

Frequently Asked Questions - Managers

What is an apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a job with an accompanying skills development programme. It combines workplace experience with formal, off-the-job training.

An apprenticeship should last for a minimum of 12 months and the apprentice must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training. The apprenticeship will usually include an end-point assessment of the apprentice's knowledge and practical capabilities.

How are apprenticeships funded in the Trust?

The Apprenticeship Levy is a Government initiative to increase the level of investment in skills and training. It applies to all employers across the UK with a pay bill in excess of £3 million. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust (SHFT) are required to pay the Apprenticeship Levy from April 2017. The LEaD Vocational Centre will be able to draw on our Levy payment to fund training of apprentices, who may be new staff or existing employees.

In order to draw on funding from the Levy, training must be delivered by an approved training provider and the apprentice must work towards an approved Framework or Standard.

What are the costs associated with taking on an apprentice?

Funding from the Apprenticeship Levy is available for apprentice training and end-point assessment, but salary costs are borne by the department. Existing staff who become apprentices could stay at their existing pay grade but this depends on the type of apprenticeship they apply for. Current terms & conditions are being discussed regarding pay, please contact LEaD/HR to discuss further. Costs associated with travel will be reimbursed by the Trust for community placements. Appropriateness of the continuation and funding of lease car provision should be discussed with their line manager.

Can existing employees do an apprenticeship?

Existing employees are eligible to do an apprenticeship and their training can be funded from the Apprenticeship Levy. It is important that the content of their training is materially different from any prior qualification or previous apprenticeships they may have completed.

Can an individual with prior qualifications do an apprenticeship?

The Levy can be used to fund apprenticeship training for an individual at the same level, or at a lower level than a current qualification, but only if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills.

What is off-the-job training?

Off-the-job training is described by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. It 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.

Examples of off-the-job training include: theory (e.g. lectures, online learning, and role play), practical training apprentices wouldn't usually do as part of their normal role (e.g. mentoring, shadowing, visits) and learning support including time spent writing assignments. **Please note:** statutory & mandatory training is required as employees but cannot count as off-the-job training.

What is my role in supporting their development?

In order to help your apprentice to develop into a productive, valuable and committed professional it is important to provide additional mentoring, support and guidance in the workplace from yourself and other colleagues for them. This does not necessarily need to be you as their manager; you could nominate another member of your team to be their mentor throughout the programme. As the manager it is important to ensure that your apprentice has a clear structure set out from the beginning of their apprenticeship programme so that they understand what is expected of them. You should expect them to adhere to the same professional standards as their colleagues.

What support is available to departments?

The LEaD Vocational Centre provides support and guidance to departments who are considering developing an apprenticeship. They can advise on the Apprenticeship Levy, help identify appropriate Frameworks or Standards and liaise with training providers. We can also advise you on the right apprenticeship, the pre-qualifications required, the duration of courses, costs involved and selection deadlines.

What is the process of studying an apprenticeship?

Initial assessment – this will establish the learner's level of confidence in English, mathematics or ICT.

On programme learning – this will develop the apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours – as required by the apprenticeship Standard.

Gateway – towards the end of the apprenticeship, employers and providers will 'sign-off' the apprentice as ready for the end-point assessment.

End point assessment (EPA) – this is a collection of assessments that offers confirmation of knowledge, skills and behaviours for a particular role. It takes place once the apprenticeship training has been completed and the apprentice is deemed ready for the EPA. The EPA must be achieved before an apprenticeship certificate can be issued.

Completion – once all the steps are achieved the Apprentice is qualified!

