



# **Dover District Council Apprenticeship Policy**

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# Apprenticeship Policy

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## **1. Introduction**

An apprentice is an employee, 16 or over, who is following a structured work-based apprenticeship training programme within a particular occupational area. Many apprenticeship pathways allow access to higher and degree education programmes. This policy will enable the Council to implement a formal apprenticeship process which will be equitable and enable us to employ apprentices as new employees into the workplace. In addition to this we will be able to provide the opportunity for the development of existing employees through an apprenticeship standard or framework

This policy will improve access to and promote the uptake of a wider range of apprenticeship training programmes to enable the Council to meet its target for apprenticeships and for the Council to meet both the current and future workforce needs.

## **2. Definitions**

Apprenticeships:

Apprenticeships are paid jobs which incorporate on and off the job training. They take between one and five years to complete. A successful apprentice may receive a nationally recognised qualification on the completion of their contract. Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16 living in England, although there are different entry requirements depending on the sector and job

There are two different types of apprenticeship schemes: frameworks and standards. Apprenticeship frameworks are being progressively phased out and replaced by the newer apprenticeship standards that require an end point assessment

An apprenticeship framework/ standard:

- Covers all the statutory requirements for an apprenticeship programme in England.
- Is used by colleges, employers and training providers to make sure that all apprenticeship programmes are delivered consistently and to national standards.

## **3. Scope**

The full policy applies to all employees of the following; Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council, and Thanet District Council (including EK Services).

## **4. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide guidance to be followed by line managers and apprentices.
- Provide a transparent process ensuring that apprenticeship opportunities are equitable, fair and effective in meeting the organisation's values, goals and objectives.
- Promote personal and professional development of apprentices.
- Ensure that apprenticeships are consistent with the Council's recruitment and selection process.
- Improve awareness of the value of apprenticeship training programmes.
- Increase access to the range of apprenticeship frameworks and standards that are available.
- Consider vacancies as potential apprenticeship opportunities as part of our vacancy management process, which could increase the number of apprentices.
- Support managers and staff to develop effective processes for recruiting and supporting apprentices, incorporating quality standards to give a positive experience for both apprentices and managers.
- Strengthen partnerships between the Council's training providers, unions and the professions in the development of standards which are appropriate to the needs of the Council.
- Ensure that apprentices work in accordance with the law, and with our policies, procedures and practices.
- Safeguard the welfare of vulnerable people and will identify and provide additional provisions as required to support the apprentice's needs.
- Support the promotion of diversity in our workforce and our commitment to equal opportunities and fairness in employment.
- Ensure a lead body/team for apprenticeships is appointed to ensure we offer a co-ordinated approach and consistency within the apprenticeship process including recruitment, progression and pay for specific roles

## **5. Roles and responsibilities**

### **5.1 Employees will:**

- Adhere to the Council's policies and procedures.
- Work towards completing the apprenticeship framework or standard and meet deadlines for work, including planned submissions of work, meeting regularly with the work place assessor and completing the end point assessment before the end of the apprenticeship contract.

## **5.2 Managers will:**

- Ensure they and their employees act in accordance with this policy.
- Consult with the Council's apprenticeship lead regarding availability of funding for an apprenticeship
- Liaise with training providers to source a suitable standard/framework to support the organisational need and source an organisation to deliver the end point assessment for an apprenticeship standard (the end point assessment is not applicable to a framework).
- Ensure that they follow the Council's tendering process for the procurement of a training provider and an end point assessment provider; and then establish a service level agreement with the provider, once an agreement has been reached.
- Liaise with EKHR to initiate and manage the recruitment process, in line with the Council's recruitment process.
- Make effective use of the Council's mechanisms and those provided by the training provider to maintain standards of performance induction programmes and probationary reviews, one-to-one performance meetings (such as appraisals) and training and development options.
- Keep comprehensive records of the above activities in order to improve standards accordingly.
- Seek guidance from EKHR regarding employment legislation and the interpretation and application of this policy.
- Make arrangements for their employees to be released from normal duties as appropriate to complete their training.
- If required attend training on the application of this policy.
- Manage accordingly the failure of an apprentice to achieve deadlines and meet performance targets in line with the Council's Disciplinary and Performance Policy.

## **5.3 EKHR will:**

- Provide support, guidance and training to the Council and its employees in the interpretation and application of this policy.
- Support a consistent and fair approach to the application of this policy
- Provide support to the line manager for the recruitment process and general human resources management
- Support managers to develop relevant job descriptions.
- Make provision for payment of the levy through payroll and inclusion of payment details in the General Ledger Report from East Kent people.
- Report on apprenticeship numbers to the Council.

#### **5.4 Directors & the Corporate/Senior Management Team will:**

- Make suitable arrangements to ensure the appropriate application of this policy.
- Encourage all employees to support and promote apprenticeships in the work place.
- Support managers to act fairly and consistently in relation to the management and recruitment of apprentices.
- If required attend training on the application of this policy.

### **6. Apprentice job role**

A structured job role will be provided to ensure the apprentice gains work experience and supported learning and development towards a nationally recognised qualification. The manager will identify learning objectives in line with the learning needs of the apprentice. All apprenticeship frameworks and standards to be used will be to the specification of Apprenticeship Standards and Frameworks for England that have been approved.

