

Employer Engagement

► Toolkit 1 of 3

For use by training provider staff who are delivering, or planning to deliver Traineeships

July 2014

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Introduction

This toolkit is a product of the Traineeship Staff Support Programme 2014. The Traineeship Staff Support Programme is commissioned and funded by The Education and Training Foundation and managed by the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)

Background to the toolkits

The purpose of the toolkits are to identify the very latest best practice from the sector through tried and tested ideas and approaches in an easy to access, useful way.

The style of these toolkits is interactive, including a range of sample templates, forms, case studies, readiness checklists and briefing notes.

Project partners

This toolkit has been designed by KEITS Training Services Ltd in partnership with the following organisations:

- Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Provider Network
- Develop EBP
- Hertfordshire County Council
- HIT Training
- Jobcentre Plus
- Luton Borough Council
- North Hertfordshire College
- Oaklands College
- SSG Training

Toolkit series

This project has seen the creation of three individual toolkits:

1. Effective Employer Engagement in Traineeships
2. Initial Assessment tools for Traineeships
3. Supporting Trainees with Additional Needs

Who should use these toolkits?

The toolkits have been designed by providers, for providers.

You can dip in and out of the different sections as you wish.

More information

For more information about this project please contact Rebecca Diamond, Director, KEITS Training Services Ltd: rebecca@keits.co.uk

Section 1

Developing your Traineeship model

Assuming that you are eligible to deliver Traineeships, you will need to have a clear vision of what your delivery model looks like, your priorities for development and the process of how you will go about recruiting employers and individuals.

Decide your Traineeship model

There are broadly three main models of Traineeships that have evolved since being introduced in August 2013, although there are other models which have slight variations and some providers offer a combination of all approaches.

The three models are:

1. **Group intake** – A training provider decides to focus on building a critical mass or cohort of employers and trainees within a similar area of interest. This could be by sector e.g. Hospitality, Sport, Care etc. or by a particular geographical area such as a town or cluster of villages. Group intakes typically commence on the same day and feel like a course or programme with a structured start and end date and a mixture of classroom learning and work placements.
2. **Employer-led** – A training provider will work with an individual employer who wants to establish a Traineeship model for their business. This could be either one post or multiple positions. The motivation for the employer may be that they have struggled to recruit to an Apprenticeship position, or they might be unsure about 'taking the plunge' with an apprentice and want to use Traineeships as a way of finding out if it could work for their business or not, or alternatively they might be using Traineeships to feed into seasonal recruitment activities.
3. **Individual-led** – A training provider may be aware of an individual who is seeking an Apprenticeship but for whatever reason, has not been successful at interview. The provider may decide to help the individual by setting up a Traineeship with an employer to gain more experience and confidence in the workplace. This will enhance their chances of succeeding at a future Apprenticeship interview or job interview.

Complying with Funding methodologies and DWP rules



Guidance for those planning to deliver Traineeships is available from Gov.uk and can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Developing your delivery model

Once you know which programme model(s) you are going to be using, you can start planning for how you want it to be delivered.

You will need to consider:

- Which member of staff will be responsible for the programme
- The age range of the individuals
- How long it will last
- Which qualifications you will include
- Which sector
- Where it will take place
- When it will start

We have created a full checklist for you to use in Appendix A.

See Appendix A - Delivery Model checklist.

Section 2

Engaging employers you already know

There are a number of different techniques that providers could use to introduce the concept of Traineeships to employers and to promote the benefits of the Traineeship programme. This section introduces some of the most successful ideas and approaches developed by providers when contacting employers.

Start with employers you know

It is always easier to make contact with an employer where there is an established relationship that you can build on. When considering which employers could make good Traineeship partners, speak to colleagues about which employers they are working with currently and which ones have lapsed and could be re-engaged through Traineeships.

Categorise employers into groups based on:

- If they already have an apprentice (and when the apprentice is due to complete)
- If they used to have an apprentice but have lapsed
- If they have never taken an apprentice
- If they have offered work experience
- If they are part of your supply chain

This will then help you to identify ‘warm’ employers where you might have a relatively easy start, whereas other employers might need a bit more development time.

Maximise succession planning

Employers with an apprentice coming to the end of their Apprenticeship can make really good work placement hosts, especially as the apprentice can also be involved in mentoring the trainee.

It may also be worth considering employers who have past apprentices who have completed their programme but may be looking for personal development opportunities to demonstrate supervisory skills.

You should also consider employers who have employees currently undertaking leadership and management qualifications.

Employer-facing colleagues

Help all employer-facing colleagues (assessors, sales, business development etc.) to be aware of Traineeships and ensure they are confident in explaining the benefits to employers. Consider running a training session for employer-facing colleagues so that they really understand the flexibilities of Traineeships and how a Traineeship can work positively alongside other programmes such as Apprenticeships.

See Step 5 - Perfecting your sales pitch.

Allow enough time

It can take a few weeks or sometimes months to set up a placement with an employer. Always allow plenty of extra time for additional meetings, the provision of extra information, delays because the manager needs to speak to Head Office and for the employer to finally agree to commit to participating in the scheme.

Recruit more than you need

It is a good idea to recruit more employers than you need. It is possible that one or more of your employers might need to cancel on you because of business demands getting in the way.

It will also mean that you potentially have more placements than you will need so that if you have a trainee with specific work placement requirements, you have some flexibility to work with a pool of employers

Keep warm strategy

Have a 'keep warm' strategy in place so that if employers have to pull out, or come to you in between your Traineeship intakes you have a plan for keeping in touch with them. This could be as simple as a regular e-communication to let them know how the current programme is progressing, or could be more involved such as a personal phone call or visit. Think about who else in your organisation will have contact with the employer e.g. assessors and enlist them in assisting with the 'keep warm' activities.

Look Internally

Remember that you work for an employer as well and most probably employ apprentices also. Think about the different departments that you have within your own organisation. Could any of these be used for a Traineeship placement?

Consider your supply chain

As an organisation, you will have a supply chain of companies that deliver services to you. This could be anything from maintaining the plants and open spaces, providing cleaning services, running the canteen, supplying IT support, providing legal or financial support. Find out who your top 10 suppliers are and consider if they could be approached to offer a Traineeship placement.



Section 3

Engaging employers you don't know

Training providers will no doubt already utilise a range of employer engagement techniques to initiate contact with employers. This section may give you a few more ideas for Traineeships using different approaches that have generated good results.

