

ACL

APPRENTICESHIPS



➤ Employer Toolkit

A Guide to Apprenticeships with ACL



Essex County Council

➤ A bit about ACL (Adult Community Learning)



Thank you for choosing ACL as your apprenticeship delivery partner. We are the largest provider of Adult Education in Essex and the main Apprenticeship provider for Essex County Council.

Our apprenticeships are delivered to businesses and public sector organisations across the county and along its borders. We offer apprenticeships at intermediate, advanced and higher levels in a range of occupational sectors. Programmes are suitable for new entrants as well as existing staff that require new skills to support a promotion, change of job role or increased responsibility or have been identified as requiring development in their current position.

Programmes are designed to be as flexible as possible to meet the demands of a busy work place and will include a variety of delivery modes including: taught sessions at one of our 9 centres, distance learning through our virtual and digital learning platforms and 1.2.1 coaching sessions at the apprentice's place of work.

Our end to end service includes:

- a fully supported recruitment service for employers wishing to take on a new employee as an apprentice

- dedicated account management to ensure the best outcome for both you and the apprentice
- professional and occupationally competent delivery team
- robust skills scans and training needs analysis to ensure the selected programme is right for you and the apprentice
- a fantastic range of add-on courses that support the apprentice and other employees

This guide has been designed to provide simplified information and guidance on all aspects of the apprenticeship journey with ACL. We hope you find it useful and look forward to working with you.

Kind regards,
The Apprenticeship Team

 acl.apprenticeships@essex.gov.uk

 **03330 139 502**



➤ Apprenticeship Myths

We thought we'd dispel a few of the most commonly encountered apprenticeship myths – here are our top five!



The 20% off job training requirement does **not** mean an apprentice has to attend college one day per week. We use a blended approach which includes: online learning, research and project work, classroom sessions both physical and virtual, employer led activity and 1.2.1 sessions in the workplace



The paperwork and process is **not** complicated and time consuming. Yes - there are a few things that you will need to sign and set up, but our team is on hand to guide you through every step of the way



Apprenticeships are **not** just for school and college leavers. Existing employees could be eligible and suitable for apprenticeships too – they are a great way to support individuals who require development, have changed roles, gained additional responsibilities or recently been promoted



Apprenticeships are **not** expensive. Whether you're paying full cost from your levy or the 5% co-investment fee we believe that apprenticeships are great value for money. All of our programmes follow a rich curriculum that enables apprentices to not just learn something new but to embed and develop these skills to improve their performance at work. In some instances, grants of £1k are available to help with costs



Recruiting a new apprentice is **not** difficult. Our Business Development Team will work with you to help source a new team member – we use the National Apprenticeship Service, our digital channels and work with colleagues in Essex County Council to find the right person for your position.





› Our quick guide to apprenticeships

Here's a top line view of how it all works. We'll go into a little more detail in the following pages and discuss fully when we meet with you.

- 1 You will discuss available options with a member of our Business Development Team (BDT) who will remain your main point of contact throughout the process
- 2 BDT will arrange for application forms to be sent to any existing employees looking to take up a programme and or send you a vacancy template to advertise your apprenticeship opportunity
- 3 If we've advertised your vacancy for you, we will send CVs and applications as agreed with you at the initial BDT meeting
- 4 Prior to starting, the applicant will complete an initial assessment, skills scan and interview with us which will determine their suitability & eligibility, and the cost and duration of the programme
- 5 If the apprentice is an existing employee, we will ask you to complete an employer skills scan to identify where you feel their areas for development are
- 6 We will carry out a Health and Safety check, ask you to sign a contract for supply of service and agree the cost of the programme and start date
- 7 We will arrange a date and time for the apprenticeship induction which will require both the line manager and apprentice to be present – at this meeting the tutor and line manager will set targets, agree the off job learning activity and ask all parties to sign the apprenticeship commitment statement
- 8 The tutor will agree a date with you for the initial review in four weeks' time. This review enables the line manager, apprentice and tutor to discuss progress against targets and set new learning objectives. These reviews are carried out every 12 weeks and require both line manager and apprentice to be present – each meeting lasts approx. 60 mins
- 9 BDT will stay in contact with you regularly by phone and email and will arrange for contract meetings to ensure you are happy with everything we are doing
- 10 The apprentice attends agreed sessions, completes work on time and by their planned end date. Once all learning has been completed, we will book their End Point Assessment (EPA) - we will support you to select the most appropriate EPA Organisation

› The Contractual Stuff

Before the apprenticeship commences there are a few things that we will need you to do. Our Business Development Team will explain what you need to do, and when, and will be on hand to provide support and answer any questions that you may have.

