



ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**APPOINTMENT OF APPRENTICES –
PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

SEPTEMBER 2017

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Document Title: Appointment of Apprentices – Pay and Conditions of Service

Summary

Publication Date	September 2015
Related Legislation / Applicable Section of Legislation	Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (ASCLA) 2009 sections 32-36, 6 April 2012 and the Apprenticeships (Form of Apprenticeship Agreement) Regulations 2012
Related Policies, Strategies, Guideline Documents	Workforce Strategy
Replaces	N/A
Policy Owner (Name/Position)	Schools HR Service
Policy Author (Name/Position)	Schools HR Service
Applies to	School based Apprenticeships

Review of Strategy

Last Review Date	September 2017
Review undertaken by	Schools HR Service
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Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Title	Date formally noted	Version Number
Service Consultative Group (SCG)	Appointment of Apprentices – Pay and Conditions of Service	21 September 2017	2
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Governing **Boards** of community and voluntary controlled schools with delegated powers are required to adopt this procedure. Governing **Boards** of voluntary aided and Foundation schools are required to adopt either an appropriate diocesan procedure, this procedure or draw up their own for formal consultation with the recognised Trade Union representatives.

1. INTRODUCTION

Apprenticeships are work based training programmes, designed by employers. The programmes provide the skills and knowledge needed to ensure a high degree of competency in a job role.

Depending on the sector and job role an Apprenticeship can take anything between one and five years to complete and they are open to any age.

Training Providers are organisations that deliver the Apprenticeship training. They may be from a college, or a private training company. The Training Provider can assist with recruitment and complete all of the necessary paperwork to secure any available grant funding. Training Providers will also visit Apprentices in the workplace to deliver training and set targets for learning.

There are a range of occupational areas in existence where schools could appoint an Apprentice to role, including:

- Office/Business Administration
 - Facilities Management
 - Digital and Social Media
- Teaching Assistant
- IT Technician
- Catering
- Accounts
- Laboratory Technician

NB: this list is not exhaustive

Funding for Apprenticeship qualifications

From April 2017, the Public Sector will be contributing into the Apprenticeship Levy, this includes Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, who can access the Levy to pay for Apprenticeship training.

Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academy schools with an annual payroll of over £3 million will have their own Apprenticeship Levy funding available to pay for Apprenticeship training. Foundation, Voluntary Aided and Academy schools under £3 million payroll will have access to Apprenticeship funding through the government, with a 10% mandatory contribution required.

Candidates holding a degree **are now eligible** for an Apprenticeship, however this must be in a different subject area to their degree qualifications.

There are four levels of Apprenticeship available:

1. **Apprenticeships - Level 2**
This is the 'starter' level Apprenticeship, where qualifications will be equivalent to around 5 GCSE's.
2. **Advanced Apprenticeships - Level 3**
This level is equivalent to 2 A-levels and acknowledges the increasing role and responsibilities of the Apprentice in the workplace.

3. **Higher Apprenticeships - Level 4/5**

This level is equivalent to Foundation Degrees and can be used to access higher level degrees.

4. **Degree Apprenticeships – Level 6/7**

This level includes a full Master's Degree from a university as part of the Apprenticeship programme.

The information contained within this document is correct at the point of writing, however it should be noted that legislation, funding and training arrangements are constantly under review and therefore at the point of appointment it is strongly advised that further advice is sought as to the most up to date information.

2. **EQUALITY**

The Schools HR Service aims to regularly review all the policies, procedures and management guidance we operate to ensure there are no negative equality impacts on staff based on their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Consultation with our customers is an important part of how we achieve this. If you feel, on reading this guidance, that there may be a negative equality impact within your school, please tell us about this. Please also let us know if you need to access this guidance in a different format. You can do this by contacting the following officers:-

Abbie Walker
Schools Support Service Manager

Telephone number (01706) 925161
e-mail – abbie.walker@rochdale.gov.uk

3. **APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT**

The requirement for an Apprenticeship Agreement between an employer and an apprentice, under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (ASCLA) 2009 sections 32-36, came into force on the 6 April 2012 and the Apprenticeships (Form of Apprenticeship Agreement) Regulations 2012. An Apprenticeship Agreement is required at the commencement of the Apprenticeship for all new apprentices who start on or after that date.

