

NEGOTIATING A MODEL APPRENTICESHIP POLICY IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Introduction

This guide provides advice on how to negotiate a new apprenticeship policy in your workplace or improve an existing one. It will cover UNISON's policy on apprenticeships, current legislation covering apprentice pay, what to include in a good apprenticeship scheme, how to make apprenticeships accessible to the widest demographic: equality and diversity, and how to use apprenticeships to boost branch recruitment.

What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are nationally recognised training programmes that give people the chance to earn as they learn. They are open to people of all ages and have specific benefits to people entering work for the first time, those returning to work after an extended break and those changing career. There are specific employer incentives for hiring someone aged 16 - 24.

Since 2010 there has been a resurgence in apprenticeship schemes in the private and public sectors, with many more apprenticeship places being offered at different levels. The government's manifesto commits to 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020.

In April 2017 the way the government funds apprenticeships in England is changing. Some employers will be required to contribute to a new apprenticeship levy, and there will be changes to the funding for apprenticeship training for all employers. The levy will impact on most public sector employers and require them to make an investment in apprenticeships and use the money to train new apprentices. Similar changes to the funding of apprenticeships are taking place in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland where respective governments have committed to around 30,000 apprenticeship starts a year.

UNISON has growing concerns about the government's target-driven approach to apprenticeships which only measures how many 'apprenticeship starts' have taken place and does not take into account the quality of the training or completion rates - therefore it is essential that UNISON branches are fully involved in the planning and implementation of these schemes in order to ensure that apprentices receive high quality training, fair pay and good conditions. Branches should also think about how to recruit apprentices into the union and involve them in the life of the branch. The TUC has produced some [negotiating tips for trade union officers](#) and reps that are negotiating apprenticeship schemes with their employer. Some of these tips are highlighted below:

Apprenticeship Levy

The apprentice levy has to be paid by all employers with a pay bill over £3m each year (0.5% of their paybill goes into the levy) and this money is to be used for funding the training and assessment of apprenticeships within their organisation.

In England employers will be issued with digital vouchers to the value of their levy contribution plus a 10% top up. These vouchers can only be spent with registered training providers and cannot be used to pay the wages of apprentices. It is presently unclear how this system will work in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Branches should start talking with their employer now about the levy in order to develop a plan moving forward. Branches should find out what their employer is planning in terms of numbers of apprenticeships, where in the business the apprentices will be, and part of the decision making process on what training provider the employer will be using in order to ensure that the employer provides high quality apprenticeships. It is important that the branch has input into what type of apprenticeships are available. Branches should try and encourage the employer to offer a wide range of apprenticeships including higher level apprenticeships (for example levels 5 & 6 which are the equivalent of a foundation degree course). By offering a wide range of apprenticeships and levels it will help support the organisation in plugging any skills gaps and will help support apprentices with future career development.

Even if your employer doesn't have to pay the levy but intends to employ apprentices, they can access 90% of the costs for the training and assessment of the apprentice from the government.

It is important that your employer works out the costs of the levy, and to help with this process the government have produced an [on-line tool](#). You may need to request information from HR on existing numbers, payroll costs and number of apprenticeship programmes in order to calculate the levy.

The training provider that is used to deliver the work based learning programmes should always go through some form of due diligence before they are awarded the contract. The branch should be part of this process and be involved in these discussions. OFSTED reports are always a good indicator of quality and your employer should not go with a provider because they are the cheapest, as this will nearly always have a bearing on the quality of training your apprentices receive.

Some employers prefer to use agencies in order to attract and recruit apprentices, however UNISON believes that all apprentices should be directly employed with their employer and have a contract. This is because the pay and conditions of the apprentices employed via an agency are determined by the agency and in practice this can sometimes be confusing as it is unclear what the involvement and remit of the agency is. Many employers we work with prefer not to go down this route because it does not offer them full control of the training, delivery and quality of the apprenticeships they offer.

