

Adding value to apprenticeships with skills competitions activity

Information note for employers

This note illustrates how new apprenticeships can work with skills competitions to benefit your organisation and your apprentices. It explains the opportunities to use apprenticeship funding to support involvement in competitions, looks at how it can be done and how you can get involved.

Apprenticeships

The English Apprenticeships 2020 vision document outlines the Government's plan to increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships, and put employers in the driving seat, in both designing and managing new apprenticeship standards to meet their business needs.

These apprenticeship reforms have changed the way apprenticeships are delivered and funded in England. For any individual over the age of 16, apprenticeship standards will be available in over 550 occupations with 170 now ready for delivery. Apprenticeships prepare young people and adults for employment by developing skills, knowledge and behaviours.

With levels from intermediate to higher and degree level, delivered over a one to four year period, employers can offer apprenticeships to new recruits and can use standards to upskill their current workforce.

Each employer-designed standard includes an assessment plan that describes how the competence will be demonstrated at the end of an apprenticeship through end-point assessment methods such as observation, showcase or professional discussion.

The apprenticeship funding guidance makes provision for competition activity to be a funded element of the apprenticeship programme, either as part of the on-the-job delivery or the off-the-job training element.

WorldSkills UK competitions

WorldSkills UK runs competitions at regional and national level, selecting the best competitors for the biennial WorldSkills and EuroSkills competitions. The annual Skills Show hosts the WorldSkills UK national finals of competitions.

You can find out more about what's involved here www.worldskillsuk.org/worldskills-uk-competitions/get-involved-employers

Why employers should get involved in competitions

Employers who have supported their staff to take part in competitions as part of an apprenticeship have reported benefits such as:

- increasing their business profile in their industry
- enhancing their reputation in the community
- increasing recruitment and business opportunities
- improved business productivity and performance
- higher-level technical and employability skills
- assessing the competence of their teams

Employer quotes

“SkillFRIDGE, part of the WorldSkills UK Competitions, is a fantastic initiative that incentivises and rewards aspiring apprentices and trainees – the industry’s standard bearers and potential leaders of tomorrow – in pursuit of excellence.”

David Dunn, director and general manager of Toshiba Air Conditioning and CIAT Ozonair

“The competition touches the lives of hundreds of apprentices at the start of their careers, encourages them to strive for excellence in their craft and reach the very highest professional standards”

Debbie Orr, Crown Paints Marketing Manager, sponsor of the CITB Competitions

“Not only has competing been great for Ethan on a personal level, but it has been invaluable for us as a business. When training for the 2015 competition, Ethan and our other apprentice, Leigh Clarke, went on several training courses. They came back to the workshop and implemented their new skills which resulted in us being able to do our job three times faster”

Matthew Booth, Electroimpact

“Global innovation is at the heart of our business which is why we are passionate about developing the young talent in our industry and supporting the work of WorldSkills UK. The competitions are proven to fast track an apprentice’s career and the training they receive as part of their preparation for the competition will see them develop the world-class skills which will drive the engineering industry forward”

Chris Cooper, DMG MORI UK

“Look for the ‘spark’ of talent and enthusiasm within an apprentice, then develop them through skills competition to be the best they can be”

John Henderson, Gemini Accident Repair Group

“Competitions help apprentices develop their team working, communication skills and professionalism whilst fostering a passion for the childcare industry and a reflective attitude to learning.”

Tanya Bill, Director Hunny Nurseries and Competition Judge

How to get involved

New Government rules (from May 2017) state that apprenticeship funds can only be used to pay for training and assessment to attain an apprenticeship. This includes the costs of an apprentice taking part in a skills competition if the employer and provider agree that competition participation directly contributes to that individual achieving the apprenticeship standard. There is also provision to fund competition activity as part of the off-the-job training. Talk to your apprenticeship provider about how you can access and use your apprenticeship funds for competition activity.

Integrating competitions into apprenticeships

If you are interested, you should ask your apprenticeship provider about how to integrate skills competitions into an apprenticeship when designing your programmes.



During your **set-up and contracting discussions**, some apprenticeship providers may offer competitions to complement apprenticeships, aligning them both to your business needs and to industry standards.

Apprenticeship training, whether delivered on your premises or off-the-job, can be agreed and cross-referenced to a WorldSkills UK Competition Brief, local inter-provider competitions or industry designed tests. Attendance at skills competitions can be funded as part of the off-the-job element of an apprenticeship, which should account in total for 20% of the apprentice's time.

It will also prepare your apprentices for the **end-point assessment** and achievement of the apprenticeship standards. You and your staff will be involved in the regular reviews that take place to monitor the progress each apprentice is making, agreeing targets and work related activities.

An important feature of new apprenticeships is end-point assessment, when an apprentice has the chance to demonstrate their competence in the role. Before they can attempt end-point assessment they will need to pass through a **Gateway** which might include any mandatory qualifications for the industry, meeting any English and maths requirements, and confirmation from the employer that they are ready for end-point assessment.

Guided by your provider and the timeline specified in the standard, you will decide when your apprentices are ready to take the end-point assessment.

End-point assessment arrangements for apprenticeship standards will be agreed with you in advance and practiced with your apprentices throughout their training so that they can advance through the Gateway, pass their end-point assessment and achieve the standard.

There will be common end-point and competition assessment criteria that may use the cross over with competition standards to enable competitions to form part of the end point assessment. This will also allow an apprenticeship assessment to reflect world class standards of competitions. You can work with your provider to put in place a training plan that works for both the apprenticeship and the competition.

Why apprentices should get involved

Learning from others, working alongside colleagues within your organisation, will help apprentices produce work of utmost quality and progress to the highest levels within your industry.

Apprentices who take part in competitions develop improved employability skills alongside improved technical skills, often demonstrate the following:

- improved time management
- self-reliance
- planning and preparation skills
- increased motivation, engagement and ambition

Motivation and engagement is seen to increase with apprentices:

- rising to challenge
- improving technical skill levels
- improving confidence

- better problem solving
- individual learning plans
- portfolios/project content and materials
- exposed to new experiences
- learning from peers

Quotes from apprentices who have taken part in skills competitions:

“WorldSkills UK literally changed my life. I got my job at Codemasters as a result of my competition success. The gaming industry is incredibly hard to get into and now I’ve got the career that I have always wanted.”

Daniel McCabe, Team UK (3D Digital Game Art), WorldSkills Abu Dhabi 2017 and designer at Codemasters

“Success in skills competitions has changed my life massively. My career with the RAF has really progressed and now I’m implementing all of the new skills I learnt with WorldSkills UK as part of my training, in the workplace.”

Shayne Hadland MBE, Team UK (Aircraft Maintenance), WorldSkills São Paulo 2015, who completed his apprenticeship with the RAF

“WorldSkills UK looks fantastic on your CV. It is also a great boost for employers as they can show they have the ‘best of the best’ working for them.”

Rachael Carr, Team UK (Manufacturing Team Challenge), WorldSkills London 2011, a former apprentice and now Systems Engineer at BAE Systems at BAE Systems

“As a former competitor of a WorldSkills competition with childcare, I can only express my experience as empowering. I was initially nervous about taking part however I really enjoyed it. Although I was not a winner of the competition, I feel I was a winner within myself”

Tayla Glover, Room Leader, Hunny Nurseries

“Skills competitions have given me the opportunity for more work experience and to meet different chefs. My parents are very proud of me.”

Eden Allsworth, East Kent College

For more information about skills competitions

For more information on skills competitions please contact getintouch@worldskillsuk.org (0800 612 0742) or go to the WorldSkills UK website <https://www.worldskills.org/>