

Employer Newsletter

First Intuition Think Tank exploring employer's retention of trainees – Tuesday 21st February 9 to 10am.

Trainees are switching between employers mid-qualification at an unprecedented rate. One reason is the difficulty of trying to engage with and motivate young adults who enter the workforce for the first time. The challenge is then to retain and inspire them as they progress through their initial training periods and onto their post qualified careers.

The mindset and expectations of young adults seems to have changed rapidly over the last 2 or 3 years and employers will need to respond to this effectively to ensure their talent pipelines stay relevant and robust. This breakfast session will look to share best practice and learn from each other on how we can engage with these young adults, motivate and – crucially - retain them.

This session will be **free** to attend, hosted on Zoom. We are looking to have insight from the professional bodies and employment agencies. To attend please register here:

[REGISTRATION](#)



FI Apprenticeship Awards

As part of national apprenticeship week, we will be hosting our 3rd annual Apprenticeship Awards ceremony recognising the outstanding achievements of our apprentices and their line managers in supporting them.

We have 5 categories outlined below. All those shortlisted will be invited to a lunchtime ceremony on Zoom on Friday 10th February at 1pm, where the winners will be announced. Deadline for entries is Monday 6th February 2023, but please don't wait until the last minute to enter! You may make multiple entries for different categories.

Award	Description	Prize
Apprentice of the year	For an apprentice who has gone above and beyond, showing great promise and achievement.	Champagne, £50 Amazon voucher and certificate
Apprenticeship team of the year	Where 3 or more apprentices have worked together this year to achieve outstanding results	£100 Nando's dinner voucher and certificate
Apprentice employer of the year	This award is to recognise employers who have put apprenticeships at the heart of their business	£100 Carluccio's dinner voucher and certificate
Apprentice manager/mentor of the year	This award is to recognise the support provided by a manager or mentor to the apprentice in helping them achieve their goals	Champagne, £50 Amazon voucher and certificate
Rising star	An ex-apprentice who has excelled since completion of their apprenticeship	Champagne, £50 Amazon voucher and certificate

Nominations should be emailed to emmaselway@fi.co.uk, identifying the category and a maximum of 200 words describing why you feel they should be nominated for this recognition. Please include the full name and email address of the person (or team) you are nominating.

Changes to our RAG rating approach (now BRAG)

You may be aware that our monthly reports rate our apprentices according to their progress and engagement with their apprenticeship. This gives you a quick indication of whether the apprentice is on track to complete as planned. We also use this to plan any extra support which the apprentice will need to help them to complete.

From 1st January 2023 our RAG rating guide has been updated to include additional factors including portfolio targets, exam progress, off the job hours, end date and skill scan scores. This means that you may have apprentices who were previously reported as 'on target' now reported as 'behind target'; this will enable us to better plan learning and focus resources where they are needed.

We will discuss this with you when the apprentice is amber or red to make sure that we are working together to help the apprentice to succeed.

Blue	The apprentice is not only on track but has been noticed to be someone who may achieve a prize or distinction on completion.
Green	This person is on track to achieve their target end date. This means that they are up to date with their exams, work and timesheet.
Amber	This apprentice is not expected to complete by their planned end date or is not up to date with their timesheet and submissions. However, they are expected to complete within 6 months of their planned end date.
Red	This apprentice is not expected to complete within 6 months of their expected end date.

Although this means that once an apprentice has slipped behind their original plan they may remain at red or amber, it ensures that we monitor them closely and provide support if needed. This is also in line with the ESFA guidelines which expect 65% of apprentices to complete by their planned end date. We will provide some notes in the report to help you understand the reason for the grading. We also grade achievement and engagement on each course attended so you can further monitor your apprentice's position on a modular basis.

If you would like more information about any learner please contact your Client Partner, or skills coach, who will be happy to help.

Free study skills sessions

We are offering students the opportunity to join 2 twilight sessions running from 5pm to 6pm on 1st and 22nd February covering some important study skills and exam techniques to help them progress in their apprenticeship. These sessions are relevant to those who are studying at either L2, L3 or L4 apprenticeships as well as to those starting out on their L7 programmes. Apprentices have been invited to these sessions but please encourage them to attend.

Session 1: This session will cover an outline of the study resources available, time management and how to consolidate learning using different revision techniques	1 st February 2023 Start time 5pm	Register here
Session 2: This session will cover further revision skills and tips as well as promoting resilience in dealing with feedback and getting the most from marked work.	22 February 2023 Start time 5pm	Register here

Changes to AAT Portfolio – Please read if you manage AAT apprentices

If you have apprentices completing AAT you will know that despite everyone's best intentions, finalising the portfolio is often a rush during the last few weeks before the final exam. We have looked at various methods to help spread the workload and for all new apprentices in 2023 we will be using a more structured approach.

The portfolio comprises a selection of reflective statements and work place evidence which demonstrate the skills and behaviours which the apprentice has acquired throughout their apprenticeship. It is essentially a showcase of their apprenticeship journey.



New process

We will send out a briefing pack to the manager and to the apprentice shortly after the Starting Out day. This will have some information about the programme (including a description of each skills day for the manager) and will set out guidelines for the journey to final assessment (EPA). Please note that the briefing packs are different for each level.

In each pack we have set out a series of monthly challenges which will be signed off by the coach each month and can be used to form the basis of the portfolio.

As an employer we would like to ask that you;

1 Review the proposed challenges early in the programme and agree a timetable for each task, making sure that it will be possible for the apprentice to obtain the work experience to complete each task. If there are any areas of concern, please raise this with the skills coach and they will work with you to agree an alternative task.

2 Attend the progress reviews with the apprentice and skills coach to discuss each challenge as it is set and support the apprentice in achieving this. Although we will monitor whether the tasks have been submitted on time and to the correct standard, a few reminders in the workplace can be helpful!

3 Some challenges require the learner to collect manager feedback. Please take the time to give this as it will help the learner to improve and help us to set meaningful targets. Feedback in the form of an email or performance review can be included as evidence in the portfolio. Just make sure that any client information is redacted.

We will track the submissions of tasks, and at 6 monthly intervals we will carry out a full review to confirm that the learner is on track. This ensures we can report if a learner is not on target to complete their portfolio before the final exam.

Feedback

As this is a slight change to our current approach to portfolios offering more structure and setting clear expectations for the apprentices, we hope that it will help you to support your apprentices. If you have any feedback or ideas to improve this process, please let us know.

Safeguarding

Our safeguarding officers are here to help if you have any concerns about an apprentice. Please contact our helpline on reading@southamptonssafeguarding@fi.co.uk. Our safeguarding officers are all trained to help.