

The Future of Apprenticeships in England

**Guidance for Trailblazers – from standards
to starts**

July 2015

Contents

1. Introduction and overview	4
2. Applying to develop an apprenticeship standard	7
Application criteria	7
Apprenticeship levels	8
Degree apprenticeships	9
Estimating likely volume and timing of apprenticeship starts	9
Guidance on naming apprenticeship occupations	9
Age appropriateness of standards	11
Ensuring standards represent good value for money	11
Commitment required of Chairs and Trailblazers	11
Application process	12
Checklist for submitting a bid to develop a standard	12
3. Developing an apprenticeship standard	13
What is an apprenticeship standard?	13
Criteria for apprenticeship standards	13
Support available	14
The planning phase	15
The development phase	16
The consultation phase	18
Assigning the copyright of your standard (and assessment plan)	19
Submitting your draft standard for approval	21
Showing that your standard meets the criteria	22
Standards approval process	24
Checklist for submitting a standard for approval	25
4. Developing an assessment plan	26
What is an assessment plan?	26
What is an assessment plan used for?	26
Who should write the assessment plan and what support is available?	27
When should the assessment plan be developed?	28
Assessment criteria	28
Quality assurance	31
Grading exemptions	32
Making consequential amendments to the related standard	32
Submitting your assessment plan for approval	33
Checklist for submitting an assessment plan for approval	33
5. Preparing for delivery	34
The Trailblazer funding pilot	34

Allocating standards to funding caps	35
Putting control of government funding in the hands of employers	36
Apprenticeship Levy	37
Working with education and training organisations	37
Certification	38
Off-the-job training	39
Turning off frameworks	39
Other delivery issues to consider	39
Process for amending standards after they are ready for delivery	40
<i>Annex 1: Template for a bid (EOI) to develop an apprenticeship standard</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Annex 2: Template for a Trailblazer workplan</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Annex 3: Template for an apprenticeship standard</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Annex 4: Template for assigning copyright to the Crown</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>Annex 5: Template for a Trailblazer employer support letter</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Annex 6: Template for an assessment plan</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Annex 7: Assessment criteria – quick reference version</i>	<i>56</i>
<i>Annex 8: Costing template</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Annex 9: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms</i>	<i>60</i>

1 Introduction and overview

1. The apprenticeships programme is already successful and provides proven benefits to both employers and apprentices. For apprentices, it can equip them with the skills needed for a successful career and be a genuine alternative to going to University or even an opportunity to combine an apprenticeship with higher education. For employers it can provide a highly efficient and effective means of developing the skills of their workforce – adult apprenticeships at level 2 and level 3 deliver £26 and £28 of economic benefits respectively for each pound of Government investment¹.
2. We therefore want to grow the number of apprenticeships available, with 3 million starts during the course of this Parliament.
3. The Richard Review found that there were key areas of the programme where significant improvements could be made to make it more rigorous and responsive to the needs of employers which will, in turn, help to drive growth in the number of apprenticeships. Our plans for implementing these reforms are set out in *The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan*², published in October 2013. The key measures aim to:
 - **Put employers in the driving seat.** Apprenticeships will be based on standards designed by employers, making them more relevant and therefore more attractive to existing and new employers.
 - **Increase the quality of apprenticeships.** An apprentice will need to demonstrate their competence through rigorous and holistic assessment. This will focus on the end of the apprenticeship to ensure that the apprentice is ready to progress.
 - **Simplify the system.** The new employer-designed standards will be short and easy to understand. They will describe the skills, knowledge and behaviour that an individual needs to be fully competent in an occupation.
 - **Give employers purchasing power.** Putting control of government funding for the external training of apprentices in the hands of employers, to empower businesses to act as customers, driving up the quality and relevance of such training.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-measuring-the-net-present-value-in-england>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-richard-review-next-steps>

4. Employers working together to design the standards and assessment plans for apprenticeships is a key feature of the new system, as it will lead to apprenticeships that are higher quality and more relevant to your industry. By getting involved in developing the standards for occupations in your sector, you will have the opportunity to define the skills, knowledge and behaviour that you require in your future workforce and which training subsidised by government will help to deliver. This, in turn, will mean that apprenticeships can more directly support your business to grow and prosper. In view of the “open policy” approach which we are taking to apprenticeship reform, getting involved in Trailblazers also gives you the opportunity to influence the policy development process.
5. We are keen to receive bids to develop standards relating both to occupations that are currently covered by frameworks and also relating to occupations that have not traditionally been associated with apprenticeships.
6. So far, we have taken a staged approach to delivery as we move towards that goal, and are now working with five phases of Trailblazers – groups of employers who have come together to be some of the first to design new apprenticeship standards and assessments, helping to define, test and improve the system.
7. The eight Phase 1 Trailblazers were launched in October 2013 and the latest 26 Trailblazers making up Phase 5 were launched in July 2015. Overall, we now have over 140 Trailblazers that so far have collectively delivered or are in the process of delivering over 350 standards.
8. In the future, we will be moving towards monthly opportunities to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs), draft standards and assessment plans which will speed up the development process. Further details of this are contained in the next Sections.
9. The diagram overleaf illustrates the end to end process and this guidance document is designed to support groups of employers from bidding to develop a standard right through to the first starts on that standard. It builds on all of the lessons and experience we have gained through previous phases, and reflects apprenticeship reform policy and process revisions made since the previous edition of the guidance was published in March 2015.
10. **This means that the policy and processes set out in this edition of the guidance apply to the development of all standards and assessment plans including those currently under development by Trailblazers from earlier phases and existing standards and assessment plans as and when they come up for review.**

11. You may also find the following links useful:

- All of the apprenticeship standards and assessment plans that have been produced by employers and agreed by the government are published at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>.
- All of the standards that are currently being developed by employer groups are listed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-in-development>.
- We will keep our main hub page on apprenticeship reforms updated with all of the latest information. You can find this at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes>.

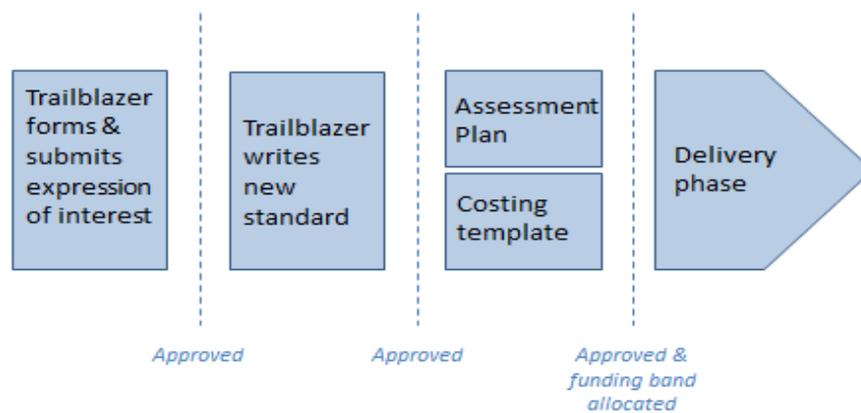


Diagram 1 - the end to end process

12. We continue to learn from our experience of working with Trailblazers (as well as from a recently published interim evaluation of early Trailblazers³) and are keen to improve our processes, responding to feedback as each phase progresses. This guidance will therefore be supplemented by FAQs regularly circulated to Trailblazers and will itself be updated periodically. We therefore welcome suggestions for improving it either via your Relationship Manager or sent to apprenticeship.trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk.

13. Whilst standards and assessment plans are generally referred to in the singular in the following Sections, clearly many Trailblazers will be developing a number of such documents simultaneously. Please note, however, that any requirement listed for either a standard or assessment plan must be satisfied for each individual standard or assessment plan.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-trailblazers-evaluation>

2 Applying to develop an apprenticeship standard

14. We welcome your interest in developing an apprenticeship standard for an occupation in your sector or for one that covers a number of sectors. The first thing that you will need to do is check whether other employers are already involved in designing a standard for this occupation, either in your sector or beyond (bearing in mind that the requirements may be very similar across sectors). You can find lists of the standards that have been designed and those in development via the links in paragraph 11. If a group already exists and you would like to join them, you can either email the specific Trailblazer contact on the gov.uk site (if listed) or us at apprenticeship.trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk, and we will pass on your contact details to the Chair of that group.
15. If there is not yet an apprenticeship standard in development for the occupation, then you can work with a group of employers to come forward with an Expression of Interest (EOI) to develop one. When preparing your EOI, if you become aware of another group developing something similar, you should make contact and consider working together in advance of submitting an EOI.
16. The next deadline for submitting EOIs is **midday on Thursday 27 August 2015 and, from then on, the deadlines will be midday on the final Thursday of every month** except around major holiday periods. The precise dates are detailed in paragraph 71. Moving to monthly opportunities to submit EOIs will mean that employers can put in bids at any time with the assurance that they will be reviewed more regularly.

Application criteria

17. Successful applications need to meet the following criteria to ensure that the occupation will provide apprentices with sufficient transferable skills and that the proposed employer group is representative of the relevant sector or sectors:

Occupational Criteria
a) The proposed occupation is unique and there is not already a standard in development (in which case we can link interested employers into that group).
b) There is not a high degree of overlap between the proposed occupation and another either proposed or in development (in which case we may ask you to collaborate with other employers on the design of related standards).
c) The occupation will require rigorous and substantial training of over a year to achieve full competence, with off-the-job training accounting for at least 20% of the apprenticeship (a requirement of all apprenticeship standards).

Occupational Criteria
d) The occupation is at a sufficiently high level to allow the successful apprentice to develop transferable skills that will enable them to perform this role in a business of any size or relevant sector.
Employer Development Group Criteria
a) You have a wide range of employers , meaning at least 10 (in addition to any participating professional bodies, trade associations etc) committed to being actively involved in the development of your apprenticeship standard.
b) These employers are reflective of those who employ people in this occupation – including in terms of size (your group must include small employers) and sector or sectors.
c) One employer member has been chosen by the group to act as Chair .
d) Any other organisations involved, such as sector or trade bodies, professional bodies, training providers or industry training boards have been invited to support the process by the employer leads and their role is specifically to support the employers.
e) The group is willing to work inclusively and collaboratively with other employers or groups who come forward with an interest in the same or similar occupation(s).
f) Employers involved in the Trailblazer should have the intention of making use of the standard once it is ready for delivery.

