

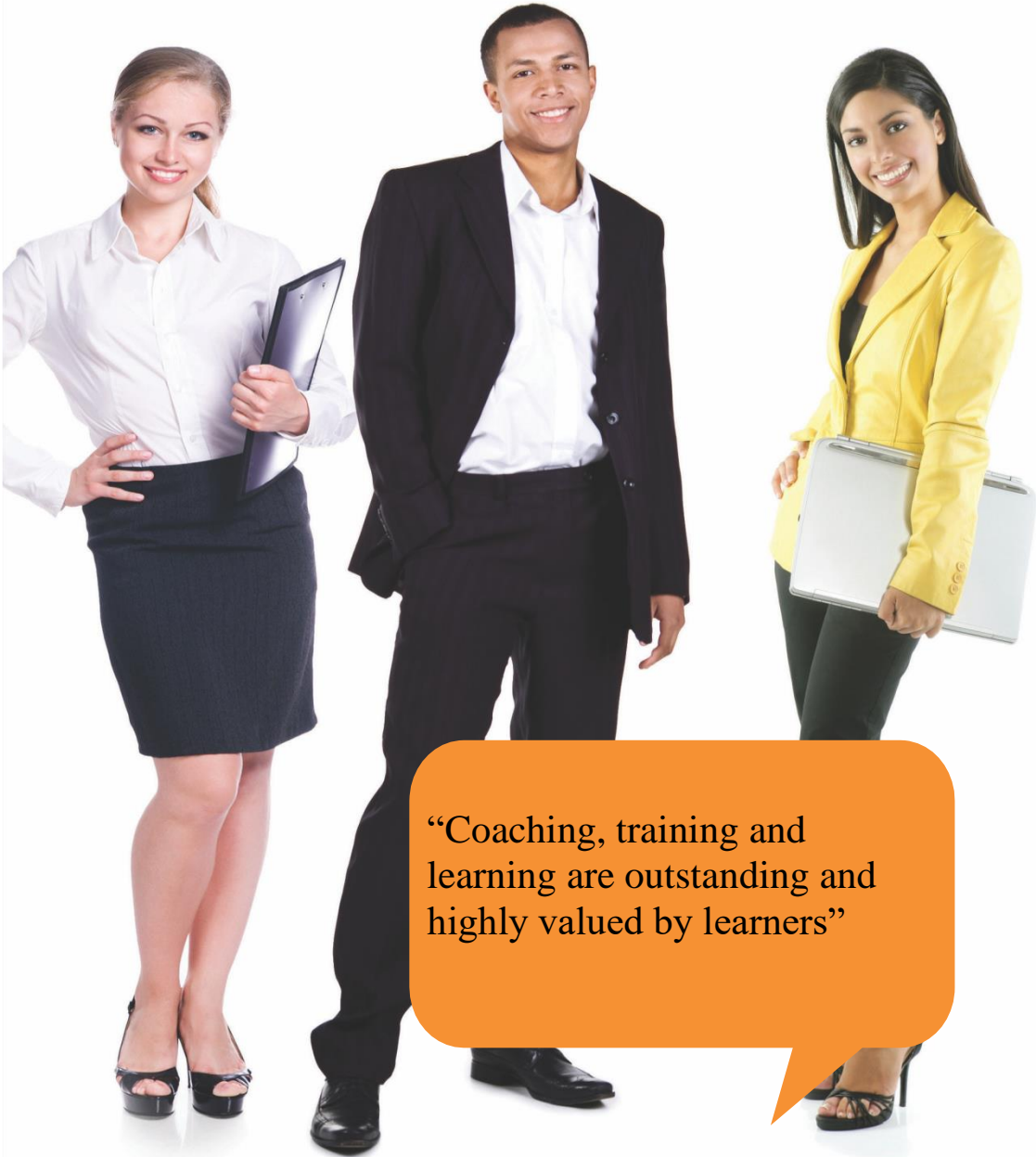


Apprenticeship Guide

Employer Handbook

We offer impartial information,
advice and guidance

www.aspire2learn.com



“Coaching, training and learning are outstanding and highly valued by learners”

Introduction

The following information has been compiled as a reference guide for employers, working in partnership with Aspire to Learn, whilst delivering an Apprenticeship programme. This guide outlines the various training methods delivered by Aspire to Learn, as well as the requirements and responsibilities of you, as an employer.

