



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

(Schedule 2)

DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD:

[STANDARD]

[PROGRAMME]

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Introduction

We look forward to working with you and your Apprentices and trust you will find our Northumbria University Degree Apprenticeship programme meets your needs. We have designed the programme to provide an outstanding learning experience for your Apprentices, which will integrate work-based learning with degree level study providing an employee with up-to-date skills and knowledge relevant to today's workplace.

This Employer Handbook provides you with information about the programme structure as well as referencing procedures and processes. It also describes how the University and the Employer will work together to ensure the programme meets the requirements of the Degree Apprenticeship Standards and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Funding Rules.

Apprentices will be provided with a Programme (Student) Handbook with detailed information about being a student at Northumbria, their programme, on-campus and online facilities and learning resources and key contacts.

Northumbria Degree Apprenticeship

The Northumbria University Apprenticeship Ethos

The key principle underpinning degree Apprenticeships is the use of the workplace as a source of and focus for learning. This requires the Apprentice to develop reflective and analytical skills. Thus, a practitioner is developed who not only has the necessary knowledge, skills and competences but is also an independent learner with critical thinking skills that will impact on their future and also potentially on the future of your organisation and its workforce. Work-based learners need to be highly motivated active learners and be able to work autonomously.

The nature of learning at work moves the focus of responsibility firmly into the hands of the learner. Individual learners are required not only to take responsibility for identifying their learning needs and aspirations but also for managing the learning process. This will involve the Apprentice engaging with a range of learning experiences, enabling them to interpret, analyse and challenge current thinking and practice. This will however require a supportive learning environment in the workplace and coordinated facilitation by both the Employer (Workplace Mentor) and the Programme Team (Academic Coach and Personal Tutor).

We will work with you to create graduates with the knowledge, skills and competences as identified in the specific Apprenticeship Standards. Technical, contextual and behavioural competency development and assessment will be embedded in degree apprenticeship programmes; where relevant being informed by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements. We seek, therefore, to produce graduates who display distinctiveness through a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which their organisations operate equipping them for a career in their chosen industry.

Northumbria University Graduate Characteristics

A Degree Apprenticeship Graduate will:

- Be able to think independently, understand and justify their own opinions, and will recognise the need to challenge their thinking, and the thinking of others
- Be able to apply their disciplinary knowledge to complex problems in their discipline and its professional or industrial practice in order to identify appropriate solutions, which are sustainable and justifiable.
- Value curiosity, collaboration and analysis as keystones in the creation of new knowledge and practice
- Be able to communicate effectively to diverse audiences utilising a range of formats and media
- Display the attitudes and skills to engage and work constructively and sensitively in multi-cultural environments and teams and have an awareness of ethical considerations
- Combine all of the above to support their employability and long-term career prospects
- Use their expertise to take responsibility for people, projects, operations / services to deliver organisational success

Apprenticeships as Partnerships

Below you will find a summary of the main roles in the tri-partite relationship between Employer, University and Apprentice. You are advised to read the ESFA Funding Rules and Guidance for Employers found [here](#) for a full breakdown of your responsibilities as Employer.

The Employer's Role in the Partnership

- To employ the Apprentice with a contract of service in a genuine paid role which is relevant to the subject area of their apprenticeship, is of sufficient duration to allow completion of the apprenticeship and provides opportunities for them to apply the knowledge, skills and behaviours learnt in the apprenticeship.
- To ensure Apprentices have the right to work in England and spend at least 50% of their working hours in England.
- To confirm that Apprentices will not be required to contribute financially to the cost of their apprenticeship.
- To provide workplace learning opportunities, support and supervision to enable Apprentices to carry out their job and complete the apprenticeship.
- To provide a Workplace Mentor for every Apprentice and ensure their engagement in regular progress reviews (tri-partite meetings).
- Check and sign both an **Apprenticeship Agreement** and a **Commitment Statement (See below)** for each Apprentice prior to, or at the start of, the apprenticeship programme as advised by the University.
- Comply with all ESFA Funding Rules (see page 21 below).
- Confirm the End-point Assessment Organisation in liaison with the University before the start of the apprenticeship. The register of End-point Assessment Organisations can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-end-point-assessment-organisations>

- Allow for the Apprentice to spend at least 20% of their normal working hours in activities related to their learning. This is called 'Off the Job Training' (OJT).

