

## Code of Practice on Apprenticeships

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## 1. Purpose

This code of practice sets out the University's requirements for its management of Higher and Degree apprenticeship provision. The Code applies to all programmes of study where an apprenticeship standard is employed.

The purpose of this Code is to ensure that the University:

- a) Has clear procedures for developing and managing arrangements for delivering apprenticeships with employers
- b) Has mechanisms in place to ensure that risks are properly assessed and reviewed on a periodic basis
- c) Has in place appropriate governance arrangements for apprenticeship provision as set by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED)
- d) Is able to meet the requirements of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and the University's internal processes for the assurance of academic quality and standards

## 2. Responsibilities

Senate, as the University's academic authority, has overriding responsibility for the management of learning opportunities for all taught provision leading to an award of the University, irrespective of where they are delivered or who provides them. Some aspects of this responsibility are delegated as follows:

- a) The Education Committee (EdC) has delegated authority from Senate for the management of academic quality and standards, including the approval of codes of practice.
- b) The Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (QSSC) reports to the Education Committee and has delegated power to oversee the development and implementation of the requirements of this Code of Practice and, in particular, to approve new collaborative arrangements for delivering academic programmes upon the recommendation of the relevant Programme Approval Panel
- c) College Education Committees (CECs) and the Apprenticeship Management Board (AMB) have delegated power to implement the requirements of this Code of Practice as they relate to the monitoring and review of collaborative arrangements.
- d) The Global Collaborative Partnership Management Group (GCPM) manages the operation of the Code on behalf of the Universities Education Committee and the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee has delegated authority to approve certain forms of collaboration as set out elsewhere in this code.
- e) The Programme Portfolio Development Groups within each College have delegated authority to approve and review certain forms of low-risk partnerships on behalf of the Global Partnership Management Group and QSSC, as set out elsewhere in this code.

2.1 Senate maintains oversight of these activities through the following mechanisms:

- a) approval of this Code of Practice
- b) an annual analysis of the operation of this Code of Practice
- c) an annual report on the management of apprenticeship provision with Academic Partnerships and assurances it receives through the operation of the Annual Programme Review process

All apprenticeship programmes must be aligned with an approved national Apprenticeship Standard and associated Assessment Plan, which sets out the knowledge, skills and behaviours each apprentice needs to have in becoming fully competent in their role.

### 3. Associated Documents

The University has an extensive array of [policies and procedures](#) that are accessible for all internal stakeholders, however this document should be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations, policies and procedures, including:

- [Personal Support for Students](#)
- [Admissions Code of Practice](#)
- [Senate Regulations](#)
- [Dignity and Respect at Leicester Policy](#) (Equality & Diversity)
- [Safeguarding and PREVENT](#)
- [Data Protection Policy](#)
- [Employee Study and Training Policy](#)
- Performance Development Discussion (PDD) Departmental Guidance
- [Health and Safety Policy Statement, Organisation and Arrangements](#)
- [Complaints and Appeals](#)
- [Wellbeing](#)
- [Insurance](#)
- Staff Development Policy

### 4. Legal Governance

It is the responsibility of the University to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of the legal governance to ensure compliance of the delivery of apprenticeship training provision. All stakeholders must comply with the [current apprenticeship funding rules](#), demonstrate compliance and retain appropriate documentation commensurate to their role.

#### 4.1 Department for Education

Higher and degree apprenticeships are available at FHEQ Levels 4 to 7, combining work with study and may include a work-based, academic or combined qualification. This level of learning is equivalent to a foundation degree and above. Degree apprenticeships are available at Levels 6 and 7, the equivalent to a full Bachelor's and Master's degree. [The Department for Education](#) provides a list of the higher and degree vacancies available with an array of employers.

#### 4.2 Education and Skills Funding Agency

All approved apprenticeship programmes must conform in accordance with the Government [Education & Skills Funding Agency \(ESFA\) Apprenticeship Agreement for Training Providers](#). The agreement identifies funding provided to the training provider and where appropriate for End-Point Assessment. Both parties must act in accordance with the [Funding Rules](#).

#### 4.3 Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)

The quality of the apprenticeship training provision must comply with the [Education Inspection Framework](#) governed by Ofsted. The [Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook](#) provides a detailed account of activities carried out by Inspectors during their site inspection. The

University will ensure that all stakeholders involved in the apprenticeship training understand their roles and responsibilities to comply with this Framework.

