



# EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

GUIDING YOU THROUGH APPRENTICESHIPS



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency



## CONTENTS

1  
WELCOME

2  
WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

2-3  
THE FACTS - WHY ARE APPRENTICESHIPS GOOD FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

3-5  
FAQS

6  
I WANT TO RECRUIT AN APPRENTICE - WHAT DO I DO?

6-7  
TERMS OF REFERENCE

7  
TOP TIPS FOR RECRUITING THE BEST STAFF

8  
I HAVE AN EXISTING EMPLOYEE READY FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP – WHAT SHOULD I DO?

8-9  
NEXT STEPS FOR ALL POTENTIAL APPRENTICES

10  
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

11  
PREVENT AND BRITISH VALUES

12  
COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

13-14  
WHAT ELSE DO WE OFFER?



*We look forward to a long and successful relationship with your company*



## WELCOME

Dear Employer,

Thank you for choosing East Sussex College Group, as your training provider. In today's economic climate, it is vital that employees acquire the skills and qualifications your business needs to be successful. As an employer, you have a key role to play in the learning process, providing opportunities for employees to learn and develop at work and to put into practice any new ideas, theory and skills they are learning with the College.

We have produced this handbook to guide, inform and support you.

I look forward to a long and successful association with your company, not only in providing learning opportunities for individuals new to the workplace, but also in helping to fulfil the aspirations of existing staff and thus improving your business performance.

Should you identify any areas of your business with which you feel we may be able to help, please contact a member of the Business Development Team on 030 300 39777 and we will do all we can to assist you.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish your organisation and student every success in your partnership with East Sussex College Group

Best wishes

Rebecca Conroy  
CEO & PRINCIPAL  
EAST SUSSEX COLLEGE GROUP

## WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

We are here to listen, support and advise and ultimately help you to grow your business. Here is a taste of the things that we can do for you – at no cost to your organisation:

- Access to students across five campuses who are your potential future workforce
- Recruitment support including advertising your vacancy and referring candidates your way
- Give you access to multiple online recruitment platforms free of charge to maximise exposure of your vacancy
- Identify appropriate training for existing staff including short online courses, management training, apprenticeships, short courses and standalone diplomas
- Offer advice on how to maximise the return on your Apprenticeship Levy investment
- Offer advice on available funding and grants
- Provide regular feedback on your student's progress and involvement
- Offer you a platform to feedback your views and thoughts on qualifications that are relevant to your sector and ultimately influence our curriculum.



## FAQs

### WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

An Apprenticeship is a genuine job, with an accompanying assessment and skills development programme, that is available for new employees and as a way of upskilling your existing workforce. It is a way for individuals to earn, while they learn gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role.

The apprentice gains this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practise new skills in a real work environment. Apprenticeships benefit employers and individuals and by boosting the skills of the workforce, they help to improve economic productivity.

### WHAT DOES OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING MEAN?

Employees undertaking an apprenticeship must spend a minimum of 6 hours per week of their time on off-the-job training. This can include time spent in college, internal training sessions, job shadowing, mentoring, appraisals and team meetings. It is up to the employer and training provider to decide how the off the-job training is delivered and we will help you to plan and record this.



*We are here to listen, support, advise and ultimately help you to grow your business*



### THE FACTS – WHY ARE APPRENTICESHIPS GOOD FOR BUSINESS?

- Recruiting apprentices enables employers to fill the skills gaps that exist within their current workforce as apprentices begin to learn sector specific skills from day one; developing specialist knowledge that will positively affect your bottom line
- You will gain eager, motivated staff who are committed to on the job training and development
- Apprenticeships can offer your existing staff the opportunity to gain recognition of their abilities and further develop their skills leading to increased confidence
- Businesses report an average increase in productivity by £214 a week when they hire apprentices
- 9 out of 10 employers who take on an apprentice report benefits to their business
- Up to 100% funding could be available to support the apprenticeship training
- Apprenticeship programmes allow training to happen at the workplace with minimal disruption to business operations.
- If your apprentice is 16-18 years old (or 19-24 years old xxxxx care plan EHCP) and your organisation has less than 50 employees, the Government will cover 100% of the cost and there are no fees payable by the employer.

### HOW MUCH SHOULD YOU PAY AN APPRENTICE?

Employers are responsible for paying their apprentice and covering other employment costs. The salary is negotiated to reflect the abilities, age, skills and experience of the apprentice, taking into account the going rate for the job role being carried out. All apprentices must be given a contract of employment and be paid under PAYE.