We will:

- › ask you to sign a contract with ACL confirming that you agree to and understand your responsibilities and obligations including compliance with the ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) rules
- › carry out a Health & Safety Check on the apprentice's place of work. A qualified ACL team member will complete this with you – it takes approx. 60mins and includes a section on safeguarding and the prevent duty. These checks are usually carried out every three years providing there are no changes to your premises and no reportable incidents have occurred
- › complete an Employer Agreement document with you which includes the financial arrangements and payment schedules
- › need you to provide us with a copy of your Employers Liability Insurance
- › want you to confirm that the apprentice has or will have a contract of employment in place on the first day of their programme

NB* The Contract and Health & Safety check need only to be completed once every three years irrespective of the number of apprentices you take on. If an incident occurs or significant changes happen in between times we may need to complete an additional Health & Safety Check to ensure the details held are up to date.

Visit aclessex.com/apprenticeship-contract for more details

➤ The Financial Bits

The government have set maximum prices for each apprenticeship. The price you pay will depend on the occupational area, the level and any prior qualifications, knowledge, skills and behaviours that the apprentice already has – we use an initial assessment and skills scan to identify these.

Our Business Development Team will negotiate and agree a price with you for each apprenticeship undertaken. They will discuss how you will pay for the programme and if applicable support you to access your digital account and any funding you may be entitled to. Employers will pay for an apprenticeship in one of three ways:

1. Through their Apprenticeship Levy Account
2. Through Co-investment
3. Through gifting

For specific costs, please visit our website.

The Apprenticeship Levy

If you're an employer with an annual pay bill over £3 million, each year you will pay into the apprenticeship levy. Payments will be added to a digital account which you then use to purchase apprenticeship training. The cost of the apprenticeship is divided across the number of months and is paid directly from your account to ACL on a monthly basis. Full details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pay-apprenticeship-levy>

Co-investment

Most small and medium employers will pay for apprenticeship training through co-investment. This is currently 5% of the agreed apprenticeship price – the government will pay the remaining 95%. We will agree a payment plan with you before the apprenticeship starts.

The government will fully fund the apprenticeship training costs for employers employing fewer than 50 people if the apprentice is:

- Aged between 16 and 18 years old; or
- Aged between 19 and 24 years old and has either an EHC plan provided by their local authority; or has been in the care of their local authority

Gifting

Levy paying employers can gift up to 25% of their levy funds to support other businesses with the cost of apprenticeship training. Further details can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transferring-apprenticeship-service-funds>

Additional Funding

Every employer is entitled to a payment of £1000 for each apprentice taken on who is aged 16 – 18 or 19 -24 and has either an EHC plan provided by their local authority; or has been in the care of their local authority. This payment will be made by ACL and in 2 installments of £500. If the apprentice is aged 16 – 24 and is a care leaver they will also receive a payment of £1,000.

Apprentice Wages

Apprentices can be paid the apprentice wage if they're either:

- aged under 19
- aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship

Most employers pay above this rate and if they are an existing employee they would continue on their current rate of pay. Apprentices can receive salary increases at any point during their programme.

Travel Costs

The employer is responsible for paying travel costs to any apprentice attending a taught session that is further away than their normal place of work.



From April - September 2021 you could receive an additional £3000 for each new apprentice that you take on

➤ The Apprenticeship

Each apprenticeship has different components and will last between 12 and 24 months depending on the level taken and the apprentice's prior knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Before an apprentice starts, they will be required to complete an Initial Assessment – this includes maths, English, sector skills scans and an interview with a member of the ACL Apprenticeship Team (if the apprentice is your current employee, we will also ask you to complete a skills scan to gauge the line managers perspective on their abilities). We will use this information to determine the content, price and duration of the programme - once agreed we will ask you to sign the Employer Agreement and the apprenticeship can commence.

Some apprenticeships have qualifications built into them whilst others are purely competency based. In some circumstance's qualifications can be added to the programme for an additional fee to cover registration and exams (e.g. AAT)

The apprentice will have a dedicated tutor who will have responsibility for ensuring that all elements of the programme are delivered within the agreed timeframe and with the employer/line manager involved at each stage.