Internal quality assurance, moderation and enhancement will support the requirements of an OfSTED inspection. This takes the form of regular position statements, annual curriculum development reviews, annual self-assessment returns and quality improvement plans.

#### 4.4 Quality Assurance Agency

The design and delivery of apprenticeship programmes must be consistent with the [Characteristics Statement](#) published by the [Quality Assurance Agency](#). This statement has been benchmarked to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education and higher education frameworks, signifying that the University can be confident that this guidance is consistent with current internal expectations.

### 5. Mandatory Documentation

All stakeholders must ensure that they understand their contribution towards the completion and restoration of all mandatory documentation required. This documentation formulates the Evidence Pack for each learner to ensure that funds are used appropriately and consists of the following documentation:

- Apprenticeship Agreement (Legal)
- Initial Needs Assessment
- Training Plans and Individual Learner Record (ILR). This will also include the assessment of the appropriate level of English and Maths. Calculation of the 20% off-the-job training (Legal)
- Recognition of prior education and learning
- Any additional support that an apprentice may require
- Individual Learner Record
- End Point Assessment Organisation
- Change of circumstances of the apprentice

Any changes made to the documentation held within the evidence pack must be updated and all parties receive a signed copy and copies retained in a central place.

### 6. Risk

It is essential to ensure that the appropriate governance and safeguarding processes are in place to meet the needs and goals of the apprentice and employer.

The University is legally required to have arrangements in place for the safety and wellbeing of all their apprentices. All staff involved in the apprenticeship delivery must follow procedures related to the safety of apprentices.

All stakeholders must be aware of their roles and responsibilities to ensure compliance is maintained and the quality of the delivery of the apprenticeship training provision is of a high standard. These risks will be managed by clear oversight at the Apprenticeship Management Board and University governance structures appropriate to apprenticeship provision and the learner journey:

### 7. Colleges and Schools

Oversight of the delivery of all apprenticeship programmes within the University of Leicester will be undertaken by the Apprenticeship Management Board. This Board will provide a quarterly report to the University's Education Committee.

Schools and Colleges will be responsible for collating feedback from apprentices via the completion of internal surveys and regular review meetings. The quality and monitoring of apprenticeship programmes from an apprentice and employers' perspective could also be obtained via the ESFA Learner Satisfaction Survey and Employer Satisfaction Survey. Outcomes of such surveys will be fed back to the Apprenticeship Board and recommendations and/or suggested alterations around the improvement of quality and delivery will be identified and implemented.

All Schools and Colleges must complete an annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to meet Ofsted requirements in line with the apprenticeship provision. The Schools and Colleges will follow the University of Leicester Apprenticeship Quality Framework for Apprenticeship provision.

The Apprenticeship Training Provision must be included in each School/College Business Continuity Plan to ensure delivery of training programmes is maintained during a significant event.

## 8. Apprenticeship Programme Development Approval

The internal process for approving new apprenticeships programmes will follow the processes set out in the Code of Practice on Programme Approval, Development and Modification. Apprentices may only be enrolled against an apprenticeship standard once this process has been completed, and upon the identification of being 'approved for delivery' on the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education [website](#).

All proposals for new, or substantially revised, programmes are required to undergo the process of internal approval via the apprenticeship programme development and approval process. The process is designed to assess the programme against the University's own quality and standards frameworks, as well as complying with the Ofsted Regulatory Framework.

The process of developing and approving a new apprenticeship programme will include consideration of the full internal and external documentary requirements for the apprenticeship.

The Development sub group of the Apprenticeship Management Board will review all draft submissions prior to consideration by the Approval Panel to ensure that all the required data is recorded and accurate, in accordance with their checklist.

In the event that a College may wish to withdraw an approved programme, the completed Programme Withdrawal Form must be raised at the Apprenticeships Management Board and submitted to the Quality and Standards Sub Committee for approval.

Upon approval all apprenticeship programmes will be monitored by the Apprenticeship Management Board and the Quality and Standards Sub Committee on behalf of Education Committee.

## 9. Structure and timing of programme delivery (including off-the-job training)

The structure of the academic year for apprenticeship programmes should align with the requirements outlined in the Framework and Regulations for the relevant award. The typical and maximum duration of the programme will be outlined in the relevant Apprenticeship Standard and the University Programme Specification.