Message from the Director

“Aspire to Learn aims to create, develop and maintain a rewarding partnership with our employers. Our services have been recognised by Ofsted, and its partners, for delivering professional training and Apprenticeship qualifications

We have a team of experienced and qualified assessors whose focus is on providing a bespoke, enjoyable and motivational learning experience through support, mentoring and tailored learning to meet the individual requirements of our learners, resulting in programmes that are inspiring and engaging. The strength of our company is evident through our achievement rates and the quality of our training provisions.

I trust that your affiliation with Aspire to Learn will always be professional, responsive and productive for your organisation and that we can develop a long-term partnership, so that you recognise us as your provider of choice for all your training needs. Aspire to Learn is Matrix approved due to the quality of our comprehensive and impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service. This has been recognised through the relationships we have developed with organisations across East London and Essex”.

The Aspire to Learn Philosophy

Aspire to Learn strives to provide our Apprentices a stepping stone to their careers and help to achieve their personal goals by delivering first-rate, bespoke training that enables our learners to acquire new skills, gain employment and advance in their chosen fields. This is accomplished through customised learning, work experience or employment and regular, scheduled meetings with an allocated Assessor. Aspire to Learn caters to the needs of employers and apprentices ensuring bespoke and personalised learning and development.

Information, Advice and Guidance

Comprehensive and impartial information, advice and guidance will be offered to you and your Apprentices at every stage of the programme. As an employer to Apprentices, we will provide you with information on the progress of the programme and help you to meet your objectives in a manner and at a time that suits you and ensure that your future requirements are established.

Apprenticeship Programme Overview

Apprenticeships are for ambitious people of all ages who want to earn while they learn, gaining real skills and knowledge. They offer employers the opportunity to strengthen and diversify their workforce by providing a future talent pipeline tailored to suit the individual needs of your business. Current and existing staff can also benefit from the apprenticeship programme to help maximise personal potential as well as your business growth.

An Apprenticeship is, first and foremost, a job and comes with substantial training and the development of transferable skills, which is beneficial to both the employer and the employee. Most of the training is on-the-job working with a mentor, to learn job specific skills in the workplace. Off-the-job training will depend on the occupational area, the training organisation and the requirements and wishes of the employer.

Apprenticeships are available in 1500 occupations across 170 industries to businesses of all sizes and can last between 12 months and five years.

Apprentices bring enthusiasm and a fresh perspective, so it's no surprise that 89% of employers say an Apprentice makes their business more productive. With the expansion of higher and degree Apprenticeships businesses can now access the higher-level technical skills for new and existing staff vital to business performance and growth.

Apprenticeships bring opportunities to attract new talent, offer progression and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce. They can also help lower recruitment costs; 75% of Apprentice

employers have found this to be the case and 80% say that Apprenticeships will play a bigger part in their future recruitment plans.

Our Recruitment Service

If you are looking to recruit an Apprentice, subject to terms and conditions, we offer a complete recruitment service, at no cost to you. We will give you;

- A dedicated account manager who will discuss your employment needs
- Create vacancy adverts based on your specification
- Pre-Interview and assessment of applicants

We ensure that we select the best Apprenticeship candidates for your business.

The 3 Levels of Apprenticeships

We offer Apprenticeships at 3 levels:

- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Higher Level

Intermediate Apprenticeship: This is the equivalent of a level 2 qualification or five GCSE passes at grade A*-C. It provides the learner with the skills and a qualification based on their chosen career. It also allows entry, if desired, to an Advanced Apprenticeship.

Advanced Apprenticeship: This is the equivalent of a level 3 qualification or two A-Level passes. To start this programme, the Apprentice must have five GCSE passes at grade A*-C or have completed an Intermediate Apprenticeship. This qualification will provide you with further skills and knowledge for your chosen career. It will also allow entry, if desired, to a Higher Apprenticeship or Degree level qualification.

Higher Apprenticeship: This is the equivalent of a level 4 or 5 qualification or a Foundation Degree. To start this programme, the Apprentice must have a level 3 qualification, A-Levels, Advanced Diploma or International Baccalaureate or have completed an Advanced Apprenticeship.

Allowances and Wages

Apprentices under 19 years or 19 years and over and in the first year of their Apprenticeship are entitled to £3.50 per hour. However, the employer may choose to pay the Apprentice at a higher rate. Once the Apprentice reaches 19 years and has completed the first year of the Apprenticeship the employer must pay the full National Minimum Wage. All other Apprentices are eligible for the full [National](#)

[Minimum Wage and National Living Wage](#) for their age.