The main components of the apprenticeship are covered in the following sections.

Induction

Once a start date has been agreed for the apprentice, we will book their induction. The induction will take approximately two hours and the line manager will need to be present. At this meeting the tutor will:

- › go through the set up the apprentice's Individual Learning Plan (ILP)
- › discuss the content of the programme
- › agree the 20% off job learning
- › set some initial targets
- › ask the line manager and apprentice to sign both the Apprenticeship Agreement and Commitment Statement

Reviews of Progress

At the induction we will ask you to set some initial learning targets for your apprentice – the tutor will also set some.

Progress against these targets will be checked at the initial review - this will take place four weeks into the programme. The reviews then occur every 12 weeks. They last approximately one hour and are like a mini-appraisal.

The tutor will spend time with both the apprentice and the line manager to:

- › track progress against previously set targets and objectives
- › set new targets and objectives for the programme and the workplace
- › ensure the 20% OJL is being met
- › check that the apprenticeship is on track as a whole
- › answer any questions or concerns about the programme

The 20% Off Job Learning

This is the part of the programme where the apprentice acquires the new skills, knowledge and behaviours that make them occupationally competent. Our blended approach means that programmes are flexible and enable apprentices to experience a range of learning opportunities in a variety of formats. This means that not all apprentices are required to attend a weekly classroom session.

The 20% Off Job Learning activity is calculated over the life time of the apprenticeship and could include:

- › A taught session at an ACL centre
- › An online tutorial or training session
- › A virtual or digital activity
- › A research project linked to the occupational area
- › Self-guided study (this includes remote tutor support)
- › Workshops and seminars
- › Attendance at conferences or trade shows
- › 1.2.1 meetings with their tutor or line manager
- › Related industry training
- › Employer led training
- › Staff meetings or away days
- › Induction training

Essentially any activity that the apprentice undertakes where they are gaining new knowledge, skills or behaviours relating to the apprenticeship can be counted.

The tutor will show the apprentice how to record this.

At induction the Off Job Learning will be planned, and the detail agreed. An example of what this may look like can be found below.

The number of Off Job Learning hours required is calculated against the number of hours the apprentice works each week and the duration of the programme – we use an OJL calculator to work this out for us

Example below* Business Administration Level 3 (18 months 37.5 hrs a week)

Off the Job Learning Activity (20%) - Minimum of 520.57hrs required	Location	Hours
Unit 301 (9 sessions at 5.5hrs each)	Classroom	49.5
Unit 308 (6 sessions at 5.5hrs each)	Classroom	33
Project	Remote	35
Mandatory Enrichment sessions	Classroom	15
Self-directed study (4 hrs a week)	Remote	288
Assessor Visits & Support - 4hrs per Month	Employer / Online	72
Employer led development (including mentoring / practical job training / shadowing)	Employer	35
Total Hours		527.5

Maths and English

These core skills are an integral part of all apprenticeships. If an apprentice does not hold a recognised level 2 equivalent (e.g. C grade GCSE) or have their certificates to demonstrate their exemption they will need to undertake Functional Skills as part of their programme. Our Initial Assessment will indicate what level each apprentice is at and how long it is likely to take them to complete their qualifications.

Functional skills do not count towards the 20% Off Job Learning. In some instances, we may recommend that the Functional Skills are completed before an apprenticeship is started. Functional skills test an individual's understanding of every day maths and English. The qualification is delivered through a mixture of classroom, online and self-study resources. There are three exam components for English and one for maths.

Maths and English skills are embedded into every apprenticeship. Even if an apprentice doesn't need to sit exams the tutors will ensure that they develop these skills further through contextualised learning and assessment.

NB* Not all previously attained maths and English qualifications will provide an exemption for Functional Skills – we will advise the apprentice and the employer/line manager prior to the start of the programme if they will need to complete functional skills as part of their programme.



Digital Skills (Information Technology - ICT)

Some apprenticeships require a Functional Skill in ICT. We will check the apprentice's prior achievements in this area in the same way that we do with maths and English and apply the same process.

As part of their programme all apprentices will have the opportunity to undertake training to improve their digital skills. These are often in the form of workshops at one of our centres and can include things like: spreadsheets, word processing and photoshop.