In accordance with funding rules, all apprentices must spend at least 20% of their paid hours in off-the-job training over the planned duration of the apprenticeship programme. Off-the-job training must deliver new skills that are directly relevant to the apprenticeship and can include the teaching of theory; practical training, shadowing, mentoring, industry visits; or learning support and time spent completing

assessment tasks. Off-the-job training does not include English and Mathematics training, progress reviews or training undertaken outside the apprentice's normal working hours. Where an apprentice needs more than the minimum number of hours of off-the-job training in order to develop full occupational competence, this must be provided. The number of planned off-the-job training hours for the full apprenticeship programme must be supported by the Initial Needs Assessment and recorded on the Apprenticeship Agreement, the Training Plan and the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

Arrangements for delivering off-the-job training and monitoring whether the 20% minimum requirement has been met will be considered as part of programme validation and re-approval processes. Apprentices must record off-the-job learning activity throughout their apprenticeship programme, facilitated by the Academic Partnerships Team and The School, who will give apprentices the opportunity to reflect on the previous month's off-the-job calculations. Compliance relating to off-the-job training requirements will be monitored through the tripartite review process and overseen by the relevant School delivery team. Actual hours of off-the-job training must be documented on the ILR, with proof of delivery contained within the evidence pack. Where planned and actual off-the-job training hours do not match, there must be a statement signed by the employer and apprentice explaining the difference and confirming that they are satisfied with the quantity of training delivered.

Modes of delivery for apprenticeship programmes will vary according to the employer's requirements, and may include day release, block release or a blended learning approach involving a combination of face-to-face and distance learning. In accordance with the funding rules, off-the-job training cannot be delivered solely via distance learning. The structure and timing of delivery and duration of study will be approved at the point of validation and outlined in the Course Handbook.

## 10. Employer Engagement

The University will be responsible for employer engagement through the following phases of the apprentice life-cycle:

### 10.1 Admissions and initial planning

- plan the initial assessment, training, assessments, review points and milestones throughout
- agree any additional qualifications to be included
- Recruitment of Learners (and eligibility checks)
- Completion of Initial Needs Assessment (INA)

### 10.2 On programme delivery, support and feedback

- Employers involved in shaping the curriculum content, coverage, structure and sequencing. (monitoring and review)
- Management of Communication with the employer relating to any concerns and issues raised.
- Feedback from employers during tripartite review meetings must be logged and reported via the appropriate routes.

Support is normally provided by the employer through the appointment of a mentor (or equivalent), who is usually a more senior or experienced member of staff who is able to provide advice and guidance to the apprentice and support them in developing the required knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the Apprenticeship Standard. The course validation and re-approval process must ensure that the appropriate arrangements for supporting the apprentice in the workplace are evidenced. This includes arrangements for appointing, briefing, training and supporting workplace mentors.

### 10.3 Post programme alumni and future tracking

- Destination tracking and future skills

## 11. [Apprenticeship Agreement and Training Plan](#)

In accordance with the EFSA funding rules, there must be a written 'Apprenticeship Agreement' contract in place between the University and the employer. This contract must be prepared, signed and in place prior to the commencement of the apprenticeship programme.

A tripartite meeting must be scheduled between the University, Employer and Apprentice to discuss and complete all requirements detailed in the Training Plan. The Training Plan will align with the funding rules and include a detailed plan of training for the apprentice. The training plan will also include the calculation for the off-the-job training hours required to ensure completion of the apprenticeship programme.

Initial assessments, training requirements, review points and milestones will be identified and monitored throughout the programme. Should any information held within the documentation be changed throughout the period of the training provision, the documentation will be updated and re-signed by all parties. Updated copies will be stored and distributed accordingly.

Where learners require additional needs, all parties will ensure that their learning programme accommodates their needs and provides the opportunity to develop their independence, improve communication skills and support in making relevant personal choices and decisions in order to help prepare them for adult life. Individually tailored learning programmes may need to be developed, harnessing the university's already established academic skills support structures.

All three parties will agree on the intervals in which the commitment statement and the apprentice's progress are reviewed during the apprenticeship. These will take place as the ESFA recommends having these reviews every 8-12 weeks. This provides an opportunity for the provider, employer and apprentice to confirm that each are happy that the others are meeting their commitments, or to take steps to address any failures to meet the intended commitments.