An Apprenticeship Agreement is an agreement between an employer and an apprentice under which the apprentice undertakes to work for the employer and is in the form prescribed by s32 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and states that the agreement is entered into in connection with a qualifying Apprenticeship framework.

The prescribed form of an apprenticeship agreement for the purposes of fulfilling the “The Apprenticeships (form of Apprenticeship Agreement) Regulations 2012” is a written statement of particulars of employment issued in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996.

This is equivalent to the contract (appointment letter and statement of particulars issued) issued to the Apprentice which meets the test of the Employment Rights Act 1996. Once an Apprentice has been appointed to a post within school please liaise with the HR Shared Service, or your contract provider where this is not the Local Authority, who will make arrangements for the appropriate contract to be issued.

An Apprentice should not be used to replace a leaver and should not hold a post on the schools establishment. An Apprentice is a paid trainee and will have a trainee contract of employment. The appointment of an Apprentice will not result in a change to the schools published staffing structure, although approval for the appointment of an Apprentice should be secured through the relevant Governance arrangements.

4. DEFINITION OF A YOUNG WORKER

A young worker is someone under 18 but over school leaving age. School leaving age is until the end of summer term of the school year in which they turn 16, from this point until the age of 18 the person will be classed as a young worker. Young workers have different employment rights to child workers, and some specific restrictions are in place in relation to their role.

5. TERMS AND CONDITION

5.1 Rate of pay

Having researched best practice the Local Authority, working with a number of other North West Local Authorities, has established a rate of pay for Apprentices. The Local Authority has determined a minimum salary of £9,000 per annum (£4.76 per hour) should be paid to Apprentices as a fair rate of remuneration. This can be pro-rata for Apprentices who are part time and/or term time only.

After 12 months the legal minimum rate of pay for an Apprentice is the equivalent rate on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) wage for age provisions. There are different levels of NMW, depending on age. The rates from **1st April 2017** are:

- **£4.05*** - the 16-17 rate for workers above school leaving age but under 18
- **£5.60*** - the 18-20 rate
- **£7.05*** - the main rate for workers aged 21 and over
- **£7.50*** - the main rate for workers aged 25 and over

*These rates will increase with National Minimum Wage but this document will not always be updated with the most up to date values so they should be checked on the www.gov.uk website.

The wage for an Apprentice must be changed to reflect the appropriate rate for their age following their 18th, 21st and 25th birthday.

If an apprentice is on a higher wage than the National Minimum Wage, the employer must continue to pay that for the remainder of the training or until the apprentice becomes eligible for the full national minimum wage.

Financial incentives are available to encourage recruitment, however this is a changing position and therefore clarification should be sought on each occasion of appointment.

5.2 Hours of work & breaks

Legally, in accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998, young workers should not normally work more than eight hours a day or 40 hours a week. The hours can't be averaged out for young workers and there is no opt-out for young workers. Apprentices within schools maintained by Rochdale Council should work in accordance with the

National Conditions of Services (National Joint Council) and should not work more than 37 hours per week. Apprentices have to work a minimum of 16 hours per week with an average amount of working hours being 30 per week.

The pattern of work determined for an Apprentice should be in accordance with the school's needs.

Young workers who work for more than four and a half hours should get a rest break of at least 30 minutes. Rest breaks must be:

- taken in one block
- taken somewhere in the middle of the work period, not at the end
- spent away from the place of work if the Apprentice wants them to be
- taken when the employer determines, to meet the conditions detailed above and the school's needs

Young workers should have 12 uninterrupted hours' daily rest in each 24 hour period in which they work. The 12 hours may be interrupted if the periods of work are split up over the day or do not last long.

Young workers must take two days off each week; this is known as weekly rest. This cannot be averaged over a two-week period (meaning young workers can't work an extra day one week and take more days off the following one). These two days' rest should also be taken together with no working in between them.