It is recommended that employers find out what the average wage is for Apprentices within a particular industry, taking in to consideration their age and experience.

Hours of Work

The SFA stipulates Apprentices should not work less than 30 hours per week. Young workers, normally those under the age of 18, must not exceed 8 hours per day or 40 hours per week. This includes any time spent with Aspire to Learn as it will be included in their full-time learning. Any hours worked over the recommended 40 hours per week should be in full agreement with the Apprentice and paid at the standard rate of overtime for the relevant industry.

Apprentices are also entitled to rest breaks of at least 30 minutes if their shift lasts more than four and a half hours. It is possible, if the Apprentice is undertaking their Functional Skills, block sessions may be offered to the employer and Apprentice to minimise time spent away from the workplace.

Aspire to Learn Requirements

Generally, the Apprentice will be required to meet with their allocated Assessor at least once a month. However, there are times when this may need to be more frequent based on the requirements of the framework being studied. It is expected that these meetings will be scheduled in advance and will adhere to the time frame which has been agreed. Whilst the majority of the framework can be completed within the workplace, there may be times that this is not possible and the Apprentice will need to attend Aspire to Learn.

Recording and Reviewing the Progress of Your Apprentice

The Assessor allocated to your Apprentice will attend the workplace, enabling them to carry out observations of the Apprentice, perform professional discussions and conduct progress reviews. These reviews are organised at intervals of 8 weeks. There may be circumstances which dictate the reviews may be carried out at intervals of 4 weeks, but this depends on the Apprentice and the progress which they are making. During the review, both the employer and Apprentice need to be present and have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion of progression, targets and future action plans. All assessments will be carried out by the assessor, at a time to suit both the employer and the

Apprentice to ensure that there is minimal disruption to the working day.

Off-the-Job Training

Off-the-job training is defined as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. This can include training that is delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties. The off-the-job training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship framework or standard and could include the following. The teaching of theory (for example: lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning or manufacturer training). Practical training: shadowing; mentoring; industry visits and attendance at competitions. Learning support and time spent writing assessments/ assignments. It does not include:

- English and maths (up to level 2) which is funded separately
- progress reviews or on-programme assessment needed for an apprenticeship framework or standard
- training which takes place outside the apprentice's paid working hours

On-the-Job Training

The training and activities carried out by the Apprentice in the work place are a vital part of the "on-the-job training" component of the work-based learning programme. As such, the Assessor will work with the employer to identify key tasks and experiences the Apprentice will need to gain in the workplace to compliment the "off-the-job training" component provided by Aspire to Learn. The combination of these training plans will allow the Apprentice to provide the evidence of their competence in key areas of their QCF and Functional Skills components to ensure successful completion of the full programme.

Disciplinary Procedures

The discipline of any Apprentice in the workplace is the responsibility of the employer. However the Assessor should be notified of serious breaches of discipline or recurring minor disciplinary problems and will intervene where appropriate, as per the terms of conditions of the apprenticeship agreement.

If the employer does not have their own disciplinary procedure, the policy created by Aspire to Learn may be adapted and implemented for the Apprentice whilst in the workplace; please contact your Assessor for more information.

Holiday Entitlement

An Apprentice has the right to the same holiday entitlement as other employees. The standard holiday entitlement for an employee in the UK is 4 weeks off each year. As an employer, you may offer more than this or increase it when the Apprentice has been there longer, but this minimum still applies.

Sickness and Absence

The Apprentice doesn't have to inform Aspire to Learn if they are absent, unless they are due to meet with their assessor on that day.

Any sickness or absence must be accounted for and recorded as specified in the Apprentices' contract of employment. If the Apprentice is absent from work for 3 consecutive weeks, dependent on the circumstances, the Apprentice may have to leave the programme or take a planned break in learning.

Employer Characteristics

Each employer working with Aspire to Learn will be expected to provide quality work experience and learning within a safe working environment. An Apprenticeship Learning Agreement between the employer, Aspire to Learn and the Apprentice will address the responsibilities involved and the conditions that apply.

