

Norfolk County Council, Adult Learning

Apprenticeships Employer Engagement Practice

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Promoting Apprenticeships

Current methods of promoting apprenticeships to employers include:

- a) Our Adult Learning web page with pages dedicated to apprenticeships including success stories and case studies of previous and existing apprentices and their employers. This includes information for employers and potential apprentices
- b) Exhibiting at careers fairs within schools and at Business to Business (B2B) events
- c) Ensuring a presence at B2B networking events and working with the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce
- d) An active presence through social media capitalising on not only the vast following of Adult Learning as a provider but drawing on the audience of followers of Norfolk County Council
- e) Generation of fact sheets and other promotional materials detailing the advantages of employing apprentices as well as giving information on specific apprenticeship standards
- f) Cold calling to generate opportunities to promote apprenticeships to employers
- g) A dedicated Adult Learning Business Development Team enquiry email address and phone number
- h) Delivering talks to employers on the benefits of employing apprentices at events or at their premises
- i) A dedicated team of Business Development Recruitment Officers to engage with and offer an advisory and support service to employers
- j) Adult Learning are listed on the Find Apprenticeship Training (FAT) website
- k) Adult Learning are listed on the Apprenticeships Norfolk website where enquiries are closely monitored and followed up within one working day
- l) Adult Learning have presence on organisations' preferred employer procurement frameworks, these employers include various NHS trusts and Norfolk County Council
- m) We serve the residents and employers across all of Norfolk with our entire apprenticeship Standards offer. The current offer our current offer can be found at: [Adult Learning Website](#)

Where available, Adult Learning ensure attendance at industry specific events and networking groups to ensure an up-to-date understanding of the requirements, developments, and challenges within specific industries. Current examples include LEP priority groups such as Digital Inclusion and Social Care, the Norfolk Visitor Economy Group and working groups at strategic level within Norfolk County Council.

Working with Employers to Develop and Train Apprentices

Adult Learning work closely with employers from promotion and initial engagement through to an apprentice's completion. We will then continue to work with that employer to gather feedback and where appropriate develop further programmes of progression through either apprenticeships or vocational programmes. Development of apprenticeship programmes are designed around the employer's needs wherever possible incorporating the need for the apprentice and employer to have planned 20%

of their contracted time off the job. We ensure flexibility as far as is reasonably

practicable through the effective use of roll-on roll-off programmes, blended learning, distance learning, on-line resources, and our e-portfolio platform.

Adult Learning ensure continuous engagement with the employer through effective customer service from the Business Development Recruitment Officer who manages the relationship very closely in the first few weeks of the apprentice starting with regular communication to ensure the process has begun to the employer's and apprentice's expectations.

The Business Development Recruitment Officer will be the relationship manager for the duration of the apprentice's journey from then on, however; support for the apprentice and employer will be taken up more closely by the Apprenticeships Tutor/Assessor (ATA).

The ATA will be there to offer continuous advice, guidance and coaching where necessary to the employer on how they can train, mentor, and support their apprentice through the duration of the apprentice's programme. The employer will be involved in the regular reviews of apprenticeship progress resulting in effective feedback and SMART action planning for both employer and apprentice and this is effectively recorded and followed up on the -e-portfolio to which the employer has access.

All training that has been completed will be recorded on the e-portfolio system alongside action plans, reviews, assessment tasks, feedback on assignments, observations, professional discussions, and all other assessment methods.

All ATAs are required to continuously update their industry, academic and subject knowledge and ensure they maintain up to date capabilities in all of these areas. They are subject to regular learning walks and formal observations and receive full reports with development actions and CPD where necessary that are monitored and followed up with regular one-to-ones with their line manager or subject coordinator. All CPD and standardisation events are recorded on the ATA's central CPD record.

Managing Relationships with Employers

In addition to the process detailed above, should the employer or apprentice have any concerns or complaints, they are escalated as follows:

- a) Employer and/or apprentice to raise concerns with the ATA as these can normally be resolved quickly and easily through direct communication as these would normally be due to either a miscommunication or the need to adjust delivery methods and ways of working.
- b) Should a resolution to the concern not be forthcoming or if the employer/ATA feels they cannot address this directly with the ATA, then they can raise their concern with the appropriate Curriculum Manager for their sector of provision who will work to find a resolution to the problem.
- c) The Curriculum Manager will make the decision as to whether they can find a resolution to any concerns or whether to escalate them to the Assistant Head of Service, Academic Planning and Service Quality (AHoS), who is part of the Senior Leadership Team of Adult Learning.

- d) The AHoS will work to resolve the issues with the employer directly and has overall responsibility for managing relationships with employers and the ability to act independently and take decisions.

Should no resolution be found to the satisfaction of the employer, then they will be directed to the Norfolk County Council complaints procedure.

Procedure for Questions and General Communications

With regard to existing apprentices on programme both employers and their apprentices can direct their questions and communications directly to the apprentice's ATA either face-to-face, through email or via telephone call. Should the ATA not be able to deal with or answer directly, they will escalate the enquiry appropriately.

General employer, individual, parent/guardian or schools' enquiries for advice and guidance, questions and general communications regarding apprenticeships can be answered through the following means:

- a) [Adult Learning Website](#)
- b) [Apprenticeships Norfolk Website](#)
- c) [Find Apprenticeships Training Website](#)
- d) [Adult Learning dedicated apprenticeships enquiry email address](#)
- e) By contacting the Adult Learning Business Development Team directly by:
 - a. Email - al.bdt@norfolk.gov.uk
 - b. Telephone – 0344 800 8020 (Option 5)

Monitoring and Improving Employer Engagement

Adult Learning will continuously monitor and critically evaluate the effectiveness of our employment engagement in order to provide a better service to our customers and stakeholders, to ensure we are playing an active role in meeting the needs of Norfolk residents and employers and to address skills shortages and LEP priorities across Norfolk. We will achieve this by employing the following methods of feedback retrieval:

- a) Regular engagement with the employer through reviews of progress of their apprentice conducted every 12 weeks or less
- b) Post-induction focussed telephone surveys to gauge employer satisfaction of their apprenticeship design, development and recruitment process every six months
- c) On-line surveys to gauge employer satisfaction every six months
- d) Analysis of the annual national employer survey results
- e) Six-monthly analysis of complaints data to identify common themes and opportunities to improve our service
- f) Quarterly course review meetings to incorporate employer engagement activities and

analyse frequently asked questions

- g) Six-monthly sector specific employer forums will enable further analysis of the effectiveness of the provision and employer engagement.
- h) Contract review meetings with the employer toward the end of their apprentice's programme to develop and improve further the service and delivery they receive from Adult Learning.

Key themes will be extracted from all of the above streams of feedback annually as part of the Adult Learning Self-Assessment Review (SAR) process. This, will in turn, inform the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) where actions for improvement will filter down to sector specific apprenticeship review processes. Additionally, course reviews will be undertaken with involvement from all ATA's and Business Development Recruitment Officers to ensure continued reflection is completed at Standard level and ongoing progression and achievement can be reviewed.