UNISON's policy on apprenticeships

UNISON has a strong interest in apprenticeships for young workers as a means of earning whilst learning. To support apprentices UNISON has launched an Apprenticeship Charter which employers can sign up to. UNISON will actively support schemes which meet the following criteria:

Apprentices have the right to:

- An employment contract
- A job offer, once their apprenticeship is complete
- Payment at the rate for the job
- The same terms and conditions as existing workplaces policies and procedures
- High quality training – both on and off the job
- Appropriate job supervision, pastoral support and clarity about rights and responsibilities
- Not to be used for job substitution, including coverings staff shortages of any duration
- A safe and health working environment – free from discrimination and bullying
- Join and participate in a trade union of their choice
- Employees that complete an apprenticeship for development should remain on the same contract, terms and conditions

Employers have a responsibility to:

- Conduct a skills audit to properly determine their organisational needs
- Negotiate with relevant trade unions, to develop a high quality apprenticeship scheme which ensures apprentices rights are respected
- Select and monitor a high-quality training provider
- Ensure the apprenticeship leads to a real job
- Recognise apprenticeships as investing in future labour, rather than 'cheap labour'
- Keep existing employees informed about the introduction of the apprenticeship scheme
- Provide support and training for the supervisors and apprentices
- Meet regularly with apprentices and their representatives
- Actively challenge job stereotyping
- Encourage and celebrate apprentices

What should be in an apprenticeship policy?

Appendix 1 of this document contains a model apprenticeship agreement for staff sides to use. Branches can campaign for employers to sign this agreement and get their commitment to the fundamental principals set out above in UNISON's policy on apprenticeships. This can be one of the first campaign steps for branches to get an agreement on with the employer, before negotiating a policy.

A model apprenticeship policy can be found in appendix 2 of this document - the policy should cover the fundamentals including pay, high quality training and be available to the widest demographic of people.

Current legislation covering apprentices: pay rates

Apprentice pay in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland is covered under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. The National Minimum Wage for apprentices stood at £3.50 in April 2017. This rate applies to apprentices under 19 or those in the first year of apprenticeship who are 19 or over; all other apprentices are entitled to the national minimum wage for their age. The NHS in Scotland has its own pay policy on apprentices whereby it will not pay apprentices less than the Scottish Living Wage which is £8.45 an hour.



Rate for the job

Lower pay rates for apprentices are usually justified on the basis that they are receiving valuable training that will lead to higher pay in the medium and longer term. This ignores the fact that many apprentices are doing full jobs now. Apprentices hold “employed” status and carry out duties and responsibilities comparable to any other employee.

The National Union of Students (NUS) and UNISON apprentice surveys have shown that the rate of pay an apprentice earns is important to them, along with the need for high quality training and job to go to after training. These are key factors in whether an apprentice completes their training or not, so should be of interest to the employer.

Negotiating points: pay

Branches should try to negotiate the Living Wage (currently £8.45 per hour outside of London and £9.75 per hour in London) for apprentices based on the full rate for the job. Apprentices should also be entitled to the same terms and conditions, such as sick leave and holiday entitlement, as their colleagues. Try to ensure that any savings made by employing apprentices, is fed back into the training regime – not used to subsidise shortfalls elsewhere.

While it is not always possible to get the Living Wage for apprentices from day one, some branches have negotiated pay in line with the National Minimum Wage – for example *Guy’s and St Thomas’s NHS Foundation Trust* has an award winning apprenticeship scheme where they directly employ apprentices (rather than go through a training agency), they offer lots of support from management and as they pay a blanket apprentice salary of £7.87/hr all are paid above the highest bracket of the National Minimum Wage.

Health Branches:

The health service group have produced specific [guidance](#) for UNISON health branches dealing with apprentice pay under Agenda for Change. Broadly the arrangements as they are set out in Annex U are not suitable for apprentices on 12 month contracts on bands 1 & 2 of Agenda for Change.

Section 4 of Annex U in the NHS Terms and Conditions handbook states that the starting pay for any trainee must be no less than the rate of the main (adult) rate of the National Minimum Wage.

Where the calculation above results in the National Minimum Wage being payable for year two and beyond, an additional payment should be made on top of the minimum wage. The addition should be equal to the cash value difference between the percentages of max pay in the year of payment and the previous year.

For further information on apprentice pay in the NHS, UNISON's report '[Your Hired](#)' looks at the vulnerability of apprentices to exploitation in the health service where they don't enjoy the protection of a nationally negotiated pay structure. The report also looks at what type of apprenticeships are being taken up in the health service and apprentice pay across all four countries.

It is important to note that apprentices should also have the opportunity of joining the NHS pension scheme if they are not already part of it and this should be stated in the negotiated apprenticeship policy.

Apprentices should have full access to the NHS Pension scheme

In terms of pension scheme membership, apprentices should be treated like any other new starter and have access to the NHS pension scheme.

For the majority of apprentices this will automatically be the case under auto-enrolment legislation. However, there are certain qualifying criteria for auto-enrolment that means some apprentices may not be automatically enrolled in the scheme.