Employers that you don't know

There are lots of ways to make contact with employers that you do not have an existing relationship with. Here are some ideas that providers have found successful.

Use the internet

There are a number of search engines that can be used free of charge to put together a list of local employers in a particular sector or geographical area.

Once you have decided which focus your Traineeship model will have e.g. sector / geographical area you can use the internet to extract contact details for employers that meet your criteria.

Use your Local Authority

Speak to your Local Authority about any sector focussed groups of employers they can help you to contact. Most Local Authorities will have an Economic Development department who will hold information about registered companies in a particular area or sector.

In addition, most Local Authorities will also have a business focussed publication such as an e-newsletter or printed publication that could be used to promote your Traineeship.

Work with your Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

There are 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships in existence across England. To find details of your local LEP click [here](#).

LEPs are locally based partnerships between Local Authorities and businesses, that play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.

Speak to your Local Enterprise Partnership about any sector focussed groups of employers they can help you to contact.

Purchase a database or pay for leads

It is possible to contact a direct marketing company to purchase a database of local businesses and key contacts e.g. Chief Executive / HR Manager. They will supply you with data based on your exact requirements.

Another option is to contact a direct sales company in order to generate employer contacts through a 'pay-per-lead' arrangement. In most cases the direct sales company would contact employers on your behalf and generate interest in Traineeships. You would then pay an amount to receive this intelligence.

Local job opportunities

Traineeships are designed to lead to employment or an Apprenticeship. It can therefore be effective to go through the local papers and look at online recruitment sites to see who is recruiting. Some of these employers may be interested in utilising Traineeships to help them fill the vacancy.

Local business networks

Make contact with local business networks such as the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses to see if there could be an opportunity to promote Traineeships at a local event or through a publication / website.

Work in partnership with other providers

Speak to other training organisations locally that might not be offering Traineeships but would be interested in working in partnership with you to boost Apprenticeship uptake. Partnerships between training providers can be mutually beneficial and an effective way to support each other.

Work with your local Jobcentre Plus

Work with your local Jobcentre Plus (JCP) to identify priority sectors and/or clusters of employers that have vacancies they need to fill.

Aligning your Traineeship with JCP priorities is important because you will need to strike a balance between the availability of eligible young people who may be right for a Traineeship with the availability of jobs in order to maximise job outcomes.

Employer Engagement checklist

Use the Employer Engagement checklist in Appendix B to make sure that you have considered everything that you need for your strategy.

See Appendix B - Employer Engagement checklist.



Section 4

Contacting the employer

We all know that first impressions count. Whether you are contacting an employer that you already know or a new employer, they will need to see that you are confident in explaining the benefits of Traineeships for their business.

Visit the employer

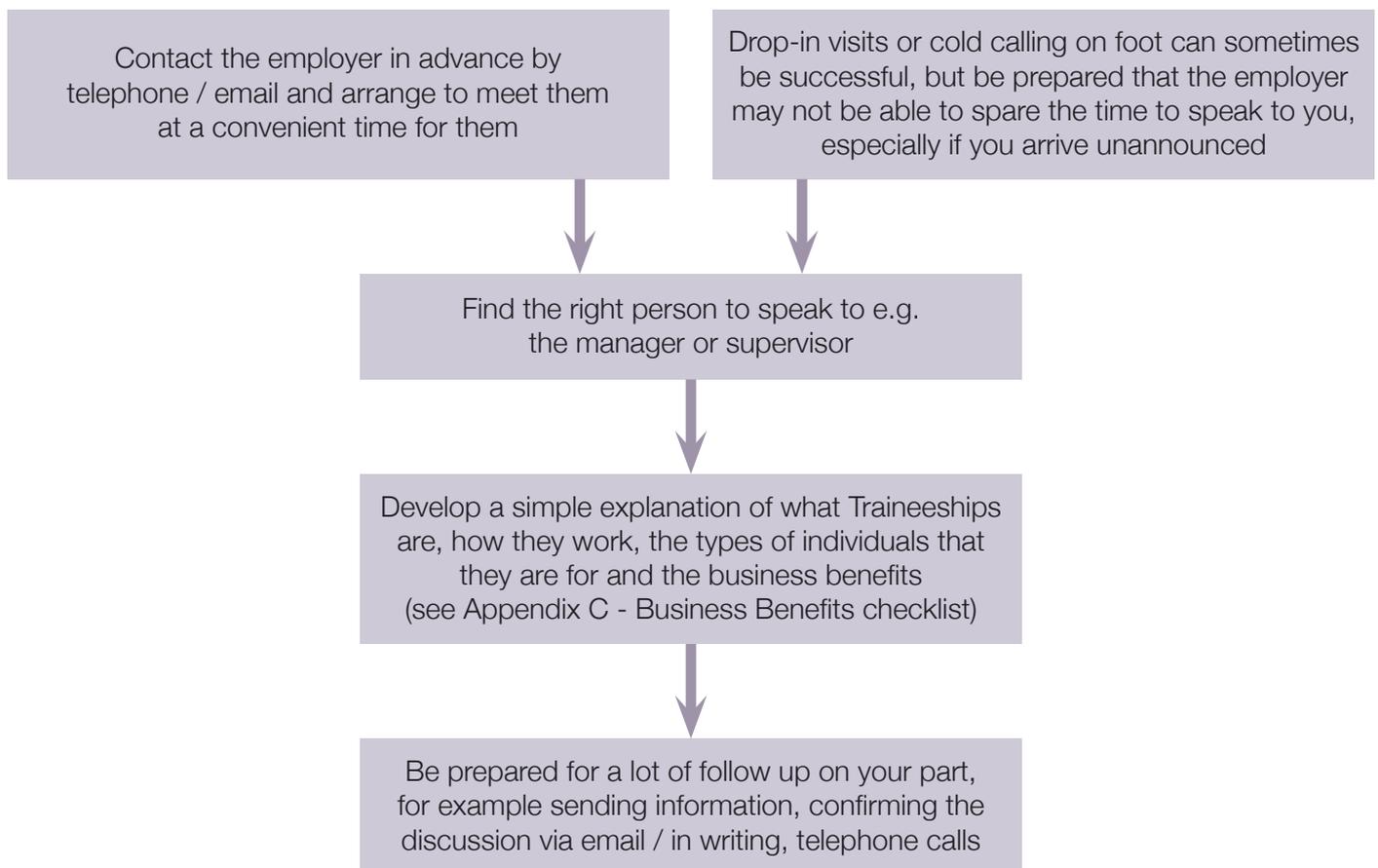
Traineeships are still relatively new and it can be confusing for employers to understand the difference between Apprenticeships, Traineeships and more traditional work experience. Employers respond positively to face to face personal contact where they can discuss the opportunity in more detail and gain a better understanding of the commitment they would be making. This flowchart outlines the simple steps for making contact with the employer:

Organise an employer event

Organising an employer event is a good way to bring a group of employers together to present the benefits of Traineeships, to explain the commitment that will be involved on their part and to discuss the details of the programme.

