

Apprenticeship Scheme Policy and procedure

This policy can be made available in other languages and formats such as large print and audio on [request](#).

What is it?

This policy outlines how apprenticeships can be utilised within Wiltshire Council and how managers recruit, support and develop apprentices within their teams.

Who does it apply to?

This policy applies to all employees appointed to an apprenticeship at Wiltshire Council, unless a separate policy applies under a TUPE transfer. There are separate policies for schools.

What are apprenticeships?

1. Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes which will lead to a nationally recognised qualification or set of competencies. Through their apprenticeships, apprentices gain the technical knowledge, practical experience, and wider skills they need for their immediate job and future career.
2. Apprenticeships are open to anyone over the age of sixteen, whether school leavers or with work experience and may include those who want to improve skills in their chosen career or start a new career.
3. Applicants to the programme must spend at least 50% of their working hours in England and have the right to work in England.
4. An apprentice role:
 - Should ideally be for a minimum of 30 hours per week but the length of an apprenticeship can be extended to accommodate fewer working hours:
 - may be a new role within your team
 - may be an existing role which could be converted into an apprentice role
 - may be upskilling of a current employee for future succession planning, and
 - Must involve at least 20% off the job training (for more information about what the 20% off the job training is defined as, including examples, refer to the Apprenticeship Guidance)
5. An apprenticeship must be at least 1 year in length but depending upon the type and level of the programme it may last up to 5 years. Extensions to an apprenticeship agreement may be considered depending upon circumstances.
6. There is a government target for the council to employ 2.3% of its workforce as apprentices which currently equates to approximately 266 apprentices per year.
7. The HR Strategic Business Partner and OD Consultant - Apprenticeships will discuss with managers what suitable apprenticeship standards or frameworks are available.
8. Apprenticeship Standards show what an apprentice will be doing, and the skills required of them, by job role. Standards are developed by employer groups known as 'trailblazers'. More Standards will be published as they are developed and approved.

9. Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels:

Apprenticeship Level	Equivalent
Level 2	GCSE, NVQ Level 2, Level 2 National Certificate
Level 3	A-Level, NVQ Level 3, Level 3 National Diploma
Level 4	CertHE, HNC, NVQ Level 4
Level 5	DipHE, HND, NVQ Level 5
Level 6	Degree with honours (BA, BSc)
Level 7	Integrated Master's degree, Master's Degree.

The Apprenticeship Levy

10. With effect from 6 April 2017 the council have to pay 0.5% of its pay bill into the apprenticeship levy.
11. The apprenticeship levy can be used to fund the cost of apprentice training and the end point assessment.

Employee Costs

12. Employment costs cannot be funded by the levy and are as follows:
- Payment of the apprentice's salary and any other related contributions.
 - Management time to support the apprentice in the workplace and to take an active part in any review sessions as provided by the approved external training provider.
 - 20% of time out of the workplace to allow the apprentice to attend formal training, time with an assessor to review progress, plus any other apprenticeship events where their presence is required.
 - Any additional costs for additional equipment i.e., tool kits, safety items, educational visits, annual subscriptions.

Salary rates

13. Apprenticeship pay rates are available on [HR Direct](#)

New apprenticeship roles

14. Managers must follow the procedure set out in [the recruitment policy](#) when creating a new apprenticeship role.
15. It is the council's objective to recruit and develop apprentices who will continue their employment, following completion of the apprenticeship programme, and develop their career within the council. Therefore, when creating an apprenticeship role, managers must consider how the role will develop in the current team structure, in consultation with the HR Strategic Business Partner, and how the skills could be transferable across the council.

16. The apprenticeship post will be attached to the substantive role description of the post which, on successful completion of the apprenticeship, the apprentice will move into.
17. Current employees can apply for an advertised apprenticeship post. If successful, they will move to the apprenticeship role and be paid on the advertised apprenticeship pay rate.

Transferring a vacancy into an apprenticeship role

18. Where vacancies arise consideration should be given as to whether the role could be converted into an apprenticeship. The manager will need to demonstrate how the role could be filled by an apprentice and have liaised with the HR Strategic Business Partner and OD Consultant - Apprenticeships regarding the options and feasibility of this.
19. Where it is agreed that there is an opportunity to convert the vacancy to an apprenticeship the role description for the post will be converted to an apprenticeship description, with the relevant apprenticeship standard included, prior to advertising the apprenticeship opportunity.

Upskilling apprenticeships

20. The council will use the apprenticeship levy to supplement current employees' training and development.
21. Where a manager is considering upskilling for a member of their team, they need to speak with their HR Strategic Business Partner in the first instance, prior to discussing this with their team member.
22. An employee can discuss/request apprenticeship training as part of their appraisal or at any other time. They must then complete an apprenticeship application form explaining:
 - a. Their reasons and objectives for undertaking the apprenticeship
 - b. How the training links with appraisal objectives
 - c. What benefits the training will bring to the team, service area and wider council
 - d. How they will put learning into practice
23. The employee will remain in their substantive post and salary for the duration of their apprenticeship and following successful completion of the apprenticeship.

