

Apprenticeship Workforce Development – Content Development Sessions: An Invitation to Participate

After the launch of the AWD programme and the initial focus groups earlier this year we are now moving into developing the content for the workshops, webinars and resource is that will be available in the autumn. There are four sessions in May / June and members; both Apprenticeship leads and academic leads for apprenticeships are welcome to join a development session to identify the detailed content, key learning points and good practice that you would want to see included.

There are four topics, each with a dedicated session. There is a broad description of the content outlined below:

FOCUS GROUPS:

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Logistics: - PLEASE JUST CLICK ON THE DATES IN THE TABLE OR BESIDE EACH TOPIC SCOPE TO REGISTER

1. Places are limited to 10 to enable the session to dig into the detail and ensure that we can consider all of the likely participants and their different perspectives as we develop the session
2. We are keen to see practitioners and academic leads attending
3. All sessions will take place online for 2.5 hours
4. PLEASE LET US KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND YOUR CHOSEN SESSION – This is to enable us to replace you with others on the waiting list

Apprenticeships in Context	Training Plans	Onboarding	Initial Needs Assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wed 24th May • 1.30 – 4.00 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thur 1st June • 2.00 – 4.30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mon 5th June • 9.30 – 12.00 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mon 5th June • 1.30 – 4.00

Topic Scope

Focus Group 1: Apprenticeships in Context - Wednesday 24th May 1.30 – 4.00

This is the Apprenticeship Orientation session, the general introduction to apprenticeships that everyone thinking about developing a new apprenticeship or teaching on an apprenticeship for the first time, or leading or governing an apprenticeship needs to know:

An important focus of CPD here needs to address increasing an understanding of apprenticeships, the language that characterises them and supporting sense making of how they may be positioned. Focussing on the nature of the demands and nature of the **‘world of work’** is crucial in reinforcing the **employer led** nature of apprenticeships.

Professional development in this area needs to be **nuanced by role** needs to be explored: by for example, schools’ staff, schools’ liaison officers, careers officers, FE and University providers by job role, governance professionals, employers, and regional commissioners. **Existing CPD resources** also need to be signposted in this context, for example targeted at the Technical Education system specifically².

Supporting professional development relating to strategic governance and leadership including understanding the relevance of **policy developments** was seen as crucial if apprenticeships are to be positioned effectively within organisational strategies. Examples include linking with **regional and local skills strategies**, appreciating the implications of Local Skills Improvement Plans, (LSIPS) and understanding Local Management Information that informs skills supply and demand in localities.

Governors, trustees, and directors are likely to bring strategic perspectives on aspects such as sustainability, inclusion and safeguarding into play. Local skills plans will include devices such as ‘frameworks’ or ‘escalators’ shaping how those individuals furthest from the workplace can access and develop skills giving insights into how apprenticeships can support **inclusion and social mobility**. Related considerations include enhancing an appreciation of the need of learners with SEND, and regional and local safeguarding priorities.

A major focus for professional development is drawing out how **apprenticeships are different** from other routes into employment and/or further and higher technical study. The work of science professional bodies, for example, with young people tends to be aimed at traditional routes and there is a need to understand the apprenticeship model much better. This is particularly the case with degree and higher apprentices where take up, particularly from younger learners, may be limited for those from underrepresented groups.

The significance of **higher-level skills** and the relevance of higher and degree apprenticeships will also be articulated in this CPD architecture. The interplay between T levels and apprenticeships, and also apprenticeships and professional recognition, is also an important consideration for CPD that supports sense making in the context of regional skill landscapes. and apprenticeships and professional recognition

Related high-level CPD requirements that emerged included the need to address national and regional challenges linked to recruiting teachers with the necessary **technical understanding** of the content of apprenticeship standards including the **apprenticeship sustainability framework**³. It was seen as

crucial to embrace related professional development initiatives such as 'Teach Too' and elements of the T level Development Programme to share industrial experience. The importance of the **recruitment and retention** of staff is also a key priority if high quality apprenticeships are to be delivered.

It is important, at the pre apprenticeship stage, that every partner involved in delivering an apprenticeship understands how their role is distinctive and how it supports the role of other players. The need for **effective communication** across all of these audiences arose as a key aspect for consideration.

Internal audiences for professional development to understand apprenticeships better were also identified. In Higher Education contexts important groups include those in academic faculties and senior leaders. Part of this increased understanding needs to extend to designing admissions systems **specific to apprenticeships**. CPD that would facilitate the rapid on boarding of staff new to apprenticeships is also a priority.