Apprenticeship levels

18. When considering bidding to develop an apprenticeship standard you should start with the job role / occupation and consider the skills, knowledge and behaviour it requires. Each standard should describe a distinct job role / occupation with different skills, knowledge and behaviour. If two job roles / occupations differ only in terms of the scale of increasing 'experience' (rather than a real increase in both number and depth of competencies) then it is more appropriate to have a standard at a single level.
19. However, where there are job roles in the same field that reflect increasing depth and breadth of competence, with each one independently requiring a minimum of 12 months' worth of training to develop full competence, it may be appropriate to develop standards at more than one level.

Degree Apprenticeships

20. If you are considering bidding to develop a standard which you believe may be at level 6 or 7, there is an opportunity to include a degree in it. Degree Apprenticeships bring together the best of higher and professional and technical education, and see apprentices achieving a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of their apprenticeship.
21. They will involve employers, universities and professional bodies working in partnership, with apprentices employed throughout, spending part of their time at university (with flexibility as to how this is structured - e.g. via day release or block release) and part with their employer.
22. Apprentices will complete a rigorous end-point assessment which tests both the wider occupational competence and academic learning required for success in the relevant profession. The degree programme can be structured in one of two ways:
- Employers, universities and professional bodies can come together to co-design a fully-integrated degree course specifically for apprentices, which delivers and tests both academic learning and on-the-job training. We think this will be the preferred approach for many sectors, as the learning is seamless and does not require a separate assessment of occupational competence.
 - Alternatively, sectors may wish to use existing degree programmes to deliver the academic knowledge requirements of that profession, combine this with additional training to meet the full apprenticeship requirements, and have a separate test of full occupational competence at the end of the apprenticeship.
23. If you wish any level 6 or 7 bids to be considered for the Degree Apprenticeship model, please state this clearly in your EOI.

Estimating likely volume and timing of apprenticeship starts

24. As part of your EOI, it is important that you set out when you envisage the apprenticeship being ready to deliver starts (assuming the development process runs smoothly) and what the annual take-up is likely to be. We expect Trailblazer employers to be committed to using the standards you develop and therefore ask you to set out in your EOI likely take-up by each member. Once a Trailblazer has standards ready for delivery, we will also expect it to work with relevant sector organisations to promote their use.

Guidance on naming apprenticeship occupations

25. This guidance has been designed through the Trailblazer process to introduce some consistency to the way that apprenticeship occupations are described in order to

make things clearer for employers and apprentices. You should take account of this when submitting an EOI in developing a standard.

General:

- You should aim to make the titles of standards as transparent as possible to allow common understanding across the country, internationally, and for people who are unfamiliar with your industry – for instance, a young person considering starting an apprenticeship.
- You should avoid including unnecessary words in titles.
- Generally the best titles are the shortest – for instance ‘plasterer’.
- For standards which are broadly at level 2, the best descriptions might be ‘operative’, ‘mechanic’ or equivalent.
- For some disciplines and sectors there are already helpful naming conventions (for instance those developed or used by professional bodies) that can help to illustrate the level of the apprenticeship.
- Where the apprenticeship is linked to professional registration, the level / designation of registration obtained could contribute to the title.

Science and Engineering:

- In engineering, occupations at levels 3, 4 and 5 that meet Engineering Technician (EngTech) registration requirements could include ‘technician’ in the title. Higher Apprenticeships at levels 6 and 7 that meet Incorporated or Chartered requirements could include ‘engineer’ in the title.
- In science, occupations at levels 3 and 4 that meet RSci Tech registration requirements could include ‘technician’ in the title. Higher Apprenticeships at levels 5, 6 and 7 that meet Registered or Chartered Scientist requirements could include ‘scientist’ in the title.

Hierarchies:

- ‘Supervisor’ is often used for level 3 roles where there is a significant workforce of operatives. Otherwise it mostly applies from levels 4 and 5. (Note that the role of supervisor should be distinct from the type of work that is being supervised).

- 'Manager' is often used for level 4 roles where there are supervisors at level 3 and operatives at level 2. It then goes right up through the hierarchies of work.

Age appropriateness of standards

26. It is our expectation that nearly all apprenticeship standards are open to all. However, in some cases there will be legitimate reasons why a standard should not be accessible to all age groups. There may, for example, be existing safety legislation or other legal or statutory requirements which prevent 16-18 years fulfilling roles, or questions about the overall appropriateness of the standard and the context in which it will be delivered to this age group.

27. In view of this, when submitting an EOI please indicate whether there might be any circumstances which would mean the eligibility for undertaking an apprenticeship based on a standard would be limited to certain age groups. Providing this information will not have any bearing on whether or not your EOI is approved.

Ensuring standards represent good value for money

28. The knowledge, skills and behaviours set out in any standard must be sufficient to ensure full competence in the relevant job role is acquired. However, it is also important that the standard represents good value for money. It needs to be accessible to all types of employers that might want to use it, all of whom will be required to contribute to the funding of the training of their apprentices under the new funding model. In view of this, when bidding to develop a standard you should be aware of the fact that, if your bid is approved, the resulting Trailblazer process may involve making compromises on content along the way.

Commitment required of Chairs and Trailblazers

29. The benefits of being in at the start of the process to develop apprenticeships geared to the needs of your sector are very significant. However, so is the employer commitment required to make it work.

30. Ensuring that a standard and related assessment plan meet the needs of all types of employers who might employ someone in an occupation is a difficult process and requires considerable time and effort. The whole process from developing a standard to seeing the first apprentices start to work towards it will take at least a year and, in most cases, longer.

31. Whilst government provides support to advise Trailblazers on policy and process, ultimately the development of the new standards is the responsibility of employers. In view of this, before submitting an application to develop a standard and related assessment plan, you should be confident, both as the Chair of any resulting Trailblazer and as a group as a whole, that you can commit the time and effort needed to see it through.

Application Process

32. You are welcome to submit your application to us at any time at apprenticeship.trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk using the template at Annex 1.
33. We will acknowledge receipt of your application and after each deadline for submitting EOIs, we will put each new EOI online for a short period in order to give any potential interested parties that have not been involved in its development the opportunity to comment on it. This process may also elicit potential new group members.
34. In addition to the information that you submit and feedback from putting the EOI online, we will also look at labour market information provided by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) showing the number of people working in the occupation and the level of skills needed. This will help us prioritise the proposals we receive.
35. In considering your application, we may contact you for further information or to ask you to work together with another employer group either from the same sector or another sector if the roles they are considering appear to require similar core knowledge and skills.
36. We will aim to notify all applicants of the outcome within four weeks of the previous submission deadline and will then liaise with successful applicants to help them take forward their Trailblazers.
37. If you subsequently wish to develop additional standards beyond those you have been given approval to develop, you will need to submit a further EOI.

Checklist for submitting a bid to develop a standard

- Check for relevant pre-existing standards or standards in development.
- Satisfy yourself that the training for the occupation to be covered by the proposed standard requires rigorous and substantial training of at least a year.
- Secure the support of 10 employers including small businesses.
- Consider if other organisations (e.g. professional bodies) could be usefully involved in the standard development process.
- Commit to chairing the Trailblazer and ensure that you and the wider group can devote the time and effort needed to see it through.
- Submit application using the template at Annex 1.

3 Developing an apprenticeship standard

38. Congratulations on being given agreement to develop an apprenticeship standard. This is your opportunity to work with employers across your sector and beyond to shape the future of training in an occupation.

What is an apprenticeship standard?

39. New apprenticeships are based on standards designed by employers to meet their needs, the needs of their sector(s) and the economy more widely. These standards, (which replace existing frameworks) are short, easy to understand documents that describe the skills, knowledge and behaviour required to undertake a specific occupation well, and to operate confidently within a sector. Standards focus on how an apprentice should demonstrate mastery of an occupation, and meet professional registration requirements in sectors where these exist (for example, in engineering, science and accountancy).

Criteria for apprenticeship standards

40. We set out in *The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan*⁴ the criteria that all Apprenticeship standards must meet:

Apprenticeship standards must be short, concise, accessible documents. They must describe the skills, knowledge and competency required for a specific occupation, and to allow an apprentice to operate confidently within the sector. Any new standard must:

- describe what full competence for a specific occupation means so that, on completion, an apprentice will have the skills, knowledge, behaviour and confidence to perform the role in any part of the sector;
- be publicly recognised by employers (including small businesses), recognised professional or trade bodies and, where appropriate, higher education institutions (HEIs), as fit for purpose;
- be suitable for small businesses to use to train their apprentices, if necessary with external training;
- contain sufficient content and be pitched at such a level, that a new entrant to the occupation would find it stretching and require at least one year of training to meet the standard;

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-richard-review-next-steps>

- include any skills, and any other requirements, for professional registration if such a system exists in the sector or occupation so that, on completion, a successful apprentice can achieve professional registration; and
- specify the level of English and maths achievement required, whether this is the minimum level required by government for all apprentices or a level above this minimum set by the Trailblazer. (Note that Scottish equivalents and GCSEs attained more than five years ago are now recognised as prior attainment).

Any new standard may:

- specify any mandatory qualifications to be achieved by all apprentices as a pre-requisite to taking the end-point assessment.

41. Please see paragraph 75 for suggested evidence for how Trailblazers can demonstrate their standard meets the above criteria. You may also wish to see the Trailblazer Quality Statement⁵ which set out the existing and new quality measures that apply to apprenticeship standards.

Support available

42. New Trailblazers are assigned a Relationship Manager either from the BIS/DfE Apprenticeships Unit (AU) or the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to work with you and your group as you develop your apprenticeship standard(s) and assessment plan(s). Your Relationship Manager will be a single point of contact for you, advising you on policy and process, attending or dialling into meetings of the Trailblazer group and providing feedback on your drafts. They will also act as a 'critical friend' providing constructive challenge and suggestions, including lessons and examples from other employer groups.

43. Other government support available includes:

- regular workshops for new Trailblazers at which you can talk to policy officials and other employers designing apprenticeship standards in different sectors; ask questions, share approaches and make links between different occupations;
- webinars on particular issues relating to the development process as needed;
- a new online discussion forum accessible solely by Trailblazers, the BIS/DfE AU and the SFA to share best practice. If you would like to join, please send a request

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-trailblazer-quality-statement

to apprenticeship.trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk, detailing which Trailblazer you are a member of and copying your request to your Trailblazer's Chair; and

- a small fund to support small businesses with their reasonable travel costs in relation to attendance at Trailblazer meetings. This is a new fund and your Relationship Manager can provide further details.