20% off the job training

24. All apprentices must spend at least 20% of their time in off the job training or learning. This is paid learning which takes place outside of the typical working environment.
25. The 20% OTJ must be logged and tracked and will be directly linked to the apprenticeship standard they are following.
26. Off the job training does not include any time studying for Maths & English qualifications n.

27. Time off the job for training or learning must be agreed between the manager and the apprentice/learning provider and may be taken as follows:
- As a proportion of every day
 - One day a week – This may involve college/university attendance
 - One week out of every five
 - Any other arrangement which suits all parties involved
28. If you have any questions on how the 20% OTJ will be set up please speak to the OD Consultant Apprenticeships, or refer to the following guidance from the Department for Education: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-off-the-job-training>

Apprentice recruitment process

29. To recruit an apprentice, managers will need to follow the council's recruitment policy and procedure which includes gaining authorisation to fill the vacancy.
30. Managers should follow the usual recruitment process, liaising with the OD Consultant - Apprenticeships to ensure the vacancy is advertised on the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) website where applicable.
31. Some apprenticeship roles will require a DBS check, and this should be highlighted on the approval to recruit form as it will need to be included in the job advertisement. For further information, refer to the policy on [DBS](#) checks.
32. Some apprenticeships will require previous experience in order to meet the requirements of the substantive post they will move into at the end of the apprenticeship. Where this is the case, this will be clearly highlighted in the advert and any other recruitment materials.

Supporting an apprentice

33. The key element of an apprenticeship programme is to combine work-based learning with the achievement of formal qualifications. To achieve this, the apprentice has an individual learning plan.
34. The individual learning plan will be developed by the training provider with input from the manager and the apprentice. This document will then be used to develop a structured work experience and development programme which supports the formal study element of the apprenticeship. Any [reasonable adjustments](#) required, such as training formats or additional support will be included.
35. The apprentice will be required to sign an apprentice agreement. This will outline the training programme with the training provider, including duration, key dates and attendance. This will be arranged by the Training provider.
36. An apprentice will be allocated a mentor as agreed with the line manager to provide an additional source of support to the apprentice. The mentor will be allocated by the manager.
37. Managers or mentors are required to hold regular one to ones with their apprentice to coach them within their role, to ensure they are performing satisfactorily and are developing their skills.

38. Managers are required to provide “on the job” feedback to the training provider regarding the apprentice’s progress. In some cases, and with prior agreement, the mentor may also be asked to provide feedback.
39. Once the apprentice has successfully completed their apprenticeship it is expected that they will move into a substantive post within the team where they were an apprentice.

Completion of the apprenticeship

40. The apprenticeship ends when the Standard, including successful completion of end-point assessment, and qualifications have been completed within the timescale originally set for the apprenticeship, unless an extension has been agreed.
41. The end-point assessment is an assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours which have been learnt throughout the apprenticeship.
42. Apprentices will not be able to achieve an apprenticeship Standard without satisfying all the requirements of the assessment plan, including the end-point assessment
43. Once the apprentice has successfully completed their apprenticeship it is expected they will move into a substantive post within the team where they were an apprentice.
44. If the originally identified post within the team is no longer available, the apprentice will be supported to look for suitable vacant posts across the council for which they could apply.
45. The council will make every effort to find a suitable post for the apprentice. However, if this is not possible and in accordance with the apprentice’s contract, the manager will inform the apprentice giving appropriate notice that the apprenticeship will end.

Care leavers and looked after children

46. The council is the corporate parent to care leavers and looked after children in Wiltshire. As such, the council has special responsibilities to improve the lives of Wiltshire care leavers and looked after children.
47. The council will offer a guaranteed interview to any Wiltshire care leaver or looked after child who applies for an apprenticeship with the council, provided that they meet the essential criteria, and they declare their status on the application form.
48. The interview process for apprenticeships will be based on the usual competitive process where suitable applicants will be shortlisted and interviewed

Safeguarding of young persons and vulnerable adults

49. The council takes its responsibilities seriously under the [safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006](#). The recruiting manager is responsible for ensuring that safe recruitment practices are followed when recruiting into roles dealing with young persons and vulnerable adults.
50. The recruiting manager should refer to the following policies/guide:
 - [employment of children and young persons](#)
 - [DBS](#)

- [guidance for managers on safer recruitment](#)