## 12. [Monitoring and Review of Learning Progression](#)

Individual learners must receive a tripartite progress review meeting every 8-10 weeks. The meetings will include the apprentice, their line manager and representative from the relevant school/college. The review meeting must include a review of progression against the relevant Apprenticeship Standard and the training plan in addition to ensuring that the apprentice is on target to meet the 20% minimum off-the-job training requirement. Any changes in personal circumstances or employment information must be discussed and recorded.

The monitoring of attendance at learning and teaching sessions must be undertaken by the relevant School/College in line with the University's Policy on [Student Engagement](#). All absences of apprentices must be reported to their employer within 24 hours by the relevant School/College, with the support and knowledge of the Academic Services Manager (Apprenticeships).

The tripartite review meetings allow an opportunity to monitor and raise awareness regarding the safety of apprentices. This will include discussion around Safeguarding and PREVENT, in line with the University's policy allowing the opportunity to raise concerns with relevant colleagues.

The tripartite review will assess the learner's progression, understanding and improvements that may be required based on their level of learning. An assessment will be made on their knowledge, skills and

behaviours and whether individual challenging targets have been met to ultimately meet the progression towards the End Point Assessment.

**A formal record of all meetings will be retained and held within the relevant evidence pack.**

Assessing learners' progress including for specific learner groups.

Apprentices will be monitored and supported throughout their learning experience and this includes those with SEND and those who have high needs, to progress quickly, gain new knowledge, skills and behaviours and achieve to their full potential. A yearly progress report will be generated by the school for each learner for the benefit of the employer review.

### 13. Marketing and promotion

The University marketing and communications strategy for apprenticeship provision may include the following:

- Sector Strategy – national, regional and local employer needs and how these can be fulfilled. Utilising existing provision and core competencies in planning how we can use it.
- Marketing and Communication Strategy
- Marketing Plan
- Proposition Development.
- Market Insight and Competitor Scanning
- Website creation with unit and programme detail
- Social Media
- Employer facing literature
- Video promotion and case studies
- Development of the [‘Recruit an Apprentice Service’](#)

### 14. Learner Focus and Satisfaction

Quality improvement and enhancement will be built around a robust feedback and experience monitoring. The following feedback will be captured:

- Internal Survey – quarterly (apprentice, employer and delivery staff)
- External Survey – NSS (apprentice)
- Focus Group – Termly (apprentice)
- Learner Representatives (apprentice)
- Staff culture of openness and support – training and operating procedures

The Apprenticeship programme will have a learner and employer centred approach. Learner voice surveys and focus groups will form the basis for feedback on the quality of the provision in a timely fashion. This will allow improvements to be made throughout the program and be reviewed by both operational and strategic boards. Feedback will be used to produce the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Self-Assessment Return (SAR).

### 15. Complaints and Appeals

The Apprenticeship complaints will follow the overarching University of Leicester policy and procedure for complaints and appeals. The ‘Complaints Policy and Procedure for Apprentices and Employers’ will form the first point of reference for addressing complaints.

The ESFA can be contacted via the National Apprenticeship helpline by calling 0800 015 0400 or 0247 682 6482 or emailing [nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk)

## 16. Reporting

Information is provided to help the University collect, return and check the quality of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and other learner data. [Guidance, validation rules and IRL specifications form the basis for the monthly return.](#)

Internal reporting will use the ILR ([ILR Template](#)), and support the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and Self-Assessment Return (SAR). For this to be effective the following criteria will be recorded:

- Numbers of learners
- Achievement rates
- Success Rates
- Attendance rates
- Punctuality
- Conduct and behaviour
- Performance Reviews

## 17. Training of Internal Stakeholders

The Training framework and learning outcomes for all internal stakeholders will include the delivery of training for Colleges and Schools.

The Quality Improvement Plan will drive the operational improvement through action planning.

Progress data will be reviewed to monitor apprenticeship progression and the identification of any issues. Regular contact will be made with the employer to ensure the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours were being delivered, assessed and monitored as part of the apprenticeship. The review will also cover English, Maths and other mandatory qualifications where appropriate.

Updates to the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) and employers will be provided for each apprentice's progress on a termly basis.

Holding tailored open events for employers, career starters and those who may be seeking a change of career or progress in their existing career.