44. Beyond government, support is available from:

- Gatsby - an independent charitable foundation set up David Sainsbury - now Lord Sainsbury of Turville – which focuses on science and engineering education. Gatsby is providing funding of up to £1.6 million to support the employers and professional bodies that are developing apprenticeship standards and assessment approaches⁶. It worked in partnership with government to support the delivery of the first Trailblazers, and continues to support groups developing standards where they align with its priorities in science and engineering education.
- Training Providers can also be a very valuable source of support for Trailblazer groups, providing feedback and contributing ideas, particularly from a delivery perspective. The Association of Colleges (AoC), Association of Employer and Learning Providers (AELP) and University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) are happy to help employer groups to make contact with providers, and have set up a central email account (trailblazers@aoc.co.uk) through which employer groups can make such requests.

The planning phase

45. One of the first things that your group will need to do is complete a short workplan (template at Annex 2) to help think through and set out how you will develop your apprenticeship standard(s). Please share this with your Relationship Manager as soon as it is ready.

46. As part of this planning process, you will want to put in place practical arrangements for your employer group. You may, for instance, want to agree and set out Terms of Reference including:

- How often to meet - on average groups have found fortnightly meetings or conference calls most effective during the standard development process and have found it helpful to book meetings at the start of the process for several months ahead.

⁶ Further information about the funding and how to apply is at:
<http://www.gatsby.org.uk/en/Education/Projects/Supporting-Apprenticeship-Reform.aspx>

- How to meet - face to face meetings may be more effective in the early days of the project but, over time, you may want to offer virtual meetings.
- Roles and resources – different members of the group may wish to take responsibility for strands of work and you may wish to ask sector or trade organisations to support your meetings.
- Who else to involve – you will want to consider at what stage and how to involve experts from your professional body or bodies⁷, education and training providers and awarding or assessment organisations. You will also want to inform relevant sector bodies that you are developing a new apprenticeship standard.

47. To ensure you stay on track, you may also find it helpful to set a series of milestones based around your meeting schedule. This will vary from Trailblazer to Trailblazer but could look something like the following:

- First meeting – agree ways of working, any subgroups, additional invitees, complete workplan.
- Next meeting(s) – focus on required knowledge, skills and behaviour and standard structure (e.g. core & options).
- Next meeting(s) – develop and implement consultation process.
- Next meeting(s) – review consultation results, refine standard and commence submission process requirements (e.g. copyright assignment).
- Final meeting – sign off standard.

The development phase

48. During this phase, you will write your draft apprenticeship standard. You are free to draw on whatever information you would find helpful to support this. Our experience from existing Trailblazers suggests that you might find it helpful to:

- Share examples of how apprenticeships are delivered in different organisations in the group, drawing out the most effective practice from each.

⁷ We consider a professional body to be a not for profit organisation seeking to further a particular profession, the interests of individuals engaged in that profession, and the public interest. Professional bodies set and uphold standards for occupations, operate codes of conduct for professionals and often hold a professional register which individuals can join, subject to meeting specified educational and/or experience requirements.

- Look at apprenticeship standards that have been developed by employers in similar occupations to your one to gather ideas and approaches. These are available online.⁸
- Think about international examples as a benchmark for world-class standards. This might include the WorldSkills competition as well as apprenticeship standards from different countries.

49. You could also look at existing material such as current apprenticeship frameworks to draw on the best of what is already available. However, we would encourage you to think radically and not be constrained in your approach by the current frameworks and qualifications within them. This is your chance to start afresh and describe exactly what you need from future apprenticeships. At the core of a successful apprenticeship standard are two things:

- A short and clear role description setting out the main activities that someone in this occupation would do, in language that can be easily understood by someone without technical knowledge.
- A definitive list of the skills, knowledge and behaviour that you as an employer would expect from someone who is a fully competent professional in the occupation.

50. Your apprenticeship standard should be an electronic document of no more than two sides in length (unless you have decided to adopt a core and options approach and your Relationship Manager has agreed that it is impractical to fit all the options onto two pages), in size 12 font, and written in clear language that will be easily understood by potential apprentices and their parents, as well as by employers and training providers.

51. Based on the work of the Trailblazers, we have developed a template standard (Annex 3) to guide you on content. However, whilst there needs to be some uniformity in terms of the content, there are no restrictions on how the information is set out, and a number of different layouts have been used by Trailblazers.

52. In some cases, there may be a number of related occupations which share some common skills and knowledge and this can be expressed through a single standard with a core and options. This potentially prevents a proliferation of very similar standards and can also help transferability across occupations and sectors. However, with a core and options approach, any single standard still needs to lead to the same level and breadth of competence being achieved irrespective of which options are

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>

taken. In view of this, in taking such an approach, you would need to consider the following factors:

- Do all the options contained in the standard, and any combination of options permissible, broadly lead to the same level of competence, albeit in different areas?
- You must specify a defined number of options that need to be selected. If you only state a minimum number, any options beyond that number would lead to a breadth of competence beyond that required for the apprenticeship. Training for any options taken beyond a “minimum” specified would not be funded by Government.
- Including optional “add-ons” in the standard is not permissible as this would lead to a two-tier breadth of the competence within a single standard. However, in the case of this point and the previous one, clearly there is nothing to stop the employer from overtraining at their own cost.

53. If you think a core and options approach might work for your occupation(s), please discuss this with your Relationship Manager. You will find a number of examples of this approach among the apprenticeship standards that have been developed and published so far.

The consultation phase

54. To ensure that your apprenticeship standard has the widest possible support and applicability across your sector(s), and represents good value for money for all potential end-users whatever the size of their company, you will need to consult widely on it. This will enable you to gather input from employers who may not have been involved in the core drafting group.

55. You will know best how to reach and engage other employers in your sector and so it is up to you how you approach the consultation phase. Some of the approaches that previous Trailblazers developed and found useful have included:

- Publishing an online survey based on a draft of your standard to raise awareness of its existence and to seek views on its content.
- Using personal contacts in other employers to get an additional perspective on your draft standard.
- Working with partners, such as representative organisations and trade bodies, to share a draft standard with their members and gather feedback.
- Holding workshops or roundtable discussions as an opportunity for a wider group of employers to meet face to face and provide feedback.

56. Please share the results of your consultation and how you have responded to the feedback with your Relationship Manager. You will also need to leave some time to reflect on the comments you receive and build in any changes to your standard as a result of them before it is submitted to the Department for approval.

Assigning the copyright of your standard (and assessment plan)

Why is it needed?

57. You will need to arrange for copyright of your final standard and assessment plan to be assigned to the Crown. This is to enable us to officially publish approved standards on behalf of the Secretary of State, to fund apprenticeships against the standards and to protect the standards and assessment plans from any misuse.

58. Assigning copyright is a necessary formality but does not change the fact that you have led the design of the standard and will see it through to delivery. Standards and assessment plans are covered by the Open Government Licence which enables you to use and publicise them freely.

When is this needed?

59. A completed copyright assignment will be needed at the time when you submit your standard for approval (or when you submit your assessment plan if it was not covered by the copyright assignment for the related standard).

60. Bearing in mind that it can take a while to gather all the necessary signatures, it is worth starting this process within your Trailblazer well in advance of the submission deadline.

What form does the assignment take?

61. A standard template for this purpose is attached at Annex 4 (and a word version is available from your Relationship Manager). The template allows you to assign copyright of both your standard and related assessment plan at the same time, even if you have not yet drafted the latter. This means you will not have to repeat the assignment process when you submit your assessment plan.

62. Also, the assignment covers any modification, adaptation, revision or amendment to the standard or assessment plan, so it will not be necessary to repeat the assignment process if any changes are made to the standard or assessment plan.

63. However, if you need a copyright letter that only refers to the assessment plan because you have already assigned copyright in relation to a standard, please contact your Relationship Manager who can provide you with an alternative template.

Who needs to sign?

64. The assignment needs a signatory from each organisation that has had a significant involvement in developing your standard and/or assessment plan. In view of the separate requirement for letters or emails from at least 10 Trailblazer group members confirming that they have been actively involved in the development of each standard (see paragraph 75 below), we would expect this to mean that all such employers would have been sufficiently involved to also need to sign over copyright to the Crown. However, ultimately this will be the judgement of the Chair and individual employers themselves. If an employer believes that their involvement in the Trailblazer, whilst active, has nonetheless been insufficient for their company to have any ownership of the Trailblazer's work, they will need to state this in their supporting letter (see suggested wording at Annex 5).
65. Within each affected organisation, the assignment will need to be signed by a person who has the authority to assign copyright. This will normally be someone of Director level and need not necessarily be the person from that organisation who has been involved in the development of the standard.
66. There is no requirement for Crown bodies to assign copyright because the copyright is already owned by the Crown. A list of Crown bodies can be found online⁹.
67. If you go on to work with additional employers and organisations when you develop your assessment plan, these contributors can add their signatures to the assignment when you submit the plan. It will not be necessary for contributors who have already assigned their copyright to sign the agreement again.

Signature types

68. Wet and electronic signatures (e-signatures) or a mixture of the two are acceptable on the assignment letter. If you are collecting wet signatures, it is acceptable to have each signature on a separate page (as long as the Assignor order matches the list in the body of the assignment document) thus avoiding the need for a single version of the letter to be circulated around all signatories.
69. An electronic signature will need to be:
- Unique to the signatory.
 - Created using means within a signatory's sole control.

⁹ <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/re-using-public-sector-information/copyright/uk-crown-bodies/>

- Capable of being linked to the relevant document or data in such a manner that any subsequent changes to that document or data would be detectable.

70. Further guidance can be found online¹⁰. Once you have collected all the required signatures, please pull them together into one document and convert it into pdf format so that it cannot be altered.

Submitting your draft standard for approval

71. You will need to submit your draft standard and supporting evidence by email to your Relationship Manager and to Apprenticeship.Trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk. The next deadline for submitting EOIs, standards and assessment plans is **midday on Thursday 27 August 2015 and, from then on, the deadlines will be midday on the final Thursday of every month** except around major holiday periods. This means that the remaining deadlines during 2015 are:

- midday on Thursday 27 August
- midday on Thursday 24 September
- midday on Thursday 29 October
- midday on Thursday 26 November

72. The more frequent opportunities for Trailblazers to submit and resubmit revised standards (and assessment plans) for approval is aimed at removing current bottlenecks in the development process and should speed it up considerably.

73. Whilst we will no longer have fixed opportunities for submitting standards and assessment plans for “informal review”, you should feel free to submit drafts to your Relationship Manager at any time for comment.