### **7. Pay and conditions**

- Apprentices will have a written Statement of Particulars, and will be subject to the same policies and procedures as any other member of staff, being contracted to complete a specified course of training over a specific period of time.
- The apprentice will enter into an Apprenticeship Agreement with the Council.
- The employer, the training provider and the apprentice will enter into a signed commitment statement to support the successful achievement of the apprenticeship
- The apprentice's rate of pay will be specific to the Council's pay scales for apprentices and role type; and above or equal to the prevailing legislation for apprentices.
- All other conditions of service will be those used as standard by the employer and will be detailed in the Statement of Particulars and employee handbook if applicable.
- The duration of the apprenticeship will be specified, and will be at least 12 months. This may be longer dependant on the apprenticeship framework or standard in operation. The end date of the contract is also confirmed at the recruitment stage allowing a period for the final apprenticeship end point assessment, within a standard.
- The apprentice will be entitled to join the pension scheme.

## **8. Induction and introduction**

A mentor and/or buddy, depending on the role, will be assigned to support the apprentice. A mentor is usually an experienced impartial member of staff, and if appropriate, will be identified by the line manager to offer advice and guidance throughout the apprenticeship, or as long as is needed. A workplace buddy will be identified to work alongside the apprentice in order to support the apprentice on a daily basis. This is in addition to the standard staff induction process.

## **9. Study time**

Adequate paid study time will be agreed of at least 20% of the apprentice's working week which will include those training elements which will be delivered in either the workplace or at an external location as part of the approved programme. This will include meetings with representatives of the learning provider and any skills assessment. Apprentices should be encouraged to take advantage of other opportunities to learn or develop new skills, including any relevant in-house training.

## **10. Reviews and supervision**

Work objectives and development will be reviewed regularly by the line manager and any problems identified at an early stage to enable appropriate support strategies to be implemented. Progress with learning objectives will be reviewed by the learning provider and the line manager informed of any problem areas.

## **11. Progression**

Apprentices will be encouraged to apply for appropriate vacancies during their contract. If the apprentice progresses to an established post within the organisation at the end of the apprenticeship, the substantive pay grade will apply.

If no suitable vacancy is available at the end of the apprenticeship then the organisation is advised to support the apprentice in finding alternative work with another employer.

## **12. Ending the apprenticeship early**

- Apprentices are contracted to complete a specified course of training and end point assessment and are subject to regular review/ appraisals.
- Contracts cannot be terminated early unless there are exceptional circumstances; i.e. sufficient evidence that there are substantial capability or conduct issues or where there is a downturn / business changes meaning the Council can no longer fulfil the agreed training and work programme.

- The manager will ensure the training provider and the Council's finance department are informed in order to administer this change.
- An apprentice wishing to terminate their training should do so in accordance with the terms of their contract.

### **13. Apprenticeship comes to an end**

- Although apprenticeships are for a limited period, they are not a fixed-term contract. As an apprenticeship contract is for a specific purpose (training), the contract will be discharged on the completion of that training.
- Upon the successful completion of the training and the end point assessment, there is no requirement to provide notice of dismissal to the apprentice as the notice is implied in the contract, although it is good practice to do so.
- There is no legal requirement for the Council to provide employment or further training at the end of the apprenticeship, although support should be given by the Council to support the apprentice seeking alternate employment.
- Reaching the end date of an apprenticeship will constitute the end of the training agreement and will terminate the employment contract. However, this will not be a redundancy because an apprenticeship contract is for a specific purpose (training), and the contract will be discharged upon the completion of that training. Apprentices have the same employment rights as other employees, including in terms of dismissal, but not redundancy<sup>1</sup>. An appropriate dismissal processes should therefore be followed.

### **14. Health and safety of a young person**

It is important to consider the health and safety requirements for the apprentice at the start of, and during, their employment. If you are recruiting a young person aged under the age of 18, a special risk assessment should be completed that takes into account these responsibilities:

- Risks to all young people under 18 years of age, before they start work.
- Their psychological or physical immaturity, inexperience, and lack of awareness of existing or potential risks.
- Control measures introduced to eliminate or minimise the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- The young person's risk assessment should be signed and agreed by the Apprentice when they start work.
- You must take these specific factors into account:
  - The fitting-out and layout of the workplace and the particular site where they will work.

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<sup>1</sup> Only relates to redundancy by virtue of the apprenticeship ending. Specific consideration would need to be given if an apprentice was to be made redundant during the course of the apprenticeship.



- The nature of any physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to for how long and to what extent.
- What types of work equipment will be used and how this will be handled.
- How the work and processes involved are organised.
- Risks from the particular agents, processes and work including cold, heat noise or vibration.
- The need to assess and provide health and safety training.

Additionally there are special regulations for young workers in line with the Working Time Directive, which restrict their working hours to 8 hours per day and 40 hours per week. The rest break is 30 minutes if their work lasts more than 4.5 hours. They are also entitled to two days off each week.

Apprentices are covered for insurance purposes by the Council's Employer Liability Insurance Policy

## **15. Child Protection & Disclosure and Barring Service checks**

- Managers should consider if supervisors and trainers directly involved with apprentices require a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- People under the age of 18 are legally classed as "vulnerable" and the Council should take this into account when recruiting apprentices. However this does not mean that every person coming into contact with the young person must have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- A line manager or supervisor may require a DBS check in the following circumstances:
  - Where the apprentice may be vulnerable (e.g. special needs, someone who has been in our looked after care);
  - Where the apprentice is likely to be regularly alone with that adult as part of their work;
  - Where the placement has a residential component.

## **16. Equality statements**

The Council is committed to promoting equality, valuing diversity and combating unfair treatment. The Council will endeavour to ensure equal access to its policies and procedures and will combat discrimination or less favourable treatment on the grounds of any irrelevant consideration, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

## **17. Policy review**

The policy will be reviewed by the Council/EKHR on a regular basis and may be amended from time to time. Responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and development of this policy lies with the Council/EKHR. Day to day operation of the policy is the responsibility of nominated officers who will ensure that this policy is adhered to.