



NEW APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS – SCAFFOLDING

Apprenticeships in England are changing. New apprenticeship standards are replacing the existing apprenticeship frameworks. The new standards will be designed by employers to meet their changing needs. The new apprenticeships will be more rigorous, better structured, independently assessed and more clearly aligned to the needs of employers.

What is changing?

The new apprenticeship standards put employers in the driving seat in terms of designing the apprenticeship standards to meet their industry's needs and specifying the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for a specific job role.

Independent synoptic end-point assessment, using a range of methods, will be introduced to assess an apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours.

An apprentice is expected to be carrying out a new job role as an employee, or if in an existing job role, to require sustained and substantial training to reach the standard. Training will be delivered within the apprentice's contracted working hours.

The Institute for Apprenticeships, a new employer body, has been created to approve apprenticeship standards, end-point assessment delivery bodies, certification etc.

So, employers will now be the customer and will have purchasing power. But in return, greater financial contributions will be required from employers to fund a programme that provides bottom line benefits to their businesses.

How will the content differ in the new standards?

End-point assessment is being introduced as the main assessment method for all the new standards. It will replace the current approach of continuous assessment and qualifications.

The new approach separates training delivery and assessment. It allows employers and training providers to focus on training and learning and to help apprentices develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours and gain the maximum possible experience before they are assessed. The knowledge, skills and behaviours for the job role linked to an occupational level will be set out in a standard drawn up by an employer group.

There is no mandatory requirement for qualifications.

Towards the end of the apprenticeship, the employer and training provider will 'sign-off' the apprentice as being ready for end-point assessment.

The end-point assessment will use a number of assessment methods and will be delivered independently of the training provider and employer by an assessment organisation selected from a national register. The end-point assessment will be graded in most cases.

The apprentice must pass the end-point assessment in order to complete the apprenticeship and be deemed to be competent in the job role.

The end-point assessment arrangements will be detailed in an assessment plan drawn up by the employer group for each job role linked to an occupational level.

Why should an employer get involved in Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships benefit employers and apprentices by boosting the skills of the workforce and helping to improve economic productivity. It is a way for apprentices to earn while they learn gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. Hiring apprentices is a productive and effective way for businesses to grow their own talent by developing a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce leading to including increased productivity and profitability and reductions in staff turnover and recruitment costs.

An employer can offer apprenticeships to a new recruit or use the programme to develop talent from among current employees.

What is happening in the scaffolding industry?

A new level 2 scaffolding apprenticeship standard developed by an employer group, outlining the required knowledge, skills and behaviours has been approved by the government. The new standard has been designed to allow the apprentice to meet the requirements of the Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS). Upon successful completion of the apprenticeship the scaffolder will be eligible to apply for a CISRS scaffolder card.

The employer group are now developing the detailed assessment plan which will focus on the end-point assessment arrangements.

In the meantime, the existing scaffolding apprenticeship framework will be available until the new standard is developed and formally launched.

What is the content of the current scaffolding framework?

The scaffolding apprenticeship framework is aligned to the training route for CISRS approved scaffolders. Under these arrangements, apprentices will complete a knowledge-based Level 2 Diploma in Scaffolding qualification and CISRS practical training courses delivered on a periodic block release basis. Apprentices will also undertake an NVQ Level 2 competence-based qualification which will be assessed in the work environment following practical experience and where required, English and maths qualifications. Successful completion of the apprenticeship framework satisfies eligibility criteria for a CISRS Scaffolder Card.

What are the funding arrangements?

The government will be introducing an Apprenticeship Levy and a new funding system from 1st May 2017.

What are the levy arrangements?

The levy is intended to fund apprenticeship delivery in the future.

The levy will be calculated at 0.5% of an employer's payroll bill for all employees in the UK with a £15,000 allowance which is like a tax allowance.

The £15,000 allowance will mean that employers with an annual payroll bill of less than £3 million will not have to pay the apprenticeship levy. The government expect fewer than 1.5% of employers to have to pay the levy.

The calculation will be based on all directly employed employees, but not contractors. It will include all payments made through the payroll, but not benefits.

When it is being introduced?

The levy will be collected monthly by HMRC through PAYE. The first levy payments will be calculated based on the April 2017 payroll, meaning that the first payment will be made on or around 22nd May 2017.

Will the levy be refunded if the employer recruits apprentices?

No, not in the form of a grant. However, in England levy funding can be spent on the delivery of apprenticeships in conjunction with an approved training provider.

Levy funds can't be used on other costs associated with apprentices or wider training delivery - e.g. mentoring in workplace, wages, statutory licences to practise, travel costs, managerial costs, set up costs etc.

The employer will need to register for an apprenticeship service account. The employer will pay the levy on a monthly basis and the account will be credited with that amount, plus a 10% government 'top-up'. This top-up is why the government state that levy-paying employers, committed to apprenticeships, will get more out than they pay in.

How will the apprenticeship service account work?

The apprenticeship service account will track the amount of levy paid by the employer and how much is therefore available for apprenticeship delivery. The account can also be used to help the employer identify apprenticeship standards to best suit their employees' job roles and to select a training provider, such as Simian to help with delivery. The government will transfer the employer's levy funds to the chosen training provider on a monthly basis.