74. If, having had your standard approved, you find you need to make subsequent revisions to it as a result of the assessment plan development process, there is an opportunity to resubmit your revised standard for approval when you submit your assessment plan. This process is detailed further at paragraphs 118-122.

¹⁰ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/356786/bis-14-1072-electronic-signatures-guide.pdf

Showing that your standard meets the criteria

75. The following table sets out the kind of evidence you will need to provide (where required) to demonstrate clearly that your standard meets the criteria set out earlier in this Section.

Criterion	Explanation and Evidence
A. Short, concise and clear	The apprenticeship standard is short and concise (typically one to two sides of A4 in size 12 font) and written in clear and simple language.
B. Full competence in an occupation	<p>The apprenticeship standard describes full competence for a specific occupation. This means that, on completing a standard, the employee will have acquired the skills, knowledge, behaviour and experience to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be able to fulfil the role in any part of the sector or sectors; and • be able to apply for professional recognition (at that level where it exists).
C. Employer support, including from smaller businesses	<p>A wide range of employers, including smaller businesses, have been involved in development of the standard, recognise it as fit for purpose and have signed up to it.</p> <p><i>You should submit letters of support addressed to the Chair of your group from at least ten employers (including smaller employers) that are representative of the sector or occupation. Each letter should indicate that the employer has been involved in the development of the standard (i.e. has been an active member of the Trailblazer group) and that they support the final draft as meeting their needs as a potential or actual apprentice employer. If a small business, the letter should also confirm this. The template at Annex 5 covers this requirement.</i></p> <p><i>Such notifications can either take the form of a signed letter (a scanned version is sufficient) or an email containing relevant employer/employee details (i.e. company logo, name and address and the emailer's name, company position and contact details).</i></p> <p><i>When submitting your standard, you should also provide evidence to demonstrate how widely beyond your Trailblazer group you have consulted (including with SMEs), in what way and with what results.</i></p>
D. Stretch	The standard contains sufficient content and is pitched at such a level that a new entrant to the occupation will find it stretching and will require at least one

Criterion	Explanation and Evidence
	year of training to meet the standard.
E. Professional registration	<p>Where professional registration exists for the occupation, the apprenticeship standard provides the individual with the knowledge, skills and experience they need to apply for this.</p> <p><i>Where this applies, you should submit a letter of support from the relevant professional body or bodies confirming that they are content that the apprenticeship standard meets the requirements of professional registration. Such letters can be submitted in the same ways as detailed in penultimate paragraph of Section C above.</i></p>
F. English and maths	<p>The standard includes details of the English and maths requirements, either at the minimum level set by government for all apprentices, or above the minimum level if required by the Trailblazer.</p> <p>For apprentices that have not yet achieved level 2 English and maths, as a minimum they must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For level 2 apprenticeships, achieve level 1 English and maths and take the test for level 2. • For level 3 apprenticeships, achieve level 2 English and maths.
G. Qualifications	<p>The apprenticeship standard specifies any mandatory qualifications that must be achieved by all apprentices. Where these are specified, they will be a pre-requisite for all apprentices, to taking the end-point assessment.</p> <p>Qualifications included in an apprenticeship standard should meet one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for professional registration. • Legal or regulatory requirement. • The qualification acts as a licence to practise. • The qualification is used as a hard sift when applying for jobs in the occupation related to the standard and, without it, an apprentice would be disadvantaged in the jobs market <p>The “hard sift” criterion could be used to include a yet to be developed qualification if it is being developed specifically for the standard and if all</p>

Criterion	Explanation and Evidence
	<p>Trailblazer employers confirm their intention to use it in their letters of support (i.e. on the basis that it will, in future, meet the “hard sift criterion”).</p> <p>If you intend to use a qualification in your apprenticeship and have included it on your standard, it must be regulated by Ofqual, QAA or a Professional Body (unless it is a vendor qualification). The qualification must be named specifically, but the standard should not name awarding organisations.</p> <p><i>Where you wish to include a qualification in the standard, when submitting your draft standard for approval, you must provide short written evidence to justify which of the above criteria your proposition meets. Whilst not a definitive list, we would expect that such evidence may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Letters of confirmation from the relevant professional bodies.</i> • <i>A written description with references to underpinning legislation or regulations.</i> • <i>Labour market information or data.</i> • <i>Evidence of a significant proportion of job vacancy advertisements in the relevant occupation requiring the qualification as an entry requirement or letters from employers, in line with Tech Levels and SFA business rules, stating that the qualification would give a learner an advantage when applying for related jobs).</i> • <i>Responses from the group’s consultation activity.</i>

Standards approval process

76. An apprenticeship standard and its related assessment plan form the basis for apprenticeships in that occupation in England, so it is essential that each are properly scrutinized before being published and approved for delivery.

77. In view of this, shortly after each submission deadline, any draft standard (or draft assessment plan) submitted for approval will now be placed online for a short period in order to give interested parties (particularly any who may not have responded to the Trailblazer’s own consultation), a final opportunity to comment on whether the standard is fit for purpose.

78. A final decision on whether the standard can be approved (possibly subject to some amendments) or needs more substantive further work and resubmission will be taken

by the Minister for Skills. Your Relationship Manager will contact you with the result of the process as soon as possible. If the standard has been approved, you will then need to make any final revisions requested and provide your Relationship Manager with a revised version for publication.

79. The approved standards from each round will then be published online¹¹, and we will let you know in advance the timing of this so that your group can celebrate this important milestone.

Checklist for submitting a standard for approval

- Submit your standard for approval (not as a pdf file as this makes flagging queries and suggested revisions more difficult).
- When submitting your draft standard, where relevant, you will also need to include the following:
 - a covering letter or email setting out how you consulted beyond your Group and the impact of this, evidence justifying the inclusion of any reference to a qualification in your draft standard and details of anything you would like to be taken into consideration alongside the draft standard (for example whether the apprenticeship covered by the standard is unlikely to be suitable for a particular age group);
 - letters from at least 10 employers including smaller businesses confirming that they have been actively involved in the development of each of the standards being submitted and that they support the final products (see Annex 5);
 - supporting letters from any professional bodies with a professional recognition level to which your standard is aligned; and
 - your completed copyright assignment letter.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>

4 Developing an assessment plan

80. Government has introduced a requirement that all apprenticeships must contain an end-point assessment which is a holistic assessment of what has been learnt throughout the apprenticeship. This is to make sure that apprentices meet the rigorous standard set by employers and are fully competent in the relevant occupation. It will give employers confidence that completing an apprenticeship means an individual is fully job ready. It will also mean that all apprentices following the same standard are assessed consistently, regardless of where they are undertaking their apprenticeship or who they are doing it with.

What is an assessment plan?

81. An assessment plan is an electronic document which describes the end-point assessment for a particular apprenticeship standard. It is the employers' opportunity to explain how to test full occupational competence. Whilst the nature and methods of assessment will differ between occupations, we require all assessment plans to focus on the end-point assessment process and do the following four things:

- Explain **what** will be assessed (i.e. which skills, knowledge and behaviour listed on the standard, giving more detail if needed).
- Explain **how** the apprentice will be assessed (i.e. which method or range of methods will be used at the end of the apprenticeship to judge competency).
- Indicate **who** will carry out the assessment (i.e. who will be the assessor(s) for each aspect of the end-point assessment) and who will make the final decision on competency and grading.
- Propose **quality assurance** arrangements to make sure that the assessment is reliable and consistent across different locations, employers and training and assessment organisations.

82. As with the standard, an assessment plan should be a stand-alone document. If you choose to develop additional documents to support delivery, such as an Employer Occupational Brief (see paragraph 141), these documents will need to be freely and readily available to others.

What is an assessment plan used for?

83. Your assessment plan will be approved and published by government, to inform other employers and apprentices which skills, knowledge and behaviour they will be expected to demonstrate at the end of the apprenticeship, and how these will be tested.

84. Once your assessment plan is published, assessment organisations will be able to offer their services against it. The plan should guide those organisations, which will be selected by individual employers, to enable them to deliver the high quality and rigorous end-point assessment as designed by the Trailblazer group. In order to allow individual employers choice over who delivers their end-point assessment, a plan must be organisation neutral, which means that it must not name any specific training or assessment organisations (including Professional Bodies who wish to fulfil this role). Individual employers have the freedom to select their own training provider and assessment organisation from the relevant SFA registers (see paragraphs 146 -147). Any organisations or individuals who have worked with you to develop your assessment plan do not have an automatic role in the delivery of assessment and will not be guaranteed exclusivity.
85. While Professional Bodies cannot be named in plans as having a guaranteed role as the assessment provider with overall responsibility, where the standard is aligned with professional recognition they can be named as playing a specific role within the assessment – for example, having the final say on competence and moderation. For those standards which are not aligned with professional recognition, Professional Bodies cannot be named in assessment plans and must be selected from the relevant SFA registers like all other assessment organisations.
86. It is important to bear in mind the intended audience and make your plan as clear as possible. We recommend that the assessment plan is set out in line with the template at Annex 6. This will help you formulate a clearer structure, rather than using the criteria, as this often creates repetition and confusion.
87. In order to free up delivery and grant more flexibility to individual employers, we ask that the assessment plan focusses only on the end-point assessment, rather than on on-programme assessments taken en route to the end-point. Any on-programme assessment or training detailed in the plan can only act as a recommendation to other employers (apart from where it relates to a qualification referenced in the standard.)

Who should write the assessment plan and what support is available?

88. You the employers know the best way to judge competence for occupations in your sector(s), and should use this expertise to lead on the preparation of the assessment plan.
89. Your Relationship Manager will support you in developing your assessment plan and you will need to decide who else to involve. A lesson learned from previous Trailblazers is that groups often benefit from early engagement with professional bodies, training providers and assessment organisations. Employers often find it helpful to draw on these organisations' expertise to make sure that the standards and assessment plans are designed with a strong focus on deliverability.

When should the assessment plan be developed?

90. Most Trailblazers have focused on developing a standard first and, only once it has been approved, embark on developing the assessment plan. Whilst you are allowed to develop both at the same time and submit them for approval simultaneously, clearly this brings a risk of wasted effort on the assessment plan if the standard on which it is based ends up requiring major revisions after being submitted for approval.

