

# The Essential Skills Academy for Apprentices

A comprehensive toolkit to elevate and equip your apprentices for the workplace





# The Apprenticeship Challenge: Closing the Critical Workplace Skills Gap

You've made a significant investment in your apprentices, securing the future talent pipeline for your business.

But are you seeing the return you expected?

For many employers, the transition from apprentice to highly productive employee can be fraught with challenges:

- **The Workplace Readiness Gap:** Technical training is vital, but apprentices often lack the foundational professional skills and behaviours, from effective business communication to managing workload effectively, that allow them to contribute confidently from day one.
- **The Unmeasurable 'Soft' Skills:** You know your apprentices need to improve in areas like teamwork and problem-solving, but how do you effectively measure, track, and prove that development to justify your training costs?
- **Off-The-Job Training Fatigue:** Finding high-quality, relevant, and engaging off-the-job training that doesn't feel duplicative of training providers or like a box-ticking exercise.
- **Overburdened Mentors:** Your line managers are the backbone of your apprenticeship programme, yet they often lack the time or specific tools needed to effectively support and share actionable feedback with new talent through their earliest workplace challenges.

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## The Risk is Too High to Ignore

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In recent years, the national overall apprenticeship achievement rate in England hovers between 50-60%.

That means nearly half of all apprenticeships don't reach completion.

For your business, this figure translates into:

- **Wasted Investment and Time:** Financial loss from early departures and non-completions.
- **Staffing Instability:** The continuous cycle of recruitment and training to replace those who don't complete their probation.
- **Future Skills Gaps:** The failure to secure the long-term, qualified talent your business needs to grow.

**It's time to close the gap between potential and performance.**

You need a solution that systematically addresses these roadblocks and turns your apprentices into well-rounded, high-achieving employees.





# The Solution: The Essential Skills Academy

The answer to closing the workplace skills gap is a focused, measurable, and flexible training solution that works for both your apprentices and your business.

The Essential Skills Academy is a complete, practical, training solution that provides you with everything needed to launch, manage, and measure a successful apprentice development programme.

It is designed to support your apprentices to understand, articulate, and immediately apply the essential skills required for in-role success in a corporate setting.

## ✓ Solve the 20% Off-the-Job (OTJ) Challenge

The Essential Skills Academy includes **8 structured workshops** and a practical **business-based project** delivering relevant, high-quality learning content. This pre-built, quality assured solution alleviates the need to create in-house training and guarantees your apprentices meet their required learning hours without administrative stress. The Academy provides apprentices with a **dedicated learning record** to record development and applied skills logging evidence towards the mandatory 20% OTJ hours.

## ✓ Achieve Measurable ROI from Day One

The Essential Skills Academy equips your apprentices with essential skills such as Problem Solving, Teamwork, Creativity, and Planning. Progress is quantified through **Skills Builder Benchmark**, supporting effective evidence collection and accelerating apprentices' time-to-productivity through a contextualised workplace project, giving you a measurable return on your investment sooner.

## ✓ Empower Your Line Managers

The Essential Skills Academy addresses the challenge of overburdened and unsupported line managers by providing comprehensive **support and guidance materials**, ensuring your mentors can quickly upskill and feel confident to provide high-value support and feedback to apprentices across their apprenticeship and professional development, turning them into highly effective contributors to apprentice's success.

## ✓ Boost Your Employer Value Proposition

The Essential Skills Academy will help increase retention and attract a wider talent pool by offering in-demand personal development to ensure a strong start to a long-term career. Apprentices gain the confidence to identify and articulate the career-building skills they have developed, making them feel valued and secure. Apprentices are rewarded with **certificates** to recognise progress made across the Academy.

# Stop investing in uncertainty and invest in a guaranteed blueprint for apprentice success

## Core Academy Investment: £13,500

Your first-year fee provides comprehensive access to two key pillars of support for your internal team to deliver the programme to one or multiple cohort of apprentices:

### 1. The Essential Skills Apprentice Academy Toolkit

- **8 Workshop Sessions (PowerPoint):** Ready-made, professional content covering all 8 essential skills, for high-impact, three-hour workshops.
- **Real - World Application Project:** A business-focused group project that provides apprentices with an immediate, hands-on opportunity to apply essential skills, consolidating learning and reinforcing value.
- **Apprentice Learning Record:** A dedicated document for apprentices to log their applied learning, directly contributing evidence to 20% Off-the-Job compliance.
- **Facilitator Training:** Resources and training to empower your internal team to deliver the workshops effectively.
- **Certificate:** Formal recognition of completion, boosting apprentice morale.
- **Evaluation Surveys:** Ready-made evaluation questions to quickly gather data and prove the programme's impact.

