

**Model**

**Apprenticeship Policy**

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**AGREEMENT ON APPRENTICESHIP POLICY BETWEEN [NAME OF EMPLOYER] AND [UNISON BRANCH]**

# 1. General principles of agreement

1.1 The parties to this agreement recognise that apprenticeships based on high quality work experience, combined with well supported learning and development towards a nationally recognised qualification, can deliver immense benefits in terms of:

* Ensuring adequate supply of the skilled workers required by **[name of organisation]**, particularly in areas of skill shortage;
* Providing opportunities to **[name of organisation]**’s existing workforce to develop their skills and take on more rewarding roles;
* Enhancing **[name of organisation]**’s reputation as an employer that provides opportunities for the local community and helps young people in particular into employment that can act as a basis for building a long-term career;
* Improving recruitment, retention and morale of a diverse workforce with an enduring commitment to **[name of organisation]**, which helps deliver cost savings and improved service delivery in the long term.

1.2 All aspects of this agreement, from the vacancies to be offered as apprenticeships through to the terms on which apprenticeships are conducted, will be the subject of discussion and negotiation as a standing item of the joint negotiating committee **[amend with alternative body as appropriate].**

# 2. Apprenticeship vacancies and recruitment

2.1 Decisons over the scale and type of roles to be made available as apprenticeships will be informed by a regular skills audit that identifies gaps between workforce skills and the future skills needed by **[name of organisation]**

2.2 The full range of intermediate, higher and degree level apprenticeships, covering from one to four years for completion, will be considered to meet requirements

2.3 The drawing up of apprenticeship job descriptions will be developed through the joint job evaluation group **[amend with alternative body as appropriate]**

2.4 The apprenticehips will provide those selected with a genuinely developmental opportunity and will not constitute accreditation of skills that they already possess

2.5 Advertisement of apprenticeship vacancies will be made available to all existing employees

2.6 Recruitment to the apprenticeship scheme will be monitored for diversity and external advertisement will seek publication in sources accessed by under-represented groups

2.7 An induction programme will be put in place for all new apprentices that will include an opportunity for union reps to highlight the union’s role in the workplace

2.8 The content of the apprenticeship scheme will be assessed for its accessibility for all groups and appropriate adjustments will be made to attract and retain under-represented groups. This may include such changes as making reasonable adjustments to assist disabled apprentices or offering flexible hours to assist those with caring responsibilities.

2.9 **[Name of organisation]’s** traineeship programme will be utilised for the separate purpose of helping young workers gain skills that improve their chances of gaining employment on a standard contract or as an apprentice, and the duration of traineeships will be limited to six weeks

# 3. Apprenticeship training

3.1 Paid time off will be allowed for all off-the-job training and study, which will consititute at least 20% of total paid working time, and time off in lieu will be allowed wherever off-the-job training takes places outside normal hours

3.2 Additional time off will be provided for any english and / or maths learning up to level two required as part of the apprenticeship

3.3 Consideration will be given firstly to internal provision of training. However, if a training provider is to be selected through an external tendering process, the procedure followed will be in line with the procurement agreement, with the union engaged in development of selection criteria and evaluation of bids **[UNISON’s model procurement agreement is available on this link** [**https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2017/05/Model-Procurement-Agreement1.docx**](https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2017/05/Model-Procurement-Agreement1.docx) **]**

3.4 Any training provider selected will be registered with the Employment and Skills Funding Agency

3.5 **[Name of organisation]** will cover all reasonable incidental costs incurred through off-the-job training (such as textbooks and additional travel costs to that normally incurred in travelling to the normal place of work)

# 4. Support through apprenticeships

* 1. Arrangements will be put in place for the apprentice and their relevant line manager to review progress through one-to-one meetings on a monthly basis, with a view to agreeing support in overcoming any difficulties encountered
	2. Line managers will receive training in the appropriate supervision of apprentices
	3. An appropriate trained mentor will also be allocated to every apprentice to offer support and guidance throughout the apprenticeship and so provide an alternative route for apprentices to raise concerns outside the line management structure
	4. The mentor may be a Union Learning Rep or an experienced member of staff from within the team in which the apprentice works
	5. Issues discussed between mentors and apprentices will be respected as confidential and will only be communicated to others with the agreement of both parties

# 5. Terms and conditions of apprenticehips

* 1. All apprentices will be provided with an employment contract and be paid at the standard rate for the job
	2. Apprentices will be employed directly by **[name of organisation]** rather than through an apprentice training agency
	3. Apprentices will receive at least the same terms and conditions as those set out in general workplace policies and procedures for staff on standard contracts
	4. Existing employees converting to an apprenticeship will remain on the same terms and conditions as prior to their conversion to the apprenticeship
	5. In recognition that apprentices are in the processing of learning a job role, dismissal will only take place in cases of extreme misconduct applied under the common law contract of apprenticeship and not on the basis of capability
	6. If an apprentice leaves their position due to redundancy or ill health, they will not be required to repay incidental costs
	7. Apprentices will be admitted to the pension scheme available to all new starters and empoyer contributions will be met regardless of hours and earnings
	8. An extension of the period necessary to complete an apprenticeship will be permitted where there are legitimate reasons. Such reasons may include an extended period of absence due to ill health, pregnancy, parental or special leave, as well as any difficulties encountered in meeting targets for the apprenticeship programme that have prompted agreement of a receovery plan between apprentice and line manager.

# 6. Completion of apprenticeships

6.1 Apprentices will be guaranteed a job offer, once their apprenticeship is complete, at the level for which they have trained.

6.2 Exit interviews will be conducted with any apprentice who does not complete their apprenticeship with a view to establishing their reasons and any improvements in the package provided to apprenticeships in order to assist future retention.

6.3 On completion of an apprenticeship, consideration will be given to whether the post needs re-evaluation through the job evaluation group to establish whether its grading needs to be raised to match the responsibilities of the role

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# 7. Health and safety of apprentices

* 1. A full risk assessment will be conducted of all posts assigned to apprentices, both in the work conducted at **[name of organisation]** and at the training provider
	2. In recognition that under 18s can face particular risks, the assessments will take account of the legal requirement that young people are not exposed to risk due to lack of experience, being unaware of existing or potential risks or lack of maturity
	3. For any apprentice under the age of 18, work time arrangements will also take account of the extra provisions for the age group under the Working Time Regulations:
* At least two consecutive days off per week;
* A daily rest break of 12 consecutive hours (usually the break between finishing work one day and starting work the next);
* A 30 minute break if the shift lasts more than 4.5 hours;
* A limit of 8 hours of work per day and 40 hours of work per week.

7.4 Particular attention will be given to ensuring apprenticeships are aware of how they can raise concerns if they feel that they are facing bullying and harassment