Assessment criteria

91. Just like for standards, government will consider assessment plans against a small number of criteria (listed directly below and see also a shorter quick reference version at Annex 7). Assessment plans which meet the criteria will be approved and published.

a) Detail a holistic assessment

92. The end-test must be holistic and assess the skills, knowledge and behaviour that have been learnt in an integrated way at the end of the programme.

93. This does not mean that every skill, knowledge and behaviour needs to be individually assessed – the end-point should assess across the standard to ensure competency. The focus should be on higher order skills, which give assurance of lower level skills without requiring specific assessment. For example, the baker does not need to have their ability to use an oven assessed if they can successfully bake a cake.

94. Holistic assessment should look to test skills and knowledge together, for example, asking someone to demonstrate their ability to accurately build an engine to specification and quality criteria, and asking them to explain what they are doing and why, as they build it.

b) Use a range of assessment methods

95. Your assessments will need to ensure that apprentices can demonstrate their ability across the standard, and will therefore need to test the skills, knowledge and behaviour as set out in the standard. This is likely to require mixed methods of assessment, which may include for example:

- Practical assessments.
- A viva to assess theoretical or technical knowledge or to discuss how the apprentice approached the practical assessment and their reasoning.
- Production of a project.
- A portfolio of work, which should not have been assessed on-programme; it

must be holistically assessed at the end of the programme, for example, using a viva or showcase.

- Observational assessment.
- Written and multiple choice tests.
- Virtual assessments, such as online tests or video evidence as appropriate to the content.

c) Grade

96. All apprenticeships should be graded, and should have at least one level above a pass to recognise exceptional performance. For example, pass and distinction or pass, merit and distinction. A pass grade in any apprenticeship must demonstrate full competency against the standard you have set.

97. How the grade is constructed is for employers to determine as they develop the assessment plan. In the assessment plan you will need to set out what assessments or qualifications will carry a grade and how they will be amalgamated into an overall grade. To do this you will need to consider the relative weighting of each assessment and grade.

98. The grade should be applied to the whole apprenticeship or, as a minimum, should be applied to the end assessment. However, we recognise that grading may not always be appropriate in your occupation and we are willing to review individual cases. See paragraphs 116-117 for more details.

d) Produce consistent and reliable judgements

99. Your assessment plan must ensure that employers can have confidence that apprentices assessed in different parts of the country, at different times, by different assessors have been judged in the same way and have therefore reached the same standard of occupational competence.

100. Good examples that ensure consistency of the end-point assessment include:

- Having assessors attend regular standardisation events.
- The relevant professional body, where applicable, assessing all or part of the end-point.

e) Deliver accurate (valid) judgements

101. The method of assessment must be appropriate to the content. Assessment plans must therefore provide sufficient detail about *what* will be assessed and *how* it will be assessed to allow us to evaluate the validity of the proposed methods of assessment.
102. The assessment methods will need to ensure that the decisions reached on every apprentice are an accurate reflection of their competence. The skills, knowledge and behaviour listed on the standard should therefore guide how each assessment tool is designed.
103. The length of your end-point assessment should be proportionate to the planned length of the apprenticeship. For example, where programmes run for 3 or 4 years, an end-point assessment including a number of methods over a period of a few months may be appropriate. It is for employers to determine the appropriate length.

f) Ensure independent assessment

104. It is vital that all apprentices are assessed in a fair and objective manner. Independence and impartiality are critical to ensure rigorous and high quality assessment and to ensure the standard is maintained over time.
105. Employers have an important role in assessing competency, as nobody is better placed to judge whether or not someone is fully occupationally competent. However, we are clear that there needs to be independence in the end-point assessment, to include a range of perspectives and to ensure that those bodies that make judgements about whether or not an apprentice has passed have nothing to gain from the outcome.
106. There is an expectation that assessments will either be delivered by an independent third party, or in such a way that no party who has been involved in delivery of the apprenticeship can make the sole decision on competence and passing the end-point assessment. The approach must clearly deliver an impartial result.
107. An approach to independence some Trailblazers have taken is to have a panel where multiple assessors carry out the end-point assessment, or part of it. If you wish to take this approach as part of your assessment plan, you will need to specify who makes the final decision regarding whether the apprentice has passed the end-point assessment or not. The person who has the 'casting vote' should be independent of the apprentice. An assessor from the employer or the training provider's workforce would not count as being independent.
108. Other strong examples of independence include:
- Having a representative of the relevant Professional Body assess the

apprentice, either individually or as part of a panel.

- Working with an independent third party, such as an assessment organisation or a professional body, to run the assessments for the standard.
- All work being sent externally for moderation.

g) Show that affordability has been considered

109. Your approach should consider how cost effectiveness in assessments will be delivered while still meeting the quality objectives. This may include a consideration of the mix of assessment approaches.

110. You should ensure that the end-point assessment is financially reasonable and not off-putting to other employers.

h) Explain how the assessment is manageable and feasible

111. You will need to set out how the assessment process will be deliverable on the scale required for the number of apprentices expected to be working towards your standard. You may therefore find it helpful to give an indication of expected volumes.

112. For example, are there the centres and assessors necessary to deliver this? Are they readily available across the country? You may wish to consider if it is appropriate or feasible for any components of your end-point assessment to be assessed or moderated virtually.

i) Include professional body recognition (where applicable)

113. Where a professional body or bodies have recognised the standard, our expectation is that they will also recognise the assessment process, as completion of the apprenticeship should ensure the apprentice is ready to secure professional accreditation.

Quality assurance

114. Like the assessments themselves, quality assurance needs to be independent of those who lead on the design and the delivery of assessments. We are open to different approaches to quality assurance, and would welcome proposals for employer-, professional body- and sector-led systems. Alternatively, if standard setters would like their assessments to be regulated by Ofqual or, where applicable, QAA, then they are welcome to do so. You can speak to your Relationship Manager about your preferred approach and they will be able to advise and/or put you in contact with relevant organisations.

115. You will need to be specific about who will quality assure the end-point assessment, how they will do it and your approach to ensuring quality of assessment over time and across different locations.

Grading exemptions

116. If you do not think grading is appropriate in your occupation and cannot grade the end-point assessment, or can only grade it partially, you will need to submit evidence against one of the following criteria:

- a) Where all assessments are aligned with professional registration.
- b) Where all assessments are aligned with regulation
- c) Where all assessments are aligned with a license to practice.

117. There is no guarantee that any request for a grading exemption, whether to only grade aspects or to not grade at all, will be granted. If you are granted an exemption, the exemption will only apply to that particular apprenticeship standard. A blanket grading exemption will not be granted to a Trailblazer group, sector or industry.

Making consequential amendments to the related standard

118. We understand that work to develop an assessment plan will sometimes highlight where amendments need to be made to a standard that has already been approved and published. Where this is the case, changes to the published standard can be proposed when the assessment plan is submitted for approval (assuming it wasn't submitted at the same time as the standard).

119. Submission of proposed amendments to a standard at this point will need to include:

- Details of how the standard needs to change (the revised standard should be submitted with the changes from the original version clearly highlighted).
- An explanation of the reasons for the amendment.
- Confirmation from the Chair that the Trailblazer employers, and other parties such as professional bodies, support the changes to the standard (an e-mail will suffice).

120. Where the proposed changes are minor, for example correcting a mistake, removing unnecessary detail, or providing clarifying text, confirmation of employer support is not required.

121. When you become aware that amendments to a published standard are likely, you should discuss this with your Relationship Manager in the first instance, so that they can advise whether confirmation of employer support will be required with your submission.
122. The proposed standard amendments will then be reviewed alongside the draft assessment plan. If the amendment to the standard and the assessment plan are approved, the revised standard will be published on the gov.uk website at the same time as the assessment plan.

Submitting your assessment plan for approval

123. Once you have completed your assessment plan, you should submit it to us in exactly the same way as the standard, as detailed in the previous Section. It will be reviewed against the criteria for approval of end-point assessment detailed above before the Minister for Skills makes the final decision.
124. Your Relationship Manager will share the outcome and any feedback from the process with you. Approved assessment plans will then be published on the gov.uk website. Your assessment plan must have been approved before apprenticeships can be commenced under your new standard. If your assessment plan isn't approved, your Relationship Manager will provide feedback as to why this was the case, and will work with you to enable the feedback to be addressed prior to resubmission.

Checklist for submitting an assessment plan for approval

- Submit your assessment plan for approval (at this stage, please do not convert it to a pdf file so that providing comments on the actual document is still possible)
- When submitting your assessment plan, where relevant, you may also need to include the following:
 - copyright assignment (unless fully covered at the standard submission stage);
 - letter(s) of support from Professional Bodies (where applicable);
 - evidence for grading exemption (where applicable).
 - You may also choose to submit your completed costing template (Annex 8) and training delivery and end-point assessment quotes at this time (see paragraphs 128-135)

5 Preparing for Delivery

125. In addition to developing your assessment plan, the other key actions necessary to prepare for delivery are:

- to provide us with information on the planned costs of delivery so that we can allocate each standard to the appropriate funding cap, giving you and your providers clarity on the amount of government funding available; and
- to work with education and training providers as they develop and adapt their curriculum to meet the requirements of your new standard, so that they are ready to deliver high quality training to your apprentices.

The Trailblazer funding pilot

126. As part of the wider reforms to apprenticeships, we will give employers control over the funding of apprenticeship training. This will empower employers to assume the role of demanding customers and ensure that your company receives the highest quality service in training apprentices against the standard. We have been trialling a simple funding model for apprenticeships based on standards since the beginning of the 2014 to 2015 academic year (AY14/15) and this will continue during AY15/16. The model may be subject to change in subsequent years in the light of experience gained in the trial, but its key elements are currently:

- A single government co-investment rate for core funding. This means that for every £1 you contribute to the external training and assessment costs of an apprenticeship, government will pay £2.
- This will apply up to a clear cap for your standard – the Core Government Contribution (CGC). There are five caps set at £18,000, £8,000, £6,000, £3,000 and £2,000.
- You will have the opportunity to negotiate the actual price for training and assessment with the provider(s) you are working with. The price will vary depending on the needs of you and your apprentice(s) but it is important that the price you negotiate represents good value for money.
- There will be additional payments on top of the CGC for small businesses up to 50 employees (between £500 and £2,700), for taking on a 16-18 year old apprentice (between £600 and £5,400) and for successful completion (between £500 and £2,700).
- Where apprentices need to complete training in English and maths at level 1 or level 2, we will fully fund the training required.

127. The model is summarised in the following table and further information on the funding reforms is available at online¹².