Roles and responsibilities

Line manager responsibilities

51. Identify the skills gap within their team which could be filled by employing an apprentice.
52. Identifying the substantive post within their service that the apprentice will move into following the completion of the apprenticeship.
53. Identify funding for the apprenticeship role to cover salary and on costs and ongoing budget to fund the substantive post within the structure.
54. Identify or create the role description for the substantive post and liaise with the OD Consultant - Apprenticeships to make relevant for the apprenticeship role.
55. Gain authorisation to recruit to the apprenticeship post
56. Liaise with the recruitment team to design advert text
57. Interview prospective apprentices in line with the council's recruitment policy
58. Provide a safe and secure working environment
59. Ensure that the apprentice has time for study and is given work that develops their skills – knowledge and experience which is linked to their Individual Learning Plan
60. Liaise promptly with the recruitment team to ensure HR Payroll Administration receive all appropriate paperwork
61. Allocate a workspace for the apprentice and order any equipment they may need
62. Allocate a mentor
63. Organise an induction and risk assessment. Contact HR case adviser/Occupational Health and Safety.
64. In the first arranged one to one meeting, ensure the apprentice understands what is required from them in the workplace and refer them to HR Direct and to the policies which they need to understand for instance absence, email and internet usage, and conduct and performance
65. Assess performance and have regular reviews with both the apprentice and tutors from the training provider

HR Strategic Business Partner responsibilities

66. Liaise with managers to provide advice & guidance on identifying suitable apprenticeship opportunities, ensuring this is in line with the service structure and supports succession planning.

Apprenticeship team responsibilities

67. Provide the manager with advice regarding relevant apprenticeship Standard.
68. Provides support with converting the substantive role description to an apprenticeship role description and advise on advert text.
69. Provide advice for interview/selection processes.
70. Negotiate with the approved training provider regarding the content of the apprenticeship standard and cost to provide it.
71. Ensure a detailed individual learning plan is provided for agreement with the line manager and the apprentice.
72. Sign the apprenticeship agreement, ensuring all parties are aware of their responsibilities
73. Support and advise the line manager and apprentice on the learning programme for its duration
74. Ensure the training is delivered in line with the apprenticeship Standard and resolve any queries
75. Assessment and evaluation of the programme once the apprentice has completed their placement
76. Carry out an exit meeting and countersign completion documents.
77. Complete change form on completion of apprenticeship and email form to payroll and recruitment to trigger permanent contract and change in salary.
78. Ongoing evaluation of external training provision.
79. Manage Wiltshire Council's apprenticeship levy funds and ensure the correct use of the Digital Apprenticeship Service.

Apprentice responsibilities

80. Attend planned and agreed formal learning and development sessions whilst working towards the apprenticeship framework either through day or block release, through generic in house or external courses
81. Complete assignments/coursework related to their programme by the set deadlines
82. Perform the job to the best of their ability
83. Discuss any problems, issues or concerns about the programme or their work with their manager, mentor or Apprenticeship team.

Recruitment team

84. Using information provided by the manager/OD consultant - Apprenticeships on the e-recruitment system, create an advert which will include standard apprenticeship agreed text.

85. Respond to recruitment queries from prospective candidates
86. Initiate all new starter actions including any DBS clearance
87. Ensure that new starter information is sent via an e-form to the payroll team.
88. Issue written conditional apprenticeship offer to candidates
89. Set up electronic personal files and ensure a copy of all relevant documentation is held on the file including a signed copy of the apprenticeship agreement and the interview notes.
90. Issue contract of permanent employment on completion of apprenticeship.

Equal Opportunities

91. This policy has been Equality Impact Assessed to identify opportunities to promote equality and mitigate any negative or adverse impacts on groups.
92. Managers will make any necessary adjustments to ensure that all employees are treated fairly.
93. For further information see the [guidance for managers on equal opportunities in recruitment](#).

Advice and guidance

94. If you require help in accessing or understanding this policy [or completing any of the associated forms] you should contact your line manager or trade union representative if you are a member.
95. If, due to the nature of your query, it is not appropriate to contact your line manager you should contact your head of service who will nominate an appropriate manager or colleague to help you. See [guidance for managers – giving advice on policies](#).

Further information

96. There are a number of related policies and procedures that you should be aware of including:

Apprenticeship guidance
Apprentice FAQs
Recruitment Policy and Procedure
Criminal records disclosures
Politically restricted posts
Code of conduct
Disciplinary

Guidelines

- [guidance for managers to managing appointments through e-recruitment](#)
- [guidance for managers to recruitment](#)
- [guidance for managers to safer recruitment](#)
- [guidance for managers - reasonable adjustments](#)

- [guidance for managers - equal opportunities in recruitment](#)
- [guidance for managers – induction](#)
- [recruitment flowchart](#)

For further information please speak to your supervisor, manager, service director or contact your [HR advisor](#).