



Employer Newsletter

Apprenticeship Onboarding: Eligibility, Potential Delays and Candidate Suitability

We understand that recruiting the right candidate for an apprenticeship can be challenging. We have therefore created the following guide to help you navigate the key considerations and potential challenges when recruiting an apprentice. If you have any questions about whether a potential candidate meets any of these criteria please ask us:

1. Eligibility Criteria:

- The learner must have the right to work in the UK for the full duration of their apprenticeship.



- They must have resided in the EEA for at least 3 years.
- They must have a permanent

employment contract covering the apprenticeship period.

2. Potential Delays:

- Check if learners have previously started the same apprenticeship standard, as this will have an impact on the available funding.



- Verify English and maths proficiency through GCSE certificates or an ENIC assessment for qualifications obtained

outside the UK. The cost of an ENIC assessment is £75 and is chargeable to the employer or the learner.

- Those without GCSE qualifications (or equivalent), will need to complete the functional skills (FS) module(s). An initial assessment will assess the learner's current abilities, which will determine whether FS can be built into the programme or whether it would be more appropriate for this to be completed before the learner starts their apprenticeship. The latter will ensure the learner has the appropriate skills before entering their programme and may incur additional costs. A strong level of written English has a strong correlation with success in the apprenticeship.

3. Overqualified Learners:

- Assess if learners have substantial room for development in the knowledge, skills, and behaviours comprised in the standard. If you are recruiting a learner with a high number of exam exemptions, or who has relevant experience within a professional industry, they may not be eligible for an apprenticeship.



4. Timescales:

- Onboarding an apprentice is a complex process, for which we need to ensure there is sufficient time to complete. On average we would require a minimum of 3 weeks' notice prior to the apprenticeship start date assuming timely completion of all required paperwork. These time-scales may vary depending on the time of year, with peak periods requiring closer to 4 weeks.



5. Candidate Suitability:

- Please consider the appropriateness of starting learners in the early stages of employment or after passing probation. If a learner is to withdraw from the programme within in the first few months, the employer may be liable for the cost of the programme which has been delivered within this period.



If you are ever unsure on whether your potential recruits meet the eligibility and suitability criteria for an apprenticeship, please discuss this with your client partner. It's also important to remember that an apprenticeship is not the only method of study to complete the professional qualification and that any learners not eligible for the funding can still achieve these programmes on a commercial basis.

Your commitment to these considerations will pave the way for a successful onboarding experience.

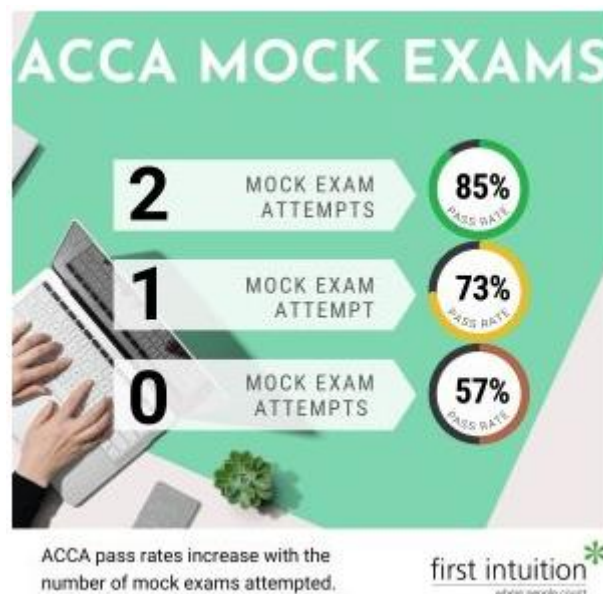
Course exams for ACCA and ICAEW courses

We all know that it is easier to be good at something if you practice it. The same is true of professional exams and we have built a significant amount of practice papers into our course structures. Please encourage your learners to submit their exams by their set deadlines.

Completing these course exams leads to:

1. Improved chance of success. Our data shows that those who complete the mock exams are at least 85% more likely to pass the real exam!
2. Pass assurance. Completion of the exams, and scoring over 40%, ensures learners will qualify for attending retake courses free of any charge.

Please note that all apprentices are given the exam submission deadlines on every course. If they do not meet these we may not be able to mark their attempt as sadly, we do not have markers on standby. We will notify managers when learners fail to meet exam deadlines.



AAT exams

AAT learners will complete a mock exam either on a formal question day or on an agreed date. Although they may reserve a date for the real exam, they will not be permitted to take the exam until they have secured a pass mark in their final mock exam, (70%). If they are unsuccessful, they will be asked to complete a further mock with a submission deadline agreed with their tutor. They will also be offered an opportunity to book time with their tutor for a one-to-one support session. Apprentices are asked to allow a minimum of 3 working days between the exam deadline and the planned exam date.

Project report and portfolio work

All apprentices need to complete these as part of the End Point Assessment. The work is spread over the final 6-12 months of the apprenticeship programme to avoid clashing with exam studies. We will not be able to book the learner onto their final course unless they have completed their project report and portfolio (**before** attending the course). All apprentices are made aware of this but please ensure that you liaise with the learner and their skills coach to confirm that they remain on track for these final, crucial stages of their apprenticeship.

Careers advice

You may be aware that we already provide extensive careers advice to our apprentices. This ranges from advising apprentices and employers about their choice of programme, qualification and individual exam-unit selection to discussing progression opportunities after achieving their qualification. This is key to making sure that each apprentice joins a programme which is suited to their needs and gives them the best chance of success. It also helps to make sure that your investment in your apprentice results in a long-term and successful relationship.

Not all apprentices will stay in the finance profession throughout their career and we also promote the development and recognition of transferable skills such as communication and team-work which will be helpful whatever job role apprentices face in the future.



Our new careers expert Georgia Filgate is also offering independent careers consultation to any apprentice who requests it. Although this service is open to any apprentice, initially we will be aiming this at:

1. Apprentices who are in-between jobs and who would like advice about careers options and how to be successful in their job search.
2. Apprentices who are on programme but who have lost interest in their studies. Georgia will help to explore their motivation for joining the programme and their future goals to try to help them to re-engage.
3. Those who are about to progress to a higher level of apprenticeship and need support to decide on their next steps.

It is a key concept of careers advice that it is confidential and independent. However, the aim of the service is to support students and their employers and is not about encouraging apprentices to change employer. A key part of Georgia's role includes helping apprentices to explore the options available to them with their current employer.

How you can be involved

From time-to-time we work with candidates identified through our schools liaison and careers evenings and those apprentices who may have been unable to stay with their previous employer e.g. due to relocation or redundancy. If you would like to be added to a list of employers who are interested in referrals please contact Georgia (georgiafilgate@fi.co.uk) with your firm name, types of role you have available and who the apprentice should contact. If you have information about your own recruitment schedules, roles and careers which you would like to share with Georgia please do contact her directly.

If you have any questions about the careers service or what more we can do to support you, please let us know.

Recruiting an apprentice

We often receive queries about recruitment including the best way to find and recruit a new apprentice. One tried and tested approach is the Find an Apprenticeship site <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>. Many schools, colleges and universities direct their learners to this site to help them identify apprenticeship opportunities with local employers.

If this is a service you would like help with, we can set this up for you, free of charge, please do get in touch.

We also regularly attend recruitment fairs and schools to promote apprenticeships. If you are recruiting, please feel free to share with us your adverts and job descriptions and we can promote them at these events while we talk about apprenticeships. Please contact your client partner if this is something you would like to pursue.