OJT can include:

Attendance at scheduled classes

Practical work-based training: Shadowing, mentoring, industry visits

Engagement with learning support and time spent writing assessments

OJT forms part of the Apprentice portfolio and evidence pack and must be recorded by the Apprentice via the system provided by the University.

Note that English and maths training, where required, does not count towards the minimum 20% OJT.

More information about OJT can be found [here](#)

- Ensure Apprentices who have successfully progressed on the programme are supported to attempt the End-point Assessment and complete the apprenticeship.

It is very important that you read and understand the complete set of regulations governing the role of the Employer which can be found at ESFA Funding Rules and Guidance for Employers found [here](#).

In addition, the Employer should retain and provide the following documents to ESFA or the University as required.

1. The [Apprenticeship Agreement](#):
2. Evidence that the Apprentice has spent at least 50% of their working hours in England over the duration of the apprenticeship.
3. Contract of employment and work rosters.

The University's Role in the Partnership

- To provide a validated programme of study which develops the skills, knowledge and behaviours as published in the programme specification and apprenticeship standard.
- To appoint an Apprentice Coach to support Apprentices in their learning specifically portfolio building and applying learning to the workplace. Coaches will meet with the Workplace Mentor and Apprentice at progress reviews (tri-partite meetings) to review progress.
- To provide an online portfolio system which is maintained by the Apprentice and accessible by Employer.
- To provide learning materials including access to the Blackboard Ultra online learning environment to support Apprentices achieving success on the programme.
- To provide regular reports to the Employer about the engagement and progress of the Apprentices.

- To review Apprentices' prior learning and experience against apprenticeship learning outcomes and standard and agree exemptions from study where appropriate.
- To provide the means for completion of a Level 2 English and maths qualification where Apprentices do not hold, or cannot evidence they hold, the appropriate qualifications.
- To ensure the programme, Apprentice records and evidence pack comply with ESFA regulations.
- To liaise with the Employer regarding appointment of an End-point Assessment Organisation and ensure the necessary information and data is made available to the EPAO.
- To ensure any sub-contractors fulfil their obligations according to ESFA Rules.
- To fulfil all obligations to Apprentices as students as laid out in the [Northumbria University's Student Charter](#)

See [ESFA Funding Rules and Guidance](#) for more information about the role of the University as a Main Provider.

The Apprentice's Role in the Partnership

- To attend and engage in scheduled teaching sessions and other learning activities.
- To engage in workplace Off the Job Training (OJT).
- To record their own Off the Job Training using the system provided by the University.
- To complete any coursework, assignments and examinations, including End-point assessment, as required by the programme.
- To maintain an ongoing portfolio using the online system provided by the University.
- To engage with Tri-partite meetings.
- To bring any issues affecting their learning or workplace training to the attention of the Employer or University.
- To record attendance in classes using the system provided by the University
- To read and understand University rules and regulations governing the conduct of students published in [Northumbria University's Student Charter](#) and [Handbook of Student Regulations](#)

The Commitment Statement

- The Commitment Statement is a document signed by the University, you the Employer, and the Apprentice, which sets out how the Apprentice will be supported to successfully achieve the intended outcomes of the apprenticeship.

- ESFA regulations stipulate that the University must retain a signed commitment statement for every Apprentice as it forms part of the Apprentice evidence pack needed for the final award. As it contains a GDPR statement, it is essential we have a copy before we release any information to the Employer about the Apprentice's progress or engagement with the programme.
- The Commitment Statement is intended to inform the regular progress (tri-partite) reviews which take place between the University Apprentice Coach, Employer Mentor and Apprentice.
- It is anticipated that the Commitment Statement will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary on agreement with all parties
- The document has been cross-referenced to the ESFA funding rules and will be retained within the evidence pack stored alongside the contract.

Data Protection and Data Sharing

Where the University or the Employer handle any personal or sensitive personal data (within the meaning of the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)), including in relation to the Apprentices or Employer Apprentices, they undertake to comply with their respective obligations under that legislation.

The University can share Apprentice information with employers if we have a signed Commitment Statement, including data sharing protocol. For any request for information outside of the scope of that covered in the Commitment Statement, we will seek permission from the student to share their personal information. This is in line with GDPR and NU [Student Privacy Notice](#)

Please also be aware of the Education and Skills Funding Agency privacy notice which can be found [here](#).