In order to be automatically enrolled in the NHS Pension Scheme a new starter must meet qualifying earnings which for 2016/17 are set at £10,000 per annum. They must also be aged at least 22 years of age. If apprentices fall outside of these criteria they will not be automatically enrolled but still have the right to opt-in to the pension scheme, and if they do so then the employer must make contributions to their pension fund.

However, if apprentices are earning less than £5,824 per annum and they opt in to the scheme, employers are under no obligation to contribute to their pension fund. Current government guidance states that apprentices should work for a minimum of 30 hours per week and in certain circumstances part time apprenticeships can be agreed for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Therefore an apprentice could be working less than 34 hours per week and if they were receiving the £3.30ph National Minimum Wage this would take them below the £5,824 annual salary leaving them potentially excluded from employer contributions.

Branches should seek a commitment from employers that a) all apprentices should have immediate access to the NHS Pension Scheme and b) that they will pay employer contributions for all apprentices regardless of hours and earnings.

Cost of living

Using the Minimum income standard by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation shows that even a single person with no dependants living in council housing needs at least £17,102 a year (Feb 2016) before tax to afford a basic, but acceptable standard of living.

As the cost of living rises, it will become increasingly difficult for young workers to manage on a below-minimum wage rate. Nor will the families of apprentices be able to supplement the training rate paid to their children. Low income families where young people are most in need of a route into employment, are likely to be the least able to subsidise their children's apprenticeship. Those determined to complete apprenticeships will suffer real hardship in terms of their ability to sustain adequate health, housing and social integration. Others will be forced to choose higher paying jobs that lack a structured training element, leading to low take up of apprenticeships and poor completion rates.

At the moment a quarter of all apprentices do not complete their full programme. This is a serious loss of investment for employers. It is clear that pay directly affects completion rates, which improved nationally from 24% in 2001/2 to 63% when the recommended minimum rate rose to £80 in 2005.

High quality training

Apprentices should benefit from nationally recognised National Vocational Qualifications, provided and supervised by a reputable learning provider.

The [Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England \(SASE\)](#) sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English framework. Compliance with SASE is a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act. This is set to be replaced by the [new trailblazer apprenticeship standards](#).

To check out the quality of the college / training provider, find their latest [OFSTED rating](#).

Negotiating points: training

Branches should ensure that their scheme has:

- Clear arrangements with one or more colleges / training providers that offer the required qualifications.
- That each apprentice receives a contract of employment / learning agreement from their employer and college.
- For England the inclusion of reference to the *Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)* and a commitment to providing access to the document for anyone who wants a copy – this shortly to be replaced by the Trailblazer apprenticeship standards.
- A compulsory induction for all apprentices is an employment rights and responsibilities (ERR) module. Trade unions and the right to join one should be covered as part of this module.

- Outreach programmes for recruiting candidates as widely as possible, including short pre-apprenticeship work placements, where possible.
- Good internal procedures for recruitment, selection and placement of apprentices in appropriate posts, ensuring that the process meets equality guidelines.
- Well thought-out arrangements for supervision and monitoring of apprentices. Each apprentice should have a mentor and a line manager that keeps track of their progress, oversees their work and helps them with their learning. Staff taking on these duties should be entitled to additional training, pay and time off in recognition of their additional responsibilities.
- Provision for apprentices to have study time, either at college or away from work to complete their NVQ work and access to the same staff development courses as other employees.
- Opportunities for all apprentices working for the employer to meet together for induction at the beginning of their course and for networking and support from time to time during their apprenticeship.
- Support systems for apprentices from disadvantaged groups such as young people leaving care, ex-offenders or those with disabilities.
- A guaranteed job, wherever possible, for those successfully completing their apprenticeships and a clear, transparent procedure for placing apprentices in permanent jobs.

Apprenticeships should be accessible to the widest demographic: equality and diversity and disabled workers

Apprenticeships should be accessible to the widest demographic. Unions play a crucial role in challenging discrimination against people from black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities and other members of disadvantaged groups. The TUC have produced a comprehensive bargaining guide for trade union activists on [accessible apprenticeships](#) for disabled workers, which looks at the Government plans to increase disabled people's access to apprenticeships and addressing the barriers disabled workers face.

