

# Guide to the Apprenticeship Levy and Apprenticeships in Social Care



Created by Upskill Shropshire

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# An Introduction to Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have changed over the years. Apprenticeships are no longer designed specifically for school leavers but are now recognised as a development tool, **whatever your age**, and **whatever your salary**. In order to be considered for an apprenticeship, an employee will have to work at least 16 hours per week, **however the recommended minimum is 25 hours per week**. This is because of the time commitment that is required to complete the necessary training. The apprenticeship must be relevant to the learners job role.

Through their apprenticeship, apprentices gain the technical knowledge, practical experience, and wider skills and behaviours they need for their current job and future career. The apprentice will gain this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal “off the job” training, and opportunities to practice new skills in a real work environment.

The Apprenticeship Levy commenced in 2017. Employers in the UK with an annual pay bill over £3 million are required to pay the [apprenticeship levy](#) and the levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer’s annual pay bill. The apprenticeship levy can only pay for the cost of approved apprenticeship training and assessment. Apprenticeship starts can be via new recruits or professional development of current staff.

This simple guide will help you understand about how the Apprenticeship Levy works, dispel some common myths and inform about the apprenticeships available for the Social Care sector.



# The Benefits of Apprenticeships

- Apprenticeships are a great way for organisations to improve and update the skills of their employees.
- You can use apprenticeships to recruit new employees, and you can also use apprenticeships to retrain or upskill existing staff of all ages and levels of experience, in a wide variety of roles.
- You can use apprenticeships to provide training that is tailored to the needs and requirements of your team/service/organisation. This can be through workplace learning and formal training.
- Apprenticeships can be used as part of your strategic workforce planning, to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce and support recruitment and retention.
- Apprenticeships range from Level 2 through to Level 7 so there is something for all levels of staff.



# Eligibility for Apprenticeships

1. Apprentices can be any age as long as they are older than 16 and must live/work in England for 50% of the time.
2. It is recommended that apprentices work approx. 30 hours a week with a minimum of 25 hours a week.
3. Apprentices must have contract of employment which longer than the duration of the apprenticeship. For example, if the apprenticeship is 18 months, the contract should be up to 24 months to enable completion.
4. The apprenticeship has to be relevant to the apprentices job post
5. The apprentice should have Math and English GCSE A\*-C(9-4) or equivalent and be able to provide evidence (certificates). If the apprentice does not have these qualifications, they can undertake Functional Skills to achieve this alongside their apprenticeship.
  - a) Level 2 Apprenticeship – the apprentice must achieve Level 1 Functional Skills
  - b) Level 3 to 7 Apprenticeship – the apprentice must achieve Level 2 Functional Skills
6. The apprentice cannot have a similar qualification at the same or higher level – an apprenticeship is about learning new skills.
7. The apprentice cannot be in any other formal learning i.e. apprenticeship, accredited qualification, distance learning degree programme etc.

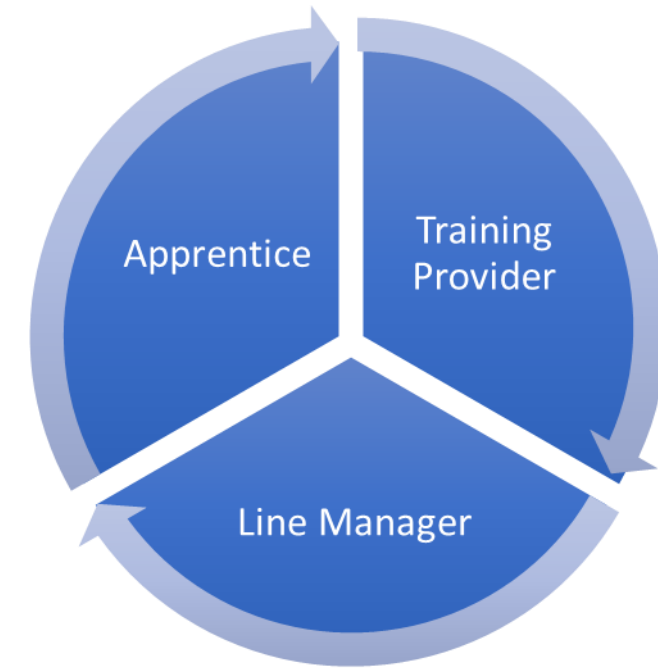
# How an Apprenticeship Works...

