

SHREWSBURY  
COLLEGES GROUP



**Employer**  
Guide to  
Apprenticeships.

## Business benefits

- Improved productivity
- Staff retention
- Relevant skills
- Government-funded training
- Consumers prefer firms that employ apprentices
- Apprenticeships can help with plans to combat an ageing workforce
- Apprenticeships help to avoid skills shortages.

### Support

At Shrewsbury Colleges Group, we are pleased to offer you a free support service, guiding you through the whole process. We provide apprenticeship vacancies, a free recruitment service that matches potential apprentices with your vacancies. We have both school leavers and full-time students, many of whom could be perfect for your particular business.

### Funding

Employers, who do not pay the apprenticeship levy, will now be able to arrange their own apprenticeships by creating accounts on the Apprenticeship Service. From 2022, the college is no longer able to receive Government-procured contracts for apprenticeship training, but move over to a system where smaller employers will have greater control over their apprenticeship choices. This will all be accessed through the gov.uk site and the Apprenticeship team will guide you through each stage of this process if required.

The level of support from the government remains high, with apprentices aged 16 – 18 years being fully funded for employers with less than 50 employees. For larger employers and apprentices aged over 19 years, employers are required to contribute towards the training costs. We would be pleased to advise on these as they are dependent on the sector.

In construction, the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) provide grants to eligible employers to help with the costs of employing an apprentice.

Please speak to us for more information.

### So what exactly is an apprenticeship?

It's a real job, with hands-on experience, a salary and the chance to train whilst working. Apprentices are just like all other employees, with a contract of employment and holiday leave.

Apprentices must be aged 16 or over and be employed in England. At least 20% of the apprentice's time must be spent undertaking off-the-job training, with a combination of attendance at college and more formal training in the workplace, whilst being paid for the duration of the apprenticeship.

They can take between one to four years to complete, depending on the apprenticeship, the level and any previous experience the apprentice may have. Whether apprentices are at the start of their careers, looking to change careers, returning to work after a break or looking to upskill within an organisation, apprenticeships are for everyone.



# Apprenticeship Standards

From August 2020, all apprenticeship programmes are being delivered in line with the new Government Standards, replacing the traditional Apprenticeship Frameworks. These Apprenticeship Standards are written by industry experts and ensure that the learner is job-ready on completion of their programme. This puts the employer in the driving seat and provides the apprentice with a clear career path from the outset.

## Delivery and end point assessment

Delivery will consist of a weekly day release (this may vary within different sectors and will be confirmed at enrolment) and have informal assessment throughout. All apprenticeship standards work towards a 'Gateway' which indicates the apprentice is ready to undergo an end point assessment (EPA).

This is conducted by an independent body and affords the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and behaviours they have learnt throughout their learning programme. Distinction, merit, pass and fail are the range of outcomes from this quality-assured process.

## Entry requirements

Different apprenticeships require different abilities so entry requirements are necessary for some. Each apprenticeship is different so please consult our factsheets (via the college website) for further information on each Standard. If your apprentice needs to complete Functional Skills in either maths and/or English, this will be delivered in a block week, arranged in advance.



# The legal issues

As an employer of an apprentice, you are legally obliged to care for their well-being.

## Health and safety

Health and safety is a very important part of an apprenticeship. We support you in your responsibilities to your apprentices' health, safety and welfare by initially visiting you in your workplace to cover these legal requirements, including:

- COSHH and RIDDOR
- Manual handling
- Managing health and safety
- Health and safety law
- Equal Opportunities
- Risk assessment
- Supervising learners.

This visit will also include a short Health and Safety inspection and questionnaire, conducted by one of our IOSH qualified staff. We will be looking for evidence of your Employers' and Public Liability insurance, a written safety policy (if you have more than 5 employees) and adequate first aid facilities.

## Personal protective equipment (PPE)

It is your responsibility to provide your apprentice with all the PPE they need to carry out their job. You also need to ensure that it is kept in good condition, stored and used correctly.

If your apprentice is attending any of our college workshops then they are required to bring safety boots, overalls and other relevant PPE with them to College. If they do not, we will be unable to allow them access, returning them back to work.

## Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity mean that apprentices should have access to the same standards of training and assessment as any other student at the college. Any apprentice with special assessment needs will be provided with alternative means of assessment as approved by the awarding body.

We strongly believe that all our apprentices must be treated fairly and not discriminated against on grounds of race, religion, colour, age, gender or from sexual orientation. We expect the same of our apprentice's employers. As part of our Equal Opportunities Policy we monitor anti-discriminatory practices in both college and the workplace and support candidates where necessary.

For your part, you will be expected to comply with equal opportunities legislation, committing to equality of opportunity by having a published policy statement and ensuring all your apprentices are treated fairly and equally.



## Electronic portfolio

### Contracts of employment

Contracts of employment must be issued from day one of employment. In addition, you and your apprentice will be asked to sign an Apprenticeship Agreement, a Commitment Statement and a Training Services Agreement, detailing the specific apprenticeship and any associated costs.

As an employer, your apprentice must be paid a wage. The Government expects that all apprentices should be paid a minimum hourly rate, though we recommend a higher rate if you can afford it to ensure you get the best calibre.

Apprentices aged 19 and over are required to be paid the statutory minimum wage for their age after they have completed their first year. The current rates can be found [here](#). Please note that minimum wage rates increase every April.

Apprentices are generally employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and cannot exceed 40 hours (depending on age). In some industries, such as childcare, the minimum amount of hours can be reduced to 16, with the programme extended to compensate for this.

Further guidance on contracts of employment, including a useful template for writing a contract can be found [here](#).