## 18. Employer Engagement, Admissions and Registration

The apprenticeship programme must be aligned with the relevant Apprenticeship Standard and entry requirements set out in the University of Leicester programme specification. All apprentices must have successfully achieved Level 2 functional skills or GCSE grade A\* to C (or 9 to 4) in English and Mathematics before being eligible to proceed to the Gateway to EPA. Where this is not set as an entry requirement for the apprenticeship programme, the University will make provision for enabling apprentices to achieve Level 2 functional skills. It is mandatory in these cases that apprentices undertake an initial diagnostic assessment as part of the induction process, with a copy of their results stored in the evidence pack prior to their first date in learning. A functional skills support plan must be in place prior to any functional skills examinations being arranged. Successful achievement of functional skills through an awarding organisation recognised by Ofqual must be evidenced prior to the Gateway.

In accordance with the funding rules, students on apprenticeship programmes are required to be in full-time or part-time employment (normally for at least 30 hours per week), and must have an employment contract which is long enough for them to successfully complete the apprenticeship programme (including the EPA). Information on paid hours must be provided at the application stage. The apprentice's job role must provide them with the opportunity to embed and consolidate new knowledge, skills and behaviours gained throughout the apprenticeship.

The University is responsible for checking the eligibility for funding for individuals prior to admission to the apprenticeship programme, in accordance with the eligibility criteria outlined in the funding rules. All employers must have a unique learner number (ULN) and be registered on the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS). An Initial Needs Assessment of the apprentice's existing knowledge, skills and behaviours against those required to achieve occupational competence must be undertaken as part of the process for determining eligibility for admission to an apprenticeship programme, and included in the evidence pack. This must include consideration of any knowledge, skills or behaviours gained via work experience and/or prior education or training. In accordance with the funding rules.

The University is required to demonstrate that prior learning has been accounted for and that the content, duration and price of the apprenticeship is adjusted accordingly where the apprentice has prior learning necessary to achieve the occupational competence. Any relevant prior learning identified through the Initial Needs Assessment process must be formally approved in accordance with the University's Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), using the information contained within the Initial Needs Assessment form and associated evidence. Initial Needs Assessments must be authorised by the relevant Course Leader prior to the apprentice induction and subsequent start date.

Strong employer partnerships are essential to high quality apprenticeships, working closely with employers from the outset. Initial meetings address the training needs analysis of the organisation via the completion of a job to standard checklist. The commitment Statement will be reviewed with the employer to ensure expectations are identified from the outset and include discussing the shared responsibility for the apprentice's progression, development and wellbeing. Apprentices and employers need to be made aware of [what constitutes Off-the-job training and full guidance is here](#).

Every apprentice will need to undertake an assessment at the end of their apprenticeship to provide the necessary evidence that they are occupationally competent. Except in the case of integrated degree apprenticeships (see below), all end-point assessments need to be undertaken by an independent organisation, selected by the employer.

The University will assist the employer with the selection of an [End-point Assessment Organisation \(EPAO\)](#) from the register of EPAOs. If the price of the apprentice taking their assessment with the chosen EPAO has not already been decided between the EPAO and the employer a negotiated price would be agreed.

The University will provide contract with the end-point assessment organisation that has been selected by the employer and work closely with them. The University will make sure that the curriculum is designed ensuring that apprentices prepare for the specific assessment that they will complete from the beginning of their apprenticeship. The University will liaise regularly with the EPAO and discuss any reasonable adjustments for apprentices which need to be made at the earliest opportunity (any application for reasonable adjustments must be supported by evidence).

For further information is provided on [the Institute for Apprenticeship's EPA reasonable adjustments guidance](#).

The University will complete an initial assessment of each apprentice's prior learning and experience. This should be used to identify sector-specific and English and maths related knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSB) that the prospective apprentice already has. This is essential, evidencing that each apprentice should obtain substantial new KSBs that enable them to reach competence in a given occupation. Funding cannot be used to certify or refresh existing KSBs.

If the apprentice already has most of the KSBs set out in the standard they were due to commence, they will not meet [funding rule requirements](#) for that apprenticeship, which would result in all funding being reclaimed by the ESFA. Therefore, the University would need to discuss with the apprentice and their employer whether there is a higher-level apprenticeship they could complete or whether a different programme would be more appropriate to help their career progression.

The findings of the initial assessment will provide an individual baseline for the employer and training provider from which their learning plan would be created.