We can provide you with up to date information on the current National Minimum Wage for an apprentice. If your apprentice is over 19 and in subsequent years of their apprenticeship you will need to pay the National Minimum Wage relevant to their age. Apprentices should be given time to see their coach at their place of work, to monitor and support their skills, knowledge and behaviours and to review any work-based evidence of their learning. If your apprentice is attending college for their learning, you have an obligation to pay them for this time.

### HOW MUCH WILL YOU PAY TOWARDS AN APPRENTICE'S TRAINING?

If your apprentice is 16-18 and your organisation has less than 50 employees the government will cover the full cost of apprenticeship training.

If your apprentice is 19+ and/or you employ more than 50 employees you will be asked to pay a 5% employer contribution towards the cost of the apprenticeship course. The government will fund the other 95%.

Employer contributions are non-refundable.

If you are an organisation that pays into the Apprenticeship Levy, you will be required to pay the full training cost of the qualification via your Digital Account (see 04).

### ARE THERE ANY INCENTIVES OR ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS?

If your apprentice is 16-18 years old, you will also be eligible for a £1000 incentive payment which is paid in 2 instalments at month 4 and month 13 of the programme.

If your apprentice is 19-24 years old who has previously been in care or who has a local authority Education, Health and Care Plan, you will be eligible for an additional £1000 payment.



WHAT ABOUT THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY?

If your organisation has a pay bill of over £3 million a year, you will have been paying the apprenticeship levy since 6th April 2017. You will pay your levy to HMRC through the PAYE process. In England, the government will top up employers’ levy with an extra 10% paid directly to employers’ apprenticeship accounts. An employer’s pay bill is made up of total amount of the employees’ earnings that are subject to Class 1 National Insurance Contributions such as wages, bonuses, commissions and pension contributions.

East Sussex College Group is able to support your organisation in the following ways:

- Support you in setting up your Apprenticeship Service Account
- Map existing job roles with appropriate apprenticeship standards
- Advise you of all relevant programme costs and how to maximise your levy pot

HOW MANY HOURS DOES AN APPRENTICE NEED TO WORK?

Ideally, all apprentices should be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week and must have a contract of employment in place. If your apprentice is employed for less than 30 hours, the length of the apprenticeship programme will be extended to ensure that sufficient time is allowed to gain the required experience and skills needed to obtain the qualification.

DO APPRENTICES NEED TO ATTEND COLLEGE?

An apprentice’s time is divided between working with their employer and undertaking training with the college. For example, some apprentices spend four days a week with their employer and one day a week at college, while others undertake all their training in the workplace, with the college coming to the employer for their part of the programme. For college release Apprentices should be paid for this day.

HOW LONG WILL THE APPRENTICESHIP LAST?

Apprenticeships can last between 1 and 4 years depending on the qualification the apprentice is studying for and their contracted hours.

WHAT IS THE EMPLOYER’S ROLE WITHIN THE APPRENTICESHIP?

As well as paying their wages, you will need to provide on and off-the job training, an induction and ongoing support as you would with any other employee. Your company will also be expected to have the relevant Health & Safety procedures and Employer’s Liability Insurance in place. We will assess your site for Health and Safety before an apprentice begins their qualification with us. Apprenticeships work well when a nominated mentor is in place to support the apprentice

CAN EXISTING STAFF START AN APPRENTICESHIP?

Yes.

WHEN DO BUSINESSES RECRUIT APPRENTICES?

Anytime, many of our apprenticeship programmes can be started at any time of the year.

WHAT IS THE END POINT ASSESSMENT?

At the end of the Apprentice’s course, they will have to complete something called an End Point Assessment. The assessment varies depending on the apprenticeship programme but it consists of a series of tests an apprentice must pass to demonstrate their ability to do the job. The assessment is only funded once, meaning the employer, assessor and student need to be in agreement for when the assessment should go ahead. It cannot be refunded. and these costs are payable by the employer. 20% of the funding is held back for the assessment.

CAN BUSINESSES ASK THE APPRENTICE TO REPAY ANY TRAINING COSTS?

No, an apprentice may not be asked to contribute financially to the cost of training on-programme or end point assessment, nor can repayment costs be written into any employment or training agreements.

RECRUITING AN APPRENTICE – WHAT TO DO NEXT?