It can be very beneficial to have an influential local employer who is willing to speak to other employers about the positive benefits of Traineeships and why they think they are good idea.

See Appendix C – Employer Event checklist



Section 5

Perfecting your sales pitch

Finding the right hook to gain the interest of an employer is a specialised skill. You will need to have a selection of different techniques to help you capture the employer's interest and confirm their commitment to the Traineeship.

Perfect your sales pitch

Traineeships are like any other programme, you will need to use your expert sales techniques to sell the benefits to the employer. The benefits of Traineeships will need to be tailored to the industry and employer that you are approaching and will ideally provide a solution to one of their business problems.

See Appendix D - Business Benefits checklist.

Key points to remember

If they are a new employer, it is useful to carry out some research before the visit so that you are familiar with their business.

Know your offer and be clear with the employer about the commitment they will need to make.

Many employers have had a poor experience of work experience previously, whether from their own personal experience when they were at school, or more recently through a local initiative. Be prepared to promote how Traineeships are different and will provide a high-quality experience for both the trainee and the employer.

Focus on the flexibility of Traineeships to the employer. The minimum expected duration of the whole programme is six weeks and up to a maximum of six months (five months with one employer) however the duration of the work experience placement element is expected to be between 100 – 240 hours.

Traineeships branding

A new Brand Centre has been set up on the Apprenticeship website providing brand guidelines and downloadable resources for Traineeships.

To access the page click [here](#).

Promotional literature and e-communication

It is useful to have some kind of marketing literature / written material that you can leave with the employer after your visit or at an employer event. This will ensure that they have the details of Traineeships outlined to them in an easy to understand way.

You could create something from scratch, or you could build on some of the existing literature that has been produced which is available by clicking [here](#).

Incentives for work placement hosts

The guidance states that there is no central financial incentive for organisations hosting work placements as part of Traineeships. However, there is nothing to stop providers using the funding they receive to offer support and incentivise locally if they decide that is what is needed to generate high quality placements. The training provider may wish to offer employers a cash incentive for offering a high quality placement. This could be paid in instalments, could be paid at the end on successful completion of the placement or could be paid on successful transition of the trainee into paid employment or an Apprenticeship.

Other types of incentives you could consider

There are a number of other ways that you could consider incentivising the employer. You could offer:

- Free/subsidised qualifications for employers to develop their staff
- The opportunity to attend training and development sessions or bespoke packages
- Pay for Employer Liability Insurance for small employers or voluntary organisations (approx. £80)
- Trade vouchers or direct payment for materials or costs associated with supervision of a trainee
- Free advertising space on provider website
- Preferential rates for use of provider facilities e.g. meeting rooms

Using Social Media

Social Media is an excellent way to contact employers and let them know about the Traineeship work placements that you are trying to line up. Some of the most successful techniques used by providers have been:

- Carry out a short survey with employers that you know, so that you can find out which social media platforms they use and which times of day are most popular
- Pre-load your social media dashboard with a variety of messages to be sent out at various times of the day based on your feedback from the survey
- Short messages that link to a webpage for further information are preferred by employers
- Showcasing new employers that have ‘signed up’ and celebrating them publicly is effective. For example, a message could read “Congratulations to Jones the Butchers on becoming our 4th Traineeship placement for July. Find out more by visiting [www.](#)”
- Following or liking employers and ‘sharing’ or ‘retweeting’ their messages is a good way to increase social media traffic
- Develop your own hashtag for use with your Traineeship for example #YESTraineeships

- Use video content to capture success stories of employers who have ‘signed up’ and carry out a short interview with them (30 seconds – one minute) about why they have decided to offer a Traineeship placement and how their business has benefitted. You can then use this within social media messaging.

✓ Marketing literature quick check

- Try to use less words and more images, for example, infographics are very popular
- Include contact details for someone who will be able to speak about Traineeships in detail
- Provide a flowchart that outlines the stages/processes for both the training organisation and the employer journey
- Be clear about where more information can be found, for example you may wish to signpost back to your own website
- Ensure that you maximise the literature provided by the National Apprenticeship Service through the [Brand Centre](#).



Section 6

Managing employer's expectations

Traineeships are very different to the more traditional work experience that employers may have encountered previously. They will need to have the differences explained to them and the expectations clearly outlined so that they are fully aware of what they are committing to.

Minimum requirements

As part of the Traineeship programme, there are certain expectations and requirements of the employer that they might not be aware of. For example, it is important that your guidance to the employer covers the following points:

- Pre-placement information e.g. supplying a job description, carrying out a health & safety assessment and/or risk assessments
- How the matching/selection process will work
- Whether the employer is willing to offer a travel subsidy, subsidised meals or any other perk or benefit
- Whether the employer will be supplying a uniform or any dress code requirements
- The process for providing regular feedback and involvement in trainee reviews
- The requirements for a final interview
- The requirement to supply a written reference

At the very least the training provider has responsibility to ensure that the following is in place:

- Appropriate insurances are held by the employer and have not expired
- A health and safety law poster is displayed and is clearly visible or alternatively each worker is provided with the equivalent pocket card
- A health and safety policy is in place (if there are 5 or more employees)
- The employer is aware of work place hazards and risks relevant to their work environment
- Appropriate measures are in place to deal with hazards and risks
- Emergency procedures are in place
- Welfare facilities are available and accessible e.g. toilets and handbasins, drinking water, somewhere to rest and eat meals
- Arrangements are in place for first aid, accidents and ill health e.g. first aid box and an appointed person to take charge of first aid arrangements

For more guidance about the Health & Safety responsibilities of the employer, see the latest Traineeship Operational Guidance which can be found by clicking [here](#).

