

Apprenticeships Guide



2022/23

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What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences. Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 6 hours of their working hours completing learning with a college, university or training provider which leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

An apprenticeship includes:

- Paid employment with holiday leave
- Hands-on-experience in a sector/role of interest
- 6 hours off-the-job training per week (or 20% for those who started their apprenticeship prior to 1 Aug 2022)
- Formal assessment which leads to a nationally recognised qualification

Apprenticeships are an exciting paid option for anyone wanting to gain experience, upskill or change career because they offer the chance to earn a wage whilst they work and study. For those that know the area that they want to work in Apprenticeships offer a structured learning process without the financial costs of a university degree.

What is the structure of an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are developed to ensure that a learner has the knowledge, skills and behaviours to be successful in their chosen profession.

Apprentices will spend 80% of their time during the apprenticeship learning and applying their learning and 6 hours of their time on off the job training (OJT). The 6 hours off the job training is not just a requirement of the funding rules but is also a great way for your apprentice to spend time reflecting on their performance and learning all the theory and knowledge aspects needed to complete their programme so they can apply these back in the workplace.

Off-the-job training is calculated using the apprentice's contracted employment hours across their whole apprenticeship – equivalent to around one day per working week (or 6 hours). This is arranged at times to suit the employer and the apprentice to minimise disruption and maximize business impact. Getting their off the job training is easy to achieve and will incorporate any study time / online learning or day release to college. Apprentices should aim for 6 hours of Off-the-job training a week.



**Off the job
training**



What is Off the Job Training?

Definition:

Sometimes referred to as OTJT.

Off-the-job training is learning that takes place outside of the normal day-to-day duties which supports the achievement of the apprenticeship.

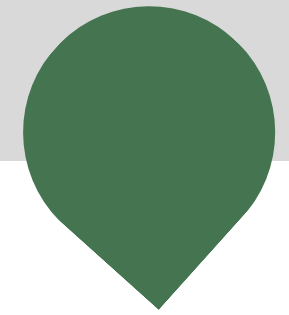
The Education and Skills Funding Agency have stated all apprentices are required to complete at least 6 hours of their paid, contracted, working hours on off-the-job training (or 20% for those who started their apprenticeship prior to 1 Aug 2022).



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REMEMBER – in order to meet the requirements, the off-the-job activity must be undertaken within apprentice’s paid, contracted, working hours!

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What are the benefits?

- It allows apprentices to learn new skills and knowledge without having the distraction of their normal workload.
- Apprentices’ all round skills and knowledge will increase within their role by undertaking different forms of training.
- Apprentices are able to access other sources of training they may not have in their day-to-day job

What counts towards off the job training?



Taught sessions at college

Being mentored/ 1:1 tuition at work

Additional learning support

Shadowing a colleague at work

Writing assignments/working on projects/portfolio and NPL work

Visits to other businesses/offices/practices

Tutorial support at work

Online learning/webinars

Attending competitions

CPD/ Training Events

What doesn't count towards off the job training?

Progress/Learner reviews

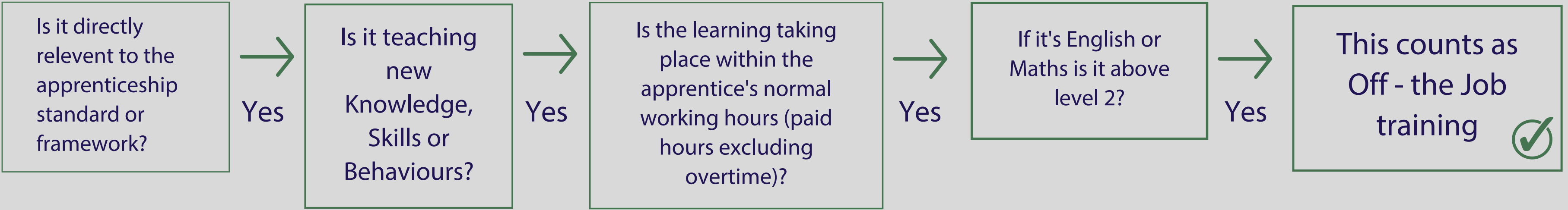
Time Spent completing English/and or Maths

Any training that doesn't contribute towards achievement of the apprenticeship

Training outside of the apprentice's paid working hours



Your off the Job training guide:



⊗ This isn't off-the job training ⊗

Key Facts

- 1** You can deliver off-the-job training in the apprentice's normal workplace or at an external location.
- 2** Off-the-job training must make up at least 6 hours of the apprentice's normal working hours (paid hours excluding overtime) over the planned duration of the apprenticeship.
- 3** Progress reviews and on-programme assessment do not count towards 1 2 3 6 hours off-the-job training.



