in advance. Where End- Point Assessment is a requirement the EQA would undertake this End-Point Assessment which may take the format of a workplace project, exam or discussion.

External evaluation

All of Together Training's provision is externally evaluated by Ofsted. This may involve the learner and you as the employer. The expectation from Ofsted will be to have open access to your place of work to carry out several activities, including learner and employer interviews and observations, to gain valuable feedback on the experience and impact the programme is having/has had on the learner and their ability to carry out their job role and how that progression has impacted on your organisation.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We expect your time with us to be a positive experience, but we accept that sometimes you will have concerns. The complaints and appeals processes are reflected below, should you require them.

1. Should you need to contact us to make a complaint about any aspect of the programme or experience, please email Felicity.Profit@togethertraining.co.uk. We will document the complaint and pass it to the relevant person who will contact the complainant and investigate the issue.
2. We will feed back the outcome of the investigation to the complainant. If you are still not satisfied, then you may appeal by writing to the Managing Director, who will fully investigate your concerns.

Appeals procedure against assessment decisions

1. Initially, our advice would be to speak to the Learning Coach and discuss your reasons for appeal. The Learning Coach may be able to provide further information regarding assessment decisions which either clarify any issues, or strengthen your grounds for appeal.
2. If you are still not satisfied, as with the complaints procedure, you may put your concerns in writing to the Board of Governors.
3. If we are unable to resolve your appeal, we will provide you with contact details for the External Awarding Body, and request that they look into the matter.



For further information, please visit
togethertraining.co.uk

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