5.3 Holidays

Employed apprentices are entitled to a minimum of 20 days' paid holiday per year. This is in addition to bank holidays. Apprentices within schools maintained by Rochdale Council should work in accordance with the National Conditions of Services (National Joint Council) and should receive the same holiday entitlements as other staff employed by the Local Authority. Holiday entitlements are outlined in the document titled Management Guidance: Annual Leave in Schools.

Apprentices can therefore be employed on term time only contracts or all year round contracts depending on the school's needs, the type of role, and whether the school is open all year round.

An Apprentice on an all year round contracts, with under 5 year's service, would be entitled to 23 days annual leave. They would be permitted to take annual leave at any time during the leave year which commences on 1st April in any year, subject to the needs of the school. It is recommended that at least 50% of the annual leave entitlement is used during school term time, to effectively manage service provision during school closure periods.

An Apprentice on a term time only (TTO) contract, within under 5 year service, would be employed to work 44 weeks. This equates to working 38 weeks and 4 days in each school year. As 38 weeks currently represents a school year, the remaining 4 days should be worked during the school holiday period at the discretion of the Headteacher. The 44 week calculation includes holiday payment of 5 weeks and 1 day for annual, statutory and other national holidays.

5.4 Sickness absence

Apprentices within schools maintained by Rochdale Council should work in accordance with the National Conditions of Services (National Joint Council) and should receive the same sickness entitlements as other staff employed by the Local Authority.

- During 1st year of service 1 month's full pay and (after completing 4 months service) 2 months half pay.
- During 2nd year of service 2 months full pay and 2 months half pay

The School's **Health Related Absence** Procedure will be used to manage the sickness absence of an employee who has completed their probationary period.

If an Apprentice has a number of absences or their absence becomes a long term sickness absence, then the training provider should be notified of this and kept updated in relation to the schools management of their absence.

5.5 Contract of employment (training contracts)

Apprentices are employed on fixed term contracts of employment known as training contracts. Training contracts should be for a minimum of 18 months. The minimum length of Apprenticeship training is 12 months.

There is an expectation that Apprentices should spend 20% of their contracted hours working on their Apprenticeship. A training provider will ensure a suitable training plan is developed to meet these requirements.

All apprentices must be employed for a minimum 30 hours per week. This includes time spent away from the workplace engaged in training. If an apprentices personal circumstances or if the nature of employment in a given sector makes it impossible to work these hours, then an absolute minimum of 16 hours per week must be worked. In these exceptional cases, the total duration of the apprenticeship will be extended accordingly. For example, the usual minimum planned delivery is a 12 month Apprenticeship with 30 hours per week spent with the employer, but where the individual can only work 20 hours per week, the Provider will need to extend the end date by one third – that is, the Apprenticeship will last for 18 months.

Ending the fixed term contract of an Apprentice, as with any employee on a fixed term or temporary contract, should be undertaken in accordance with the management guidance issued on the use of fixed term/temporary contracts. The Apprentice will not be eligible for redeployment or redundancy at the end of the training period.

An Apprentice will be subject to an enhanced DBS clearance. As an Apprentice should be supervised, they will not meet the test of regulated activity and therefore will not be subject to a barred list check. All other pre-employment checks, including medical and references are relevant prior to the Apprentice commencing their role.

6. APPOINTMENT OF AN APPRENTICE

There are a number of options available to a school when recruiting an Apprentice including, a:

- school advertisement, or,

- training providers will advertise your vacancy on the National Apprenticeship website and locally.

Irrespective of the method of securing candidates for an Apprentice role, schools should follow their Recruitment and Selection Policy to ensure a fair non-discriminatory process at the appointment stage, including assessing a candidate's skill against the person specification for the post. Once a recruitment process has concluded, a conditional offer can be made to the Apprentice who will be subject to all the standard pre-employment checks including references, medical and DBS.

7. TRAINING

Young people need training most when they first start a job; to increase their capabilities and competencies to a level where they can do the work without putting themselves and others at risk. It is not enough to make training available; employers should make sure that it is undertaken and also check that key messages have been understood.