**Apprenticeship
Funding**

How are Apprenticeships funded?

Pets at Home Group PLC pays into a Government Levy fund. This is available to fund Apprenticeships to train new and existing colleagues in a qualification linked to their job role.

At Pets at Home Group, we are working to ensure that our Apprenticeships align to our talent strategy, as part of our strategic workforce planning.



**Frequently
asked
questions**

FAQs Contents

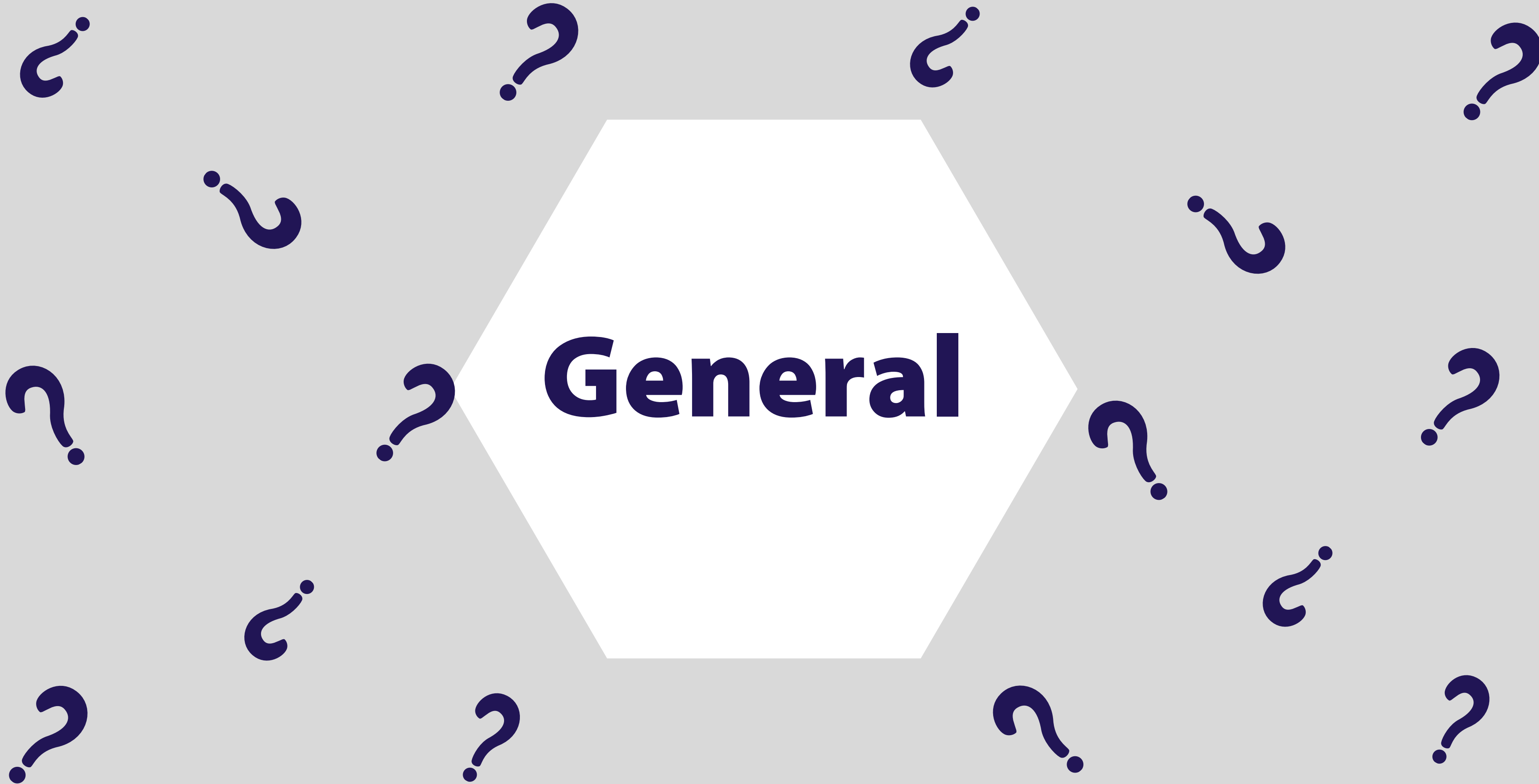
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General



Are Apprenticeships just for people who can't get into Higher Education?