Employer Pension contribution – you are not liable for pension contribution if your apprentice is aged 16 – 21. If they are 22 or older, then they will only be liable if their wages are over a particular threshold. Please check for the latest

guidance [here](#).

An 'e-portfolio' is an electronic collection of competence, which is assessed against qualifications, replacing paper portfolios. At the college we use OneFile where all apprentices use this system to record their learning and track their progress.

As their employer, you can also access this information. By logging in with your own password, you are able to see not only how your apprentices are progressing, but also any outstanding actions and when their assessor is next visiting.



## We are here to help

As a training provider, Shrewsbury Colleges Group is here to help you decide which apprenticeship is right for you. If you do decide an apprentice is a good way forward for your business, we will continue to support you and your apprentice throughout the enrolment process and duration of the apprenticeship programme.

### Recruitment

As a college we offer a recruitment service where we can advertise any of your apprenticeship vacancies within the college, through Connexions/Shropshire Youth Service for school leavers, Job Centre Plus for adults and nationally, via the National Apprenticeship Service website: [apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://apprenticeships.gov.uk)

There is no charge for this advertising service and typically takes just 10 minutes of your time to place a vacancy with us.

In detail, we offer to:

- Display your vacancy, collating and sending you any applications received
- Carry out the initial shortlisting of prospective apprentices
- Carry out initial assessments (English and Maths) and skills scans to identify prior learning
- Arrange work trials for students being placed from our full time-pool.

### Supporting your apprentice

When supporting your apprentice we recommend you assign a mentor. Typically this would be their immediate work supervisor. In construction companies, this role can be more involved in the apprentices learning through becoming a “Work Based Recorder”. If you would like to find out more about mentoring or work-based recording, please speak to us.



### Keeping you informed

We will keep you informed by holding regular progress reviews with you and your apprentice (every 12 weeks at most), offering encouragement and airing any concerns before they become a problem.

For further reading, you can find additional employer information on all aspects of hiring an apprentice here:

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers)



## Our commitment to you

With over 20 years' experience of delivering training solutions to employers, we constantly strive to provide the very highest of standards in everything we do.

Our vision is “**To be the employer’s first choice**” and this, our Employer Charter, sets out our commitment to give you the high-quality service you have the right to expect.

Our dedicated Apprenticeship Team of specialists in various sectors aims to ensure we offer you a knowledgeable, professional and tailored service by:

- Working in partnership to deliver business solutions through training
- Designing and delivering relevant training that meets your needs
- Referring you to other training providers if we are unable to meet those needs.

Any employer who is considering working with our team to train and develop their workforce can expect:

### Enquiries

- A response to their enquiry within 24 hours
- A named contact to handle their enquiry
- A visit from one of our Apprenticeship Team, if appropriate
- To be provided with clear information to help make an informed choice
- To be provided with detailed, written proposals and charges if applicable
- The opportunity to visit us at the college to view our facilities and resources, if applicable
- To be referred to an approved provider if we are unable to help.



### Getting started

- A named account manager to oversee their training programme
- A delivery team that is fully briefed regarding their requirements
- Clear joining instructions where their staff are enrolling to an apprenticeship
- Comprehensive inductions given to all employees at the start of their programme
- Visits to apprentices every 12 weeks, at times to suit all
- To be kept informed of employees progress at specified intervals .

### On completion

- A review of the training against their business objectives
- The opportunity to discuss any further training needs they may have.

## What we ask from you

### We ask:

- That you support your staff throughout their training programme, including any examination or assessment periods
- That you offer us feedback on our service
- That you settle invoices in accordance with our terms and conditions.

### Our Team

At all times, we expect our staff to be dressed appropriately and to respond to your requests in an efficient, considerate and courteous manner.

We expect them to carry out their duties professionally and to make every reasonable effort to deal effectively with any customer problems that may arise.

### If things go wrong

Whilst all staff involved in our employer services will do their best to ensure they meet and, we hope, surpass our commitment to you, we realise, however, that things do occasionally go wrong. When they do, we will do our best to put things right.

If you have a problem or are unhappy with the service provided, please tell us by contacting the Apprenticeship Recruitment Co-ordinator at **01743 653 444** or email **apprenticeships@shrewsbury.ac.uk**

**We will acknowledge your complaint in writing within three working days and make a full response within 21 working days. If your complaint requires escalation, we will advise you of the college Compliments and Complaints Policy to ensure a satisfactory resolution is met.**

## Off-the-job training

Off-the-job training must deliver new skills that are directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard.

### It can include the following:

- The teaching of theory (e.g., lectures, role-playing, simulation exercises, online learning and manufacturer training)
- Practical training, shadowing, mentoring, industry visits and participation in competitions, where the activity has been agreed and documented as part of the agreed training plan
- Learning support and time spent writing assignments.

### The formats for the end-point assessment (EPA) can be any of the following:

- Practical assessment
- Professional discussion
- Project and presentation
- Portfolio evidence.

### Process for starting your apprentice on an apprenticeship:

- Pre-enrolment - consisting of assessor discussion, skills scan (if applicable), individual delivery plan, and initial assessments
- Apprenticeship service account setup
- Training Service Agreement issued
- Initial review will be undertaken within the first 12 weeks from enrolment
- Apprenticeship Agreement, Delivery Plan and Commitment Statement to be completed and signed.

### Confidentiality

All our dealings with you will be treated in the strictest confidence, not only when you are a customer, but also at all times in the future.

### Additional information available on:

- Distance learning
- Higher education qualifications
- Work experience placements
- T Level placements

Get in touch by calling **01743 653 444** or email **apprenticeships@shrewsbury.ac.uk**