The University will adapt the curriculum according to the findings of the initial assessment. This would include English and Maths teaching where apprentices have not obtained Level 2 qualifications in these subjects. Teaching time for English and Maths, where needed, is additional to the minimum 20% off the job training time. The following would be agreed with the employer prior to enrolment:

- the employer's and their apprentice's training needs including any reasonable adjustments the apprentice may need
- how the training needs can be effectively aligned to ensure the new KSB will be embedded into the apprentice's job
- the price of the training their apprentices require to reach full occupational competence
- a proposed 'gateway' date

## 19. Feedback

Gaining feedback throughout the apprentice's learning experience will be essential. The University will be responsible for obtaining feedback and will be committed to responding to all feedback received. Feedback will also be used to improve future training programmes offered.

Employer feedback is published on the [Find Apprenticeship Training](#)

Regular feedback would be provided by the training provider (relevant School/College) to apprentice's providing meaningful feedback to help in the understanding of improvements and progression.

## 20. Learner Induction

Apprentices will be inducted by the Academic Partnership team and the respective School and/or College responsible for the Apprentices. The following offers clear guidance on what the induction should include:

- discuss the training plan to make sure that they understand how the three-way relationship will function and what they can expect from their training provider
- highlight the progress review meetings as an opportunity for them to hold their training provider and employer to account
- ensure they understand how their Off the job training will be delivered and by whom
- encourage them to log their learning from the outset to help monitor whether they are being given a minimum of 20% of their working hours to dedicate to OTJT and whether they are getting the opportunities to practise and reflect on what they have learnt
- Explain the difference between off-the-job training and on-the-job training. It is important that they understand which activities will count as which form of training and how they fit together
- inform them of the pastoral support available, how to seek it if needed and how they can make complaints
- check the [apprenticeship agreement](#) between them and their employer is signed
- send them their occupational standard and assessment plan and give an overview of the assessment for their specific standard

- explain how the apprentice will work towards assessment and full occupational competence throughout their apprenticeship and that passing the assessment is required for them to complete their apprenticeship and get a certificate
- ensure that the apprentice knows the sector-specific and transferable skills they can expect to develop
- inform the apprentice of any mandatory qualifications they will also need to pass in order to complete their apprenticeship and receive a certificate
- Inform them about the possibility of taking a break-in-learning during their apprenticeship where they need to 'pause' their apprenticeship for four or more weeks due to illness or caring responsibilities.

## 21. Monitoring Learner Progression

Progression data will be used from regular reviews to monitor the apprentice's progress and identify any concerns. For example, apprentices may need more time to develop specific knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) which would need to be discussed with the employer throughout the Tri-partite and progression reviews

These reviews should cover attaining the KSBs in the apprenticeship, English and Maths qualifications where required and obtaining any other mandatory qualifications where relevant.

The Academic Partnership Team (Apprenticeships) in collaboration with the School will check how the apprentice is progressing during the time that they are with their employer, including whether their on and off the job training are complementing one another.

UOL will liaise and update the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) and employer of each apprentice's progress. This will also include how soon they are likely to be ready to take their End Point Assessment (EPA).

The form of assessment for all assignments and reviews will be completed in line with the style and grading criteria of the EPA. This will help the apprentice to know what to expect from their final assessments. Encouraging the employer to do the same to share responsibility for monitoring their apprentice's progress towards completing their apprenticeship and getting the certificate.

Progression review meetings would be held between the University, the employer and apprentice. The frequency of these meetings would be identified in the commitment statement at 8-12 week intervals. They may need to be adjusted as the apprenticeship progresses. In circumstances where the apprentice is ready to take the EPA earlier than expected the Commitment Statement must be updated accordingly.

In such circumstances the EPAO must be notified immediately.

These progress reviews are used to encourage collaboration and identify what is required of the employer to play an active role in helping their apprentice reflect and act on their feedback within the workplace and in their training UOL will monitor whether apprentices are achieving their **planned minimum 20% OTJT time** over the duration of the apprenticeship and focused on developing the KSBs set out in their apprenticeship standard. This can be flexible; it doesn't need to be the same every month and there are numerous ways that the training can be delivered to impart new KSBs.

Any identified concerns would be identified to the employer, to remind them of their duty to allow their apprentice to spend at least 20% of their working time on OTJT. If the employer cannot provide this time

as planned in the commitment statement, UOL will negotiate whether they can give time in lieu at a later date within working hours.