We use virtual learning tools and an e-portfolio system to deliver and manage certain aspects of the apprenticeship. These will further support digital skills and give apprentices confidence in using a range of different systems and platforms.

Virtual Learning and E-Portfolios

To support apprenticeship delivery, we use various online and digital resources and platforms to enable a blended learning approach.

A few of these are listed below:

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

This is our own system where apprentices can access and complete online learning activities. These activities are set by their tutor and are aligned to their apprenticeship. There are various resources stored in the VLE that support units or elements of the programme being undertaken

Big Blue Button and Microsoft Teams

These systems enable the tutor to 'visit' the apprentice remotely or carry out taught sessions/elements to a group through a virtual classroom

Learning Assistant

All apprentices will use our e-portfolio system to store their work and track their progress. As a line manager you will also have access to the system so that you can see the progress being made between progress review meetings

End Point Assessment EPA

End Point Assessment (EPA) takes place at the end of the apprenticeship programme and is a comprehensive holistic assessment of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required as laid out in the apprenticeship standard. It is generally made up of:

Portfolio of work - a mixture of written documents, audio and video evidence that showcases the professional application of on-programme learning

Online knowledge test - the learner showcases knowledge by answering a series of questions, explaining how they would respond to a range of different scenarios. Assessed via an online, on-demand test

Competency based interview - a one-to-one interview with the learner, using structured questions to test understanding and application of knowledge, and to assess their soft skills and behaviours

Professional discussion - the appointed EPA assessor leads a detailed discussion around the learners personal and professional development, looking for clear evidence of focused CPD and how this has been applied to improve performance in the workplace

Learners will receive a Pass, Merit or Distinction upon completion of the apprenticeship. If the result is a fail then a resit will be agreed with both learner and employer.

➤ Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty

We have a duty to safeguard our learners and apprentices - this includes the Prevent Duty.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children is defined in Working together to safeguard children as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health or development
- ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is defined in the Care and support statutory guidance issued under the Care Act 2014 as:

- protecting the rights of adults to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect
- people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect
- people and organisations making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, taking fully into account their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action
- recognising that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances and therefore potential risks to their safety or well-being

The Prevent Duty

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies, listed in Schedule 3 of the Act, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

These statutory bodies include:

- Education
- Health
- Social Care
- Police

Full details of the Prevent Duty can be found in the link below and in our 'Safeguarding and The Prevent Duty for Employers' booklet. This booklet can be downloaded from our website – a hardcopy is also available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

If you have a concern, would like more information or have any questions, please contact our Safeguarding Designated Officer Jill Newton on **07788301629** or email jill.newton2@essex.gov.uk

➤ Reporting an absence

If your apprentice does not turn up for work and does not make contact as per their terms and conditions of employment you must let ACL know on that same day.

If your apprentice does not turn up to an ACL learning session, we will let the line manager know.

If your apprentice needs to cancel a learning session, they need to let their tutor know in advance.

You must let us know when an apprentice is absent from work for more than one day (excluding the day of the incident) as a result of suffering personal injury or developing a disease/illness at the place of employment.

To report an absence please call us on 03330 130926.

FAQs

What happens if my apprentice leaves or we no longer wish to employ them?

We would ask that you contact your Business Development Account Manager or the apprentice's tutor as soon as possible. Where appropriate we will work with you and the apprentice to remedy any issues. If a resolution is not possible the tutor will continue to work with the apprentice to ensure they complete their programme. The Business Development Team will support the employer to source a new apprentice.

The following will apply with regards to payments for the apprenticeship training.

Levy Paying Employers

If the apprentice leaves their employer prior to completion of their programme payments will cease at the point they are removed from the DAS (digital apprenticeship service) account.

Non-Levy Paying Employers

If the apprentice leaves their employer prior to completion of their programme ACL will calculate the amount of co-investment received by the employer to the date the apprentice ceased employment. ACL will then, where required, invoice the employer for any underpayment of the co-investment or credit back any overpayment that ACL has received. Any underpayment is paid for by the employer and not the apprentice.

What happens if we no longer wish to continue with the apprenticeship?

We would ask that you contact your account manager in the first instance. There may be a financial penalty for withdrawing an apprentice early from the programme.

Further details can be found in the apprenticeship contract and within our fee policy.

What happens if we experience any problems or concerns?