Confidentiality

This is a work-based programme and as such it is likely the Apprentice will complete a substantial amount of work relating to the workplace. In line with data protection, commercial sensitivity and professional practice requirements Apprentices and Workplace Mentors should give very careful consideration to issues of confidentiality within submitted work and take advice from within their own organisation if necessary

Student work is not published or shared with third parties other than for quality assurance purposes in line with normal practices within Higher Education.

About the Programme

Application and Induction

Apprentices must be paid employees of your organisation: they may be either existing employees or new employees who you recruit specifically to undertake the apprenticeship programme. In future if you plan to recruit new employees, please advertise vacancies for Apprentices ideally by a month prior to the commencement of the course, so that there is sufficient time for the University to complete the selection and admissions process. The process for selection and admission for September 2020 has been adjusted to ensure recruitment. Your University Degree Apprenticeship Business Development Manager will

advise further. The University can support you in advertising the apprenticeship vacancy via the Government's 'Find an Apprenticeship' service. If this were something you would like support with, please speak with your University Degree Apprenticeship Business Development Manager. The application process can only commence once the University and Employer have agreed and signed the contract.

We feel it is important that Apprentices and their Employers are welcomed to the University and receive all the information they need to enable a smooth and successful partnership. The induction session will introduce the Apprentice to their programme, explaining the principles, rules and regulations and other important information about studying at the University. Employer representatives will be invited to attend for part of the induction programme. The induction will include an opportunity for all parties to sign the Commitment Statement if not already completed.

Skills Assessment and Recognition of Prior Learning and experience

ESFA Funding Rules state that funds must not be used to pay for training for skills, knowledge and behaviours already attained by the Apprentice. Or in other words, the apprenticeship must consist of new learning. In order to assess prior learning and skills, the University invites apprentice applicants to submit an application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). This is assessed by comparing to the programme learning outcomes. If exemption from any part of the programme is approved, the Apprentice's schedule of study and fees are amended accordingly. A record of the application and assessment of RPL will be retained and stored in the Apprentice evidence pack.

Entry requirements

The following standard entry requirements are shown for guidance. A student's particular combination of qualifications (including key skills) will always be taken into account in making an offer.

Admission onto a higher or degree apprenticeship can only take place if applicants are currently employed and their employer has a training agreement in place with Northumbria University.

Applicants must be employed in a relevant role, with the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts directly to their personal and professional work experience.

Potential apprentices will need:

120 UCAS Tariff points; From a combination of acceptable Level 3 qualifications which may include: A-levels, BTEC Diplomas/Extended Diplomas, Scottish and Irish Highers, Access to HE Diplomas or the International Baccalaureate.

We may also consider applicants who have successfully completed a related Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship, or those with non-standard qualifications, or a significant amount of relevant work-based or professional experience.

English and Maths Requirement

Please also note the additional requirement from ESFA that students undertaking Degree Apprenticeship programmes must hold, **and be able to evidence**, an approved Level 2 qualification in both English and Maths (equivalent to a GCSE minimum Grade C or 4) prior to passing through Gateway and before they can complete End-point Assessment.

For any student who does not hold, or is unable to evidence, these qualifications we will identify the best way to support the Apprentice to either achieve or evidence the appropriate level of qualification before gateway and completion of the apprenticeship.

If the Apprentice needs to complete a level 2 English or Maths qualification, the University will work with a designated level 2 provider to facilitate an initial diagnostic test, learning support and assessment leading to the required qualification.

Apprentice or Employer Changes

In order to keep records up to date and avoid funding issues, the Employer should let the University know where a change in circumstances effects the Apprentice as soon as possible.

Examples of changes:

- The Apprentice taking a break in learning where they plan to return, and this is agreed with the Employer. This could include medical treatment, parental or personal reasons. A short-term absence of up to 4 weeks, such as sickness or annual leave, must not be recorded as a break. Note that where a break in learning has taken place the commitment statement must be updated to reflect any change in completion date as appropriate.
- Where an Apprentice is made redundant, the University is required to make reasonable efforts to find the Apprentice a new Employer. The Apprentice must forward their redundancy notice for the evidence pack.
- When an Apprentice withdraws from the apprenticeship, i.e. the Apprentice is no longer employed by the Employer and has withdrawn from their programme (not redundancy).
- Change in programme where the Apprentice starts a new role with the same Employer and requires a different apprenticeship programme and the Provider remains the same.
- Confirmation of eligibility for where the Employer contribution is waived including evidence from the Employer that they had an average of 49 or fewer employees with a contract of employment in the 365 days before the Apprentice was recruited.