STEP 1	Complete the <a href="#">vacancy template</a> found here on our website and return it to <a href="mailto:Apprenticeships@escg.ac.uk">Apprenticeships@escg.ac.uk</a> . Once we have received the vacancy template, an Account Manager will be in touch to match the vacancy to the correct apprenticeship and the correct level.
	We will also need you to set up a Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) account, if not already in place. To set up to account you will need the company’s PAYE details and Gateway Government ID. Having this account in place will allow us to advertise on your behalf.  Please use this <a href="#">link</a> to initially set up your account. You may also find this <a href="#">link</a> useful as it explains a bit more about How to Use the Service as an Employer. Once you have set up the account, the college will need your Account ID. Make sure that you electronically sign the ESFA Agreement and give the college permission to make changes to your account. To give permissions please follow the instructions below:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Go to the homepage</li><li>- Go to ‘Your Training Providers’</li><li>- Add East Sussex College with UK PRN 10002923</li><li>- Return to training provider</li><li>- Set permissions to both options to ‘Yes’</li><li>- Click continue/save.</li></ul>
	We will then add your apprenticeship to the National Apprenticeship Website, the college’s website, our social media channels, circulate the vacancy around the college, send the vacancy to our Talent Bank and promote the vacancy at jobs fairs. We will send across applications and as an employer it will be up to you to interview applicants and feedback to them if they have been unsuccessful.
STEP 2	
STEP 3	
STEP 4	Once you have successfully found your apprentice, we will guide you through next steps.

WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO:

- Take care of any of the legal issues of recruiting or carry out other recruitment services such as pre-employment checks, payroll etc.
- Guarantee, or be held responsible for, the performance of apprentices in the roles. Rather, we act as supportive partners to help get the best from your apprentice, in the workplace and in study.
- Promote any opportunities that do not comply with Apprenticeship Agreement legislation. For more information please follow this [link](#)
- We do not accept advertisements that discriminate under the Equality Act (2010). See more [here](#)

BY USING THIS SERVICE YOU WILL:

- Ensure the vacancy complies with all relevant UK Employment Legislation including: Right to Work legislation and the Equality Act (2010), so all adverts and selection criteria are not unlawfully discriminatory
- Fill in all the sections on the vacancy template in detail
- Let us know if any students/candidates who have applied have been contacted for interview and/or offered the role
- Only advertise with one training provider at any given time
- Provide feedback for unsuccessful applicants
- Advertise your vacancy through any channels that are easily available to yourself. (E.g. company’s website)
- Let us know whether you want your vacancy extending once it has closed
- Agree to pay the National Minimum Apprenticeship Wage. If the Apprenticeship enters into a second year the Apprentice will need to be paid the minimum wage for their age. <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>
- Take responsibility for complying with any legal requirements related to recruiting an employee including verification of their eligibility to work in the country where the opportunity is based
- Agree that only once a candidate has completed their initial assessments and reached the correct level in accordance with their programme, they will only then be enrolled in their Apprenticeship programme. Failure to complete these assessments or attain the correct level may result in the candidate being unable to complete their apprenticeship programme with East Sussex College Group. East Sussex College Group maintains the right to reject a candidate from an apprenticeship should they deem necessary.

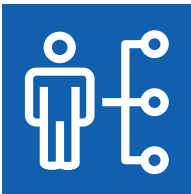
TOP TIPS FOR RECRUITING THE BEST STAFF



**YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR**  
It's not just about the take home salary but the whole package.



**SELL YOUR BUSINESS**  
Why should someone work for you over your competitors?



**BE CLEAR ON WHAT THE ROLE IS**  
And be clear about your expectations.

Think about what you are asking your apprentice to do and where you are based and make sure you are offering a fair wage for the role.



**RECRUIT FOR ATTITUDE, TRAIN FOR SKILLS**  
Identify the behaviours that are important for the role and the organisation and use them as your key selection criteria.  
You can train the technical knowledge for the job but it's much harder to train different behaviours.



**GIVE FEEDBACK**  
Be fair and let unsuccessful candidates know what went right and what could be improved on.



**ADVERTISE SMART**  
Advertising via the right outlets is key to finding the right staff.

DO YOU HAVE AN EXISTING EMPLOYEE READY FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP?  
HERE'S WHAT TO DO NEXT

STEP 1	Identify the role and forward us your Job Description/person specification. We will then identify a suitable apprenticeship programme to fit the role.
STEP 2	Provide full details of the candidate as requested via email. We will then speak with your potential apprentice directly where appropriate.
STEP 3	We will provide you with an overview of the most suitable qualification and associated costs, available funding and additional incentives.

NEXT STEPS FOR ALL POTENTIAL APPRENTICES

All apprentices are asked to complete an initial assessment in maths and English on a platform called BKSB. The assessments should be completed at home, in exam conditions, on a laptop or a computer.