Branches should:

- support employers encourage applications from under-represented groups (e.g. by adopting recruitment strategies to reach the widest audience);
- review the recruitment selection process and criteria to ensure it does not discourage or exclude under-represented groups – these should be available in alternative formats;
- encourage managers and recruitment staff to take part in equality and diversity training and make interviews inclusive and accessible.

- in the NHS, Health Education England have issued [standards for Healthcare employers on apprenticeships](#). They also have put together a guide of good practise case studies from NHS employers

What can branches do? Apprentices – a recruitment opportunity

Young members are one of the fastest growing sectors of the UNISON membership, but there is still much more we can do to attract young workers. The growth of apprenticeships, forecast to grow by another 3 million apprenticeship places by 2020, offers branches an excellent opportunity to recruit young workers and potential activists. While specific plans for recruitment will depend on the type of employer and number of apprentices, there are a number of ideas branches can try:

- Ensure that the branch is allowed to attend induction sessions for apprentices and that new starters are informed of their right to join a union. Apprentices can join UNISON for a special fee of £10 a year and also gives them the opportunity to apply to attend UNISON's young members' weekend. The weekend offers them a chance to discuss key issues, gain industrial expertise and socialise with other apprentices and people roughly the same age.
- Branches should map where there apprentices are in the organisation; this is valuable information to support any mentoring schemes. The branch could also track the end date of the apprenticeships and plan a meeting near the end date to discuss their progress, their experience on the apprenticeship, the support they received from the training provider and any permanent opportunities that may have been offered. This is also a good opportunity to recruit an apprentice into becoming a full member.
- As young, vulnerable workers apprentices will be in need of support and representation even in the best apprenticeship scheme. You might want to assign a specific steward to be their contact point within the branch. As new recruits, apprentices will also appreciate being included in the social life of the branch.
- Health and safety reps should ensure that a risk assessment is done of apprenticeship posts, and you might want to involve Union Learning Reps in developing a programme for apprentices.
- Good apprenticeships schemes should have outreach schemes designed to recruit candidates from the local community. The branch could use that process to develop closer relationships with local schools, community organisations and youth programmes. If possible, make contact with young people coming in on pre-apprenticeship work placements.
- UNISON's leaflet Young Workers: Your Wages, Your Rights is available from the online catalogue by clicking [here](#) . Many citizenship teachers, youth workers and voluntary organisations have indicated that they would value UNISON's expertise. Branches can use the leaflet as a basis for workshops or surgeries designed to offer basic education on employment rights and the role of trade unions for young people.
- Apprentices may have other family members who are potential UNISON members. People are often attracted to apply for apprenticeships in a public service organisation where they already have contacts. Family members will appreciate the help UNISON offers to their young relations. The branch might want to offer a social/information session for apprentices and their family.
- Overall, the aim is to be creative in how you use apprenticeships to build the branch, bearing in mind that the large numbers of apprentices entering the public service workforce over the next few years will become the core membership of the near future.

Appendix 1

Apprenticeship agreement between The Staffside Group (the unions) and (employer)

1. Definition

An apprentice is an employee, 16 or over, who is following a structured work-based apprenticeship training programme within a particular occupational area.

2. Our commitment

We will work in partnership to promote learning in the workplace.

We will review vacancies as part of our vacancy management process, which could potentially increase the number of apprentices in line with our workforce strategy.

We will promote diversity in our workforce and be committed to equal opportunities and fairness in employment.

We will safeguard the welfare of vulnerable people and will identify and provide any additional support needed.

We will 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.

We will ensure that apprentices work in accordance with the law, and with our policies, procedures and practices.

3. Our process

A structured job role will be provided to ensure the apprentice gains work experience and supported learning and development towards a nationally recognised qualification. We will identify SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) learning objectives and apply appropriate competency requirements. All apprenticeship frameworks to be used will be Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) approved and adhered to.

4. Pay and conditions

Apprentices will have a written Contract of Employment, and will be subject to the same policies and procedures as any other member of staff. Their rate of pay will be in accordance with the prevailing legislation or trade union negotiated rate. All other conditions of service will be those used as standard by the employer and will be detailed in the Contract of Employment. The duration of the apprenticeship will be specified, usually 12 months. This may be longer depending on the apprenticeship framework in operation, but will be sufficient for the average willing learner to complete the qualification. The end date is also confirmed at this stage. As the apprentice nears the end of their contractual programme there will be opportunities at key stages to discuss future development. The apprentice will also be entitled to join the organisations pension scheme.