Health and Safety

There are many different opinions about the pre-placement requirements for a health and safety assessment to be completed. Some providers will maintain that a full health and safety assessment must be completed. Other providers prefer to utilise a combination of guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and individual risk assessments based on the employer type and the individual.

A number of free resources and guidance can be downloaded from the HSE website by clicking [here](#). This site also includes guidance by industry and examples of risk assessments that can be downloaded.

Cost to the employer

Employers are not required to pay young people who are on a Traineeship. Traineeships fall under an exemption to the National Minimum Wage as the individuals are treated as being in education and training.

It is encouraged, but not required, that employers consider providing trainees with support to meet their travel or meal costs.

Maximising job outcomes

With Traineeships, the employer offering the placement does not necessarily have to have a job opportunity for the individual to progress into on completion, although it's great if they do. It is important to introduce the concept of progression into employment to the employer from the very beginning so that they are clear about the purpose of the programme and how they can help the individual to progress.

It can be beneficial to inform the employer about wage incentives and other discounts and promotions from the beginning of your conversation with them, so that should the opportunity to create a job arise during the Traineeship, they know about the additional benefits that they could be entitled to.

Introducing a Service Level Agreement

Many providers have found that utilising a short Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the employer is an effective way to set out the roles and responsibilities of the Employer, the training provider and also the trainee.

A Service Level Agreement is an agreement between the Provider, the Employer providing the work placement and the trainee. It should specify in measurable terms the services that will be provided and any requirements of each of the parties. You would not expect an SLA of this nature to be legally binding. It should provide a summary of the main actions that you expect each party to carry out and should be signed and dated.

We have included an example Traineeship Service Level Agreement that providers can base their own SLA on.

See Appendix E – Example Service Level Agreement



Section 7 Matching the Trainee to the employer placement

There are a number of different models that could be used when it comes to designing this part of the Traineeship and it can be a critical deciding factor as to whether the placement is successful or not. You may already have a preferred model, however, if you don't then these ideas may help you.

To match or not to match?

Providers will have different preferred styles when it comes to matching the individual with their employer placement. The employer may also have strong opinions about how they want it to work.

The table below outlines three different methods and summarises some of the positives and negatives to each approach:

	Method	Positives	Negatives
A	Provider match The provider will have all of the information about the trainees and employers and will decide which individuals will be the best match for each placement.	It's quick - the employer does not have to set aside time to conduct interviews. It is impartial – neither the trainee nor the employer are involved in deciding which trainees go to which placements.	The employer may not take ownership of the placement so if things 'go wrong' they may be less likely to put in extra effort with the trainee. The trainee might not value the placement as much as if they had been selected for it by the employer.
B	Employer selection The provider facilitates some kind of interview process for trainees and the employer selects their preferred candidate.	The employer will select the candidate that they feel will fit in with their team most effectively. The trainee is motivated because they were the one selected by the employer.	It can be time consuming for the employer. The trainees may not impress the employer in an interview because of lack of experience.
C	Trainee and employer selection The trainees are introduced to the placement opportunities and put themselves forward for those they prefer. An interview is then arranged with the employer and the employer selects their preferred candidate.	There is ownership from both the trainee and the employer and a feeling that both have been 'selected' by each other.	It can be time consuming to organise interviews, especially when you are working with a large cohort of trainees Providers will need to manage the feelings of rejection for those that are not selected by their preferred employer.

Encourage trainees to research the employer

Many young people will be unaware of the range of opportunities available within certain employers. It can be a really useful exercise to encourage the trainees to carry out research on the different employers that are going to be offering work placements and getting them used to finding out whatever they can about an employer before they visit them. This can also help the trainees to come across as more enthusiastic and confident when they first meet the employer.

You could ask them to research:

- The company website
- How long the company has been established
- The main products and services that the company offers
- Any information about main staff that work there e.g. meet the team
- Where they are based

Tour of the work placement

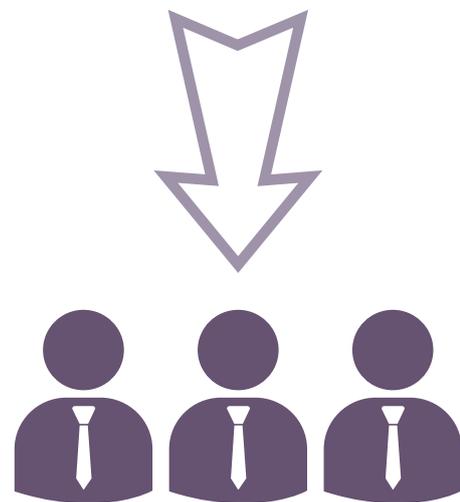
It would be a good idea to take your trainees to the work placement before they decide if they would like to be matched to that employer. This will give them a chance to see the venue and meet some of the staff. It is quite likely that the trainees will have pre-conceived ideas about the employer and this is a good way to inspire and motivate them. It also gives the employer a chance to meet the trainees in an informal way and start to build a picture about who is the most interested and enthusiastic about their organisation.

Pre-placement interview

If the employer wishes to interview the trainees in order to select the most suited candidate for the placement, you may find it useful to provide them with some sample interview questions.

It is also important that the employer understands that the candidate has most likely had only limited experience of both working in paid employment and also undertaking interviews. It is perfectly natural that they may be very nervous and the employer will need to help them to feel comfortable to get the best out of them.

Appendix F – Example Interview questions



Section 8 Involving employers in the design of the Traineeship

It can be both beneficial for the training provider and hugely rewarding for the employer if they are involved in helping to design the content of the Traineeship. The involvement of employers and use of real workplace settings for the work placement are crucial to the success of Traineeships.

Meeting the needs of the business

When starting to plan the Traineeship you will have various discussions with the employer about the needs of their business and how Traineeships fit this need. It is important to manage expectations by all parties in the early days of planning so that the employer does not feel that they've been misinformed or misled about how Traineeships operate.

You will need to work out from the employer what they want to achieve from the placement. For example, are they looking for a future employee, a spare pair of hands to help at the busiest times or are they perhaps looking to develop the leadership skills of other members of staff?

You will need to capture information about how the business works in order to start to plan the most effective placement with them. See Appendix G for the Work Placement questionnaire. This tool contains some of the basics that you will need to discuss with the employer when planning the placement with them.

