

## **FAQs for employers wishing to take on an apprentice**

### **What is an apprentice?**

In short, an apprentice is someone who will:

- usually be a young person. (However, there is no upper age limit to the apprenticeship scheme.)
- work full-time (at least 35 hours per week) alongside an experienced employee to learn specific skills sets.
- receive training including training towards nationally recognised qualifications such as NVQs or VRQ's.
- earn a salary while learning in an expert environment.
- is someone who can help employers, in a cost-effective way, to grow the next generation of skilled staff.

### **What are the advantages in taking on an apprentice?**

In short, the employer may benefit from:

- improved productivity –statistics indicate that 78% of employers that employ apprentices agree they make their workplace more productive<sup>1</sup>
- fresh ideas.
- 96% of employers with apprentices have experienced benefits from taking on apprentices<sup>1</sup>
- 73% of employers say that staff morale is improved by having apprentices<sup>1</sup>
- 67% of employers say that employing apprentices improved their image in the sector<sup>1</sup>
- 69% of employers say that employing apprentices improved staff retention<sup>1</sup>

1. Gov.UK Data [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5cd174a8e5274a34eb6b994a/Achieving\\_the\\_benefits\\_of\\_apprenticeships.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5cd174a8e5274a34eb6b994a/Achieving_the_benefits_of_apprenticeships.pdf)

### **Who can I employ as an apprentice?**

You may employ anyone who you consider to be; suitable for your business and; the occupation they will be training towards. There is no upper age limit. You will, however, need to be mindful of the Control of Employment Act 2017 and apply for a work permit for anyone who is not classed as an [Isle of Man Worker](#)

### **Where can I find an apprentice and is there help recruiting one?**

You can recruit your apprentice in the same way as you would a regular member of staff, perhaps by advertising the position in the local press and/or posting it as a JobCentre vacancy listing. Additionally the Apprenticeship Team will be on hand to help you with the recruitment process provide assistance in finding and selecting suitable candidates.

### **Will the applicant require any pre-qualifications?**

This will depend entirely on the apprenticeship being undertaken. Some training requires no previous knowledge or qualifications where others may require a minimum level of academic achievement (such as GCSE's).

### **What should I do once I have recruited an apprentice?**

As soon as you have chosen your apprentice, contact the Apprenticeship Team to register the individual and arrange completion of the necessary paperwork. You will then be able to access funding through the Skills Development Scheme 2007 (SDS). Consideration will also be given to meeting the cost of any courses or technical qualifications that are required to complete the apprenticeship.

### **When can I start my apprentice's employment?**

You can start your apprentice's employment at any time - just contact the Apprenticeship Team to formalise the agreement and discuss training courses and options. (But do bear in mind that the formal training element of the apprenticeship may be time bound with many courses starting in line with the academic year - generally in September.

### What will the apprenticeship consist of?

Depending on the specific trade, the apprenticeship will likely be made up of a combination of technical qualifications and/or on-site experience. The technical certificates, should they be required, will most likely be obtained through college attendance and passing the necessary exams, assessments and/or tests. In addition to the technical qualifications your apprentice will need to serve the minimum stipulated period of time in the workplace, working within their chosen trade or occupation, prior to becoming a fully qualified in their field.

Further trade specific information may be obtained from a member of the Apprenticeship Team.

### How will my apprentice be assessed?

Generally, your apprentice will gain their qualifications through assignments and work based assessments which will take place either at college or on site/in the workplace throughout the apprenticeship.

### Does the apprentice require a contract of employment?

The apprentice will be employed pretty much along the lines of any of your regular employees and so will need to have a Terms and Conditions of Employment established. The Manx Industrial Relations Service (MIRS) will be happy to offer guidance relating to employee contracts. Guidance is also available in their handbook, accessible [MIRS](#)

### How much will I need to pay my apprentice?

- Apprentices training under a formal Department of Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) apprenticeship agreement, and who are between the ages of 16 to 19 are currently exempt from minimum wage legislation. You may therefore pay them an agreed 'Training Wage' which will reflect their contribution to your company and take into account your investment in time dedicated to their training, guidance and mentoring.
- Apprentices between the ages of 19 and 24 are exempt (as above) from Minimum Wage Legislation for the first 12 months of their apprenticeship. After this period you will need to pay the relevant Minimum Wage.
- An apprentice who is 25 years of age or over will be entitled to receive the minimum wage.

You can, off course, pay more than this if you wish!

In determining the level of pay for your apprentice, please bear in mind the level of support you will be entitled to through the Skills Development Scheme: [here](#)

### Do I need to give my apprentice holidays?

Yes. Your apprentice will be entitled to a minimum of 20 days paid leave per year in addition to the Manx Public and Bank Holidays.

### How long will the apprenticeship take to complete?

This will depend on the trade or occupation, and the level to which the apprentice will be working towards. But generally speaking, most apprenticeships will take between two and four years to complete.

### Will there be a lot of paperwork and administration?

Apprenticeships don't require much paperwork or administration from the employer and the Apprenticeship Team will be available to help you with all the relevant documents throughout the training period, should assistance be required.

What happens if the apprentice proves to be unsuitable, or if work runs out and I'm no longer able to employ my apprentice?

Your apprentice should be treated as any other employee within your organisation. As such there are no additional burdens to their employment status through DESC's involvement in the apprenticeship. However, the Apprenticeship Team will be on hand to offer mentoring or mediation if any difficulties arise during the apprenticeship period. Should the apprenticeship ultimately neither work out due to the employee not meeting the required standard of the training or by failing to fulfil their obligation under their Terms and Conditions of Employment then they shall be treated in the same way as any other employee and you may well terminate their employment.

What happens once the training is complete?

Once the training, under the terms of the apprenticeship, has been completed you will have the choice to offer the apprentice a permanent contract to remain with you after which they can continue to improve their knowledge of the trade by undertaking further qualifications. A limited level of funding can be offered by Training Services under the Vocational Training Assistance Scheme (VTAS). Information relating to this scheme, including its terms and condition can be found [here](#)

It's worth noting that most apprentices will stay with their employer where possible as they will, by now, be adding significant value to you as the employer bringing commitment and productivity.

Who can I contact at DESC should I have any questions?

The Training Services Team - 682379 / [training@gov.im](mailto:training@gov.im)

*'We are here to guide you through the processes involved in the taking on of an apprentice, from recruitment to accessing funding from the department through to understanding what's expected of the trainee during their training with the aim of helping you to make the most of the Apprenticeship Scheme knowing that ultimately the employer, the apprentice and the island benefits.'*