Programme Facts

Programme Overview

Faculty: XXX

Department: XXX

Award/Programme Title: XXX

Length: XXX

Programme (Practical Period) Start Date: XXX

Programme (Practical Period) End Date: XXX

End-point Assessment Date: XXX

Delivery Mode: Part-time

Programme Aims and Learning Outcomes

[INSERT FROM PROGRAMME SPEC]

The programme learning outcomes have been mapped to the Apprenticeship Standard which can be found [here](#).

Programme Structure

[INSERT FROM PROGRAMME SPEC]

Professional Statutory and Regulatory Board (PSRB) Accreditation

[INSERT FROM PROGRAMME SPEC]

EXAMPLE

Key People

The University

The Northumbria Degree Apprenticeship Academic Support Team

The Degree Apprenticeship Academic Support Team within Educational Partnerships will be your key point of contact, from supporting you through the contract signing process and ensuring all required documentation is in place, right through the duration of the programme to completion of the Apprentice's End-point Assessment and graduation. When dealing with any queries you or your Apprentice may have, the Academic Support Team will triage them to the appropriate person/University department/service.

Kerry Douglas, Academic Support Manager

Contact details: Phone number: 0191 243 7574

E-mail: rg.da.academic.support@northumbria.ac.uk

The Northumbria Apprenticeship Business Development Manager and Business & Enterprise Coordinator

As an Employer looking to find a suitable Degree Apprenticeship programme for a prospective apprentice or existing employee, your key point of contact will be the Northumbria University Business Development Manager and Business & Enterprise Coordinator. They will liaise with you regarding contractual terms, entry requirements for the programme and advertising vacancies. They will also require details of candidates who you wish to be considered for admission to the University. Once an employee has been offered a place, the Degree Apprenticeship Academic Support Team will be your first point of contact.

Name: Jacqui Clark

Contact details: Phone number: 0191 2273251 / 07925035718

E-mail: degree.apprenticeships@northumbria.ac.uk

The Northumbria University Apprenticeship Programme Leader

The Programme Leader is a member of academic staff with subject expertise. They will manage the design and delivery of the programme and co-ordinate the teaching team to ensure quality assurance and regulatory obligations are met. They will also assess non-standard applications and oversee the organization of Tri-partite meetings and End-point Assessment in liaison with the Academic Support Manager.

Name: XXX

Contact details: Phone number: XXX

E-mail: XXX

Personal Tutors

As every other Northumbria student, the Apprentice will have a Personal Tutor who is a member of academic staff from the department responsible for delivering the programme. The Personal Tutor will provide pastoral advice and support in relation to academic and personal development and is the person who the student would typically contact first if there were problems affecting academic work at Northumbria. The Personal Tutor will meet with the Apprentice regularly.

Apprentice Coach

In addition to the Personal Tutor, Apprentices also have an Apprentice Coach. The Coach will conduct progress reviews to ensure the Apprentice is on track to complete their programme. The Coach is one of the main links between University, Apprentice and workplace and they will be present at the progress reviews (tripartite meetings) to discuss progress and any issues with either teaching or workplace and provide reports on Apprentice engagement and progress. It is expected there would be quarterly meetings with at least one physical tripartite meeting, preferably in the workplace. Other meetings could be conducted virtually.

Key People – The Employer

Apprentice Co-ordinator

The Employer Apprentice Co-ordinator has the following responsibilities:

Confirm proposed Apprentices are employed in a post relevant to the apprenticeship standard and are able to complete the relevant work-based learning.

Ensure Apprentices are given an adequate allowance as 'Off the Job Training' in order to undertake study and work based learning.

Liaise with the University on any admissions queries.

Liaise with the University on the following:

- Key programme dates, timelines and milestones, including End-point Assessment
- Induction arrangements including Employer attendance
- Workplace Mentor allocation (names and contact details) and associated staff development
- Progress review (tripartite meeting) schedule
- Completion of apprenticeship enrolment processes

Engage with and contribute to Northumbria Programme and Module Review processes.

Engage with work-based learning arrangements and quality of learning opportunities in the workplace to ensure student can meet learning outcomes/Apprenticeship Standards, notifying the Northumbria Apprenticeship Programme Leader of potential problems.

Receive assessment results, where there is a signed Commitment Statement in place, or evidence that the student has given permission for information to be shared. This is in line with GDPR and [NU Student Privacy Notice](#).