See Appendix G - Work Placement questionnaire

Principles for a good quality work placement

The Traineeship guidance sets out 6 criteria for a achieving a good quality placement. These include:

1. **Choice and relevance** – Placement matched to the trainee's area of interest and aspiration, undertaking high quality work experience rather than observation or mundane tasks
2. **Organisational readiness** – Commitment from senior managers or owner/manager and a low ratio of trainees to experienced staff

3. **Good preparation** – Thorough pre-placement preparation by the provider, employer and prospective trainee and an understanding of the individual's circumstances which may impact on their workplace behaviour
4. **Written agreement** – Made between the trainee, employer and provider setting out mutual expectations and commitments, including the training plan and arrangements for review
5. **A planned placement** – A structured induction, clear objectives and integrated off-the-job training, with an identified mentor or buddy
6. **Feedback and review** – Regular constructive feedback from managers and formal reviews at key stages with the manager, trainee and provider

Planning the placement

Most employers will need to be supported to plan a high quality placement for the trainee. Providers should not assume that the employer will have the time or capacity to plan the placement in detail.

It can be helpful to provide a template for the employer to use to assist them in this process so that the essentials are covered e.g. duration of the placement, which days/dates the trainee will be attending, who the main contact should be and which departments the trainee will be placed with during the placement.

See Appendix H - Placement planner.

It may also be useful to include details about any induction activities that the employer will be delivering and any additional training opportunities that might occur.

Developing the Trainee's skills throughout the placement

The employer needs to be aware that their trainee is going to need support and development whilst on placement. Encourage the employer to think about the core skills that are needed for the job role that the trainee is undertaking. Some employers will have a job description that they want to use, other employers may be creating a new role in their team for the trainee.

It can be useful for the employer to have a list of skills to select from. Appendix I contains a Workplace Skills list to help the employer select the most important skills that they feel are needed in the job role.

See Appendix I - Workplace Skills list

Once the employer has selected their top skills they can be transferred to the Development sheet (see Appendix J) which can be 'owned' by the employer. This can also be inserted into the trainee's Workplace Diary.

See Appendix J - Development sheet

Appointing a mentor / buddy

Appointing a mentor / buddy to work closely with the trainee during their work placement can work extremely well. This needn't be the manager or owner but could be any individual who is willing to provide support and guidance to the trainee.

A good mentor / buddy would ideally have the following attributes:

- Willing to share skills, knowledge and expertise
 - A positive attitude and acts a positive role model
 - An interest in mentoring / coaching
 - Enthusiastic about their job and the organisation
 - Provides guidance and constructive feedback
 - Respected by colleagues
 - Sets and reviews ongoing development goals
 - Motivates others by setting a good example
-

Planning a thorough induction

The employer should be asked to provide an induction to the trainee on the first day of the work placement. This should include:

- An introduction to the organisation e.g. the products and services
- A tour of the workplace
- An introduction to the trainee's buddy/mentor and supervisor
- An introduction to other people the trainee will be working with
- Information about domestic arrangements e.g. hours of work, canteen/lunch arrangements, facilities etc.
- Health & Safety information e.g. procedures relating to accidents, first aid, emergencies, assembly points, exits, use of protective clothing/equipment

Section 9 Establishing effective review and feedback methods

Maintaining regular contact between the training provider and employer is extremely important so that the employer feels supported. Any issues that arise in relation to the workplace can then be identified and addressed at the earliest opportunity. A number of different methods can be used to capture feedback.

Verbal feedback

Probably the quickest way for you to gather instant, honest feedback is to speak to the employer in person. You will be able to gauge from their tone of voice and levels of enthusiasm as to whether the placement is going well or not. It needs to be a priority during week 1 of the placement to speak to the employer in person.

Electronic feedback tools

The National Apprenticeship Service have developed some excellent interactive feedback tools that can be a quick way to gather feedback electronically. Simply click [here](#) to download the pdf

Work experience / Traineeships – feedback tool																																																						
Apprentice name	Company name	Placement start date	Placement end date																																																			
Candidate name	Age band	16-18	19-24	25+																																																		
		By	By	By																																																		
		Computer	Computer	Computer																																																		
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As part of the workplace diary

Most providers will use some form of diary for the trainee to capture the different activities and tasks that they have completed, what they have enjoyed most, where they feel they need to improve, goals for the future and employer feedback. By enhancing and prioritising the employer feedback contained within the diary you can ensure that you are receiving regular reports about how the placement is progressing.

Send reminders

It is a good idea to schedule in a time of the week, for example, Friday afternoons, to remind employers and trainees of the need to capture feedback. You could also send the employer a reminder on Thursday and perhaps again on Friday morning so that they are prompted to complete this task.

Section 10 Managing the final stages of the placement

In some ways, the final stages of the placement are every bit as important as getting the start right. Maintaining energy and momentum with both the trainee and employer until the very end needn't be difficult with the help of this guide.

Minimum requirements

Government guidance on Traineeships sets out the three minimum expectations and requirements of employers in the final stages of a Traineeship.

- 1. Written feedback** – The employer must provide written feedback to the trainee, that reflects on the time spent in their work placement, together with confirmation of any qualifications completed with their provider.

Ideally written feedback will include the following:

- Letter headed paper, including the address of the employer
- Confirmation of the dates during which the work placement took place
- An outline of some of the basic tasks and activities performed by the trainee
- Where appropriate, provide a comment or judgement on the ability of the trainee to complete these tasks
- Signature and date

- 2. In-house certificates** – Providers and employers can award locally-recognised certificates for a Traineeship. These could be in-house certificates, or perhaps a 'passport' style certificate

- 3. Guaranteed interview with meaningful feedback** – An interview provides a vital experience for trainees who are going on to seek work. There is an expectation that the work placement host will offer a guaranteed interview with the trainee at the end of the placement. Where possible this will be for a real job or Apprenticeship. This will not always be feasible and under such circumstances, a formal interview with the employer will help the individual to prepare for future opportunities.

In either case, the trainee should receive meaningful feedback to help them improve their performance.

