



Apprenticeship Standard Guidance Note

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Introduction

What is the change?

Apprenticeships in England have changed. Following a review, the Government has created an employer-led model for developing and funding apprenticeship standards. This will replace the current system and employers will drive the development and delivery of apprenticeships. The Government's aim is to replace all current Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE apprenticeships) with new apprenticeships, known as Apprenticeship Standards, by 31 December 2020.

The Government has introduced Apprenticeship Standards to:

- ❖ **Ensure that employers are in the driving seat:** employers will be designing the Apprenticeship Standards, making them more relevant.
- ❖ **Increase the quality of apprenticeships:** apprentices will be required to complete a rigorous assessment throughout their programme. This will give employers confidence in the competence of the apprentice and provide apprentices with transferable skills.
- ❖ **Simplify the system:** employer-designed standards will be concise and easy to understand, and will describe the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) expected of a fully competent operative.
- ❖ **Give employers purchasing power:** empowering businesses to act as customers; putting control of funding in the hands of employers is expected to drive up quality and relevance.

How will this affect my sector?

- ❖ **From the beginning of the 2020/ 2021 academic year, only Apprenticeship Standards will be eligible for apprenticeship funding**

From May 2017, providers stopped receiving direct funding from Government to fund apprenticeship programmes. Instead, employers now decide which provider they want to deliver their apprenticeship and confirm when payments should be made through the Apprenticeship Service.

- ❖ **All existing SASE Framework will be switched off on the 31 July 2020**

The changes mean that employers will need to identify existing or new occupations requiring apprenticeships and design and implement a programme, which meets the Apprenticeship Standards criteria. Where there are existing SASE apprenticeships, Apprenticeship Standards should be completed by 31 July 2020 to ensure there is no gap in funding provision. Where existing SASE apprenticeships already meet the needs of the sector, there will be limited development activity required to move from the SASE framework to an Apprenticeship Standard.

Build UK has produced this guide to help employers and their trade associations understand how apprenticeships are evolving.

The Government is making regular changes to its apprenticeship policy. This Guidance Note will be kept up to date and further information is available on the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website](#).

The Development Process

An overview of how Apprenticeship Standards are developed:

Step 1: Identify the occupation requiring an Apprenticeship Standard and seek approval by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to submit a proposal to commence development work



Step 2: Following approval of step 1, use the apprenticeship builder tool to submit an Apprenticeship Occupation Proposal that includes an occupational profile and supporting evidence of need.



Step 3: Following approval of step 2 use the apprenticeship builder tool to develop and gain approval of the Apprenticeship Occupational Standard.

An initial funding band allocation will be given with the approval of step 3



Step 4: Following approval of Step 3 develop and gain approval of an End-point Assessment Plan. If necessary, appeal the initial funding band allocation



Step 5: Funding and delivering the Apprenticeship Standard

Step 1: Identify the occupation requiring an Apprenticeship Standard and seek permission to submit a development proposal

The sector needs to identify the role that requires an Apprenticeship Standard. The occupation needs to be unique and should not have any significant overlap with any other. If there is significant overlap with another occupation then it will be necessary to consider designing them as a single apprenticeship with core content and additional options to reflect the difference in job roles.

Once the occupation has been identified, you should check the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website](#) to ensure there is not an existing Apprenticeship Standard or one in development. The **Construction Apprenticeship Working Group (CAWG)** also has a list of construction specific apprenticeships in development. If there is another Apprenticeship Standard in development you should contact the Chair of that employer group to request involvement in its development.

Existing SASE apprenticeship frameworks will provide a good indicator to where new Apprenticeship Standards are required. Data relating to the occupations currently served by an apprenticeship, their content and usage is available via the [Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards \(FISS\)](#).

It is necessary to gain formal agreement from the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to submit a proposal to develop the Apprenticeship Standard. This will include providing detail of the Apprenticeship Standard Employer Group which will carry out the development work. This must be a group of employers recognised by the Institute and reflect those who employ people in the occupation, including small employers.

The Institute recommends a group of between 10 and 12 employers with at least two employers employing fewer than 50 people.

Sector or trade bodies, professional bodies, training providers or industry training boards can be invited to support the process by employer leads, but cannot lead the process themselves.

One employer member acts as the Lead Employer. They cannot be a representative from a trade body or other such organisation.

The group must be willing to work inclusively and collaboratively with other employers or groups who express an interest in the same or similar occupations.

