APPRENTICE HANDBOOK

Support and guidance

SKERN SKILLS

Apprentice Handbook

Welcome – this is ***your*** apprenticeship

Welcome to your apprenticeship with Skern Skills This handbook is written for you, the apprentice. It explains what an apprenticeship really is, what is expected of you, how you are supported, and what happens at the end.

What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a **real job with structured training** that allows you to earn a wage while gaining valuable skills and a nationally recognised qualification.

As an apprentice, you:

- Are employed and paid by an employer
- Learn in the workplace and through structured training with Skern Skills
- Develop **Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)** required for your role
- Complete at least **6 hours off-the-job training** per week during paid working hours

An apprenticeship is designed to prepare you for long-term employment and career progression. It is a demanding but rewarding route that requires commitment, professionalism and engagement from start to finish.

An apprenticeship is not just a course – it is **a paid job with training** that helps you build a real career. You earn a wage, gain recognised qualifications, and develop the skills employers value.

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Your support and training – at a glance

Who supports you?

- Your **employer** trains and supports you in your job role
- Your **Skern Skills trainer** teaches, coaches, reviews progress and supports your learning
- **Extra learning support** is available if you need it
- Regular **reviews** with you, your trainer and your employer
- Access to online learning resources and study support
- All **Skern Skills** staff can help with **safeguarding and wellbeing concerns**
- **Careers advice and guidance** with support from your trainer.

How long does it last?

- Apprenticeship durations vary with some being as little as 8 to 12 month Apprenticeship durations depending on the type of apprenticeship you are on and Level (most last longer depending on the role)
- You are employed throughout

How your time is split

- **Approximately 80%** working and learning on the job
- **6 hours per week** off-the-job training (during paid working hours)

What is a skills scan?

A **skills scan** is completed before the start of your apprenticeship.

It looks at:

- What you already know
- What skills you already have
- What you still need to learn

This helps your trainer create a **training plan that is right for you**, so you are not repeating things you already know and get support where you need it most.

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Reviews and progress

- Progress reviews every **10 to 12 weeks**
- You, your employer, and your trainer meet to:
    - Check progress
    - Set targets
    - Plan next steps

What you will learn - Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)

Every apprenticeship is built around **KSBs**:

- **Knowledge** – what you need to understand (the theory)
- **Skills** – what you need to be able to do
- **Behaviours** – how you act at work (attitude, professionalism, teamwork)

KSBs are developed both at work and during training.

Your employer helps you learn KSBs through real work tasks. **Skern Skills** helps you learn them through teaching, coaching, and reviews. You must show evidence of all KSBs before you can complete your apprenticeship.

What is the End Point Assessment (EPA)?

The **EPA** is the final assessment of your apprenticeship although some assessments depending on your apprenticeship happening during your apprenticeship.

It is:

- Completed at the **end** of your apprenticeship
- Carried out by an **independent assessor (not Skern Skills)**
- Based on the KSBs for your role

The EPA may include:

- A professional discussion
- Practical observation
- Tests or projects (depending on your standard)

You will only go to EPA when you and your trainer are confident you are ready. After your EPA you will receive an overall grade for your apprenticeship

Who will be involved in your apprenticeship?

Several people will support you throughout your journey:

The apprentice

As an apprentice, you are both an **employee** and a **learner**.

You are expected to:

- Turn up on time for work and training
- Be professional and willing to learn
- Ask questions and take feedback
- Complete training work and evidence on time
- Follow health, safety, and workplace rules

If something is not right or you are struggling, **tell your trainer** – support is there for you.

The employer

Role of an Apprenticeship Employer

The apprenticeship employer plays a key role in supporting the apprentice's development. Their responsibilities include:

- **Providing meaningful work experience:** Offering tasks and projects that build the apprentice's skills in line with their apprenticeship framework.
- **Supporting learning and development:** Ensuring the apprentice can apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings and encouraging continuous growth.
- **Monitoring progress:** Regularly reviewing performance, giving constructive feedback, and identifying areas for improvement.
- **Ensuring a safe and inclusive environment:** Complying with health and safety regulations and promoting a positive, respectful workplace.
- **Liaising with training providers:** Coordinating with colleges or training organizations to ensure the apprenticeship program meets required standards.

The employer's commitment ensures the apprentice gains the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to succeed in their chosen career.

Your Skern Skills trainer

Your **Skern Skills** trainer:

- Teaches and supports your learning
- Reviews progress every 10–12 weeks
- Sets targets and action plans
- Supports wellbeing and safeguarding
- Prepares you for End Point Assessment

Additional support

We are a fully inclusive apprenticeship provider and welcome everyone. If you have any additional learning or support needs, please let us know so we can provide the necessary support to help you achieve your full potential.