No

- Apprenticeships are for anyone who wants to earn and learn at the same time. Higher Apprenticeships can include degrees.



What are the eligibility requirements for an apprenticeship?

- 16 or over
- Living in England
- Must have continuously lived in the UK for the last 3 years.
- Not in full-time education



What is the DAS?

- The Digital Apprenticeship Service is the government portal for employers to find, fund and manage apprenticeship programmes.
- The Early Careers team manage the DAS for you, contact them if you want further detail on this or if you need them to set up funding for your apprentice.



How do I hire an apprentice?

- If you want to fill a vacancy with an apprentice, contact the apprenticeships team prior to recruiting and they will manage the recruitment for you.
- If you have already identified a candidate, check with the team before offering an apprenticeship. The team will check we have the funding and a supplier available.
- We cannot guarantee an apprenticeship without prior consultation with the Apprenticeships Team.



How many hours should an apprentice work?

- Ideally apprentices should work a minimum of 30 hours a week although they can work part-time which will extend the duration of an apprenticeship.
- We advise that apprentices should be hired on a full time contract
- We would also advise that off the job training hours (6 hours) are included in the apprentices working hours.



Can I hire an apprentice on a part time contract?

Yes

- The apprenticeship funding rules state that an apprentice's weekly hours should ideally be no less than 30 hours, although some providers can accommodate an apprenticeship for a colleague working 20 hours a week by significantly extending the duration of the apprenticeship.



What is my responsibility as a Line Manager?



It's important to know that, as a line manager, you are responsible for ensuring the following:

- That you attend regular meetings with the training provider to keep up to date with the Apprentice's progress.
- That you take into account the 6 hours (or 20% dependant on when the apprentice started the apprenticeship) a week Off The Job learning when assessing workload for the Apprentice.
- That you provide the access and exposure to areas of the role that the Apprentice may need to complete their apprenticeship.
- That you flag any issues with the learner's progress or training provider's service to the Apprenticeship team.

I need more support for my apprentice, what do I do?



- It's important to know that sometimes a person will need more support than you are able, or qualified enough, to provide. The People Services team can signpost you to many different forms of support.
- Please contact peopleservices@vets4pets.com
- Your apprenticeship specialist can also support you with any issues such as with training providers or apprentice support, contact them via apprenticeships@petsathome.co.uk

My Apprentice wants to withdraw from their Apprenticeship early.

- It is recognised that being supported on an Apprenticeship is a privilege and therefore there is an expectation that an Apprentice complete the Apprenticeship.
- Steps are taken at the beginning of an Apprenticeship to ensure that the Apprenticeship is right for the Apprentice and that they are fully aware of the expectations of them throughout the course of the Apprenticeship and support is available throughout.
- We encourage Line Managers and Apprentices to contact the Apprenticeships team firstly to request support.
- On some occasions, such as a personal matter or maternity leave, there is the opportunity for a Break In Learning (BIL) to be applied, where the Apprentice will resume to the Apprenticeship once the situation has changed.
- If a BIL is not suitable and both the Line Manager, Head of Department and Apprentice agree that this is the only option, then you must notify the Apprenticeship team and supplier.

If my Apprentice fails or withdraws from an Apprenticeship, can they apply for another?

No

- Although we consider applications on a case-by-case basis, where exceptional circumstances would be taken into consideration, our policy is that the Apprentice would not be eligible for another Apprenticeship.
- We encourage all Apprentices to consider accessing additional support before withdrawing from an Apprenticeship.

What are my responsibilities when my apprentice finishes their programme?



- Once an apprenticeship finishes, as an employer you may extend the apprentice's employment contract through progression onto another role or a further apprenticeship (if appropriate).
- There is no obligation for an employer to retain their apprentice. However, most apprentices do stay with their employer.
- When an apprentice finishes their apprenticeship, you will need to ensure that their working salary is increased to and meets the National Minimum Wage.

Resits



Can an apprentice retake an exam ?

Yes

- Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a resit or a retake.



Can my apprentice resit a module to get a better grade?