Young people will also need training and instruction on the hazards and risks present in the workplace and on the preventive and control measures put in place to protect their health and safety. This training should include a basic introduction to health and safety, e.g. first aid, fire and evacuation procedures etc.

As well as training, young people are also likely to need more supervision than adults. Effective supervision will help to monitor the effectiveness of the training young people have received and will be used to assess whether a young person has the necessary capacity and competence to do the job. It is recommended that a work place buddy is designated to support the Apprentice and to assist with any queries within the workplace.

Apprentices should not be left for long periods of time unsupervised. The Apprentice should be line managed by a nominated supervisor in school and they should be clear of who the Line Manager is.

The training provider will undertake regular visits to the school to assess the progress of the Apprentice within the workplace. Supervision meetings will take place with the Apprentice's line manager/supervisor in order that concerns can be discussed in a transparent and fair way.

Qualifications take a minimum of 12 months to complete although there is no maximum time limit.

Training for an Apprentice should not be limited to the minimum basic training and schools should support an Apprentice in a range of formal and informal training opportunities during their Apprenticeship.

The Apprentice may need either day release or time off to study to enable the completion of relevant training linked to the Apprenticeship.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

All employers have a responsibility to make sure that their employees' health and safety are protected at work. This means that thorough training should take place to ensure that employees know how to do their job safely.

Before employing a young person, a health and safety risk assessment must be undertaken which takes these specific factors into account:

- the fitting-out and layout of the workplace and the particular site where they will work;
- the nature of any physical, biological and chemical agents they will be exposed to, for how long and to what extent;
- what types of work equipment will be used and how this will be handled;
- how the work and processes involved are organised;
- the need to assess and provide health and safety training; and
- risks from the particular agents, processes and work.

All risk assessments need to take account of certain features which apply to young people. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require that young people are protected at work from risks to their health and safety which are a consequence of the following factors:

- physical or psychological capacity
- pace of work
- temperature extremes, noise or vibration
- hazardous substances
- lack of training and experience

There is no need for a new risk assessment each time a young person is employed, as long as the risk assessment takes account of the characteristics of young people and activities which present significant risks to their health and safety. It may be appropriate to consider developing generic risk assessments for young people. These could be useful when they are likely to be doing temporary or transient work, and when the risk assessments could be modified to deal with particular work situations and any unacceptable risks. In all cases, the risk assessment will need to be reviewed if the nature of the work changes or becomes no longer valid.

A training provider will always attend the workplace to undertake a health and safety inspection to ensure that the premises are a safe place of work for the Apprentice.

9. INDUCTION

Schools should have an induction policy in which their procedures are clearly laid out. There is likely to be some variations in these procedures according to the post, since the induction of teaching staff, teaching assistants, administration staff etc would need to be tailored to requirements. It is important that a manageable induction takes place for all staff regardless of previous experience.

The five main objectives of induction are:

- To establish clearly what standards the school expects, this is of significance as the Apprentice may not have been within a work environment prior to commencing the role and may have no or little understanding of workplace expectations.
- To provide new staff with copies of School Policies particularly around Child Protection and Safeguarding children.
- To ensure that the employee is aware of and understands all relevant Health & Safety issues.

- To assist new staff in becoming familiar with their surroundings and colleagues, so that their ultimate effectiveness is not compromised by them being uncomfortable or lacking confidence.
- To create the right conditions for newcomers to develop a commitment to their new employer and for the employer to be able to assess objectively what contribution the new recruit will be able to make to the organisation.

Safeguarding and Health and Safety should be completed on the first day in all cases. This includes the provision of and explanation of the Guidance for Safer Working Practices Document. Staff induction should begin with the new member of staff signing that they have read and understood all documentation relevant to the post.

10. PROBATION

Terms and conditions of employment for any new employee state that they will be required to serve a six-month probationary period. Headteachers/Line Managers will need to ensure that this is made clear during the Apprentice's induction. A probationary period of 26 weeks (6 months) applies to all new members of staff except those who have previous continuous length of service or service under the Redundancy Modifications Order. The probationary period may be extended up to a maximum of 50 weeks.