The Apprentice, the Training Provider and the Line Manager all share responsibility in the learner's journey.

Progression through an apprenticeship is normally tracked by a percentage which will be logged on a learner platform provided by the training provider.

These elements contribute to progression:

- \* “Off The Job” Training (see pg. 8)
- \* Time spent with an assessor learning/time spent in workplace applying new skills
- \* Assignments, reflective reviews and logging on learner platform



How to achieve success in an apprenticeship:

- The learner and line manager are invested in the journey and there is a supportive environment.
- Get at least 6 hours “off the job” logged each week (based on 30+ hour contract).
- Line manager attends 8-12 week tripartite reviews with the learner and training provider.
- Line manager has regular monthly 1:1s with the apprentice and focuses on their training and development for a proportion of this.
- Learner flags up any issues or barriers early on and these are resolved with the appropriate party.
- Set goals and aim to achieve these. Meet progress targets.

# Levels of Apprenticeship & Duration?

There are four levels of apprenticeships available. An apprentice can progress from Level 2 all the way through to Level 7 in some cases or can start at a higher level.

Level	Meaning	Duration (Approx.)
Intermediate:	Level 2 standard which is equivalent to GCSE.	12 – 15 months
Advanced:	Level 3 standard which is equivalent to A Level.	15 months – 2 years
Higher Levels:	Level 4 and 5 standards which are equivalent to a Foundation Degree, Diploma or HND.	2 - 3 years
Degree Levels	Levels 6 & 7 which is equivalent to a Bachelor or Masters Degree.	3 – 5 years



## How is an apprenticeship assessed?

Different apprenticeship standards have different methods of assessment, but all will have an End Point Assessment (EPA). The EPA takes place once the apprentice, the line manager and the training provider thinks the learner is ready, after a minimum of 12 months and a day from the start of training (depending on your apprenticeship length).

Throughout the duration of the apprenticeship there will be observations; projects; journal of training activities that an apprentice undertakes as part of their job role; witness statements from colleagues or managers; all of which will be stored on an e-portfolio online, that the apprentice, the manager and the training provider can see. For some standards there is also a qualification with the apprenticeship, and this can include additional examinations. Please contact Upskill Shropshire for detailed information on any apprenticeship standard you are considering undertaking.



# The Off The Job Training Requirement...

## What does off-the-job training mean?



In England, all apprentices must spend at least 6 hours a week of their contracted working hours in off-the-job training (based on 30+ hours a week). This means time that is spent training and learning during their ordinary working hours that is separate from their work duties. **Off The Job Training is not a day off or out of the office.** If these hours aren't taken this is a breach of the funding rules and Levy could be removed from the employer. Hours are pro-rata for part time and term time only staff. Hours can be achieved flexibly over the duration of the programme and must all be achieved before the learner undertakes their End Point Assessment.

### What can contribute to off the job learning?

Activity within contracted working hours which could include:

- Theory i.e. lectures, role play, online learner, webinars, simulation exercises
- Practical training which the learner wouldn't normally do in a week – coaching, mentoring, shadowing, industry visits, competitions.
- Learning Support and time spent writing assignments – could be with the line manager or learning coach.

### What can't it be?

- Maths and English Functional Skills
- Progress reviews or on-programme assessments
- Training or activity which takes place outside the apprentices' paid hours.



# Useful Information

Skills for Care:

[Think Care Careers](#)

[Developing Your Workforce - Apprenticeships](#)

Shropshire Partners in Care: [Recruitment and Retention](#)

National Careers Service: [Social Care Job Categories](#)

DHSC: [Recruit Staff](#)