No

- A resit cannot be taken with the intention of increasing the original grade if an apprentice has passed their EPA. Resits are only to be taken in the event of a failure.



How will I know if my apprentice needs to retake part of their apprenticeship?



Your training provider will notify you

- When the result notification recommends a re-take, the employer and training provider should consider a supportive action plan that responds to the weaknesses identified from the original EPA result notification.

Who is responsible for resit costs?



Resit costs are the employers responsibility

- Re-sit costs are to be funded from the Apprentice's department's budget.
- Employers are expected to financially support apprentices until completion, including paying the cost of resits, when necessary.
- Resits are ineligible costs and are not funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The EPAO and training provider are not responsible for resit costs but may agree to contribute and can include this in their agreement at the beginning of the apprenticeship.
- Apprentices cannot be asked to pay for costs of training and assessment and are not responsible for resit costs. For example, a training provider may contribute to the cost of a resit if the apprentice fails a theoretical element of the training. An EPAO may offer one or more resits in the initial contract price.

How many resits can my apprentice take?

The number of resits is at the Employer discretion

- The number of resits that can be taken by an apprentice will be at the discretion of their employer, unless the assessment plan limits this to one. The ESFA recommends a limit of 2 resits, however more than 2 resits can be taken if needed, unless otherwise specified in the assessment plan.





Financial

Do I pay my apprentice?



Yes

- **You must pay at least the relevant national minimum wage set by the government through your usual payroll process.**
- **Apprentices aged under 19, or in their first year, must be paid the apprentice minimum wage rate.**
- **Higher Apprentices, those over 19 or after their first year, must receive the minimum wage rate that applies to their age. In some cases, you may also contribute towards the cost of training.**
- **The People Services team can support on what wage to pay your Apprentice.**

How do I fund an apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are funded by our Apprenticeships Levy.

- **The Apprenticeships team will set up funding for you.**



As an apprentice employer, will I receive any cash incentives for hiring an apprentice?



In some cases, Yes.

At present there is one government initiative for cash incentives.

Employers and training providers could get £1,000 each for taking on an apprentice who is either:

- **aged 16 to 18 years old**

or

- **aged 19 to 25 years old and has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has been in the care of their local authority**

When will I be paid my cash incentive?

Incentives are paid throughout the apprenticeship

The government will provide the training provider with a £1000 incentive payment, which the training provider will pay to the company directly. 50% is paid after 90 days and the remaining 50% is paid after 1 year.



Do I need to take out a learning agreement for my apprentice?



You cannot take out a learning agreement

- **As part of government funding rules, an employer is not permitted to ask for any reimbursement from the apprentice for any apprenticeship costs, therefore we do not issue Learning Agreements for Apprentices.**

What information is required from a line manager to initiate transfer of funds to a training provider?

Before you have an apprentice ready to start with you, you must initiate contact with the Apprenticeships team. Then, when you have a start date, the team will set up funding.

They will need the Apprentices:

- Name
- Employee Number

Email information to apprenticeships@petsathome.co.uk



Can I get reimbursement from my apprentice if they decide to leave employment during or after the apprenticeship?

No

- **An employer is not permitted to ask for any reimbursement from the apprentice for any apprenticeship costs.**



What happens if my apprentice leaves?



Firstly, notify the Early Careers team

Action 1:

Notify the Early Careers team by emailing apprenticeships@petsathome.co.uk

- The Early Careers team will complete all DAS related activities for you, including all actions to end Government funding to the supplier

Action 2:

Notify the Apprenticeship training provider

- You will need to notify the training provider of their leave date

What happens if I take on an apprentice that has already started their apprenticeship elsewhere?

Firstly, notify the Early Careers team

- **It is important not to agree to continue the Apprenticeship until you have checked with the Early Careers Team.**
- **The Early Careers team will complete all DAS related actions**
- **The Early Careers team will then start all actions to ensure that government funding is sent to the supplier**
- **The team will engage with the supplier to get contracts agreed.**



**Setting up
an
apprentice**

Apprenticeship timeline





**Glossary of
terms**

Glossary of Terms

- Agreed / agreed subject to final apprenticeship standard approval: decision relating to a submission of an occupation proposal, occupational standard and end-point assessment plan during the development stages, before 'approval' of the apprenticeship standard in full at the end of the process.
- Agreed with conditions: decision relating to a submission of an occupation proposal, occupational standard and EPA plan. Conditions outline changes needed or additional evidence required before the submission can be agreed.
- Apprenticeship: an apprenticeship is employment with training to industry standards in a recognised occupation. It will involve a substantial programme of on and off-the-job training
- Apprenticeship framework: old-style apprenticeship based on qualifications, currently being phased out in England in favour of apprenticeships based on standards developed by employers.