Step 2: Develop and Submit an Apprenticeship Occupational Profile to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

Following agreement by the Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education to proceed with development work it is necessary to submit an Apprenticeship Occupational Proposal

The occupation proposal will need to include:

- An occupational profile, including the usual duties for that role
- The indicative typical duration of the apprenticeship
- The indicative occupational level of the apprenticeship
- The amount of off-the-job training required by a new entrant to become fully competent in the occupation via the apprenticeship. This will not necessarily mean that the apprentice is new to the sector, meaning that some prior knowledge and skills can be assumed if this would be the norm.
- Evidence of skills transferability
- How it fits in with any existing Apprenticeship Standards.

The Institute will need to be satisfied that the Apprenticeship Standard demonstrates the following:

- There is must be evidence of demand in the labour market
- It is transferable to a range of other employers and secures long term earning potential, greater security and potential to progress.
- It requires employment and training of at least a year's duration with 20% of the time in off-the-job training
- It provides full occupational competence for new entrants
- It is recognised by a range of employers and people practising the occupation
- It aligns with an occupation within the relevant Occupational Map and further information is available via: www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/occupational-maps/
- It is recognised by relevant professional bodies and/or regulators

It is necessary to enter this information on the occupation proposal part of the Institute's apprenticeship builder and submit it along with any supporting evidence.

Step 3: Develop and gain approval of the Apprenticeship Occupational Standard

Apprenticeship Occupational Standards should meet the needs of employers, their sector(s) and the economy. These standards are short, easy to understand documents that describe the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) required to undertake a specific occupation and to operate confidently within a sector. Standards focus on how an apprentice should demonstrate competence in an occupation and meet professional registration requirements where these exist; for example, the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB), Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) and Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS).

To ensure quality, all Trailblazer Occupational Apprenticeship Standards must meet seven criteria:

1. Be short, concise and clear
 2. Set out the full competence needed in an occupation so that on completion, the apprentice is able to carry out the role for any employer, across any relevant sector
 3. Have the support of employers including smaller businesses
 4. Be sufficiently stretching that it will require at least a year of training before the end-point assessment, with off-the-job training accounting for at least 20% of the apprenticeship
 5. Align with professional registration where it exists
 6. Meet minimum English, Maths and digital requirements, as follows:
 - a) for Level 2 apprenticeships, achieve Level 1 English and maths and take the test for level 2 prior to taking their End Point Assessment (EPA)
 - b) for Level 3 to 8 apprenticeships, achieve Level 2 English and maths prior to taking their EPA
 - c) for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a legacy statement, the English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.
1. **Include mandatory qualifications under certain circumstances.** Each Apprenticeship Standard Employer Group will have to determine with the If A whether its proposal will meet the criteria for including the attainment of an NVQ as a compulsory part of the apprenticeship. If an NVQ is not included and the occupation has a CSCS logo'd card then the Employer Group should at the commencement of its development work, discuss with CSCS how to ensure recognition of the Apprenticeship Standard and the issue of a card. Further information is available in the Best Practice section of this Guidance Note.

Once the Apprenticeship Occupational Standard is developed, the employer group must facilitate consultation with employers and parties who had not been involved in its development and consider any feedback. Once submitted to the Institute it will be posted on their website for final consultation.

If the Standard meets all of the required criteria it will be approved by the Institute's Construction Route Panel within six weeks of submission. This will include giving the apprenticeship an initial funding band allocation.

Step 4: Develop and gain approval of the Trailblazer Apprenticeship End-point Assessment Plan

All apprentices must take an independent assessment at the end of their training to confirm that they have achieved occupational competence. Rigorous, robust and independent End Point Assessment (EPA) is essential to give employers confidence that apprentices completing an Apprenticeship Standard can perform in the occupation they have been trained in and can demonstrate the duties, knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the occupational standard.

EPA can take a wide range of forms – it can include assessment methods such as an observation in the workplace, written tests and interviews. It must include a minimum of two separate assessment methods.

The EPA plan is published online and EPA organisations will use it to develop assessment tools (such as tests, banks of case study scenarios, controlled observation checklists and professional discussion specifications) and deliver the assessment.

The EPA must:

1. **Deliver valid and accurate judgements of occupational competence.** The assessment methods must be fit for purpose and appropriate to the content of the occupational profile. They must include a mixture of valid assessment methods that will lead to a synoptic EPA that truly measures occupational competence. This is underpinned by having at least one synoptic assessment method.
2. **Produce consistent and reliable judgements.** The assessment methodology and tools used must ensure that employers have confidence that regardless of place, time or assessor, apprentices have been judged in the same way and have reached the same standard of occupational competence.
3. **Ensure independence** of the organisation delivering the assessment and of the individual assessors making assessment decisions. For integrated degree apprenticeships, the organisation does not have to be independent but the individual assessor must be.
4. **Apprenticeships should be graded using** at least one level (merit or distinction) above pass for the EPA as a whole.
5. **Feasibility, manageability, and affordability** within the constraints of funding policy.
6. **Enables EPA organisations to make reasonable adjustments** for conducting an EPA in compliance with equality legislation.