It was reported that the perception of apprenticeships as a deficit model was still in play amongst some staff in delivery organisations. The need to highlight implications of the apprenticeship model within an **organisation's culture** is a professional development priority. The link between, for example, business development staff, link tutors and assessors need to be strengthened and enhancing the ability of some providers to be more **responsive** to employers was also seen as important. CPD focussing on achieving increased compatibility in reporting and other systems, at an early stage, within large provider organisations, including HEIs, emerged as highly relevant.

Focus Group 2: Training Plans - Thursday 1st June 2.00 – 4.30

The notion of **individualised learning** and **pathways** and related professional development implications was seen as important. The need to recognise different starting points through initial assessment and recognition of prior learning and, more importantly, ensuring that such differences are accommodated in teaching and learning approaches is critical. **Commitment statements** and their implications for the employer, provider and apprentice are important if training plans are to be authentic in supporting each learner's journey.

Some participants drew attention to the need for CPD specifically relating to a better **understanding of the entry point** of an individual starting an apprenticeship, and how that then has an impact on their individual learning plan. The Higher Education admissions audience may need specific CPD to focus on the implications of the need for apprenticeship admissions be treated individually including deconstructing and mapping to the Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours of individual standards.

CPD is necessary that allows for the development of flexibility in **sequencing** and other elements of programme design to accommodate individualised programmes and adjustments following apprentices' **formative assessments and progress reviews**.

The CPD implications of the interplay between apprentices' training plans and range of **delivery models** need to be explored. Examples that emerged from the evidence base included roll on/roll off approaches or delivery in cohorts. The significance of a triadic relationship building including with the EPAO was also raised in ensuring continuity between initial assessment and individualised training plans.

Focus Group 3: Initial Needs Assessment - Mon 5th June 1.30 – 4.00

The relevance of **skills scans** is important here with CPD focussing on guidance on interpreting how those skills identified could be used, graded, or classified to create personalised training plans and enable **recognition of current capabilities**. This **Recognition of Prior Learning** (RPL) will include mechanisms for mapping existing qualifications held by potential apprentices to specific apprenticeship standards. This may also part of the dynamic for considering professional recognition within professional body membership.

There is a need for more exemplars of effective practice in matching learners to the right programmes. Such skills analyses need to be applicable to **all age and level** apprenticeships including those new to a sector, those upskilling to gain **professional recognition** or take on higher-level roles, and those training and upskilling for new careers in different occupations.

Professional development to enhance the **understanding of the entry point** of an individual starting an apprenticeship, and how that then has an impact on their individual learning plan was identified as a priority. The Higher Education admissions audience may need specific CPD to focus on the implications of the need for apprenticeship admissions be treated individually including mapping to the Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours of individual standards.

CPD supporting an appreciation of the significance of building the **triadic relationship**, between employer, provider and apprentice is highly relevant in the context of initial assessment. This includes ensuring that the role in the workplace allows opportunities to meet the end point assessment criteria. Enhancing an understanding of the role that End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs) should play in onboarding was also highlighted.

Professional development was seen as particularly crucial to support **apprentices with SEND**. Resources, including live case studies, potentially segmented for those with different conditions, need developing. Providers need to have a detailed appreciation of the reasonable adjustments to learning necessary for apprentices to have the best chance of successfully completing. Understanding applications for **Additional Learning Support** and associated funding is an important aspect.

Focus Group 4: Apprenticeship Onboarding - Mon 5th June 9.30 – 12.00

Professional development to grow understanding of the need to align the apprentice with the **right programme** and the **right employer** is crucial in creating a high-quality platform for their apprenticeship journey. Careful consideration of **eligibility criteria**, including that the individual is eligible, the programme is an apprenticeship, and that the provider can claim funding for, is essential in this context.

Such expectations can be underpinned by ensuring that the nature of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours is understood by each apprentice, their employer, coach and tutor. All need to have a **fully informed expectation** of specific apprenticeship standards and how, in creating a culture of partnership, they can work to support their apprentice. Recognising the need to play EPAOs into this relationship is also necessary here.



CPD needs to strengthen an appreciation by **apprentices' line managers** of where work-based opportunities will be most effective including integrating aspects such as Prevent, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, inclusion and sustainability into delivery.

An increased appreciation of how **apprentices with SEND** can be supported through end-point assessment is necessary. This would be further enhanced through **EPAOs' increased awareness** of the need to engage early with apprentices who may need reasonable adjustments and providing access to examples of appropriate assessment materials.

In local authority contexts brokerage services are likely to specialise in supporting people with SEND into **accessible apprenticeships** and will understand appropriate adjustments necessary for apprentices to complete. This will highlight potential CPD needs for providers including how **vocational profiling** can add value in this context as will understanding the implications of Education, Health and Care plans where they are in place.

