

# RHA Briefing | A Guide to Running an Apprenticeship in England

*If you've not run an apprenticeship before, it can be a daunting prospect. This step-by-step will help to guide you through the process.*

## What is an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes which last at least 12 months. The role must be a minimum of 30 hours per week with 20% of the normal working hours spent on training. Apprenticeships run from Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) to Level 7 (degree) and allow learners to combine working and training, both on and off-the-job.

## Why take on an apprentice?

With so many labour shortages, now is the perfect time to give your business an advantage and start training either new employees or upskilling existing employees. Both are funded to either 95% or 100%. Check [here](#) if you pay the apprenticeship levy and how you will be funded.

## How to start

### 1. Understand your responsibilities

The apprentice will need to be supported throughout the apprenticeship by their team. Line managers play an important role in the success of the apprenticeship. The line manager will be expected to make sure that the training programme is in place and monthly reviews are completed alongside the training provider. They will make sure that other members of the team fully understand the requirements of the apprenticeship.

Best practice is to assign a mentor to the apprentice. This is separate to the line manager and can help provide advice, guidance and support.

It's important to have this in place before taking on an apprentice. Your training provider should also give you guidance on this.

### 2. Find the right apprenticeship course

Each occupation has its own set of standards. You need to select the right training for your business and the apprentice. Consider the level and duration of the training. It might be that another training option works better for your business needs. You can browse the RHA funding guide [here](#) to see the options.

If an apprenticeship is the correct route, a full list of standards is available [here](#).

### 3. Choose your training provider

There are several options available. You can use a local college, independent training provider, university, or employer provider. To find a provider who runs the course required, you can search via this [link](#). Through the link you can see reviews on how other employers have rated their services.

Dependent on your business, you may require a training provider with national provision if you have several depots and want consistency of training. Smaller businesses may want a local provision to cut down on travel costs such as hotels for residential courses.

You should meet with several training providers to assess if they are the right fit for your business. They should be able to provide a training plan for the apprenticeship, provide guidance on your off-the-job training responsibilities, help advise the apprentices line manager and mentor and talk you through the end point assessment.

### 4. Off the job training

The training provider will organise and deliver formal training for the apprentice. Apprentices must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training.

Off-the-job training must be delivered during normal working hours. It should teach apprentices new knowledge, skills and behaviours.

The following are ideas for off-the-job training.

- Theoretical training – lectures, role playing, simulation exercises and online learning.
- Practical training – shadowing, mentoring, or an activity which has been planned and documented as part of the training plan.
- Time spent writing assignments would also be eligible.

It is up to the employer and provider to decide when the training is delivered. It could be one day a week, a week every five, or training can be provided in blocks. For the LGV Driver apprenticeship, training can be front loaded to gain the licence and Driver CPC within the first 6 months of the apprenticeship.

Simply put, as long as the apprentice is being taught new knowledge, skills and behaviours which are directly linked to the apprenticeship standard then that is "off-the-job" training.

### 5. Create your apprenticeship services account

Once you have decided to take on an apprentice, you will need to register for an apprenticeship services account. The apprenticeship service is a government online service which will allow you to set up and manage your apprenticeships.

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You'll need an email address, permission to add your PAYE schemes to the account, and permission to accept the employer agreement on behalf of your organisation. You'll also need the Government Gateway login for your organisation or your accounts office reference number, and employer PAYE scheme reference number.

Full details are available [here](#).

## 6. Recruit your apprentice

You can offer an apprenticeship to a current employee or advertise your apprenticeship opportunity to an external candidate. You can use your company website, the Find an Apprentice government [portal](#) or social media. Your training provider may be able to support your recruitment.

## 7. Complete an initial assessment

At the start of the apprenticeship, you will complete an initial assessment. This is a conversation between you as the employer, the apprentice and the training provider.

Each party has a role in the initial assessment.

If the initial assessment shows that the apprentice is already competent in any area of the apprenticeship, then they should not have to do this part of the training. After reductions have been agreed, the apprenticeship must still be at least 12 months duration. Your apprentice may also need to study for English and maths qualifications as part of their apprenticeship if they have not yet met the level 2 minimum requirements. Your apprentice will need their certificates to prove they have already passed at GCSE or equivalent level.

If your apprentice needs to complete English and/ or maths during the apprenticeship, this must be completed within their normal working hours. However, English and maths is not counted as part of the 20% off-the-job training. It's important to take this into consideration before the apprenticeship starts. It may be that pre-apprenticeship training such as ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) is required.

Further details on English and maths training can be found [here](#).

## 8. Understand the End Point Assessment (EPA)

The EPA is the final stage of the apprenticeship. It is an impartial assessment of whether your apprentice has developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard.

As well as successfully completing the EPA, your apprentice may need to complete, and pass, several additional requirements before completion of the apprenticeship. This might include mandatory English and maths qualifications.

Once all the elements of the apprenticeship are completed, the apprentice will receive their apprenticeship certificate.

Further details on the EPA are available [here](#).

## Final considerations

It's important to emphasise that running an apprenticeship is a commitment. You'll need to support your apprentice through their training, to help them achieve their End Point Assessment. It's a tripartite relationship; the employer, apprentice and training provider need to work together.

If, in the case of the LGV Driver apprenticeship, you are just looking for someone to gain their licence, there are other more suitable training programmes.

However, running an apprenticeship can be a rewarding experience for the whole team and business as a whole. It's a way of investing in and developing your future workforce which in a nation of skills shortages is vital.

For more information, contact [policy@rha.uk.net](mailto:policy@rha.uk.net).

RHA Training deliver apprenticeships if you would like further information then please contact [training@rha.uk.net](mailto:training@rha.uk.net).

## About the RHA

The RHA is a major trade association representing 8,500 road haulage, coach, and van operators across the UK, 85% of whom are SMEs. Our members operate around 250,000 HGVs (half of the UK fleet) out of 10,000 operating centres and range from a single-truck company to those with thousands of vehicles.

To find out more, please click here: [www.rha.uk.net](http://www.rha.uk.net)

**We would be happy to provide you with further information. Please contact us via [policy@rha.uk.net](mailto:policy@rha.uk.net)**