5. Induction and introduction

A mentor, who is usually an experienced member of staff from within the team in which the apprentice works, will be identified to offer support and guidance throughout the apprenticeship, or as long as needed. This is in addition to the standard staff induction process.

6. Study time

Adequate paid study time will be agreed 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.

7. 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 mainly by the learning provider and the line manager informed of any problem areas.

8. Union Learning Representative (ULR)

In addition to the team mentor a union trained ULR/Mentor should be available to support the apprentice in their learning, encouraging them to share any concerns they have with the apprenticeship at an early stage and work closely with the Apprenticeship Team. The Apprenticeship Team and where appropriate other union reps will help the apprentice to prepare for job interviews (CV preparation, interview practice) and provide any job leads or other opportunities and information liaising with the ULR to ensure that appropriate support is given. Union reps and ULRs will be trained as mentors. ULRs and, where appropriate, other union reps will be given adequate time and resources to enable them to deliver their duties effectively. The Apprenticeship Team will be a group of HR professionals and union representatives such as ULRs who will work in partnership to ensure high standards and quality of apprenticeships for the employer.

9. Progression

Apprentices will be encouraged to apply for suitable vacancies during their temporary contract. Where the apprentice progresses to an established post within the organisation the substantive pay grade will apply. Support will be offered to complete any outstanding qualification, or the start date of the new role phased or delayed (subject to operational requirements).

10. End of the apprenticeship

Apprentices will be offered an exit interview at the end of the contract.

We fully support this agreement.

Name on behalf of Employer

Name on behalf of Staffside Group/Unions

Date

APPENDIX 2

Model apprenticeship policy

1. Overview

Apprenticeships are nationally recognised training programmes that give people the chance to earn as they learn. They are open to people of all ages and have specific benefits to people entering work for the first time, those returning to work after an extended break and those changing career. There are specific employer incentives for hiring someone aged 16-24. The speed at which the person will achieve their Apprenticeship depends upon both their ability and the employer's requirements. Usually, an Apprenticeship will last between one and three years but it must be no less than one year to be recognised as an official apprenticeship.

All people in the **[name of the employer]** are entitled to apply for an apprenticeship programme. Applicants who qualify for the scheme will be placed in an appropriate vacancy. Once a work placement has been found for the person, the apprentice, employer and learning provider will agree a learning plan. Funding is available for the full cost of Apprenticeship training for most employees aged 16 – 18. Some funding is available for employees aged over 19.

The apprentice must show dedication and a professional attitude. The apprentice will be expected to keep to normal working hours with the **[organisation]** to earn a wage. The apprentice will be expected to spend time with a learning provider and to study for a recognised qualification. The apprentice will need commitment.

The apprentice will benefit from a nationally recognised qualification that could potentially enable them to progress to a higher level qualification (foundation degree or Higher National Certificate/ Diploma).

[England Only]

Apprenticeships in England are changing over to the new '**Trailblazer**' apprenticeship. They will be replacing the old SASE framework.

The Standards will:

- Define an apprenticeship that lasts a minimum of 12 months
- Be linked to a specific occupational level
- Respond to employers' needs, ensuring that apprenticeships are high quality and rigorous and develop the knowledge, skills and behaviour required for a specific job role
- Be designed to prepare the apprentice for the (newly introduced) end-point assessment
- Standards are created by groups of employers – known as 'Trailblazers'.

Read more about the new [Apprenticeship Standards](#)

The *Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)* sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English framework. Compliance with the SASE is a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act. <http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/further-education-skills/docs/s/11-521-specification-apprenticeship-standards-england>

Apprenticeships are available in almost every area of employment, from administration and accountancy to health and social care. Part of the apprenticeship will also require an apprentice to attain the appropriate level in English and Maths.

2. Benefits

Benefits an Apprentice can bring to the **[organisation]** are as follows:

- The **[organisation]** will produce a programme of succession planning from within the organisation – thus retaining valuable knowledge and experience.
- Apprenticeships bring new skills to the **[organisation]**
- Recruitment of apprentices will develop valuable links between the **[organisation]** and local schools, community and voluntary sector organisations.
- Apprenticeships provide in-house training, with a learning plan designed for the **[organisation]** by the **[organisation]**.
- Apprenticeships improve productivity by developing better trained staff, making the **[organisation]** more competitive and improving standards of [care, service provision].
- Apprenticeships are well structured and require commitment from an apprentice. An apprentice is therefore more likely to be a committed member of the **[organisation]**
- Well-implemented apprenticeship schemes address inequalities in the **[organisation]**'s age profile
- Well-implemented apprenticeship schemes address inequalities in the other areas of **[organisation]**'s profile (e.g. gender, ethnicity, disability etc.)
- Better staff training results in higher motivation
- Apprenticeships help the **[organisation]** to meet the requirement of Mindful employer, Investors in People, Positive About Young People, Single Equality Scheme and equality legislation. Short-term benefits relate to better customer service and widening the internal talent pool for management recruitment. Long-term benefits are linked to reduced labour turnover, lower absenteeism figures and higher employee satisfaction.
- Having an apprentice in the team can positively change the dynamic of a team and/or workplace by bringing in fresh eyes and ideas.