Discussion would be held with the apprentice to identify whether they are happy with the quality and quantity of their OTJT, whether they feel sufficiently challenged or whether there are opportunities such as shadowing or mentoring which may be required. The College and School Leads will prepare apprentices for their final assessments by:

- familiarising them with their assessment format and grading criteria, particularly where reasonable adjustments have been made to the default format
- holding mock assessments which are assessed taking into account the KSBs included in the standard and EPA grading criteria
- using their mock results to determine when to hold a three way “gateway” discussion to agree whether the apprentice is ready to move to the next stage, or if they need any additional support
- assess all assignments and reviews with reference to the EPA grading criteria to familiarise the apprentice in advance. Encourage the employer to do the same to share responsibility for monitoring their apprentices

It is essential that employers and apprentices understand the importance of completing EPAs which were designed by employers to demonstrate the individual’s full occupational competency. Apprentices reaching **gateway** will have completed their training and are prepare for their final assessment to certify the new KSBs learnt. Mock gateway discussions would be held with the employer and the EPAO. This involves assessing the apprentice against the KSBs set out in their standard to decide whether they are ready to complete their assessment, if successful would provide those within the industry confidence of the apprentice’s ability to carry out their role successfully.

The University would complete a review of professional body’s and regulatory requirements prior to gateway to ensure that they have been met. This should be done within sufficient time to notify the EPAO in advance of the chosen EPA date to avoid delays. [Reading the ESFA’s guidance on EPA and the apprenticeship gateway](#) to better understand this process is recommended.

Representatives of the University will a meet with the employer and EPAO at least three months prior to the EPA. The following would need to be agreed:

- roles and responsibilities
- a proposed timeline for the EPA
- whether the apprentice will need any reasonable adjustments
- where the EPA is going to take place and what equipment and materials the apprentice will need

## 22. Certification and End Point Assessment (EPA)

The EPAO will provide a holistic and independent assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that have been acquired throughout the apprenticeship programme. The approach to the EPA will be outlined in the Assessment Plan for the relevant Apprenticeship Standard and confirmed at the point of programme approval. The EPA may either be integrated into the programme of study or represent an additional stage beyond meeting the requirements for the relevant University award. In both cases the course team within the relevant School/College will be responsible for supporting apprentices’ preparations for the EPA. Where an EPA is not integrated into the programme, apprentices who fail to successfully complete the EPA may still receive the relevant University award where the requirements for that award have been met, but will not receive the apprenticeship completion certificate from the ESFA.

Non-integrated EPA requires the involvement of an authorised independent End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) listed on the ESFA Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations (RoEPAO). The University will provide information to employers about possible EPAOs but the selection of the EPAO is the responsibility of the employer. The EPAO must be selected by the employer at the start of the apprenticeship programme, in liaison with the relevant course team, and notified to the Apprenticeships team to ensure that the EPAO details can be included in the agreement between the University and the employer. The University will liaise with the EPAO to confirm contractual arrangements and schedule the EPA, the cost of the EPA will be taken from the apprenticeship fee paid to the University. One EPA for each apprentice will be funded, with funding for any re-sits based on the agreement between the University and the employer as set out in the Written Agreement.

The University will ensure that all Individual Learner Record (ILR) data is correct for apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship to avoid any errors in respect of certification. Checks would be made to ensure that the End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) has been arranged for all apprentices who have completed their final assessments to have certificates sent from the ESFA recognising their achievement.

An apprentice can only take the EPA once they have satisfied the Gateway requirements set out in the Assessment Plan (including attainment of English and Mathematics at Level 2) and both the employer and the University are content that they have attained sufficient skills, knowledge and behaviours. The employer and apprentice will also need to confirm as part of the Gateway declaration that the planned minimum 20% off-the-job training hours detailed in the Commitment Statement have been undertaken and fulfilled.

## **22.1 Retaking End-point Assessments (EPA)**

When an apprentice fails one or more components of their EPA they can usually retake this depending on the apprenticeship.

If the EPAO recommends a retake the University and employer would identify and implement an action plan aiming to improve the apprentice's weaknesses as identified by the EPA to ensure a successful retake.

## **21.2 Suspension in learning or withdrawal**

Apprentices may submit claims for a break in learning, where they take a period of leave from their work and/or their off-the-job training lasting more than four weeks as a result of extenuating circumstances (such as medical treatment, maternity or paternity leave, parental leave or leave for other personal reasons). The request for a suspension in learning will be considered in accordance with the suspension in studies approval process outlined in the University's Extenuating Circumstances Policy. Any suspension in learning must be agreed with their employer via the submission of a supporting statement, and must be reported to the ESFA (via the ILR) ensuring that the original planned end date can be adjusted accordingly to the ILR. In accordance with the funding rules, annual leave or short-term absence of up to four weeks is not considered by the ESFA to be a suspension in learning, and does not require the apprentice to break their studies at the University.

