

Apprenticeship Scheme Policy

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1.0 Introduction

Rossendale Borough Council is committed to working proactively towards increasing the recruitment of apprentices within its workforce.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To provide a framework to support the training and development of apprentices within Rossendale Borough Council
- Provide clarity on the Council's position with respect to engagement of an apprentice.
- Provide clarity on the terms and conditions of employment of an apprentice.
- To ensure consistency and parity in the engagements and deployment of an apprentice.
- To assist in workforce and succession planning in relation to addressing any skills shortages.

3.0 Definition of an apprentice

In aiming to ensure a consistent approach in the engagement of an apprentice the Council has adopted the definition of an apprentice as: "An apprentice is a person who is learning from a skilled employer, having agreed to work for a fixed period of time within an agreed training plan".

To supplement the above definition the following guiding principles should be observed:

- The recruitment of an apprentice will be aimed at young people aged between 16 – 24 years and be a resident of Rossendale.
- The purpose of using an apprentice is an opportunity to give a person valuable work experience and training in a relevant field.
- An apprenticeship is a package of on-the-job training and relevant national recognised qualification.

4.0 Benefits of employing an apprentice

Apprenticeships are a real opportunity to offer entry level jobs in order to continue the development of an effective workforce.

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Apprentices will enable the Council to build skills in the local community to ensure succession planning, develop knowledge transfer and build a committed, loyal workforce whilst addressing future skills gaps.

Managing and mentoring an apprentice is a great development opportunity for the existing workforce, especially for those that do not currently have people management responsibilities. It will help develop management and leadership skills.

To enable the local young people to gain nationally recognised qualification while they earn, increasing their employability for the future.

5.0 Manager’s responsibilities

- Identifying opportunities to support an apprentice within their service area.
- Undertaking of induction (including risk assessments), regular supervision meetings and performance reviews with the apprentice.
- Ensuring appropriate mentoring/support mechanisms are in place throughout the apprenticeship placement.
- Planning and implementing a work programme that is appropriate and supports the development of the apprentice’s skills and competence, and supports the achievement of the qualification aspect of the apprenticeship.
- Ensuring that the apprentice knows how and who to contact to seek information and guidance to enable him/her to fulfil his/her duties.

6.0 Apprentice’s responsibilities

- Carrying out the requirements of the job to a high standard.
- Abiding by all relevant Council policies and procedures.
- Understanding the purpose of their apprenticeship and the standards of standards and behaviours expected.
- Attendance of all training and completion of the qualification aspect of the apprenticeship.
- To make satisfactory progress throughout the course of his/her apprenticeship placement and seek further clarification on any aspects of his/her role of which he/she are unsure.

7.0 People Team responsibilities

- First point of contact for recruiting managers, training providers and apprentices.

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- Managing the recruitment process in line with the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Policy.
- Identifying suitable apprenticeship frameworks in line with the requirements of the role.
- Monitoring and evaluating the apprenticeship scheme.

8.0 Identifying an apprentice opportunity

An apprentice opportunity can arise when designing succession planning models for the service area. However, managers must not create an apprentice opportunity to replace jobs which have been deleted from the authorised establishment, and should not be a means by which vacancies are normally filled or replace an employee in any circumstance.

9.0 Recruitment and selection of an apprentice

Once an apprentice opportunity is identified recruitment must be undertaken in line with the Council’s Recruitment and Selection Policy.

On the appointment of an apprentice, the apprentice must complete an Apprenticeship Agreement as shown in Appendix 1, which will be provided to the apprentice by the People and Policy Team with the Conditional Offer Letter.

10.0 Terms and conditions of an apprentice

An apprentice will be employed on the Council’s terms and conditions with the exception of the following variations:

- The apprentice’s role is outside of the Council’s pay and grading framework and the relevant National Minimum Wage for Apprentices will be payable.

Under National Minimum Wage legislation, apprentices are entitled to receive an apprentice rate for time spent working and training. The apprentice rate applies to apprentices who are under 19 years old, or who are aged 19 years or over but in the first year of the apprenticeship. Apprentices who are aged 19 or over who have spent a year in their apprenticeship must be paid at least minimum wage rate applicable to their age.

- An apprentice will be employed on a fixed term training contract for the duration that aligns with the relevant national recognised qualification.

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- An apprentice is considered to be an employee of the Council and must be managed in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.
- The apprentice will be reimbursed travel expenses incurred in relation to attendance at college or duties performed in accordance with the Council's Training Policy.

11.0 Funding the apprentice placement

All wages and expenses paid by Rossendale Borough Council and must be accounted for within the authorised establishment of the appointing service area.

The National Apprentice Service will provide an Apprentice Grant for Employers of 16 to 24 year olds (AGE 16 to 24) individual grant value of £1,500 per apprentice employed and 100% of the cost of the training is funded for 16 – 18 years, up to 50% of the training funded for 19-24 years old.

12.0 Completion of the Apprenticeship

Although the Council is not obliged to guarantee the apprentice a permanent job at the end of the Apprenticeship, it is intended that all Apprentices will be encouraged and supported to apply for posts within the Council.

13.0 Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and in accordance with any changes to the organisation, statutory legislation, local demographics, available funding and in consultation with the Council's recognised Trade Union.

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