3. Eligibility

All staff are eligible to enrol on an Apprenticeship whether they are new recruits or existing staff wanting to develop within their current role or embark on a new career. All efforts should be made to ensure that both men and women are encouraged to enter apprenticeships in the full range of possible occupations.

4. Cost

[England Only] From April 2017 the way the government funds apprenticeships in England is changing. Some employers will be required to contribute to a new apprenticeship levy, and there will be changes to the funding for apprenticeship training for all employers. The levy will impact on most public sector employers and require them to make an investment in apprenticeships and use the money to train new apprentices. Similar changes to the funding of apprenticeships are taking place in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. UK employers are currently awaiting further guidance from the Department of Business, Skills and Innovation on how funding will work in practice.

In most organisations, apprentices are employed and paid a salary that reflects their skills, experience and ability.

The apprentice will be paid for the time they attend training as part of their apprenticeship framework, including training during and outside of normal working hours.

The apprentice is also entitled to join the organisations pension scheme; the organisation is authorised to deduct any sums due to it from your salary.

5. Terms and Conditions

The [organisation] is keen to ensure that apprentices receive fair pay, terms and conditions during their period of training, and not just the statutory minimum.

All apprentices therefore, will be appointed onto [the employer's negotiated] terms and conditions of employment. This will include benefits such as [nationally/locally agreed] days annual leave and 8 bank holidays, occupational sickness pay, time off for family emergencies, etc. It is hoped that such benefits will attract the best candidates to the [organisation].

Apprentices will be provided with mentors and line managers who will be responsible for keeping track of their progress, overseeing their work and helping them with their learning. Staff taking on these duties will be entitled to additional training, pay and time off in recognition of their additional responsibilities.

A full risk assessment will be done of the posts assigned to apprentices.

Apprentices will be entitled to have study time, either at college or away from work to complete their apprenticeship.

Opportunities will be provided for all apprentices working for the [organisation] to meet together for induction at the beginning of their course and for networking and support from time to time during their apprenticeship.

The [organisation] will ensure that they provide additional support systems for apprentices from disadvantaged groups such as young people leaving care, ex-offenders, those with disabilities or mental health difficulties etc..

Apprentices will be appointed into [--] year fixed-term contracts on the basis that it will take up to [--] years to achieve their qualification and become competent in their role. Thereafter, subject to satisfactory assessment, apprentices will be appointed into the substantive post and receive the appropriate pay rate.

In terms of salary, the [organisation] will pay an apprentice a salary based on the bottom point of the grade appropriate to the job being performed, pro-rata to the number of hours worked. [see **Negotiating pay above for alternative pay formulas including the implementation of the Living Wage for apprentices**].

Where towards the end of the [-] year fixed-term contract, a substantive post is no longer available for an apprentice to slot into, e.g., due to organisational change etc., but the apprentice is deemed competent, the **[organisation]** will place the trainee 'at risk' and make every effort to redeploy the individual before their contract is expires.

In the event of pregnancy, the apprentice will be entitled to maternity leave and once she has returned to work, will have her contract extended to enable her to complete her apprenticeship.

5. Addressing Skills Shortages

The **[organisation]** will be facing a skills shortage in the future, by opening up apprenticeships to under-represented groups we can help to close their skills gaps.

Promoting diversity in Apprenticeships will also contribute to creating a range of skills necessary for successful business. Drawing apprentices from a wider recruitment pool will allow us greater access to skills such as communications, customer-handling, team-working, and problem-solving.

6. Apprenticeship Scheme Recruitment Stages

When a vacancy becomes available within the **[organisation]**, the appointing managers will review the job roles and consider the post for the Apprenticeship Placement before advertising the post. The stages shown in the flowchart overleaf will be followed:

Apprenticeship Policy Recruitment Stages