An interactive interview feedback form can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Candidate name:					Company name:		Interview Outcome:	
Interviewer name:					Date:		<input type="checkbox"/> Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Unsuccessful	
							If referred please include details:	
Candidate notes:					Comments / suggestions from the person conducting the interview:			
Personal appearance	Engagement in the workplace	Communication	Teamwork	Problem solving	Initiative	Attitude	Overall	Comments
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please click here to select your feedback or enter your own comments
Preparation	Communication	Teamwork	Problem solving	Initiative	Attitude	Overall	Comments	Please click here to select your feedback or enter your own comments
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Communication	Teamwork	Problem solving	Initiative	Attitude	Overall	Comments	Comments	Please click here to select your feedback or enter your own comments
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Other (please detail)	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text	Enter your own text
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For Provider use only:								
Feedback given to applicant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date feedback given to applicant: _____ Given by (name): _____								
Method of feedback: <input type="checkbox"/> verbal/telephone <input type="checkbox"/> face to face <input type="checkbox"/> email <input type="checkbox"/> text message <input type="checkbox"/> postal <input type="checkbox"/> other: _____								
Apprentice will be asked to complete the following statement: My Special Credits Month reflects the quality of my work placement.								
What needs to be done?			How / when will it be done?			What will it be?		
Signatures / Endorsements:								

Celebrating success

Holding a celebration event is a great idea, especially if you have used the 'Group intake' model and have a number of trainees and employers to congratulate on reaching the end of the Traineeship. It doesn't have to be an elaborate or expensive celebration, it is far more memorable to hold an event that focusses on the positive achievements of the trainee.

Celebration event quick check

- Plan the date and time for the celebration at the very beginning of the Traineeship so that everyone has it in their diaries
- Consider the invite list. In addition to inviting the trainees and their host employer, it can be a nice touch to extend the invite to close family and friends of the trainee, their Jobcentre Plus Adviser or key worker and anyone else who has been involved in supporting the trainees on their journey
- Pick a venue that is easily accessible and easy to find with plenty of parking
- Provide some light refreshments. This could be soft drinks and a biscuit if budgets are tight.
- Invite a dignitary to hand out the certificates, for example the Mayor, the Leader of the Council, the Principal or Chief Executive of the training provider
- Arrange for someone to take photos of each trainee receiving their award
- Capture quotes from everyone who attends so that you can use them in your press release
- Turn the photos and quotes into a press release or case study that can be sent to local newspapers, put on your website and used to persuade future potential trainees. Ideally the trainees will have secured employment as a result of their Traineeship and this can be an inspirational message for others.

Learning from experience

It is perfectly natural that your Traineeship model may experience the odd glitch or snag along the way, with things not running quite as perfectly as you might have wanted them to. It is important that you seek feedback from all employers involved in the work placements so that you can capture their opinions and ideas about how to improve your model for the next time.

Hopefully, you will have maintained regular communication with your employers throughout the Traineeship and so there shouldn't be any surprises by the time you get to the end of the placement. Even so, it is always a good idea to have a formal 'wrap up' session with your employers so that you can formally seek their feedback and reassure them about the changes you will be making in the design and management of future opportunities. Ideally you will want to keep the employer engaged for future programmes so handling this stage in a professional way will really help.

We have designed an Employer Feedback Form as a guide to the kinds of questions you might like to ask employers so that you have a robust evidence base when you enter the planning stages for the next Traineeship.

See Appendix K - Employer Feedback form

Section 11

Progression and future placements

The aim of Traineeships is to secure young people's progression to an Apprenticeship or sustainable job as quickly as possible. Providers need to manage the tracking and monitoring process carefully so that all job outcomes can be recorded.

Progression to an Apprenticeship or sustainable employment

When a trainee progresses to a positive outcome, it is important that the training provider records this on the Individual Learning Record (ILR) and obtains the necessary evidence.

Permissible evidence requirements may vary for the different age groups. Ensure that you check the funding guidance so that you collect the correct evidence of job outcome / progression and that job outcomes meet the minimum required hours and duration.

What is the definition of 'Achievement' for a Traineeship?

The guidance states that the Traineeship will be completed as soon as one of the following is achieved:

- They move into employment, an Apprenticeship or further education & training
- All elements of the agreed Traineeship programme are complete or
- The trainee reaches the maximum of 6 months on programme

If an individual starts a Traineeship, but leaves early, there are some allowances:

16-19 – If a trainee completes their full programme of planned hours, or progresses into employment or an apprenticeship (this can be before they have completed their planned hours but not before six weeks) then the full amount of funding will be drawn down.

19-24 – The funding will follow the methodology of the Adult Skills Budget and will also include the 20% achievement payment. If an individual has completed less than 100 hours in a work placement, they can still generate funding as long as they have been a trainee for at least six weeks before leaving. The work placement also generates a 20% achievement (progression) payment when the learner has progressed to an eligible job or an Apprenticeship.

What evidence is permissible for progression?

When a trainee progresses to a positive outcome, it is important that the training provider records this on the Individual Learning Record (ILR) and obtains the necessary evidence.

Permissible evidence includes:

- Self-declaration (for 19-24 year olds)
- Written confirmation from the employer, including start date
- Confirmation that the individual has sustained employment for 16 hours or more per week for six weeks or more

Self-employment is also considered to be a positive destination, provided they meet the Funding Rules criteria in relation to the number of hours a week they declare 'employed status'.

Future placements

Hopefully your employer will have found their involvement in the Traineeship programme a beneficial experience and will want to participate in future schemes. It is therefore important to keep them informed about possible future opportunities to take trainees and to confirm with them that they want to be involved in future programmes.

Consider keeping a mailing list or implementing a way to 'flag up' Traineeship employers on your employer database so that they can be easily contacted.

See Appendix K - Employer Feedback form

Wage incentives

There are currently two different Government incentives available. Government wage incentives can be a good motivator for employers who are unsure about committing to the full cost of a salary and can sometimes be a good way to tip employers who are unsure into making a positive decision.

Apprenticeship Grant for Employers of 16 to 24 year olds (AGE 16-24)

AGE 16 to 24 is a £1,500 grant (per apprentice) to support the recruitment of apprentices by a business that employs up to 1000 employees and has not employed an apprentice in the last 12 months.

Subject to budget availability and the employer's commitment to support the apprentice to the end of their programme, up to 10 grants can be made to any one employer.

Remember to encourage the employer to consider future recruitment and to apply for the maximum number of grants (up to 10) that they might want to access.

For further information please visit the employer section of the Apprenticeships website [here](#).

Department for Work and Pensions Wage incentive scheme (18 to 24)

Wage incentives are available through the Jobcentre Plus for employers across England, Scotland and Wales who can offer a job to an 18 to 24 year old who has been unemployed for six months or more. The wage incentive is available if you employ someone for 16 hours or more each week in a job lasting more than 26 weeks.