Off-the-job training – what does this mean?

This does *not* mean time off work. It means learning that is **outside your normal daily duties**, such as:

- Training days (online or face-to-face)
- Coaching and mentoring
- Shadowing experienced staff
- E-learning and assignments
- Research and reflective work

This training helps you build the skills needed to pass your apprenticeship and do your job well.

English and maths (Functional Skills)

English and maths are part of most apprenticeships. This is however dependant on age. If you are 19+ then the employer can ask for you to be exempt. 16–18-year-olds need to continue unless exempt (i.e. you have already achieved the level of maths or English required0

- You will complete an initial assessment if you do not have the entry requirements
- If required, you will work towards Functional Skills Level 1 or 2
- Learning is supported through BKSB, your maths and English lessons and your trainer

These skills are important for your job and future career and a requirement of the apprenticeship if you do not have the entry level needed.

Safeguarding and the Safeguarding Learning Module

Safeguarding means protecting people from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation. This includes children, young people and adults.

Skern Skills is committed to safeguarding all apprentices. We:

- Promote safe and inclusive learning environments
- Take all safeguarding concerns seriously
- Have trained safeguarding staff available to support you

Safeguarding Learning Module

At the start of your apprenticeship, you will complete a **Safeguarding learning module**. This helps you understand:

- Your rights and responsibilities
- How to recognise abuse, bullying or harassment
- How to stay safe online
- Prevent duty (protecting people from radicalisation)
- British Values such as respect, tolerance and the rule of law
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If you are worried about yourself or someone else, report it immediately using: https://www.skernskills.co.uk/safeguarding

Urgent concerns should be reported immediately.

Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Skern Skills is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We believe everyone should be treated fairly and with respect, regardless of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender or gender identity
- Race or ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

You have the right to learn and work in an environment free from:

- Discrimination
- Bullying
- Harassment

You also have a responsibility to:

- Treat others with respect
- Value differences
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour
- Report concerns

Any form of discrimination or harassment will not be tolerated.

Health and safety - Keeping You Safe on Your Apprenticeship

Your safety and well-being are very important to us.

Skern Skills works with employers to make sure:

- Your workplace is safe and suitable for learning
- Health and safety checks are completed
- You receive appropriate training and supervision

You also have responsibilities to:

- Follow workplace health and safety rules
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) where required
- Report accidents, hazards or unsafe practices immediately
- Act responsibly and look after your own safety and the safety of others

If you ever feel unsafe, concerned, or unsure about something, speak to your trainer, employer, or any member of the Skern Skills team.

Code of Conduct

As an apprentice, you are expected to behave professionally at all times.

You must:

- Be punctual and reliable
- Follow workplace and training rules
- Show respect to colleagues, trainers and others
- Use IT and online systems appropriately
- Dress appropriately for your role and training
- Act honestly and responsibly

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Bullying or harassment
- Offensive language or behaviour
- Dishonesty or misconduct

- Bringing Skern Skills or your employer into disrepute

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

Cheating and Academic Misconduct

All work you submit must be **your own**.

Cheating includes:

- Copying someone else's work
- Allowing someone to copy your work
- Plagiarism (using others' work without referencing)
- Using AI or online sources inappropriately
- Submitting false or fabricated evidence

Cheating is taken very seriously and may result in:

- Work being rejected
- A fail or removal from the programme
- Disciplinary action

If you are unsure about what is allowed, **ask your trainer before submitting work**.

Disciplinary Procedure

If you fail to meet expectations or break rules, the following steps may be taken:

1. **Informal discussion and support with you and your employer**
2. **Written warning and improvement plan**
3. **Formal disciplinary meeting**
4. **Possible withdrawal from the apprenticeship**

Disciplinary procedures are fair, transparent and supportive, and you will always have the opportunity to explain your situation.

Complaints Procedure

Skern Skills aims to provide a high-quality experience, but if something goes wrong, we want to know.

If you have a concern:

1. Speak to your trainer or lead trainer first
2. If unresolved, make a formal complaint

Complaints will be:

- Taken seriously

- Handled fairly and confidentially
- Investigated promptly

Details of the complaints process are available on our website or from your trainer.

What happens after your apprenticeship?

Your apprenticeship is a stepping stone.

Next steps could include:

- A permanent role with your employer
- A higher-level apprenticeship
- Further or higher education

Talk to your Skern Skills trainer early about your goals – we can help you plan. Alternatively e mail enquiries@skerntskills.co.uk

Need help or have questions?

enquiries@skernskills.co.uk
01237 809 469

www.skernskills.co.uk

Your apprenticeship is *your journey*. Use the support available, stay engaged, and make the most of the opportunity. Best of luck to you from all of the team at Skern Skills

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