Core Government Contribution (CGC) Cap:		Cap 1	Cap 2	Cap 3	Cap 4	Cap 5
£2 for every £1 from employer		£2,000	£3,000	£6,000	£8,000	£18,000
Additional incentive payments	Recruiting a 16-18 year old	£600	£900	£1,800	£2,400	£5,400
	For a small business (<50)	£500	£500	£900	£1,200	£2,700
	For successful completion	£500	£500	£900	£1,200	£2,700
Maximum total Government contribution		£3,600	£4,900	£9,600	£12,800	£28,800

Allocating standards to funding caps

128. The delivery of apprenticeship starts against a standard can only begin once a standard has been allocated to a Core Government Contribution (CGC) cap. To gain a CGC cap for your standard you will need to submit to the SFA at least three on-programme training delivery quotes and one end-point assessment quote, together with a completed apprenticeship standard costing template (Annex 8) . Ideally, this should be done when you submit your assessment plan for approval, but can be later if it is not practical for the Trailblazer and/or training providers to produce the necessary information at that time.

129. The purpose of the costing template is to:

- Set out the indicative costs associated with on-programme and end-point assessment of the standard.
- Set out the indicative costs for an average or typical learner following a typical learning route.
- Establish whether the elements included in the standard are eligible for funding.
- Collect information in a consistent format to ensure that the cap allocation process can be managed quickly and smoothly.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes>

130. The template links to a series of macros which extract and analyse the information on the template and other formats can't be used for this reason. In view of this, you must use an Excel version of the template which your Relationship Manager can provide along with a guide to completing it. One costing template per apprenticeship standard is required.
131. Each training provider and assessment organisation quote supplied must include a detailed itemised breakdown of the training on-programme costs / end-point assessment costs per apprentice. It is not sufficient for providers or assessment organisations to submit a range of costs or a single line summary cost.
132. Your provider quotes are your declaration of evidence to support your proposed costing value. You need to be content that they reflect what you believe are suitable and reasonable costs, and if quotes are supplied to you with insufficient detail or if you are not content with what has been supplied, you should challenge this and discuss further with your providers.
133. Employers that have a Direct Grant arrangement with the SFA and deliver in-house training may submit quotes for the costs of on-programme delivery, but it is important that training provider quotes represent the costs for a typical apprentice and a typical apprenticeship programme. If you include quotes from Direct Grant employers, you are strongly encouraged to seek a wider range of quotes to ensure that those submitted to support your standard are representative of delivery to all those employing apprentices working towards the standard.
134. The on- programme training and end-point assessment values, and the quotes which you submit to support these values, are part of the information considered when the SFA allocates CGC caps for each apprenticeship standard. The costing template will be reviewed with other factors such as sources of occupation or sector information on a range of economic indicators and the closest current apprenticeship framework and its costs. The SFA will then contact you to inform you of your CGC cap allocation.
135. The cap allocation process is still developing as part of the Trailblazer funding pilot and may be subject to change. We will provide revised guidance and an updated costing and eligibility template should this be needed.

Putting control of government funding in the hands of employers

136. At present, when an employer uses a new standard, the government funding is routed directly from the SFA to the training provider following the provider-employer price negotiation. However, as recently announced, in future, employer control of the funding will be maximised through the introduction of apprenticeship vouchers.

137. Apprenticeship vouchers offer a simple, burden-free way of controlling apprenticeship funding that will benefit employers of all sizes and learning providers regardless of the number of apprentices they take on. The voucher approach we are introducing assigns an employer a 'discount' on any training purchased. For example, the employer will register their details on a new digital system – the characteristics of the business, the details of the apprentice and the chosen apprenticeship standard. The system will calculate the rate at which the training you are purchasing has been discounted and you will be given a 'discount code' to use when making payments to the learning provider. The provider will then redeem the 'discount code' with the SFA
138. We are involving businesses, providers and their representatives in the design and development of the new system, to ensure it reflects your needs and priorities. It will be fully prototyped and live-tested with Trailblazers to ensure it is simple, secure and easy to use before it is implemented. The initial stages of development are underway and will continue throughout 2015-16, and 2016-17. We expect the new system to be fully operational for AY17/18. If you are interested in contributing to the testing and development work, please contact the SFA at: trailblazerfundingenquiries@sfa.bis.gov.uk.

Apprenticeship Levy

139. The intention to introduce a UK-wide Apprenticeship Levy on larger businesses was announced in the July 2015 Budget. This will help fund the increase in quantity and quality of apprenticeship training and further details will be set out in the Spending Review.

Working with education and training organisations

140. In preparing for the delivery of your new apprenticeship, you will want to work with a range of training providers to ensure that they understand and are ready to deliver the training content to enable apprentices to meet your standard.
141. Many Trailblazers have found it helpful to engage with Training Providers throughout the development process, but it is particularly important to do so as you get closer to delivery. One way in which some Trailblazer groups have facilitated this is by developing an 'Employer Occupational Brief' (EOB) or Training Specification to set out for providers in more detail what you as employers mean by the competencies in your standard to ensure that the training and assessment meet your needs precisely.
142. This is not a mandatory part of the standard and assessment plan development process, but where it is adopted, it is important that anyone wishing to deliver an apprenticeship in the future has ready access to all the information they need to do so. In view of this, where Trailblazers choose to develop additional documents to

support delivery, such as an EOB, they will need to consider how those documents will be made freely and readily available to others.

143. We recommend annexing such documents to your assessment plan, so that they can be published as a package at the same time. However, Trailblazers can choose to make different arrangements, provided that those arrangements are clearly signposted either in the apprenticeship standard or the assessment plan and the document can be accessed free of charge. As an optional part of the process, where EOBs or similar documents are annexed to assessment plans, they will not be scrutinised as part of the approvals process.
144. Another means of engaging training providers is running workshops, webinars or engagement events in your sector to encourage them to prepare for delivery of your standard and to answer their questions.
145. As already flagged, provider representative organisations including the Association of Colleges (AoC), Association of Employer and Learning Providers (AELP) and University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) are happy to help employer groups to make contact with providers, and have set up a central email account (trailblazers@aoc.co.uk) through which employer groups can make such requests. As you move towards delivery of the standard, it would also be helpful if you could keep your Relationship Manager informed of which providers you are working with.
146. In order to deliver your apprenticeship standard, providers will need to be on the Skills Funding Agency's register of approved training organisations. If providers you work with would like to apply to join the register, details of how to do so are available online¹³.
147. Similarly, any assessment organisation that an employer wishes to work with will need to be on the Skills Funding Agency's register of apprenticeship assessment organisations¹⁴

Certification

148. Apprenticeship completion certificates emphasise the value of the apprenticeship brand to apprentices, employers and national growth. The apprenticeship certificate also plays a crucial role in recognising and celebrating the success of apprentices.

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-register-of-training-organisations#how-organisations-can-enter-the-register>

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations>

149. Following the Deregulation Act 2015, we are considering the options for a certification system for the issue of apprenticeship certificates for completion of new approved standards.

150. We will provide further information on the proposed certification process once this work is complete.

Off-the-job training

151. For all standards, the amount of off-the-job training mandated is a minimum of 20% or equivalent, and we expect that all apprentices will benefit from genuine training away from their day-to-day job.

Turning off frameworks

152. Once the coverage of an existing apprenticeship framework is covered by a new standard or standards, we would envisage the former being turned off at a point which is reasonably practical. Since standards will not necessarily map onto framework coverage precisely, we are currently considering the best way of implementing this.

Other delivery issues to consider

153. Once your apprenticeship standard and assessment plan have been approved, published and assigned to a funding cap, we will expect employers and providers to start delivering apprenticeships under your standard. Your Relationship Manager will continue to support you during this process and some of the issues that you will want to consider (if you have not already done so by this point) are:

- How to communicate your standard to employers (including smaller employers) which have not been directly involved in its development to encourage them to offer apprenticeships using the standard.
- How to support education and training providers to develop their curriculum for training apprentices to meet your standard.
- How to approach the process of negotiating the cost of training with education and training providers – this could be done at an individual employer level or more broadly across a number of employers and providers.
- How to work with assessment organisations as they develop the specific tools set out in your assessment plan to ensure that they meet your needs as employers.
- How to work with professional bodies to ensure that, where your standard aligns with professional registration, the process for apprentices seeking registration at the end of the apprenticeship is clear and straightforward.

Process for amending standards after they are ready for delivery

154. As a rule, once an assessment plan is published, there should be no further changes to a published standard before the formal review date, unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example, legal changes.
155. However, to support our Trailblazers at this early stage of delivery, we will initially take a more pragmatic approach as follows, but Trailblazers should not work on the basis that this option will be available longer term.
156. The process for amending a standard as a result of the development of the assessment plan was detailed in the previous Section. Where a Trailblazer determines that an amendment needs to be made to a published standard, for which the assessment plan has already been published, changes can be submitted for consideration by one of the monthly deadlines detailed in Section 3. The submission will need to include:
- a clear explanation of how the standard needs to change along with an explanation of the reasons for the amendment (the revised standard should be submitted with the changes from the original version clearly highlighted);
 - details of whether or not the amendment has implications for the assessment plan and if so, whether amendments also need to be made to the assessment plan; and
 - letters of support from the Trailblazer employers and professional bodies, where appropriate, in line with the standards approval criteria.
157. The proposed amendment and accompanying paperwork can then be submitted for approval. If approved, the standard (and where necessary the assessment plan) will be revised and re-published.

Annex 1: Template for a bid (EOI) to develop an apprenticeship standard (see Section 2)

To: Apprenticeship Trailblazers Team by email:

apprenticeship.trailblazers@bis.gsi.gov.uk

Proposal to develop apprenticeship standard(s) in [x] sector(s)

I am writing as the lead employer for the proposed development group in [sector or sectors]. This is a [new/existing] standard development group. I would chair the group and lead this work.

[if you have previously submitted an EOI to develop these standards please state this and indicate how your new EOI differs from your previous one]

I am working with the group of employers listed below, all of whom are committed to working together to develop apprenticeship standards and to see these through to delivery.

The occupation(s) that we would like to develop apprenticeship standards for is/are:

- Occupation *[please include a brief explanation of the main responsibilities and skills required and include a bullet for each standard you are planning to develop]*

We believe that this occupation will require rigorous and substantial training of around [x] months *[NB must be at least 12 months]* to achieve full competence, 20% of which will be off-the-job training *[insert evidence supporting this]*.