As with the standard, an EPA should be a stand-alone document which can be easily understood by other employers, training and assessment organisations, the apprentice and their parents.

If the Trailblazer Employer Group disagrees with the initial funding allocation given with the approval of the occupational standard then they have to submit an appeal along with the EPA submission using the appeal forms.

If the EPA meets all the criteria it will be approved by the Institute's Construction Route Panel within six weeks of submission.

Step 5: Funding and delivering the Trailblazer Apprenticeship Standard

Each apprenticeship is allocated to one of 30 funding bands, which range from £1,500 to £27,000.

Following the approval of the assessment plan and the allocation of the final funding band, there will be a short delay to allow training providers to register apprenticeships onto the funding system. Once the Apprenticeship Standard goes 'live', employers and providers can begin negotiating and agreeing the price for delivery.

The upper limit of each funding band caps the maximum amount of digital funds an employer who pays the [Apprenticeship Levy](#) can use towards an individual apprenticeship. Where an employer does not pay the Levy or has insufficient digital funds, the upper limit of the funding band also sets the maximum price that government will 'co-invest' towards an individual apprenticeship.

Funding up to the maximum of the funding band for that apprenticeship, can be used to pay for apprenticeship training and End Point Assessment (EPA) for apprentices. If the costs of training and EPA go over the funding band maximum, employers will need to pay the difference with other funds.

Details about what can and can't be funded are set out in the [Education and Skills Funding Agency's apprenticeship funding rules](#).

Apprenticeship Standards will be allocated one funding band, regardless of whether there are options which lead to different occupations; different funding bands will not be allocated for different options. Where options have different costs associated with them, the funding band will be assigned based on the lowest cost option to achieve the Apprenticeship Standard. Training for any options taken beyond the 'minimum' required for the Apprenticeship Standard, would be outside the apprenticeship and employers would pay the difference from other funds.

Once an Apprenticeship Standard is 'live', members of the Employer Group should be contributing to the delivery of projected annual volumes stated in the initial Expression Of Interest.

Employers and providers are expected to start delivering apprenticeships under the standard within the wider sector. The Employer Group will need to:

- Communicate details of the Apprenticeship Standard to employers of all sizes that have not been directly involved in its development, to encourage them to offer apprenticeships
- Work with the Association of Colleges (AOC), Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) to promote the Apprenticeship Standard to training providers
- Negotiate the cost of training with education and training providers, either at employer level or by forming a consortium
- Work with EPA organisations to ensure they meet the group's expectations
- Work with professional bodies to ensure that where standards are aligned with professional registration, the process for apprentices seeking registration is clear and straightforward.

Best Practice

It is essential that there is a co-ordinated approach to the development and implementation of construction Apprenticeship Standards to ensure they:

- Reflect current employer skill needs
- Demonstrate consistency
- Have common rigorous quality assurance arrangements in place
- Allow workers to move freely within the industry.

Adopting the following recommendations will help Apprenticeship Standard Employer Groups achieve this. These are offered as suggested best practice and there is no Government requirement to comply:

1. Engage with the Construction Apprenticeship Working Group (CAWG)

Employers wishing to develop a Construction Trailblazer Apprenticeship should request help, advice and guidance from the CAWG. Build UK has representation on this group along with employers and other stakeholders. Engaging with the group will ensure a consistent industry approach to development work, and that good practice is shared across the development and implementation of all Apprenticeship Standards.

2. Seek CITB Involvement

If the Apprenticeship Standard is for a construction occupation, CITB offer a range of support including a representative to facilitate development of the Apprenticeship Standard, meeting facilities, assistance with wider industry consultation and support liaising with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

3. Assistance with Industry Consultation

Apprenticeship Standard Employer Groups whose proposed occupation(s) fall within the scope of CITB should consider using their consultation service to ensure proper and wide consultation with all relevant and interested employers, federations, associations and other organisations that may have an interest in the apprenticeship being developed.

4. Quality Assurance of Assessment

Apprenticeship Standard Employer Groups should consider requesting that CITB be responsible for ensuring the external quality control of the apprenticeship assessment.

5. Standardised Duration and Content

Construction Apprenticeship Standards should typically be 18 months to two years in duration, and recognise and allow the transferability of the common skills and knowledge required by industry.

