Skills England

Guidance

Criteria and process for retiring an apprenticeship

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Applies to England

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This document sets out the criteria and process Skills England follows when an apprenticeship is identified for potential retirement.

1. Criteria

An apprenticeship may be retired because of any combination of the following factors:

- low or no starts or completions
- lack of providers and/or assessment organisations available to deliver the

apprenticeship

- other existing training routes or products (potentially including another apprenticeship) being preferred by employers
- the apprenticeship not aligning with government priorities

Where Skills England retires an apprenticeship, the occupational standard will normally be retained, along with its place on the occupational map. This is because occupational standards may be used as the basis for other existing or future skills products, such as T Levels or Higher Technical Qualifications.

2. Process

When our assessment against the above factors indicates that an apprenticeship may need retiring, we will engage with key external stakeholders such as relevant members of the Expert Network, employers, members of the group that helped us develop or most recently revise the apprenticeship, and any relevant professional body.

A decision will then be taken either to retain the apprenticeship (potentially subject to revising it), retire it, or undertake further stakeholder engagement before making a final decision. In the case of the latter, we will alert relevant stakeholders, including by placing a banner on the relevant apprenticeship webpage with a deadline for comments and by highlighting our intention in the Apprenticeship standards: revisions and adjustments report.

Where a decision is taken to retire an apprenticeship, a minimum notice period of 30 days will be provided before it is retired for new starts. Any stakeholders that Skills England has engaged with during the process will be notified of such a decision and the rationale for it.

If an apprenticeship is retired, its webpage will remain on Skills England's apprenticeship finder with an appropriate banner until all current learners have completed their training.

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