THE INDUCTION PROCESS

All apprentices are expected to attend an Apprenticeship Induction Session to ensure that they fully understand the requirements of the programme. This will be a remote Induction Session on Zoom.

HEALTH AND SAFETY VETTING

It is Government policy that all training providers undertake a health and safety check of the working environment that an apprentice will be working in. Only when an employer passes the health and safety check are we able to enrol the apprentice on to our learning programmes. This will be arranged once your apprentice has attended their initial assessment and Induction Session. You will also need to provide an up to date and valid Employer Liability Insurance Certificate.

ENROLMENT PAPERWORK

You will be contacted by your appointed assessor shortly after this induction session to arrange a suitable time to complete all necessary enrolment paperwork.

THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Every student who joins the programme at East Sussex College Group is on an initial six-week probationary period. This period is used to allow us to assess the student's progress – both on their programme and in the workplace. If, during this period, the student fails to reach the required standard, then the college may have to withdraw them from the course. Your opinion on progress will be sought and will be used when making a decision regarding the outcomes of the probationary period.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT AND ADDITIONAL SOCIAL NEEDS

The College has a learning support service. We offer individual assessments to all students who request them. We are also able to support the student if they feel they have barriers to learning. This comes in many forms but we will assess their need and endeavour to find appropriate support throughout the programme.

10/12 WEEK REVIEWS

Regular reviews are a vital and important part of any work-based learning programme. This is an opportunity to have a three way dialogue between the training provider (assessor), yourself (the employer) and your apprentice to ensure they are progressing as planned over all of the relevant qualifications they are undertaking. This meeting will allow for the review of the progress made over the past 10 weeks, and planning of the activities to be completed over the next period, setting SMART targets for student progress. It will be possible for you, as the employer, to identify specific on-the job training that you can also provide to enhance the learning experience.

CHANGE OF DETAILS

We ask our employers to keep us up to date with any changes that may affect the student or their programme.

These may include:

- Change of company details
- Change of mentor/supervisor or management structure
- The student gives notice or leaves
- The student changes job roles
- The student changes their regular shift pattern



EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

East Sussex College Group recognises that a diversity of backgrounds in students and college staff brings with it a variety of ideas, perspectives and experiences. These are valuable in developing both an inclusive ethos and a forward-thinking workforce that is responsible for the delivery of services to the public in general and groups of vulnerable people.

Our Equal Opportunities Policy concentrates on the areas relevant to personal development and assessment within the qualification. It complies with the equal opportunities policies of the relevant awarding bodies.

Equality of opportunity also acknowledges that individuals are different and have different needs. The principles of equality observed by us do not necessarily mean that all students are treated the same: We use positive measures to promote and enhance equal opportunities so that no unnecessary barriers to assessment prevent achievement. If a student indicates particular assessment requirements, we will make appropriate arrangements to ensure equality of access to assessment with the relevant Awarding Organisation.

“Equality & Diversity” is the term used to promote equal access to all within the workplace.

East Sussex College Group aims to ensure that no students, members of staff, visitors or others that visit/use the college receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of gender, gender identity, race, ethnic origin, skin colour, learning difficulty, disability, mental or physical health status, sexual orientation, marital status, age, class or religion.



PREVENT & BRITISH VALUES



**DEMOCRACY**  
A society or environment of freedom and equality where all are involved in decision making, either directly or by voting to elect representatives to speak on their behalf.



**INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY**  
Express oneself in a manner of one’s own choosing, free from unjust or undue control, coercion or violence of others, including the government. The concept of individual freedom is central to the ideal of a free society.



**LAW (RULE OF)**  
The principle that all people, organisations and the elected government are subject to and accountable to law that is fairly applied and enforced.



**TOLERANCE AND MUTUAL RESPECT**  
Raising understanding and tackling prejudice so all are treated with dignity and respect, without regard to gender, race, disability, faith or any other aspect of identity or personal circumstance.

WHAT IS PREVENT?

- Prevent is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism.
- Prevent is one of four elements of CONTEST, the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- Prevent covers all forms of terrorism and extremism and some aspects of non-violent extremism.

HOW DOES THE PREVENT STRATEGY WORK?

- By supporting people who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist or extremist activity.
- By working with and supporting community groups and social enterprise projects who provide services and support to vulnerable people.
- By working with faith groups and institutions to assist them in providing support and guidance to people who may be vulnerable.
- By supporting local schools, local industry and partner agencies through engagement, advice and training.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU THOUGHT IT WAS HAPPENING?