We are committed to ensuring that the standard(s) we design provides sufficiently transferable skills to enable a successful apprentice to perform this role in an employer of any size and in any relevant sector. We are representative of our sector(s) and are willing to work with other employers who come forward with an interest in this occupation and with colleagues from other sectors where our standards are closely related. We will develop the apprenticeship standard(s) and assessment plan(s) in line with the latest edition of the “Guidance for Trailblazers – from standards to starts” and will ensure that the resulting standards represent good value for money for the end-users.

We have reviewed the standards that have already been developed and those in development and are satisfied that there is no duplication with our bid *[also include any reference to related Trailblazers and any discussions you have had with them to ensure they are content that your bid does not duplicate their activity]*

My company and all the employers listed below as supporters of this bid fully intend to make use of the standard[s] once [it is/they are] ready for delivery. Projected annual starts for each standard we are bidding to develop by each group member are detailed in the table overleaf.

[If applicable:

- We are working with *[professional body]* who set the professional standards for this sector]
- As employers, we have invited representatives from *[sector body or bodies]* to play a supporting role to the Trailblazer
- *Include details of why the standard(s) you are bidding to develop are likely to be inappropriate for a particular age group]*

[Include details of when you envisage the resulting apprenticeship being ready to deliver starts (assuming the development process runs smoothly) and what the annual take-up is likely to be thereafter].

[Include any details of where in England any resulting Trailblazer is likely to meet as this will help us in our process of allocating each Trailblazer a Relationship Manager]

If the standard[s] [is/are] selected for development at this stage:

- I am happy for my organisation to be publically named as the lead employer and the companies listed below are happy to be named as working together to deliver this.
- I am content for *[insert name and email address of appropriate contact which doesn't necessarily need to be the chair]* to be used on the gov.uk website as the contact point for enquiries in relation to the Trailblazer; and
- I commit the Group to working with relevant sector organisations to promote the use of the resulting standard(s) once it/they is/are ready for delivery.

Yours sincerely,

Annex 2: Template for a Trailblazer workplan (see paragraph 45)

Occupation(s):
Employer Chair:
Relationship Manager:
1. Managing the Trailblazer <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you plan to manage the work of the Trailblazer? How often does the group plan to meet? Who will set the agenda for these discussions and chair the sessions?• Will the whole group consider all issues or will you split the work into specific strands working on different aspects?
2. Key phases and milestones <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you plan to meet the overall goal of submitting a high quality apprenticeship standard?• What are the key milestones along the way? When will you share information and drafts with your Relationship Manager?
Key Milestones:
3. Plans for involving others

- How do you plan to involve a wider group of employers, including smaller businesses, in the Trailblazer process to ensure that the standard is widely applicable?
- How do you plan to work with the other Trailblazers on any cross-over issues?
- What are your plans to involve other organisations and at what stage – e.g. professional bodies, awarding bodies, providers, trade unions?

--

4. Risks and issues

- What are the key risks and issues for the Trailblazer project at this point and how are you managing them?

Risk / Issue	Plans for mitigating/managing

5. Anything else to raise

- Is there anything else that you would like to make your Relationship Manager aware of at this stage?

--

Annex 3: Template for an apprenticeship standard (see Section 3)

Items that we expect to be covered in all apprenticeship standards appear in black type in the template, whilst those that are optional depending on the occupation and circumstances are in **blue type**. Apprenticeship standards should be short and clear, taking up no more than two sides of A4 (in size 12 font) unless you have been given approval to adopt a core and options approach and your Relationship Manager has agreed that it is impractical to fit all the options onto two pages.

Whilst there needs to be some uniformity in terms of the content of standards, there are no restrictions on how the information is set out and a number of different layouts have been used by Trailblazers as can be seen online¹⁵.

The standard should not refer to ‘the apprentice’, other than in sections relating to entry requirements. It needs to be presented in terms of what the fully competent individual will be able to do.

Title – Apprenticeship standard for *[insert occupation title – don’t refer to “Trailblazer”]*

1. Occupation(s)

- *List the occupation(s) covered by this apprenticeship standard including any generic job titles used to describe this occupation within the sector. It will also be helpful to provide context by explaining where the occupation fits within the wider sector(s).*
- *If you are using a core and options approach, you should summarise the range of options here.*
- *Describe briefly what someone who is fully competent in this occupation will be expected to be able to do – their main duties and tasks.*

2. Entry Requirements *(only if needed)*

In order to avoid creating barriers to entry, it is not permissible to include entry requirements in a standard unless they are statutory or regulatory requirements. However, some Trailblazers have chosen to include wording such as “Whilst any entry requirements will be a matter for individual employers, typically an apprentice might be expected to have already achieved.... on entry.”

3. Requirements: Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>

- *This is the core of the apprenticeship standard. You should list the knowledge, skills and behaviour that are required by employers for full competence in this occupation. If you have approval to develop a core and options approach, you will want to set out separately which knowledge and skills are core and which apply to individual options.*

Knowledge	What is required

Skill	What is required

Behaviour	What is required

- *Where completing the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour sections, you may find it helpful to start with phrases like “The [insert occupation title] will require a comprehensive understanding of...” so that you do not need to start every Knowledge bullet with “an understanding of..”*

4. Duration

- *You should give an indication of the likely duration of the apprenticeship (e.g. “typically 24 months”, or “typically 18-24 months”. If the latter, the range given should not generally span more than 6 months).*
- *This must be at least 12 months.*
- *You should not state a maximum duration.*

5. Qualifications

- *We do not expect you to specify qualifications as part of your apprenticeship standard as the standard is focused on the outcome for the apprentice, not the inputs. However, there are some exceptions to this as detailed in the standards criteria in Section 3.*

- *If a qualification is to be referenced in the standard, the name, type and level of qualification should be stated but not a particular provider or awarding organisation (except where it is offered by only one organisation e.g. vendor and professional qualifications).*
- *This section should also state the English and maths requirements at the end of the apprenticeship. These may either be the minimum required across all apprenticeships (see the criteria relating to standards in Section 3) in which case the standard wording below can be used, or any such requirements that you set above the minimum. The standard wording for level 2 apprenticeships is:*

“Apprentices without level 1 English and maths will need to achieve this level and take the test for level 2 English and maths prior to completion of their Apprenticeship”

...and the standard wording for level 3 apprenticeships is:

“Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to completion of their Apprenticeship”.

6. Link to professional registration *(only include where professional registration exists)*

- *Apprenticeship standards must link to professional registration where this exists at that level in the occupation. This means that when someone completes an apprenticeship, they have the evidence proving that they have met the level of competence needed to secure professional registration. It is up to the individual whether they choose to become registered.*
- *Where relevant, this section should set out which professional registration the apprenticeship standard is designed to meet and the name of the professional body or bodies responsible for maintaining the professional register.*

7. Level

- *State the proposed level of the apprenticeship standard (levels 2-7)¹⁶*

8. Review date

- *This should generally be “after 3 years” unless there is a particular reason for it to be reviewed earlier (e.g. in cases where technology or processes are developing rapidly). NB - on approval of your assessment plan, we will insert a specific review date into your standard.*

¹⁶ Advice is available at <http://ofqual.gov.uk/help-and-advice/comparing-qualifications/> and <http://www.gaa.ac.uk/en/Publications/Documents/Framework-Higher-Education-Qualifications-08.pdf> (Page 15-22)

Annex 4: Template for assigning copyright to the Crown (see paragraphs 57-70)

This Assignment is dated [date]

PARTIES

(1) The Assignors are the persons listed in the table below.

Assignor	Full Company Name (incorporated in England and Wales)	Company Number	Registered Office
First			
Second			
Third			
Fourth			
[Continued]			

(2) The Assignee is the Secretary of State.

SCHEDULE

The works are the following apprenticeship standards:

- [Names of standards]

In this Schedule, “apprenticeship standards” means any standard which may be published, with or without revisions, by the Secretary of State in connection with approved English apprenticeships, and includes any assessment plan related to that standard.

In this Schedule, an “assessment plan” is any document prepared for the purpose of assisting the Secretary of State, or another person, to decide whether a person has achieved an apprenticeship standard (whether or not the document is annexed to or otherwise forms part of that standard).

BACKGROUND

- The Assignors jointly own the copyright in the Works.
- The Assignor and Assignee acknowledge that the Assignor may create Future Works.
- The Assignor has agreed to assign to the Assignee all copyright in the Works and the Future Works on the terms set out in this agreement.

AGREED TERMS

1. DEFINITIONS

“Works” means the works described in the Schedule. (The schedule forms part of this agreement and has effect as if set out in the body of the agreement.)

“Future Works” means any modification, adaptation, revision or amendment to any of the Works.

2. ASSIGNMENT

In consideration of the sum of £1.00 (receipt of which the Assignors expressly acknowledge), the Assignors assign to the Assignee absolutely the following rights throughout the world:

the entire copyright and all other rights in the nature of copyright subsisting in the Works and the Future Works; and

all other rights in the Works and the Future Works of whatever nature, whether now known or created in the future, to which the Assignors are now, or at any time after the date of this agreement may be, entitled by virtue of the laws in force in the United Kingdom and in any other part of the world,

in each case for the whole term including any renewals, reversions, revivals and extensions and together with all related rights and powers arising or accrued, including the right to bring, make, oppose, defend, appeal and obtain relief (and to retain any damages recovered) in respect of any infringement, or any other cause of action arising from ownership, of any of these assigned rights, whether occurring before, on, or after the date of this agreement.

3. MORAL RIGHTS

The Assignors waive their moral rights arising under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and, so far as is legally possible, any broadly equivalent rights they may have in any territory of the world.

4. VARIATION

No variation of this agreement shall be effective unless it is in writing and signed by the parties (or their authorised representatives).

5. SEVERANCE

If any provision or part-provision of this agreement is or becomes invalid, illegal or unenforceable, it is to be deemed modified to the minimum extent necessary to make it valid, legal and enforceable. If such modification is not possible, the relevant provision or part-provision is to be deemed deleted. Any modification to or deletion of a provision or part-provision under this clause does not affect the validity and enforceability of the rest of this agreement.

6. GOVERNING LAW

This agreement and any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with it or its subject matter or formation (including non-contractual disputes or claims) shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the law of England and Wales.

7. JURISDICTION

Each party irrevocably agrees that the courts of England and Wales shall have exclusive jurisdiction to settle any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with this agreement or its subject matter or formation (including non-contractual disputes or claims).