We hope that your experience with our apprenticeship provision is a positive one. If at any point throughout the programme you are not happy, encounter a problem or are concerned we would ask you to speak to either the tutor or your Business Development Account Manager in the first instance. They will direct you to our complaints procedure if required.

Employee Training and Personal Development Programmes

ACL can also offer a wide range of courses and programmes outside of apprenticeships. These can be used to develop skills to support job roles or for personal development.

Please talk to your Business Development Account Manager to discuss any training needs that you may have – if we can't offer it, we'll know someone that can!

Full details of all courses can be found on our website www.aclessex.com

Programmes include:

- › Certificate in Coaching & Mentoring
- › Maths, English, Biology, Computer Science GCSE's
- › Mindfulness
- › Creative & Cultural including: Photography, Floristry, Painting, Silversmithing, Pottery, Textiles
- › AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians)
- › Access to Higher Education Diplomas
- › Counselling
- › Housekeeping
- › Hospitality
- › British Sign Language
- › Makaton
- › ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)
- › Beauty & Complementary Therapies
- › SAGE Essentials
- › Dementia Awareness
- › End of Life Care
- › Sports Massage
- › Team Leading & Management
- › Infection Control
- › Support Work in Schools
- › Mental Health Recovery
- › Resilience
- › Customer Service
- › Microsoft Office
- › Photoshop



Team Building Days

★ NEW FOR 2021 ★

Spend valuable time away from the workplace with your team at one of our centres or outreach venues. Content can be tailored to business need.

Contact us at:
ACL.BusinessDevelopment@essex.gov.uk



› Our Apprenticeship Programmes

Business School

- › Accounts or Finance Assistant Level 2
- › Customer Service Practitioner Level 2
- › Public Service Operations Delivery Officer Level 2 **Coming Soon*
- › Assistant Accountant Level 3
- › Business Administrator Level 3
- › Customer Service Professional Level 3
- › Payroll Administrator Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › Team Leader or Supervisor Level 3
- › Associate Project Manager Level 4
- › Professional Accounting Technician Level 4
- › Schools Business Professional Level 4
- › Coaching Professional Level 5
- › Operations or Departmental Manager Level 5

Health, Medical & Care

- › Adult Care Worker Level 2
- › Healthcare Cleaning Operative Level 2
- › Healthcare Science Assistant Level 2 **Coming Soon*
- › Healthcare Support Worker Level 2
- › Lead Adult Care Worker Level 3
- › Senior Healthcare Support Worker Level 3
- › Lead Practitioner in Adult Care Level 4
- › Leader in Adult Care Level 5

Early Years & Education

- › Early Years Practitioner Level 2
- › Youth Support Worker Level 2 **Coming Soon*
- › Early Years Educator Level 3
- › Learning Mentor Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › Teaching Assistant Level 3
- › Assessor Coach Level 4 **Coming Soon*
- › Children, Young People & Families Practitioner (Community) Level 4 **Coming Soon*
- › Children, Young People & Families Practitioner (Residential) Level 4
- › Children, Young People & Families Manager (Community) Level 5 **Coming Soon*

Science & Digital

- › Pharmacy Services Assistant Level 2 **Coming Soon*
- › Digital Marketer Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › IT Solutions Technician (Software) Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › IT Solutions Technician (Hardware) Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › Junior Content Producer Level 3 **Coming Soon*
- › Laboratory Technician Level 3 **Coming Soon*

› Details of these courses can be found on our website



 acl.apprenticeships@essex.gov.uk

 03330 139 502

ACL Basildon

Churchill Avenue,
Broadmayne,
Basildon, SS14 3SG

ACL Chelmsford

Beeches Close,
Chelmsford, CM1 2SB

ACL Brentwood

Bishops Hill,
Rayleigh Road, Hutton,
Brentwood, CM13 1BD

ACL Clacton

St Osyth Road,
Clacton, CO15 3BN

ACL Colchester

Wilson Marriage,
Barrack Street,
Colchester, CO1 2LR

ACL Harlow

The Harlow Centre,
Partridge Rd, Harlow,
Essex, CM18 6TE

ACL Maldon

Carmelite House
(above the library),
White Horse Lane,
Maldon, CM9 5FW

ACL Witham

Spinks Lane, Witham,
CM8 1EP

ACL Rayleigh

132/4 High Street,
Rayleigh, SS6 7BX