Talk to the College’s safeguarding team who can provide support if needed.

COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

East Sussex College Group takes all complaints very seriously, whether made in writing, phone or verbally and has a full complaints procedure.

Whilst it is unlikely you will need to use the complaints procedure, it is important that you are familiar with it. The complaints procedure is the process you use to resolve any issues you have with the College. You can also find the policy on our website: [www.escg.ac.uk/documents/policies/complaints-concerns-and-compliments-policy](http://www.escg.ac.uk/documents/policies/complaints-concerns-and-compliments-policy)

STAGE 1	The simplest way to resolve a complaint is to discuss it with the Assessor, (unless Assessor-related). The Assessor can be contacted at any (reasonable) time to discuss an issue or leave a message and they will get back in touch as soon as they can. If your complaint is assessor related, progress to stage 2.
	STAGE 2
APPEALS PROCEDURE	If you cannot resolve an issue with the Assessor then you need to move to the next stage and contact the Delivery Manager, they will listen to your problem or query and look into a suitable solution to resolve. They will not ‘take sides’ or make assumptions and your complaint will be kept confidential where possible.
	LEARNER CONCERN PROCEDURE
LEARNER CONCERN PROCEDURE	If a student is unhappy with their grade or the outcome of an assessment, the Appeals Procedure allows the student the opportunity to explain their situation or give reasons why their performance or results were not as they had hoped. The student will be given a copy of the Appeals Procedure.
	The College has a standard Learner Concern Procedure to deal with issues around attendance, progress and behaviour. The four stage process is designed to be a supportive process and find resolution, but ultimately if the learner fails to improve they can be asked to withdraw from their programme. If you are unsure where to start or have any questions please contact your Account Manager or ring the group phone line on 030 300 39777 for support.



## WHAT ELSE DO WE OFFER?

We offer a range of services to enable business growth from short one-day compliance workshops to longer term professional development programmes. We are able to offer bespoke training.

### ONLINE-COURSES

We offer a series of free courses, for those that are 19+ and have lived in the UK for the last three years. The courses last up to 16 weeks, studying 2-3 hours per week. All of the courses are level 2 accredited.

Some of the courses include Awareness of Mental Health Problems, Understanding Business Improvement Techniques, Customer Service, Understanding Autism, Understanding Common Childhood Illnesses and Understanding Specific Learning Difficulties. A full list can be found [here](#).

### MANAGEMENT COURSES

We run a series of management units in conjunction with the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM.) Instead of employees completing a whole qualification, we have taken onboard feedback and we are now able to offer individual units for either the Level 3 Diploma for Managers or the Level 5 Diploma for Leaders and Managers.

A single unit will take an average of approx. 6-12 weeks to complete and 12 weeks for the Project Management unit to give time for the project duration. We can make recommendations to the company on which units certain team members should be completing.

For more information and costings get in touch.

### LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA FOR MANAGERS (CITY AND GUILDS)

The units below are currently available:

1. Team Development and Resource Management
2. Building a High-Performance Team
3. Managing Self
4. Communication and interpersonal skills
5. Organisational culture and strategy
6. Problem solving and decision making
7. Data management
8. Organisational governance
9. Project management.

### LEVEL 5 DIPLOMA FOR LEADERS AND MANAGERS (CITY UNITS)

The units below are currently available:

1. Personal and Professional Development
2. Communication skills
3. Managing Teams
4. Business Planning
5. Operations Planning and Management
6. Financial Practices
7. Project Planning.

### SECTOR-BASED WORK ACADEMIES

Do you want to recruit new talent into the business? Are you struggling to recruit? ESCG can help and support by offering, one-eight weeks, sector-based work academies to those trying to get back into work. At the end of the course as a business you will need to guarantee an interview for those that have completed a course.

### INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

You can work with us to offer a placement opportunity for a T Level student or work experience. To find out more and to register interest please follow the [link](#).

### GAS COURSES

We offer the Level 3 GAS Engineering Operative Apprenticeship, but also a series of GAS courses including the ACS Assessment, Unvented Hot Water and Water Regulations. For more information follow the [link](#).



East Sussex College Group was  
formed in 2018 following the  
merger of Sussex Coast College  
& Sussex Downs College

Our aim is to become the provider  
of choice across East Sussex, and the  
wider region, for apprenticeships and  
a range of other skills training.  
We are here to listen, support, as  
well as advise and ultimately help  
you grow your business.

[www.escg.ac.uk](http://www.escg.ac.uk)

[apprenticeships@escg.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@escg.ac.uk)

030 300 39777