Individual levy payments will be available for expenditure on apprenticeships by the employer for up to 24 months from the time that they reach the apprenticeship service account.

How much levy funds will be needed for each apprentice?

Each apprenticeship for a trade or job role will be allocated to one of 15 funding bands by the government. This will denote the maximum amount of levy funding that will be required for delivery of the apprenticeship. The maximum amount required for the new scaffolding apprenticeship standard when available will be £9,000.

In the meantime, the maximum amount required for the existing scaffolding apprenticeship framework is £6,000.

How will the process actually work?

The employer will pay the levy monthly to HMRC through the PAYE process alongside tax and NICs. The first submission in which employers will declare levy payments for April 2017 will therefore be 22nd May 2017 if submitted electronically. The £15,000 allowance equates to £1,250 per month. Any unused allowance can be carried forward from one month to the next.

The employer will need to register on the apprenticeship service and verify their PAYE schemes and link them to their apprenticeship service account. The employer's levy payments will then be transferred to their account. The government will top-up the employer's monthly levy payments by 10%.

The employer can negotiate a price up to the relevant funding band cap level with Simian for the delivery of a scaffolding apprenticeship over the expected duration of 18-24 months.

The agreed price can only be used to fund externally purchased and delivered training and in the case of the new standard, the end-point assessment. The employer will record the agreed price in their apprenticeship service account.

Simian will issue an agreement to the employer covering the delivery arrangements and requirements for the apprenticeship. The agreement will record the agreed price for the apprenticeship.

The government will make payment to Simian monthly in arrears from the employer's apprenticeship service account. 80% of the levy fund will be available. The remaining 20% will be held back as a completion payment.

Will there be any additional funding available to employers in 2017/18?

Any 16-18-year-old apprentice will attract an additional £1,000 payment from the government to the employer towards the extra expenses incurred in training apprentices in this age group. The payment will be paid in two instalments at months 3 and 12 of the apprentice's programme. Similar arrangements will apply in respect of 19-24-year-old apprentices previously in care or who have a Local Authority Education, Health and Care Plan.

What are the funding arrangements for English and maths in 2017/18?

The government will continue to provide funding for any required English and maths training as part of an approved apprenticeship programme. Funding will be paid direct to Simian. Therefore, the employer will not be required to fund this training.

What if there aren't enough levy funds in the apprenticeship service account?

The employer will only need to have enough funds in its apprenticeship service account to cover the monthly cost of the apprenticeship programme as levy funds will be paid into/from the account on a monthly basis.

However, were the employer to use up the levy funds within their account, it would be able to continue to recruit apprentices, but would pay 10% of the agreed price with Simian direct to Simian. The remaining 90% will be paid to Simian by the government.

What are the arrangements outside England?

The levy funds in the apprenticeship service account can only be spent in England. The UK government will allocate the levy take between the four devolved nations. This will be based on the residency of employees. If, for example, 80% of a workforce works in England and 20% work in Scotland, then 80% of the employer's levy account would be made available in the (English) apprenticeship service account system for expenditure on apprenticeships. The remaining 20% will be allocated to the Scottish government.

Each devolved nation is responsible for how their share of the levy is spent and they are currently consulting on how best to allocate and spend their share of the levy. They may decide to deploy different systems from England.

What if the employer already pays a levy to the CITB?

Depending on the size of their payroll, an employer will potentially have to pay 2 levies in 2017/18, the apprenticeship levy and the longstanding CITB statutory levy. The government have commissioned a review of the industrial training boards and future funding arrangements. In the meantime, the CITB will offer an enhanced grants package to employers to help mitigate against the impact of two levies.

What happens if the employer doesn't pay the apprenticeship levy?

Employers with a payroll of less than £3 million will not be required to pay the apprenticeship levy. However, these employers must co-invest 10% of the agreed total price up to the funding band maximum. The government will co-invest the remaining 90% contribution. The employer contribution will be paid over the duration of the apprenticeship programme.

The government will waive the co-investment requirement for employers with fewer than 50 employees if the apprentice is a 16-18-year-old or an 19-24-year-old with either an Education, Health and Care plan provided by the local authority or who has been in the care of the local authority. The government will pay 100% of the total price for these individuals, up to the maximum value of the funding band.

The government will also generate the additional payment of £1,000 for the employer if the apprentice is a 16-18-year-old or an eligible 19-24-year-old. These payments will be split into two equal payments when the apprentice is still in learning at 90 days and 365 days.

Which training providers will be able to deliver the training?

The government has created a new Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). All training providers wanting funding to deliver apprenticeship training must apply to RoATP. The training providers must directly deliver most of the apprenticeship training themselves and will have to undergo a due diligence, quality, capacity and capability and financial health test check. The choice of training provider to be used will rest with the employer. Simian has applied to the register and its application has been successful. Simian is therefore approved to deliver scaffolding apprenticeship training for apprentices employed by those employers who pay the apprenticeship levy.

All organisations delivering end-point assessment must be listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations (RAAO). The choice of end-point assessment organisation to be used will also rest with the employer.

If the employer selects Simian as their lead training provider can they still claim CITB apprenticeship grants?

Yes! Employers can claim apprenticeship grants as they do now for apprentices on a government approved apprenticeship programme with an approved training provider such as Simian.

Version 1. Information correct as at April 2017.