



## Level 4 Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship

### Overview for Applicants (2020/2021)

Serco delivers the **Level 4 Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship**, an apprenticeship developed by a group of employers, which included Serco, based on standards and an assessment plan by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE).

The Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship is a 24-month learning programme (longer for those who normally work less than 30 hours a week) in England and is suitable for those with working with individuals who are distanced furthest from the labour market, helping them to address and overcome obstacles to securing suitable and sustainable employment. Employability Practitioners may specialise in working with a specific group of individuals and will devise strategies to address and overcome the multiple and complex barriers to employment, and to improve their employability prospects, with the end goal being to find employment or to progress in work if they are already employed.

For part-time employees or those working less than 30 hours a week, the apprenticeship will be extended pro rata, although the majority of the learning still takes place as a group within the 24-month period. There is no age limit and the vast majority of employability Practitioners will already have experience of the role or could be relatively new to role.

#### Benefits to your organisation will include:

- Professional staff member who will enhance the management of your organisation
- An employability practitioner who understands the importance of their role and its scope
- Increased ability of the employability Practitioner to devise strategies to address and overcome the multiple and complex barriers to employment
- An employability Practitioner who can take a holistic approach to the service user

#### Successful apprentices will achieve:

- On-the-job experience
- A professional pathway for future development
- IfATE apprentice certificate
- Level 2 in mathematics and English (if you do not already have these qualifications)
- An increased ability to devise strategies to address and overcome the multiple and complex barriers to employment

#### Programme Overview

Applicants wishing to join the Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship are committing themselves to a 24-month programme of study. If you work less than 30 hours a week then your study period will be extended pro rata. The final end-point assessment occurs within a 3-month window after the study period. You are supported by a coach, a tutor, your line manager/mentor and also through peer support via online group forum areas and networking opportunities at face-to-face workshops. Apprenticeships also require employers to agree to **20% off-the-job training** for the apprentice (which can include attendance at workshops, coaching and review sessions).

As part of the application process you will need to complete a **self-assessment** with your line manager. There are a number of **additional registration forms** we will require you to complete as part of the onboarding process for the apprenticeship in order to claim the levy funding. You will also agree an **individual learning plan** (ILP) with your line manager or mentor.

You then begin your academic studies, developing a portfolio of evidence of the skills and knowledge of an Employability Practitioner.

Most units will begin with face-to-face workshops (5 x one-day workshops in total, held at regional centres) but the remainder of your studies will be online, maximising the flexibility of learning. Please note that during the current lockdown restrictions all face to face workshops will be held online.

In addition, as an apprentice, you will receive visits and support from your coach (8 x workplace visits plus 2 x touch-point phone support calls) who will ensure, with your line manager's support, that the learning is put into practice and also helps you develop a portfolio of evidence.

In order to successfully complete the Apprenticeship, you will also need to undertake an end-point assessment with an external assessor once you have completed all activities.

### Structure

The apprenticeship will typically take 24 months to complete (but longer for those who work less than 30 hours per week) and must include 20% off-the-job training (which includes attendance at workshops and coaching sessions, etc.). The programme includes units on:

- Holistic Assessment & Reviews
- Integrated Services
- Coaching & Mentoring
- Legislation
- Challenging & Complex Caseloads
- Safeguarding, Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

The programme will develop and examine the knowledge, skills and behaviours of these activities associated with the role of an employability Practitioner. Further information on these units can be found in the FAQ (frequently asked questions) document available on the web page via [www.serco-education.com](http://www.serco-education.com)

In addition to the above, it is a requirement that you are able to evidence that you are working at Level 2 maths and English. You will be required to take a short online initial assessment after you have accepted your place on the apprenticeship. Should you not have these GCSE Level 2 qualifications (or their equivalent) or be unable to find their original certificates, then we will provide additional support to help you gain these qualifications (at no extra cost). Note that these eligibility conditions are applied rigorously to comply with ESFA (Education & Skills Funding Agency) requirements.

### What is the role of my line manager/Team Leader?

We will only accept applications from individuals who have the support of their line manager. They will be asked to provide a written statement in support of your application (part of the 'personal statement and line manager support' document) so that we are satisfied that each party understands the commitment being made. Your line manager will be asked to sign to confirm that they have read the guidance document and will also be involved with your review process during the apprenticeship.

Your line manager may wish to identify a mentor to support you throughout your programme of study rather than undertake this themselves. Regardless of whether you are supported by a mentor, we do require a signed, written

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statement from the line manager.

### **Funding and Costs**

The DfE funding band for the Employability Practitioner is capped at £6,000, however the cost of the programme may be reduced slightly depending upon previous experience and qualifications which will be identified once the apprentice has completed a skills scan during the application process.