There are two rates:

- For part-time work between 16 and 29 hours a week - £1,137.50
- For full-time work of 30 hours or more a week - £2,275

This will be paid 26 weeks after the employee starts work. Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees can claim a part payment eight weeks after the employee starts work.

For further information please visit the DWP website [here](#).



Appendix A

Delivery Model checklist

These are the suggested questions you need to answer when developing your Traineeship model.

Who is going to lead, manage and deliver on the programme?

Which age range(s) and funding stream(s) are you going to focus on?

How it will be structured e.g. how many hours over how many weeks?

Will you include any accredited qualifications? If so, which ones?

Will you target a specific sector or geographical area?

What will the format/balance of classroom based activity and work placement activity be?

Where will the classroom based activities be delivered?

What targets will you set yourself for job outcomes and progression?

How much funding do you expect to draw down?

Appendix B

Employer Engagement checklist

Complete the following checklist to see how established your approach to employer engagement is:

	Comments
<p>Aside from supporting youth employment and social wellbeing, what is the next most important driver for your organisation in developing a Traineeship model? Which of the following are you trying to achieve?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximise funding • Create new markets • Contribute to Apprenticeship growth • Diversify income streams • Increase job outcome rates • Enhance your existing employer offer 	
<p>Are you are going to target employers by sector/industry? E.g. Hospitality, Sport, Care</p>	
<p>Are you are going to target employers by geographical location? E.g. A town or cluster of villages</p>	
<p>Will you prioritise employers with the potential to offer an Apprenticeship or job opportunity at the end of the Traineeship? Or will all employers be encouraged to get involved?</p>	
<p>Do you have a minimum number of employers or placements that you need to source?</p>	
<p>When do you need to have employers and placements in place by? How long is your lead-in time?</p>	
<p>What makes your Traineeship offer unique or different to that of your competitors?</p>	
<p>Who is going to be responsible for contacting employers to promote Traineeships?</p>	
<p>Are you going to have a social media strategy?</p>	

Appendix C

Employer Event checklist

If you are planning an employer event, use this checklist to make sure that you have everything covered.

- Plan your event well in advance. Employers need to be given the maximum amount of time to plan around their business needs. Invites should be sent out no less than three to four weeks before the event and followed up with personal contact to confirm attendance
- Consider the timing of your event. For example, if pitched at the hospitality industry you will need to ensure that you time the event for a quieter time of day rather than during peak service hours
- Consider utilising a workplace venue for the employer event rather than at the training organisation venue. Many employers will have large spaces that could be suitable for the event
- When selecting the venue, ensure that plenty of free parking will be available close to the venue
- Remember to send plenty of reminders to the employers
- Send detailed directions for the venue location and parking. Ask employers to notify you of any access requirements such as disabled parking
- Keep it short and sweet. One to two hours is enough
- Invite an influential local employer to speak at your event about the positive business benefits of Traineeships
- Prepare a presentation and have slides available for employers to take away with them
- Ensure free refreshments are available for your guests
- Allow time for a question and answer session so that employers can gain a thorough understanding of Traineeships
- Be prepared for questions like 'What if it doesn't work out' and 'What if we don't get on' These will be genuine concerns for a lot of employers and it can help if you have examples that you can quote
- The day after the event, ensure that you contact the employers, thank them for attending and follow up on any possible questions they may have

Appendix D

Business Benefits checklist

Use this checklist to see if you've got everything covered within your sales pitch. Not all of the points will apply to your organisation. Tick the ones that do:

-
- Flexible in duration to suit the needs of the business

 - No contract needed

 - No wage commitment

 - Free advertising and recruitment for the Traineeship vacancy, managed by the provider through Apprenticeship vacancies [website](#)

 - An opportunity to help the local community and support youth employment

 - Follows the idea of 'try before you buy', especially if the employer is looking to potentially offer the trainee paid employment if successful

 - The employer can select the hours of work experience to reflect the realistic needs of their business and industry e.g. split-shifts / weekend working

 - Mentoring/coaching for the person supporting the trainee (if you offer this)

 - The employer will be part of a ground-breaking initiative supported by the Government

 - Employers will be put forward for local/regional awards and competitions (if you do this)

 - Free PR and Case Studies

 - If the employer already offers Apprenticeships, use Traineeships as a way to reduce early leavers and boost retention and commitment

 - Access to additional benefits such as discounted training for other members of the workforce

Appendix E

Example Service Level Agreement

Name: _____

The Individual agrees to:	The Provider agrees to:	The Employer agrees to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertake the agreed learning plan by completing all activities and individual targets as agreed through reviews and feedback. 2. Be fully prepared to engage with the programme and participate in all planned activities. 3. Be diligent, punctual and behave responsibly. 4. Take reasonable care of my health & safety and those around me by complying with the health and safety policy/guidance provided. 5. Notify the delivery team if I am unhappy or feel that I am not enjoying the programme. 6. Carry out my work experience placement and training sessions for the period of the Traineeship and on the days agreed with the employer and training provider. 7. If unwell, to telephone my employer and tutor in plenty of time before I am due to start. 8. I understand that if I fail to attend my work placement or training sessions this may result in removal from the Traineeship programme. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide ongoing support and guidance throughout the programme to both the individual and employer 2. Complete all required paperwork with the individual including initial assessment. 3. Plan a meaningful and personalised programme of study with the individual that supports their intended progression destination. 4. Review and monitor progress on a regular basis and provide support, assessment and guidance throughout. 5. Complete registrations and paperwork appropriate to the programme of study. 6. Complete all funding body and awarding organisations documentations. 7. Apply for certification of completed work. 8. Provide impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to individuals and employers. 9. Provide a high-quality experience for both the individual and the employer that supports progression into employment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a high quality, varied and meaningful work placement to develop workplace skills and behaviours of the trainee. 2. Assist in weekly feedback reviews about the trainee's performance and development. 3. Provide on-the-job training appropriate to the trainee's individual needs. 4. Ensure the Health & Safety of the trainee in the work place and update them on any new risks or hazards. 5. Report any accidents or incidents involving the trainee to the provider at the earliest opportunity. 6. Provide equality of opportunity in all aspects of their placement. 7. Pay the trainee any travel and lunch expenses agreed. 8. Ensure that the trainee's agreed rota of work placement hours are maintained. 9. Offer a guaranteed formal interview at the end of the placement. 10. Provide a written reference for the trainee at the end of the programme.
<p>Name:</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Name:</p> <p>Signed:</p> <p>Date:</p>

Appendix F

Example Interview questions

This list of questions might help when interviewing a trainee for a potential placement

- Why are you interested in undertaking a placement with us?