First Assignor

Signed by [NAME OF
DIRECTOR] Director
for and on behalf of [NAME OF
ASSIGNOR]

Second Assignor

Signed by [NAME OF
DIRECTOR] Director
for and on behalf of [NAME OF
ASSIGNOR]

Third Assignor

Signed by [NAME OF
DIRECTOR] Director
for and on behalf of [NAME OF
ASSIGNOR]

Fourth Assignor

Signed by [NAME OF
DIRECTOR] Director
for and on behalf of [NAME OF
ASSIGNOR]

[Continued]

Annex 5: Template for a Trailblazer employer support letter (see paragraph 75)

To be submitted via the Chair when draft standards are being submitted for approval. Such notifications can either take the form of a signed letter (a scanned version will do) or an email containing relevant employer/employee details (i.e. company logo, name and address and the emailer's name, company position and contact details)

Address to the Trailblazer Chair:

I confirm that I have been an active member of the *[insert name]* Trailblazer group, that I have been involved in developing the standard / all of the standards *[insert names of standards]* being submitted and that I approve of the final draft(s).

I believe that the standard(s) fully meet the needs of the *[insert name]* sector in relation to the job roles covered by them and offer(s) good value for money for end-users.

[Only if applicable (see paragraph 64)] Whilst I have had an active involvement in the Trailblazer, I have not expended sufficient skill and labour to be classed as an author and neither I nor my employer are entitled to the copyright in any of the works produced by the Trailblazer. In view of this, my company has not signed the assignment to transfer copyright of the standard(s) to the Crown.

The company that I represent on the Trailblazer group employs approximately *[insert number]* people.

Annex 6: Template for an assessment plan (see Section 4)

A good assessment plan will concisely:

- Explain **what** will be assessed (i.e. which skills, knowledge and behaviour listed on the standard, and giving more detail if needed).
- Explain **how** the apprentice will be assessed (i.e. which method or range of methods will be used at the end of the apprenticeship to judge competency),
- Indicate **who** will carry out the assessment (i.e. who will be the assessor(s) for each aspect of the end-point assessment),
- Propose **quality assurance** arrangements to make sure that end-point assessments are reliable and consistent across different locations, employers, and training and assessment organisations.

The template below has been provided to help you include the detail behind the above points. You should aim for your Assessment Plan to be no more than 10 pages long.

Summary of Assessment				
Provide an introduction, a clear explanation of how the end point assessment will work and a description of how an apprentice should expect to be assessed.				
Assessment Overview [set out key assessment information]				
Assessment Method	Area Assessed	Assessed by	Grading	Weighting
e.g. Online test	What Skills / Knowledge / Behaviour are being assessed?	Independent Assessment Organisation	Fail/Pass / Distinction	65%
e.g. Professional Discussion	What Skills / Knowledge / Behaviour are being assessed?	Professional Body	Fail / Pass / Merit / Distinction	35%

Professional Qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Include details of any mandatory qualifications or those that the employers would recommend the apprentice takes during the apprenticeship</i>
On-programme Assessment [if used]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Set out a brief description of the on-programme assessment</i>
Assessment Gateway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What will trigger the apprentice being put forward for the end-point assessment?</i> ▪ <i>Who will make the judgement?</i>
End Point - Assessment
<p>What</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>What skills/knowledge/behaviour are being assessed? You might want to link this to the published standard</i> <p>How</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>How will the ‘what’ be assessed?</i> ▪ <i>What will the apprentice have to do exactly?</i> ▪ <i>Where will the assessment take place?</i> <p>Who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Who will carry out the assessment?</i> ▪ <i>If there are a number of assessors, such as in a panel arrangement, explain how they will work together</i> ▪ <i>Are there any minimum requirements of assessors? e.g. sector knowledge, assessor qualification?</i>
End Point – final judgement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Who makes the final decision about whether the apprentice has passed?</i>
Independence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Who is providing the independent element of the assessment? This could be, for example, another employer, a Professional Body or a Sector Skills Council.</i> ▪ <i>What is their relationship to the apprentice? What level of independence and impartiality do they have?</i>

End-point – Summary of roles and responsibilities [set out the role of each organisation/person involved in assessment]	
Assessor	Role
<i>e.g. Employer</i>	
<i>e.g. Training Provider</i>	
<i>e.g. Assessment Organisation</i>	
Quality Assurance – internal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This is usually provided by the Awarding Organisation but does not have to be</i> 	
Quality Assurance – external [this is optional]	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This needs to be provided independently of the Awarding Organisation</i> 	
End-point - Grading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How will the grade be decided?</i> <i>Who decides the grade?</i> <i>Are there grading criteria?</i> <i>What does the grade above pass look like and how is it determined?</i> 	
Implementation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Affordability: What are the likely costs for end-point assessment and what proportion of the overall cost of the apprenticeship is likely to be on assessment?</i> <i>Professional Body recognition: How will the apprentice be recognised by the professional body? Will they be accredited upon completion?</i> <i>Consistent: How is the end-point assessment deliverable across the country and in a variety of businesses to the same standard of competence?</i> <i>Volumes:</i> 	
Annex	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Please include any additional documents or resources, or links to these documents where they can be freely obtained.</i> 	

Annex 7: Assessment criteria (quick reference version)

Criterion	Explanation
1.SYNOPTIC ASSESSMENT	The end-point assessment must be synoptic, which means that it must holistically assess the higher order skills, knowledge and behaviour from across the standard in an integrated way at the end of the programme.
2. USING A RANGE OF ASSESSMENT METHODS	Your assessments will need to ensure that apprentices can demonstrate their ability across the standard. This is likely to require mixed methods of assessment.
3.GRADED ASSESSMENTS	All Apprenticeships should be graded, and should have at least one level above a pass. For example, pass and distinction or pass, merit and distinction.
4. DELIVERING CONSISTENT (RELIABLE) JUDGEMENTS	Your assessment strategy and tools must ensure that employers can have confidence that apprentices assessed in different parts of the country, at different times, by different assessors have been judged in the same way and have therefore reached the same standard of occupational competence.
5. DELIVERING ACCURATE (VALID) JUDGEMENTS	The method of assessment must be appropriate to the content. The assessment methods and tools will need to ensure that the decisions reached on every apprentice are an accurate reflection of their competence.
6. ENSURING INDEPENDENCE	<p>It is vital that all apprentices are assessed in a fair and objective manner.</p> <p>This means assessments will either be delivered by an independent third party, or will be delivered in such a way that no party who has been involved in delivery can make the sole decision on competence. The approach must clearly deliver an impartial result.</p>
7.AFFORDABILITY	<p>Your approach should consider how cost effectiveness in assessments will be delivered while still meeting the quality objectives.</p> <p>You should ensure that the end-point assessment is financially reasonable and not off-putting to other employers.</p>
8. MANAGEABILITY /	You will need to set out how the assessment process will be

FEASIBILITY	deliverable on the scale required for the number of apprentices.
9. PROFESSIONAL BODY RECOGNITION	Where a professional body or bodies have recognised the standard, our expectation is that they will also recognise the assessment process, as completion of the apprenticeship should ensure the apprentice is ready to secure professional accreditation.

Annex 8: Costing template (this version is for reference only and is subject to change – the latest excel version for completion is available from your Relationship Manager)

Trailblazer Standard: Estimated Delivery Cost Template

Standard title

--

Occupation

--

Sector Subject Area (select from the drop down list)

--

Which are the main sector/ sectors in which this occupation is based?

--	--

How many people work in this occupation currently?

	Source:	
--	---------	--

What is the current level of published skills shortage (no. of skilled individuals)?

	Source:	
--	---------	--

Does this standard replace an existing apprenticeship framework(s) or pathway(s)? (select Y or N)

--

If yes, what is the name, level and/or pathway of the framework being replaced (please add rows as required):

Framework Title	Pathway (if relevant)	Level	Full or Part Replacement	% Shared Content

What is the end level of the standard? (select from the drop down list)

--

When are you expecting the first starts on the standard? (dd/mm/yy)

--

Does the standard include English and maths above level 2? (select Y or N)

--

If yes, to which level? (select from the drop down list)

English
Maths

How many starts are you expecting in the first academic year (Aug '15 to Jul '16)?

16-18	19+

How many starts are you expecting in the second academic year (Aug '16 to Jul '17)?

--	--

How many starts per year are you expecting once fully established?

--	--

Please provide a detailed itemised breakdown of your on programme training costs for a single learner (add rows as required)

Description of On Programme Training Costs	Value £
Description of End Point Assessment Costs	Value £
Total On Programme Training Costs (per apprentice) - this will automatically calculate	A £ -
Total End Point Assessment Costs (per apprentice) - this will automatically calculate	B £ -
Grand Total per apprentice Cost of On Programme Training and End Point Assessment (A+B=C) - this will automatically calculate	C £ -

Does the standard include qualifications?
(select Y or N)

If responding "Yes" to Q18 please list the qualifications below- include those listed as mandatory or recommended in the assessment plan and any qualifications new and in development.	Awarding Organisation or Body / Product Owner	Learning Aim Reference - if applicable (e.g. 600/0000 /01)	Is this mandatory for all apprentices?	Level

Please add any further information needed to support the entries elsewhere in this form (press Alt+Return to go to start of new line)

Annex 9: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

AU	Apprenticeships Unit within both the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education (DfE) responsible for developing apprenticeship policy and reporting to the Minister for Skills.
End-point assessment	The assessment undertaken at the end of an apprenticeship to test full occupational competence.
Expression of Interest (EOI)	A bid by a group of employers to develop one or more apprenticeship standards.
Off the job training	On or Off-site training away from the apprentice's immediate workstation.
On-programme assessment	Any assessment undertaken during the apprenticeship used to check progress towards developing full competence.
Open Policy Development	Refining policy in the light of experience and stakeholder feedback derived from early implementation.
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.
RM	Relationship Manager - a named individual either in the AU or SFA whose role is to advise individual Trailblazers on policy and processes relating to the development of standards and assessment plans.
SFA	Skills Funding Agency.
Synoptic or holistic assessment	An assessment of the skills, knowledge and behaviour in an integrated way at the end of the programme.
Trailblazer	A group of employers approved by government to develop one or more apprenticeship standards and related assessment plans for occupations in their sector(s).
Viva	Oral examination - question and answer test between the apprentice and the examiner.

© Crown copyright 2015

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. Visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is also available online at www.gov.uk/bis

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to:

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET
Tel: 020 7215 5000

If you require this publication in an alternative format, email enquiries@bis.gsi.gov.uk, or call 020 7215 5000.

BIS/15/355