Engage with changes to the Employer Handbook and associated documents and record agreement by signing the updated Commitment Statement and send a copy of your

Apprenticeship Agreement at the start of the programme to the Degree Apprenticeship Academic Support Team.

Provide the details of any staff changes, specifically your Workplace Mentors to the Northumbria Apprenticeship Programme Leader and Degree Apprenticeship Academic Support Team.

Workplace Mentor

The Employer will appoint a Workplace Mentor for each Apprentice. The Workplace Mentor is fundamental to ensuring that the Apprentice is supported and has opportunity to undertake work-based learning. The role includes:

Familiarising themselves with the apprenticeship programme and its workplace requirements and responsibilities as outlined in the Commitment Statement.

Facilitating the appropriate learning opportunities to ensure that the Apprentice meets the requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard.

Contributing to relevant aspects of student induction/orientation within the workplace.

Participating in progress reviews (tripartite meetings) on behalf of the Employer, with the Apprentice and the University, and contributing to the maintenance of records of the Apprentice's programmes.

Taking part in any elements of assessment required by the programme /Apprenticeship Assessment Plan, including any skills assessment.

Undertaking liaison with the Employer Degree Apprenticeship Coordinator and University as necessary but particularly if any problems are encountered.

Supporting the Apprentice in identifying and securing opportunities for development and evidencing the application of learning in the workplace to meet the requirements of the Apprenticeship Standard

The Employer and the University will work together to ensure that Workplace Mentors and suitably prepared for their role which will normally include engagement with a programme of activities.

Key Policies

The University has a range of policies to support the health, safety and wellbeing of all its students and staff. Please familiarise yourself with the following policies, you will be asked to confirm you have read and understood some of these policies when you sign the Commitment Statement.

Student Conduct Expectations

Students of Northumbria University have obligations to behave reasonably, ensuring that the University is a safe and supportive place to live, study and work for all. Everyone, fellow students, staff, visitors to the University, and neighbours in the community, have a right to be

treated with dignity and respect. All members of the University community have a duty to support this principle in accordance with the [Student Charter](#).

The University provides advice, guidance, policies and procedures to make you aware of available support and to assist your understanding of the standards of behaviour expected by the University. Further information can be found [here](#)

Academic Misconduct

Every student of the University is expected to act with integrity in relation to the production and representation of academic work. Academic integrity is central to University life and requires in particular that students are honest and responsible in acknowledging the contributions of others in their work.

If Academic Misconduct is suspected then the [University Academic Misconduct Procedure](#) will be followed.

Health and Safety

The University Health and Safety Policy describes how the University, overseen by its Board of Governors, manages the risks to health and safety and explains:

- The strategic aims of the Board of Governors and the University Executive;
- The organisation of managers and staff at all levels with health and safety roles and responsibilities;
- The arrangements by which management will discharge those responsibilities

Further information can be found [here](#)

Equality and Diversity

Northumbria University is proud to be a multi-cultural community; we value diversity, and are determined to ensure that the opportunities we provide are open to all. Equality and Diversity strongly underpins the University's Vision 2025 and Strategy 2018-2023.

Further information can be found [here](#)

Anti-bullying and Harassment

The University aims to create an environment that respects the dignity and rights of all students and staff, where individuals have the opportunity to realise their full potential. The aim of the University's Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy is to support this ethos and to strive to prevent harassment and bullying of any form occurring.

Further information can be found [here](#)

Safeguarding

Details of the University's Safeguarding Policy can be found [here](#).

Prevent Duty

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on all universities, including Northumbria, as a relevant higher education body (RHEB) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. 'People' in this sense is principally staff and students and those who represent the University. The Prevent duty guidance for higher education institutions in England and Wales was published by the government in late summer 2015. This document requires universities to review their arrangements to ensure the Prevent Duty is implemented, to be overseen on behalf of government by HEFCE as 'principal regulator' of the University. HEFCE has produced a Monitoring Framework which all registered HEI providers in England are required to satisfy.

Further information can be found [here](#)

How we Assess and Support our Students

Personal Tutors and Apprentice Coaches

The University has a comprehensive learning support structure in place to ensure apprentices have the best possible chance of success. There are several points of contact for direct academic and learning support including: Module and Programme Leaders, Personal Tutors and Apprentice Coaches. A key design feature of our apprenticeship programmes is the interface between academic and workplace skills. University staff work closely with Apprentices and Workplace Mentors to ensure this synergy is understood and applied to maximise benefit to the Apprentice and Employer and prepare for End-point Assessment.