The probationary period will allow the Headteacher/Line Manager to assess the Apprentice's ability and suitability for the post including attendance, conduct and work performance, in order to ascertain whether the member of staff should be confirmed in the post.

Due to the relatively short period, close monitoring of the Apprentice's performance is essential to ensure that the line manager is aware of their progress in the job and to identify any shortcomings with a view to redressing these. The probationary process should also be used to identify and recognise a new member of staff's strengths and to provide encouragement and support during the settling-in period. Involvement of the training provider in the probationary review process may also be appropriate.

11. TERMINATION OF AN APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING AGREEMENT

There is no legal obligation to provide the apprentice with a job once their training contract has ended. The exception to this is when a job is specified within the apprentice agreement. Apprenticeships are considered to be temporary with a specific purpose, and that purpose is the training of the apprentice. So when the training is complete, the contract will end - and the apprentice will not be considered to have been made redundant. They will be legally considered to have been dismissed for 'some other substantial reason'.

The nature of an apprentice's contract also makes it very difficult for an employer to dismiss them during the course of their apprenticeship. The onus is on the employer to show that they are dismissing the apprentice fairly and reasonably in accordance with an agreed procedure. Access to other HR procedures may be appropriately used during the Apprentice period of training, further advice and guidance should be sought in accordance with Section 12.

12. CONTACT DETAILS

For information required on training providers, funding, advertising etc. please contact:

- Raising Participation and Skills Team 01706 925099

For contractual queries, please contact:

- HR Shared Service 01706 92 5196/6207

For general queries, please contact:

- Schools HR Service 01706 92 5194/5169/5187

Example JD

APPENDIX 1

* Please delete/insert as appropriate

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

*SCHOOL/SERVICE:

JOB DESCRIPTION

OCCUPATION

Job Title:	Apprentice *****
Grade:	£9,000 per annum (All year round, 37.00 hours per week)
School/Service:	* Insert School Name
Responsible to:	Headteacher/Bursar/Senior Admin Assistant/Business manager. <Please delete as appropriate>
Responsible for:	None
Hours of Duty:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please insert as appropriate e.g. 37 hours flexible working hours in accordance with the needs of the school or 37 hours • Specify whether TTO/AYR
Any Special Conditions of Service:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Postholder may be required to attend evening and weekend meetings (*delete as appropriate) ➤ The School operates a Smoke Free Policy for all its employees and applies to any building and associated grounds within the immediate vicinity of the school. ➤ (*delete as appropriate) Annual Leave – Term Time Only – this post is employed on a Term Time Only basis and therefore all staff are required to be in school during school term. There is no further annual leave. ➤ (*delete as appropriate) Annual Leave – All Year Round – Annual leave will be approved in accordance with the needs of the school.
DBS Disclosure Level:	Enhanced

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

Organisational Chart: * ***Please amend chart to reflect structure of the school***

E.g. Headteacher

E.g. Bursar/ Business Manager/Senior Administrator

E.g. Apprentice

PURPOSE AND OBJECTS OF THE ROLE

To gain work skills, qualifications and experience to help the participant increase their confidence and experience and enable them to apply for further employment with the School, Local Authority or other organisations on completion of the Apprenticeship.

Under the direction/instruction of senior staff, to provide i.e. routine general administrative and financial support to the school <**Please insert as appropriate**>

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

CONTROL OF RESOURCES

Personnel

To be self motivated and able to manage own workload and training responsibilities.

Financial

To work in accordance with Financial Regulations and procedures of the school.

Equipment/Materials

To be responsible for the safe use and maintenance of equipment/materials used by the postholder.

To adhere to the school's rules and regulations relating to the use of ICT, e-mail and intranet/internet access.

Operation of general office equipment, ICT systems and the orderly storage of stationary and office supplies.

Health/Safety/Welfare

Responsible for the health, safety and welfare of self and colleagues in accordance with school's Health & Safety policies, procedures and current legislation.

Equality and Diversity

To work in accordance with the School's Policy relating to the promotion of Equality and Diversity.

Training and Development

To take responsibility for identifying training and development needs in conjunction with placement managers and training providers. To take responsibility for attending training sessions and producing the required work towards the full Apprenticeship framework.