Where an apprentice is made redundant by their employer, in accordance with the funding rules, the University must:

- a) Make reasonable efforts to find the apprentice a new employer;

- b) Record the change in employment status in the ILR (this must match the date the apprentice became redundant, and a copy of the apprentice's redundancy notice must be maintained in the evidence pack);
- c) Record apprentices more than six months from the final day of their apprenticeship and with more than 25% of the practical period remaining as having left their apprenticeship due to redundancy if a new employer is not found within twelve weeks of them becoming redundant (noting that funding will continue to be received for this twelve week period while they seek a new employer); and
- d) Provide a 'record of apprenticeship part-completion' to support the individual to fund new employment.

If an apprentice is made redundant within six months of the final day of their practical period specified in the Apprenticeship Agreement, or if they have completed at least 75% of the practical period at the point of redundancy, they may continue on the programme without being employed under a written Apprenticeship Agreement. In these circumstances, in accordance with the funding rules:

- the University can continue to deliver the apprenticeship's training as long as all the remaining elements and the EPA can be successfully delivered (with the ESFA continuing to fund the remaining costs of the price negotiated between the University and employer up to the funding band maximum);
- if the apprentice finds a new employer where they can complete their apprenticeship, then the new employer will assume all outstanding liabilities and benefits from that point (the University will negotiate a new price, if required, with the new employer and input this on the ILR);
- If the apprentice takes a job with an employer which is not related to their apprenticeship, the ESFA will continue to fund the remaining costs of the price negotiated between the University and employer up to the funding band maximum).

If an apprentice's employment is terminated for reasons other than redundancy (including resignation or dismissal) and new employment is not found within thirty days, the apprentice must be withdrawn to ensure funds are not paid when the apprentice is not employed.

Where a change of circumstance means that training and/or assessment is no longer being delivered, no further funds from the ESFA will be made available. If an apprentice leaves without completing their apprenticeship, the last date of learning will be the last date the University has evidence that the apprentice was engaged in learning that formed part of their apprenticeship programme. This can be evidenced by conducting a formal exit interview with the apprentice and their employer, with a record of the interview maintained in the evidence pack.

### **21.3 Tracking learners' onward journeys**

The University will track the career progression of former Apprentice's including whether they have achieved promotions or pay rises as a result of completing their apprenticeships.

Sharing the positive outcomes of previous apprentices can help to inspire current and future cohorts to complete their apprenticeship.

### 23. Safeguarding and PREVENT

The University has a legal duty to create a safe environment for apprentices, protecting and safeguarding their health and wellbeing and promoting respect and tolerance through British Values. The University's Safeguarding Policy outlines the approach to ensure that the welfare of all those who study, work or visit the University and the procedures dealing with any safeguarding concerns are met. This includes anyone who may be at risk of being radicalised by any extremist group or ideology. Safeguarding and PREVENT are key themes for discussion at tripartite review meetings, providing an opportunity to monitor and raise awareness. Mandatory professional development workshops are provided by the designated Safeguarding Officers within the University for colleagues engaged with apprentices.

### 24. Quality and Continuous Improvement

Oversight of the delivery of all UOL apprenticeship programmes, including compliance within the funding rules, will be undertaken at College, School and institutional level through the relevant Academic lead and the Academic Partnerships Team.

The Quality Improvement Plan and the Self-Assessment Return will provide the basis for quality control and monitoring on an annual basis. To support this, Curriculum Development Reviews (CDR) will be conducted on a bi-annual basis to offer a deeper dive into the quality position of the Apprenticeship programmes. Schools will be required to complete an annual programme review for apprenticeships which will be considered through the mechanisms set out in the Code of Practice on Annual Review. External Examiners will be appointed as standard in line with the requirements and processes set out in Senate Regulation 7 to provide external confirmation of the academic standards of the award and the consistency of the award standards with provision across the University and the sector.

Termly position statements with KPI data will help inform relevant internal stakeholders of the current status of any given apprenticeship programme.

All staff involved in the delivery and support of apprenticeship provision will be trained through the Academic Partnerships team and offered regular CPD in support of driving the student-centred culture of apprenticeship provision.