The employer is encouraged to take an active role in all aspects of the Apprentices' development and welfare, particularly for the following areas:

- Nominating a supervisor or mentor to be responsible for the Apprentice
- Carrying out an agreed programme of induction, where relevant
- Taking part in qualification assessments and reviews
- Ensuring equality of opportunity to the Apprentice at all times.

The supervisor or mentor should encourage and support the Apprentice to collect work evidence to assist with the completion of the course framework. This evidence includes: completed

diary or work sheets, photographs and other visual or written evidence of work.

The Assessor responsible for your Apprentices' programme should be kept up to date on matters relating to attendance, discipline, accidents, etc. as detailed later.

Please remember that our staff can be contacted for discussions using any of the mediums below:
Address: 68 George Lane, South Woodford, London, E18 1LW.
Telephone: 020 8989 9832
Email: info@aspire2learn.com

Equal Opportunities

Aspire to Learn is committed to its policy, and the practice of, Equality of Opportunity. This commitment applies to all aspects of work by Aspire to Learn and to all members of the Aspire to Learn community, regardless of gender, age, race, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, political beliefs or any other trait commonly identified for discrimination.

Everyone connected with Aspire to Learn is expected to take responsibility for ensuring that Equality of Opportunity and Human Rights including British values are promoted. This includes creating a culture of mutual respect in which all contributions to society, as a whole, and this organisation are valued.

The aims and objectives, outlined below, demonstrate the expectations of Aspire to Learn:

- To comply with all relevant legislations, including the Race Relations, Sex Discrimination and Disability Discrimination Acts.
- To ensure an environment free from harassment, unfair or unlawful discrimination
- To develop the ethos of Equality of Opportunity and take positive steps to promote said ethos.
- To regularly review the policies and procedures which promote and protect Equality of Opportunity
- To organise and access opportunities that foster a culture of equality in both staff and Apprentices
- To discourage and actively oppose any unfair or unlawful discrimination

- To monitor procedures and activities to ensure effectiveness
- To take into account the needs of Apprentices, particularly those which create barriers to participation
- To take positive action to redress unjustified disparities in education and employment.

Health and Safety Information

As an Apprentice employer, it is extremely important that an induction to the workplace is carried out for all new apprentices. It is important that your Apprentices are made familiar with their environment, colleagues, duties, regulations and health and safety requirements. Inductions are best offered before an Apprentice starts any new practical activities.

During the induction process, a member of staff from Aspire to Learn will be present to ensure that all requirements of the health and safety induction are carried out. Should the requirements not be met, the Apprentice will be unable to begin their programme. The following checklist suggest routine items which should be covered efficiently as Apprentices are shown around the premises for the first time or when they move in to a new area within the company. Please note that the checklist can be either lengthened or shortened to meet your individual needs as an employer. You should adapt it in accordance with changes made within the workplace and as policies and procedures are updated or replaced.

- Supervisor and mentor roles
- Company policies and procedures
- Smoking policy
- Key safety personnel
- Location of First Aid boxes and personnel
- Safe working systems
- Toilet and personal hygiene facilities
- Eating facilities
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Hazardous operations
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments
- Prohibited equipment and areas
- The safe use of equipment
- Housekeeping agendas and policies
- Disciplinary rules and regulations
- Accident Report procedures
- Fire and evacuation procedure

The basis of workplace health and safety legislation is the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, of which the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is a part.

Employers have a legal obligation to comply with any health and safety legislation in relation to their premises and to the activities in which Apprentices are involved.

Employers should pay particular attention to:

- Ensuring the company's Health and Safety Policy is brought to the attention of the Apprentice
- Offering a complete Health and Safety induction, including issuing any relevant literature.
- Offering information, advice, training and instruction on Health and Safety and safe working practices to Apprentices. This should, where necessary, be confirmed in writing.
- Keep a complete record of all safety training given to Apprentices.
- Ensuring Apprentices do not work on plant machinery or in locations from which they are prohibited by law and that such prohibitions are recorded and monitored.
- Investigate all incidents and accidents involving an Apprentice and take appropriate remedial action
- Provide PPE free of any levy.

If an Apprentice is prohibited from working on or with particular machinery, or should not take part in any processes within specific work areas, it should be specified both verbally and in written form to ensure complete understanding of the restrictions.

In some circumstances, Apprentices may be at a higher risk than adults and will, therefore, require closer supervision. It is the employer's responsibility to decide how best to protect their Apprentices by devising and operating working practices relevant to the workplace.