Relationships (Internal and External)

- Internal:
1. School staff.
 2. Senior managers.
 3. Governors.
 4. Pupils.
 5. Users of the School.
- External:
1. Parents/carers.
 2. Staff in other schools and within the LA.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The apprentice must –

1. Perform his/her duties in accordance with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.
 2. Ensure that the Authority's/School's commitment to public service orientation and care of our customers is provided.
 3. Be able to render regular and efficient service to undertake the duties of this post.
1. Adhere to the general guidelines for confidentiality as issued by the Data Protection Registrar

PRINCIPAL DUTIES

- 1.

SECONDARY DUTIES

- To undertake such other duties and responsibilities of an equivalent nature as may be determined by the Headteacher (or nominated representative) in consultation with the post-holder and if she/he wishes with her/his trade union representative.

Job Description prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Agreed by Postholder: _____ Date: _____

Example PS

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSON SPECIFICATION

POST:

GRADE: £9,000 p.a.

Note to Applicants:

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

The **Essential Criteria** are the qualifications, experience, skills or knowledge you **MUST SHOW YOU HAVE** to be considered for the job.

The **Desirable Criteria** are used to help decide between candidates who meet **ALL** the Essential Criteria.

The **How Identified** column shows how the School will obtain the necessary information about you.

If the **How Identified** column says the **Application Form** next to an **Essential Criteria** or a **Desirable Criteria**, you **MUST** include in your application enough information to show **how** you meet this criteria. You should include examples from your paid or voluntary work.

	ESSENTIAL CRITERIA	HOW IDENTIFIED	DESIRABLE CRITERIA	HOW IDENTIFIED
Qualifications and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•	Application form, production of evidence and assessment		
Skills		Application assessment and interview		
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic knowledge of the work of a school• Understanding of the importance of safeguarding/child protection when working in a school setting.			
Profession				

Values and Practice				
Special Working Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There may be some evening or early morning work to support staff within school. Please confirm you are willing to provide this support if and when required. • Requirement to attend induction training. 	Application Form and Interview		

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I have to pay an Apprentice?

Yes, all Apprentices are paid at £9,000 per annum; this can be pro-rata if the employee is part time and/or term time only.

How old will they be?

Apprentices can be of any age, however most candidates for vacancies will be under 24.

Is there help available to assist me putting the vacancy and job description and person specification together?

Yes, the Raising Participation and Skills Team will assist and guide you through the process; appointments can be made at any time in the year.

What types of work can Apprentices do?

Apprenticeships are available in many different types of jobs. The Raising Participation and Skills Team can advise you about whether your role is suitable for an Apprentice.

Do I have a say in which Apprentice is recruited?

Yes, you interview and recruit as normal.

What happens if there's a problem with my Apprentice?

Normal employment rules relate to Apprentices around conduct and capability. There will also be additional support from the Raising Participation and Skills Team and from the training provider supplying the Apprenticeship training to help sort out any issues. The standard 6 month probationary period applies to Apprentices.

Will I have to give day release for my Apprentice to go to college?

Possibly, although this depends on what type of Apprenticeship qualification they are on - some training can be done totally in the workplace, but there could be a need for off-site training at times. **There is an expectation that 20% of the Apprentices contracted hours should be spent in training.**

Who delivers the training to the Apprentice?

An appropriate training provider will be allocated to your Apprentice. This training provider will be the most suitable to deliver the best programme for your Apprentice and will be sourced by the Raising Participation and Skills Team.

Will the qualifications done by the Apprentice be free of charge?

No – if your school contributes to the council Apprenticeship Levy, payment will come through this.

VA or Foundation schools will have their own Levy pot if their payroll is over £3m. For those under £3m, a 10% contribution will be required towards the cost of the Apprenticeship training.

How long will the Apprenticeship qualifications take?

Each qualification runs at a different rate, although the minimum period is 12 months to complete, the Apprenticeship training contract runs for 18 months.

Can I recruit someone with a degree?

Yes. The funding rules changed in 2017 to allow graduates to access Apprenticeship programmes.