- What is it that you like most about this company?

- What do you already know about our company? How have you found this out? E.g. by looking on the internet, through friends or family, as a previous customer.

- What interests you about working in this industry?

- Do you know anyone who has worked in this industry before? What kind of job did/do they do?

- What do you feel are the most important skills to have when working in our company?

- What do you think you will bring to this placement that other candidates might not?

- What would you say are your biggest strengths?

- Is there anything about this placement that you are not sure about?

- Are there any particular skills or experiences that you would like to have if you succeed in being placed here? E.g. working in different departments, shadowing a particular member of staff.

- What kind of career are you hoping to move into after the work placement?

Appendix G

Work Placement questionnaire

Company name: _____

Date: _____

Questions	Yes	No	Comments
Has the company offered Traineeships or work experience before?			
Was it successful? What made it successful (or not)?			
Do they have a company work experience policy that you need to link in with?			
Do they operate over multiple sites?			
How many different departments do they have?			
How many trainees do they want to take?			
How do they see it working? Would they rather have a trainee spend the whole duration in one department or move around?			
Do they understand the need for some kind of mentor/buddy system to be established?			
If different departments are going to be involved, how will the managers/mentors be briefed?			
Do they have a job description or a list of responsibilities for the trainee role offered?			
Is the Traineeship linked to a job vacancy that the employer has struggled to fill? Why is this?			
Is there an intention to offer an employment opportunity at the end of the Traineeship?			
Are they able to offer any additional workplace training that would complement the programme?			
What are the most important skills/attributes that they would want to develop in a trainee?			
What is their preferred duration / hours of the placement? Are they able to cover the required weeks/hours?			
Is there anything the trainee needs before they can start a placement? This could be a mandatory requirement e.g. up to date DBS check / security clearance, or a desirable requirement e.g. first aid certificate / certain level of ability			

Appendix H

Placement planner

Contact details

Organisation name	
Main contact name	
Address	
Telephone / Mobile	
Email	

Placement details

Start date					End date		
Duration (no. of weeks)					Name of buddy / mentor		
Working pattern	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Start time							
Finish time							
Total hours							

NB: Hours per week should not exceed 30 for those aged 19-23 in receipt of JSA

Placement activities and tasks

It is a requirement of the Traineeship programme that regular review and feedback is captured, both informally and formally through a structured review involving the employer, provider and trainee.

Review and feedback

Informal review	<i>Use this box to outline how informal feedback will be captured e.g. telephone, email, completing the form in the trainee work placement diary on a weekly basis etc.</i>			
Formal review	How many reviews will you plan to hold during the work placement?			
	Review 1 Date: Time:	Review 2 Date: Time:	Review 3 Date: Time:	Review 4 Date: Time:

Appendix H

Placement planner

Placement activities and tasks

Use this section to outline which activities and tasks the trainee will be working on and which personal skills they will be developing.

	Activities / tasks	Personal Skills	Other
Week 1	Work place induction		
Week 2			
Week 3			
Week 4			
Week 5			
Week 6			
Week 7			
Week 8			

Any other comments?

--

Signed by

Employer name		Provider name	
Employer signature		Provider signature	
Date		Date	

Appendix I

Workplace Skills list

Use this skills list with the employer to help to decide which Personal Skills and Knowledge/Experience will be developed as part of the work placement.

Team working

- Respecting others
- Helping with the public
- Showing that you are adaptable
- Responding quickly to requests for help
- Working as part of a team
- Attending team meetings
- Asking for help when needed

Problem solving

- Meeting a tight deadline
- Getting to work on time
- Dealing with a shortfall in quantity
- Responding to incorrect information
- Managing late deliveries
- Discovering a faulty product
- Dealing with an accident
- Dealing with a difficult customer

Communication and Literacy

- Meeting the public
- Listening and carrying out instructions
- Answering the telephone
- Writing notes or memos
- Drafting or writing a letter
- Writing names and addresses
- Reading an introductory pack
- Reading Health & Safety guidelines
- Reading any work instructions
- Reading any other company information

Application of IT

- Entering details on a computer
- Finding information on a computer
- Learning to use the company computer software
- Finding and printing a document
- Saving, storing or backing up files
- Using a database
- Using or processing a spreadsheet

- Word processing
- Using email or the Internet
- Using a desktop publishing package

Application of Numeracy

- Working with money e.g. on a till
- Checking stock numbers
- Dealing with invoices and receipts
- Adding up or counting items
- Checking for out of date items
- Doing calculation in your head
- Using a calculator to work out something
- Collecting or recording figures onto charts
- Drawing a scale plan
- Weighing and measuring items

Business and customer awareness

- Greeting customers
- Dealing with customer complaints
- Responding to customer enquiries
- Providing an efficient service
- Ensuring repeat of business
- Improving response times
- Going beyond customer expectations
- Understanding business competition
- Improving profitability
- Co-operating with other departments

Self management

- Learning quickly how the place operates
- Planning your work with your supervisor
- Setting yourself targets
- Meeting deadlines
- Reviewing your progress with your supervisor
- Learning from your mistakes
- Accepting responsibility
- Managing time
- Being confident

Appendix J

Development sheet

Use this development sheet as a template to capture the work place skills that the employer wants the trainee to develop. We have provided examples of tasks/activities below.

Tasks or activities	Has the trainee displayed the ability to do this consistently and to an acceptable standard?		
	Employer signature	Date	Comments
Meeting the public			
Answering the telephone			
Learning to use the company computer software			
Finding and printing a document			
Working with money e.g. on a till			
Checking stock numbers			
Dealing with an accident			
Dealing with a difficult customer			
Greeting customers			
Dealing with customer complaints			
Working as part of a team			
Attending team meetings			
Learning quickly how the place operates			

Appendix K

Employer Feedback form

Employer name	
Main contact name	
Trainee(s) name	

What worked well during this placement?

What could have been improved?

Would you like to be involved in future Traineeship opportunities?

Yes No

Reason for decision:



The
Education
& Training
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