There is also a responsibility to make sure that the Apprentice is safe if they remain within the workplace during meal breaks and rest periods.

It should be noted that, during monitoring visits, the Assessor will make further checks on Health and Safety to record any changes and log details of any additional training which has been carried out. The actions necessary to protect Apprentices will depend on the nature of the business, the layout of the workplace and potential hazards. As an employer, you have obligations under various legislations, of which there are many. Below is a list, which is not exhaustive by any means, which may be relevant to

your organisation. If you require any further information on a particular piece of legislation, please do not hesitate to contact Aspire to Learn and we are happy to be of service.

The regulations are as follows:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- Noise at Work Act
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER) Regulations 1998
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Regulation 1992
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations (DSE) 1992
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Sex Discrimination Act 1995
- Equal Opportunities Act 1976

Duty of Care

All those who are involved in the provision of learning owe a duty of care to the Apprentice. The duty bears most directly on the employer who, at the time, has the Apprentice in their charge. However, others whose actions and omissions have a bearing on the Apprentice's well-being must share the duty of care. Employers may be sued if they are negligent in their duty of care towards an Apprentice, even if they are not breaking any specific laws.

Reporting Accidents

Your Apprentice's Assessor will need to be made aware if any accidents which happen within the workplace involving Apprentices.

The reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 states that "if you are an employer, self employed or anyone in control of work premises, you are required to report some work-related accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences.

Reporting accidents and ill health at work is a legal requirement. The information enables the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and local authorities to

identify where and how risks arise and enables them to investigate serious accidents.

As an employer, you must report all of the following:

- Death or major injury
- An injury which lasts over 7 days. This is applicable when an employee, Apprentice or self-employed person has an accident at work and is unable to work for over 7 days but does not have a serious injury. Please note that the 7 days includes weekends and public holidays.
- A work related disease
- A dangerous occurrence. This is applicable when something happens that does not result in a reportable injury but which clearly could have done.

Responsibilities of the Apprentice

Apprentices have the same duty of care as everyone else and must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare. The Health and Safety (Training for Employment) Regulations 1990 extends the duties required of employers to Apprentices. For example, an Apprentice must take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves and others during their training activities and to co-operate with employers and colleagues.

Safeguarding

The health, safety and welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is of primary concern to Aspire to Learn. Therefore, we take all necessary precautions to ensure that risks are minimised. Where there are concerns about a young person or vulnerable adult's welfare, Aspire to Learn will work alongside the employer to resolve any issues.

From April 2017 all employers will have to contribute 10% of the cost for the training via the Apprenticeship levy

What is the Levy exactly?

The Levy is a Government tax of 0.5% for every employer with a pay-bill of over £3 million. It will be collected by HMRC, directly via PAYE process. There is a £15,000 allowance, similar to PAYE tax allowance. No employer is exempt (including charities, colleges etc). The levy will be collected from employers monthly **starting 6 April 2017** and will be held in a 'virtual' Account"

- The levy will be 0.5% of an employer's pay bill which is in excess of £3million (No employer is exempt). It is employer's responsibility to declare via PAYE that they are a levy paying organisation
- The levy will be collected monthly by HMRC, directly via the PAYE process and accessed through the new Digital Apprenticeship Service. Monthly levy payments will go up or down according to employer payroll amount (fluctuations in staffing and seasonal employment), with overpayment rebated at year end.
- There will be a £15,000 allowance for levy paying companies, similar to PAYE tax allowance, to off-set against the levy.
- The Government will top-up monthly funds for apprenticeship training by 10%*. In addition, Government will contribute £2000 towards the cost of apprenticeships for all apprentices aged 16-18 and apprentices aged 19-24 with a local authority Education Health and Care Plan. £1000 for the employer, £1000 for the provider.
- Non-levy paying companies (those under the £3m pay bill threshold) will access apprenticeship funding through a new Government funded **co-investment model**.