### 2. Skills Builder Expert Support & Programme Accreditation

- **Skills Builder Benchmark:** Access to the online self-assessment tool, which provides measurable, objective data to track apprentice progress.
- **Guidance & Support for Line Managers:** Dedicated guidance to support apprentice mentors to provide high-value support and reduce administrative burden.
- **1:1 Guidance from a Skills Builder Expert:** Dedicated support to help you launch, monitor, and review the Academy programme, ensuring maximum ROI.
- **Impact Level 4 Accreditation:** Quality assured approach by the Skills Builder team.
- **Networking Opportunities:** Connect with other apprenticeship employers to share best practice and insights.

### Optional Add-ons:

**Need help facilitating?** Skills Builder trainers are available to deliver the workshops directly to your apprentices, providing expert, hassle-free delivery. Prices start from £4,500.

**Want to align it with your brand?** We can customise the branding and project focus to align with your industry and organisation's specific needs. Prices start from £500



We're here to provide a demo, answer your questions,  
and help you get started!

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*The Academy is remarkably successful in equipping our apprentices with vital skills and a better understanding of our workplace expectations and business objectives. The Skills Builder team bring exceptional expertise, organisational skills and professional guidance to support its launch, implementation and impact reporting. The Academy has exceeded our expectations and has prepared apprentices for their roles and strengthened our talent pipeline.*

**Samantha Nash – Wilson,**

Senior Apprenticeship Programme Manager, Amazon



*Effectively developing my listening skills has been key for me, especially when communicating with stakeholders. It's about understanding their requirements and what I should actually take away from those interactions*

**Sam Fage-Bennett,**

Apprentice



# The Essential Skills Academy: Workshop Overview

## Providing Foundations and Focus:



**Workshop 1 (2 hours):** Apprentices are introduced to the Universal Framework for essential skills. They unlock internal motivations for professional development, exploring key concepts of 'employability' and 'professionalism' and leave with an actionable SMART target for the Academy ahead.

**Workshop 2 (2 hours):** Apprentices unpack the importance of these skills. They deep dive into Creativity and Teamwork, building a consistent understanding of what these skills involve and their value in the workplace. They create Skills Builder Benchmark profiles enabling them to identify their essential skills strengths and development areas in following sessions.

## Skill Application – 'Project Evolve':



**Workshop 3 (2 hours):** Apprentices get to work on Project Evolve. They begin by building the business case for: 'How will your business innovate and evolve to thrive in the future?'. They explore Problem Solving, applying key research concepts to project tasks. This workshop additionally explores how essential skills directly support the successful adoption of AI technologies.



**Workshop 4 (2 hours):** Apprentices deep dive into Planning. They explore how to set an effective SMART goal, and use this to help create a detailed project plan for their future-proofing innovation, considering the major activities that might be required to move to implementation. Apprentices complete Benchmark assessments for Planning and Problem Solving, and consider how these link to their new roles.



**Workshop 5 (2 hours):** Apprentices explore and apply the skills of Adapting and Leadership. The teams are faced with an unexpected challenge to their project plans. They use a SWOT analysis to identify opportunities to re-imagine or modify their future-proofing innovation. Apprentices complete their Benchmark assessments for Adapting and Leadership.

## Communicating for Impact:



**Workshop 6 (2 hours):** Apprentices shift focus to Listening and Speaking. Once they have explored and Benchmarked these focus skills, they prepare a presentation to share their planned future innovation with the business.

**Workshop 7 (2 hours):** Apprentices deliver their final presentations, responding to questions and seeking feedback. Apprentices put their Speaking skills to the test whilst actively listening to other teams, practising key skills including note-taking and effective questioning.

## Sustaining Professional Growth:

**Workshop 8 (2 hours):** Apprentices focus is on longevity. Apprentices map their role to the Universal Framework steps, pinpointing their critical future skills needs, and setting on-going development goals to ensure continued growth, long after the course concludes. They reflect on and celebrate their journey.