Glossary of Terms

- Apprenticeship standard: new-style apprenticeship based on an occupational standard that defines the duties carried out by someone in the occupation and knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve that competence in those duties. The apprentice's occupational competence is tested by an independent, end-point assessment
- Approval & Funding Committee: a sub-committee of the Institute's board. It makes final decisions on the approval of occupational standards and end-point assessment plans and makes final decisions on behalf of the Institute on funding band recommendations
- Approved for delivery: an apprenticeship standard that is finalised for apprenticeship starts – occupational standard and end-point assessment plan must be agreed and published and funding band allocated
- Conditions – changes needed or additional evidence required before an occupation proposal, occupational standard and/or end-point assessment plan can be agreed

Glossary of Terms

- Degree apprenticeship standard: an apprenticeship that mandates a full bachelor's or master's degree
- Department for Education: responsible for children's services and education, including higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England
- Duty/duties: the activities/competencies that will be carried out by a competent person in a specific occupation; requires the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours in the workplace. Duties always begin with a verb
- Education and Skills Funding Agency: agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults

Glossary of Terms

- End-point assessment: rigorous robust and independent assessment undertaken by an apprentice at the end of training to test that the apprentice can perform in the occupation they have been trained in and can demonstrate the duties, and knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the occupational standard
- End-point assessment organisation (EPAO): an organisation approved to deliver end-point assessment for a particular apprenticeship standard. EPAOs must be on the register of end-point assessment organisations
- Funding band recommendation: recommendation made by the Institute, taking account of information submitted by a trailblazer group. It is notified to trailblazer group when the end-point assessment plan is agreed
- Funding bands: each apprenticeship standard is allocated to one of 30 funding bands. The upper limit of each funding band caps the maximum amount of digital funds an employer who pays the levy can use towards an individual apprenticeship

Glossary of Terms

- Funding evidence: what you must submit regarding costs of delivery of your apprenticeship standard. Used to inform the Institute's funding band recommendation
- Holistic / synoptic: assessment of an apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours in an integrated way i.e. assessing several KSBs at the same time
- Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education - ('the Institute'): the body responsible for improving the quality of apprenticeships in England
- Integrated degree apprenticeship standard: an apprenticeship that mandates a full bachelor's or master's degree, which incorporates the end-point assessment. The higher education institution delivering the degree must be on the register of apprenticeship training providers and the register of end-point assessment organisations

Glossary of Terms

- Knowledge, skills and behaviours – what is needed to competently undertake the duties required for an occupational standard
- Relationship Manager – primary contact within the Institute for a trailblazer group, who supports you through the entire apprenticeship standard development process
- Requirements – what needs to be met when developing an apprenticeship standard. There are requirements relating to trailblazer groups, an apprenticeship occupation, occupational standard and end-point assessment
- Route/Pathway – grouping of sectors initially devised as part of the reforms to technical education. There are 15 different routes; pathways are groupings of occupations within a route

Glossary of Terms

- Occupation: a recognised job role. The basis for apprenticeship standards
- Occupation level: level assigned to an occupation based on its difficulty and degree of autonomy
- Occupational profile: description of what someone in the occupation usually does, including duties
- Occupational standard: document that details what someone competent in the occupation does - duties and the knowledge, skills and behaviours they require to do it; the basis for apprenticeship standards and T-levels
- Standard occupational classification: common classification of occupational information for the UK. It is used to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data

Glossary of Terms

- Route panel – there are 15 sector-based route panels made up of industry experts. They scrutinise occupational standards, end-point assessment plans and funding evidence as part of the Institute’s approvals process. They make recommendations to the Approval and Funding Committee who make the final decisions on submissions
- Trailblazer group – group of employers developing an apprenticeship standard, recognised by the Institute as representative of those who employ people in the occupation
- Training provider – any organisation that delivers apprenticeship training. For example, a college, higher education institution, private training organisation. Training providers delivering training for apprenticeships must be on the register of apprenticeship training providers
- Valid – referred to in relation to assessment methods; fit for purpose