

ASSESSMENT & TRAINING CENTRE

APPRENTICESHIPS

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What is on offer?

- **AGE 16-24 apprenticeship grant offer (subject to eligibility)**
- **Apprenticeships for all ages**
- **Opportunity to develop staff teams and provide for succession planning**
- **Opportunity to ensure essential skills and knowledge are passed on**

The AGE 16-24 offer is a GRANT of £1500.00 to support the employment of an apprentice for the first time (or 12 months from completion of any previous apprentice)

- The National Apprenticeship Service is looking for 40,000 new starts in small and medium sized businesses (under 1000 employees) with 20,000 being targeted to SMEs (businesses employing no more than 250 employees).
- Up to 10 GRANTS per employer can be allowed – offer is available until March 2013.
- Employers not eligible for the GRANT can still employ an apprentice under the same conditions but without the £1500.00 grant.
- Apprenticeships are open to any age – no age limits but funding is reduced.
- Good apprenticeships offer a rounded view of how the business works – they are a framework for learning and developing skills in the workplace supported with off the job training.
- Developing young people using the skills of your staff teams ensures the continuity of good practice and the future of your business.

What is an apprenticeship?

- Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes designed around the needs of employers for your existing and future employees.
- The apprenticeship framework will be relevant to your industry/sector. Business representatives from the sector have worked with the Sector Skills Councils eg Skills for Care to develop standards that reflect good working practice.
- At PATA the apprenticeships we offer are made up of National Qualifications on the QCF (Qualifications Credit Framework), functional skills in English, Maths and Information Communications Technology, ERR (Employer Rights and Responsibilities) and PLTS (Personal Learning and Thinking Skills). These are the requirements for the apprenticeship frameworks.
- Apprenticeships require good levels of basic skills; English, Maths and Information Technology skills are essential not only in everyday life but to support the professionalism and effectiveness of the business. Good GCSE grades are foundations to build upon.
- An apprenticeship **MUST** be a minimum of 12 months duration for Level 2. Level 3 is approximately 15 months dependent on the sector. Some apprenticeships can be up to 4 years.

- There are 3 types of apprenticeship: Level 2 is intermediate; Level 3 is advanced and L4 is Higher. Currently Higher Level apprenticeships are not available in the child care sector.

What employers say:

- 92% of employers believe apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce.
- 83% of employers rely on apprenticeship programmes to provide their skilled workforce. Source: www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/
- PATA's experience is that employers rely on the training provider generating new thinking and development of practice through the trainees/apprentices.
- PATA's experience from working closely with the apprentice and the employer is that the learning is significantly enhanced and supported through partnership working.

Some funding facts:

- Employers who take on a 16-18 year old apprentice only pay their salary. The Government will fund the training.
- There is no age limit for an apprenticeship BUT there are restrictions on the amount the government will fund according to the age of the apprentice. Learning for age 16-18 is fully funded. Funding is reduced to 50% from 19+ and is further reduced for over 25s. Learners cannot be asked to pay course fees – employer responsibility.
- The National Minimum Wage for apprentices was introduced on 1 October 2010 and applies to all apprentices aged under 19; and apprentices aged 19+ in the first year of their apprenticeship.
- The current minimum rate is £2.60 per hour and applies to time working and studying/training that is part of the apprenticeship. Employers are free to pay above the minimum wage. The rate will increase from October 2012.
- If an apprentice is on a higher wage due to previous employment in the business, the employer must continue to pay that rate for the remainder of the training or until the apprentice becomes eligible for the full national minimum wage.

Some employment and training facts:

- Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes, most of the training is 'on the job' – at your premises. Off-the-job can be provided by a specialist training provider or you could deliver everything yourself. This will be agreed within the Individual Learning Plan that sets out the learning requirements and expected completion dates for the apprenticeship. The employment contract must include time for off-the-job training.
- Employment must be for at least 30 hours per week, except in the minority of circumstances where the learner cannot complete the full 30 hours. In these cases employment must be for more than 16 hours per week and include provision for off-the-job training. All apprentices must be given 2 hours per week in the work setting for evidence gathering/study. Where the full 30 hours cannot be met the Employer must provide written statement on headed paper as to why the required hours cannot be met, eg setting is not registered sufficient hours with Ofsted.
- As the employer you must give your apprentices an induction into their role and provide for on-the-job training (mentoring and supervision) within the contracted hours. You are responsible for paying your apprentices wages.

- As the employer you will have to ensure you have met the Induction requirements for Health & Safety provision as required by the Funding Agency and detailed in the Apprenticeship Agreement provided by the training provider.
- The employer must ensure a suitable contract of employment is in place and be aware of new regulations ie,
 - You can now engage your apprentices under a 'contract of service' rather than a 'contract of apprenticeship', provided the agreement meets the following conditions:
 - The apprentice undertakes to work for you under the agreement;
 - The agreement is in the prescribed form (ie a written statement of particulars of employment, a written employment contract, or a letter of engagement); and
 - The agreement states that it is governed by the law of England and Wales and it is entered into in connection with a qualifying apprenticeship framework.
 (Further information will be available to prospective employers of apprentices on request.)
- Apprenticeships should only be entered into for new positions, or as opportunities for progression for existing employees – their purpose is for training.
- Your responsibility as an employer will involve participating in 12 week reviews of the apprentice's progress, these are formal auditable documents, conducted by the Assessor.
- The employer and the apprentice will be required to respond to national surveys for feedback on the quality of the training provision and also to the Training Provider for quality monitoring purposes.
- On completion of the apprenticeship it is anticipated there will be continued employment for the apprentice, employers are required to manage their apprentices towards employment wherever possible. Apprenticeships provide for development of staff teams.

What PATA will provide:

- We undertake to provide a supportive, accessible and informed training and development service to both the apprentice and the employer by working in partnership through the Learning Agreements and Individual Learning Plan for the apprentice.
- We can meet with you to discuss your needs to support your informed approach to the recruitment of an apprentice. There are no limits on the amount of apprentices you recruit but clearly you need to have sufficient supervision to manage the requirements and the needs of your business.

To apply or seek further details contact:

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