If you are employed by a **levy-paying** organisation then the cost of the Apprenticeship should be covered by the apprenticeship levy. Your employer should have a digital apprentice account or be able to provide us with the contact details for the parent organisation holding the account. As long as your organisation has sufficient funds in their digital apprenticeship account (DAS) then there is no additional cost for the programme delivery. You, or your line manager, will be required to provide your employer's levy account details.

If you are from a **non-levy paying** organisation then you will be invoiced for 5% of the total cost of the programme (please contact us for further details), i.e. normally £300 + VAT. Please note that the ESFA allocate a number of non-levy paying places to training providers each year. These are quickly used up by applicants for a range of apprentices. We work on a first come first served basis when allocating these places and you may have to wait until a later cohort when we are provided with an updated ESFA allowance before we are able to accept you onto the apprenticeship.

Please be aware that you will be required to attend 5 x one-day regional face-to-face workshops, each at the beginning of most units and although workshops are situated in the closest location for the majority of apprentices within the cohort, you may have to travel. You will need to agree with your line manager/ employer whether your employer will cover the cost of travel. It is unlikely that you will require overnight accommodation, but we recommend that you confirm what your employer will cover prior to the programme commencing. There are no other additional costs.

### **Time Commitment (line manager)**

The line manager, or mentor identified by the line manager, will be required to:

- join the first meeting between you, the apprentice, and coach for approx. half an hour to ensure that all key parties are aware of the requirements of the individual learning plan.
- actively contribute to the regular coaching/assessment sessions held with yourself (they will not be required to attend the full session). Some of these sessions will be observations by the coach of you, the apprentice, undertaking certain activities.
- observe you undertake certain activities commensurate with the role of an employability Practitioner. Your line manager/mentor will be required to complete a proforma confirming that they observed certain skills and behaviours and you will include this proforma in your portfolio of evidence.
- attend an annual review of progress between the coach, apprentice and the line manager/mentor.
- support you, the apprentice, by providing a room within your normal place of work for the above meetings to take place in confidence.
- ensure that you are given time to attend the above meetings and the face-to-face workshops. This must not be deducted from your annual leave allowance. Please note that the workshops, web conferences and coaching/assessment sessions are mandatory elements of the apprenticeship. You cannot successfully complete the programme without full attendance.
- support you in your studies, identifying opportunities for you to develop your skills alongside your learning

### **Study time**

In addition to the above-mentioned workshops etc., apprentices must be given time to study. Study time should be

flexible to minimise the impact in the workplace. This should be agreed between you and your line manager prior to the start of the programme. As an apprenticeship, you must be allowed **20% of your work time to study**; this includes workshops and meetings with your coach, but it also includes any learning or development activities that your role requires, for example meetings to discuss your work, work-based dialogue between colleagues, attendance at meetings where learning is taking place etc. The 20% off-the-job training must be logged to meet ESFA compliance. Study time will need to be flexible, so, for example, it could be 1 hour at the beginning or end of each day or a morning/afternoon twice a week etc.

### **Next Steps – two-stage application process**

If the Level 4 Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship seems the right way forward for you and you have the commitment to study the 24-month programme (or longer if working part-time only, etc.), plus end-point assessment, with support from your line manager/ employer, then you will need to:

1. Complete an application form which can be accessed via [www.serco-education.com](http://www.serco-education.com) – navigate to the Level 4 Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship web page. You will need to read and download, or print, all of the important supporting documents found in the **Key Documents** area (near the foot of the web page).
2. Once your application form is submitted you will have 5 working days to complete a **personal statement** which we also require your line manager to sign. Their signature is required to confirm that they have read the line manager's guidance document and fully support your application. We will not consider applications unless we receive a personal statement which is also signed by the line manager.
3. We will then send you a Skills Scan self-assessment to complete the eligibility process so that we may assess your eligibility to join the apprenticeship and develop your individual learning plan (ILP).

We may invite some applicants to participate in a phone-based interview as part of the selection process later on (after the application deadline).

Applicants will receive confirmation of their place on the Apprenticeship approximately 3-4 weeks after the application deadline. Should an applicant be unsuccessful in their application they will be offered feedback and recommendations to help prepare them to study the programme at a later date.

Once a successful applicant has formally accepted their place, they will then be sent an **Apprenticeship Agreement**, by email, together with other official documents, to be completed and returned. These formal documents will need to be signed by you and your line manager and returned to Serco.

### **Start dates**

Termly intakes (with regional locations for the 5 x face-to-face workshops) will be offered each year. See [www.serco-education.com](http://www.serco-education.com) for latest start dates.

### **Key documents to read**

Please read this document in conjunction with the following documents available on the Level 4 Employability Practitioner web page:

- **Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship FAQs (frequently asked questions)**
- **Employability Practitioner Apprenticeship Terms & Conditions**
- **Personal Statement & Line Manager Support**
- **Line Manager's Guidance**

### **Further information:**

[www.serco-education.com](http://www.serco-education.com)

**Enquiries:**

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01452 341829 (office hours)

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