This will be paid over the duration of the Apprentice time in learning

Terms & Conditions For Hiring An Apprentice

1. Apprenticeship Agreement and Guidelines

- 1.1 It is the responsibility of the Apprentice and the Employer to understand and adhere to all relevant Governmental and legal guidelines pertaining to the National Apprenticeship Programme.
- 1.2 Apprentices must be employed for no less than 30 hours per week and no more than 40 hours per week.
- 1.3 As the employer of Apprentices, it is imperative that you ensure all reasonable effort is made to ensure the Apprentice completes all elements of their framework in accordance with the National Apprenticeship Guidelines and Standards and the Apprenticeship Agreement a three-way contract of conditions between Aspire to Learn, the Apprentice and the Employer.
- 1.4 In accordance with the Apprenticeship Agreement, regular contact (minimum one meeting per calendar month) is to be maintained between the Assessor, the Apprentice and the Employer.
- 1.5 As an employer, you will need to assign a mentor to the Apprentice and ensure that regular meetings take place to review the progress of the Apprenticeship Programme and employee

objectives are being met. You will need to allocate time for meetings with the Assessor and the completion of necessary paperwork pertaining to the progress of the Programme.

- 1.6 It is important that your Apprentice has sufficient time during personal and working hours, to be able to complete all elements of their Programme. Furthermore, you have to allow time for your Apprentice to attend any examinations which they are required to undertake.

2. Health and Safety

- 2.1 In accordance with Health and Safety laws, all employers must have valid Employer Liability insurance and a Health and Safety Policy including any necessary risk assessments in place and you must provide the details of said policies to Aspire to Learn.
- 2.2 Apprentices must have sufficient Health and Safety training within the workplace including how to report accidents and to whom they should be reported.
- 2.3 It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that all possible measures are taken to ensure that the welfare and safety of the Apprentice is paramount and that all risks are minimised.

3. Holiday Entitlement

- 3.1 Apprentices are entitled to the same annual leave as any other employee, including statutory holidays. Currently, this is 28 days per annum; including all Public holidays.
- 3.2 The Apprentice must follow company procedures when requesting annual leave.
- 3.3 Apprentices, under the age of 19 or those aged 19 and over but completing the first year of an Apprenticeship, are entitled to £3.50 per hour and must be paid in accordance with your company's procedure.
- 3.4 Apprentices which have completed their first year of their Apprenticeship are entitled to National Minimum Wage according to their age. These rates are applicable to time spent training with Aspire to Learn, for example when the Apprentice is taking their exams are hours worked.
- 3.5 As an employer, it is at your discretion to pay the Apprentice more than the minimum wage.

However, you must continue to pay the agreed rate until the Apprentice has completed their Programme or until they are eligible for the National Minimum Wage.

- 3.6 All wage agreements must be in writing.

4. Reasonable Effort

- 4.1 Upon hiring an Apprentice, you are contractually obligated, for 12 months, to employ said Apprentice until they have completed their Apprenticeship Programme.
- 4.2 Every effort should be made, by all parties, to ensure the Apprentice remains on target with their programme and in employment.
- 4.3 The contract cannot be terminated in the case of redundancy unless the company closes or fundamentally changes its character.

5. Existing Employees

- 5.1 If your Apprentice is an existing employee, Aspire to Learn can, at our discretion, waive any additional training fees and employer contribution.
- 5.2 You cannot amend wages of an existing employee to the minimum apprenticeship wage.
- 5.3 If the employer ceases the Apprenticeship Programme before the end date, the employer may be liable to repay any administrative and resources expenses incurred by Aspire to Learn at our discretion including recruitment fees.
- 5.4 If the employee ceases their Apprenticeship Programme before the end date, the employer may be liable to repay any administrative and resources expenses incurred by Aspire to Learn at our discretion including recruitment fees.
- 5.5 The Apprenticeship Agreement can only be terminated without any costs being incurred to the employer if it is proven that the Apprentice is unteachable or untrainable and all parties agree to the termination.

6. Apprentice Misconduct

- 6.1 Apprentices who have an apprenticeship contract have additional rights. The level of misconduct, committed by an Apprentice, would need to be much higher than that of an ordinary employee for dismissal to be considered fair in the eyes of the law. However, the policies of your company, relevant to misconduct and dismissal, would still have to be followed and the Apprentice would be

subject to the same processes as an ordinary employee.

- 6.2 If the Apprentice is in breach of the Apprenticeship Agreement, as an employer, you are unable to cease training. Aspire to Learn will intervene upon being alerted, by any party, to any breaches and mediate to resolve issues.
- 6.3 The Apprenticeship Agreement can only be terminated without any costs being incurred to the employer if it is proven that the Apprentice is unteachable or untrainable and all parties agree to the termination.

Further information on Apprenticeships and the employer's obligations can be found on www.gov.uk.

Aspire to Learn contact information

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