6. Mandating NVQs

Apprenticeship Standards should consider including NVQs where available, as they are required to obtain a card which carries the CSCS logo and apprentices could be at a disadvantage without one. Apprenticeship Standard Employer Groups should avoid frequent references to the level of the standard and its link to the NVQ, instead focussing on the skills and outputs which the apprenticeship leads to. If Employer Groups decide not to include an NVQ then they should map their Apprenticeship Standard and End Point Assessment (EPA) Plan requirements to a relevant National Occupational Standard (NOS) and its associated S/NVQ Recommended Qualification Structure (RQS) to demonstrate the link with scope, assessment outcomes and quality assurance arrangements in order to create mobility. If the group chooses to map to the NOS, rather than mandate the NVQ, it should hold early discussions with CSCS over the process required to gain its recognition of the apprenticeship once developed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Which nations are Apprenticeship Standards available in?

Apprenticeship Standards are for England only, however the devolved nations may choose to adopt the model.

The Apprenticeship Levy is UK-wide.

What will happen to current SASE Apprenticeships?

All existing SASE Framework will be switched off on the 31 July 2020. Some SASE Apprenticeships may be withdrawn prior to this date due to low or no take up, or as Apprenticeship Standards are introduced.

What is the funding model for current Apprenticeship Standards?

Apprenticeship Standard funding banding is agreed via consultation between the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and the Trailblazer group. If an employer group believes the funding band is incorrect, they can appeal the decision and would be required to provide information to support their case. The final decision on the funding band remains with the Institute.

What is the purpose of the Occupational Maps that have been produced by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education?

Each map sets out related occupations with relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) within a route. All apprenticeship standards are included on the maps as these represent skilled occupations where there is a substantial element of technical education required.

The maps group occupations with related KSBs into pathways, making it easier to see the opportunities for career progression within that particular route. Within each pathway, occupations at the same level are grouped into clusters, to show how skills learnt can be applied to other related occupations.

How will the Apprenticeship Levy work?

The levy is charged at 0.5% of the annual wage bill. There will be a Levy offset allowance of £15,000 per annum, which means the Levy will only be paid if the employer's wage bill exceeds £3 million a year.

For the purposes of the Levy, an 'employer' is someone who is a secondary contributor, with liability to pay Class 1 National Insurance Contributions for their employees.

The Levy payment to HMRC will be made through the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) process, with employers able to access funding, and pay for training and assessment for apprenticeships through the Apprenticeship Service (AS).

Employers that do not pay the Levy won't be able to use the AS to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment until at least mid-2019, unless they are receiving a transfer of funds from a levy paying employer. Instead, they will need to agree a payment schedule with their provider and pay them directly for the training. The provider must prove that the employer has paid their contributions as a condition of government paying its contribution.

Employers that do not pay the Levy will be able to search for training and assessment using the apprenticeship service and pay for it with vouchers provided through the co-investment system of 90% government and 10% employer contribution.

How do Apprenticeship Standards fit with CSCS and other industry card schemes?

The Construction Leadership Council has agreed that any card scheme used on Government funded and major contractor sites must feature the CSCS logo. This means that those card schemes which feature the CSCS logo demand a minimum standard which includes using S/NVQs as a means of demonstrating competence.

To receive CSCS recognition, any Apprenticeship Standard must either include the achievement of an S/NVQ or have been mapped against a National Occupational Standard (NOS) and associated Recommended Qualification Structure (RQS) for the occupation, and have a letter from a recognised standard setting body confirming equivalency. If an Apprenticeship Standard Employer Group considers the NOS/RQS to be inappropriate, either fully or in part, then they will need to explain their reasoning to the standard setting body and gain its agreement to any gaps in its mapping. For mainstream construction, the standard setting body is CITB.

How is a Specialist Applied Skills Programme converted into an Apprenticeship Standard?

Sectors wishing to convert a Specialist Applied Skills Programme into an Apprenticeship Standard will follow the process for development of Apprenticeship Standards outlined.

What about employers with operations across the UK?

Many employers have cross-border operations and training activity. The Government is working with the devolved administrations to allow this to continue and to allow digital funds or Government support to pay for it.

Further Information

Further information on Trailblazer apprenticeship and the Apprenticeship Levy are available from:

Build UK:

[Apprenticeship Funding Guide](#)

CITB:

[Apprenticeship Standards and Frameworks](#)

Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISS):

[Apprenticeship Standards](#)

Government:

[Apprenticeship Levy](#)
[Information on how the Levy will work](#)

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education:

[Trailblazer Apprenticeship Standards](#)
[Overview of developing new Apprenticeship standards](#)

Useful Contacts

National Apprenticeship Service - Employer Helpline	0800 150 600
CITB Apprenticeship Team	0344 994 4010
Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards	0207 313 4890
National Careers Service	0300 303 4444