Timetables

Scheduled learning will be included the Apprentice's University timetable which they will be issued following enrolment and can be accessed from the University website and via Office 365 Calendar.

Attendance

Apprentices are expected to attend all timetabled university activities and individual attendance will be monitored using University systems. Apprentices will be expected to inform their Module Leader and Employer if they are unable to attend and make every effort to catch up on any missed work.

The Northumbria University [Student Attendance Monitoring policy](#) will apply in the following situations and Faculties will have procedures for contacting students who either:

- Have failed to attend on two consecutive monitored attendance sessions in any one Module without authorisation *or*;
- Where there is a pattern of absence, which is affecting the student's work or causing concerns for the student's wellbeing or academic progress.

Apprentice Progress Monitoring

Individual apprentice monitoring is essential for all three parties. Normal University processes will be supplemented by the requirements for apprenticeships generally and the specific requirements of the relevant Apprenticeship Standard. In line with the University's [Personal Tutor policy](#), the Apprentice and their allocated Personal Tutor will meet at least once a semester (but this does not preclude additional meetings). Further progress reviews (tri-partite meetings) will include the University Apprentice Coach, an Employer representative (normally the Workplace Mentor but may be somebody else nominated by the Employer) and Apprentice. As a minimum, these will take place quarterly or more frequently if defined in the Apprenticeship Standard.

Sources of Student Support

The Student Progress Service delivers a range of student support and administration, with responsibility for a wide range of student support activities ranging from key information, advice and guidance, to tailored support on 'student progress' activities. Their key activities include assessment receipting and return, managing student absence, student data checking activities, managing the authorisation of approvals for late submission of work (LA) and personal extenuating circumstances (PEC) claims.

The Student Support and Wellbeing Service supports student retention and progression by offering a range of professional support services, which complement the programme support offered by faculties. Services include disability and dyslexia support, counselling and mental health support, welfare support, 'change of circumstances' support, international student/immigration support and funding advice/support. The service also hosts and oversees the work of the multi-faith chaplaincy/faith advice team, which works with students and staff.

The University Library Service supports learning, teaching and research by providing print and online scholarly and research collections, 24/7 library study space, and professional advice, information and guidance face-to-face and online. This includes support for developing core study skills, with a focus on information and digital literacy. The University Library offers formal programmes and the Northumbria Skills Programme (which will be of particular use to Apprentices); informal weekly drop ins at both City Campus and Coach Lane Libraries; "in programme" skills sessions for specific student cohorts arranged with members of academic staff, and our collection of online support materials, Skills Plus. The University Library also offers learning and research space within our three libraries, with over 2,000 study spaces in a variety of learning environments, including quiet and silent study, and social learning spaces for group and collaborative work.

Ask4Help is the frontline service dedicated to provide students with the first point of contact for all of Student and Library Services. Queries, which cannot be resolved by Ask4Help staff, are referred to the professional services in Student and Library Services, or to Faculty, or to corporate services. [Ask4Help Online](#) provides a comprehensive range of answers to frequently asked questions and is of benefit to students as a central point of reference for information about many different topics.

The Student Portal

The portal provides students with general University information, customised information about their programme e.g. their timetable, and facilitate access to a number of University self-serve activities. These include:

- Enrolment: Every year Apprentices will re-enrol through the portal to re-confirm their details or amend as appropriate.
- Course (Programme) details: Including programme start and end dates, Personal Tutor and Programme Leader details, module information online.
- Programme Representatives: Names and contact details of the Programme Reps, Department Rep and Student Union Officers.
- Self Service letters: This provides the ability to request services such as a Confirmation of Enrolment letter.
- Change of Circumstances: Links to Student Progress Team should students wish to change programme, take a break from their studies or leave the University.
- Student Details: Facility to maintain and update all their personal data such as contact details. They will also receive messages here if any data is missing
- Congregation: Provides students with details about the graduation ceremony, confirming attendance.
- Personal Extenuating Circumstances: If extenuating circumstances significantly affect assessed work, Apprentices can submit a claim through the online service.
- Module Results: Students can access this service directly,

IT Support

The University offers flexible, enhanced, anytime, anywhere technologies to support their studies including:

- Email on Smartphone: Setup University email & manage everything from one place
- Simply Web enabling the student to access files, software, email through one desktop wherever their location
- Online Learning: enables the student to engage with learning content anytime, anywhere
- Use of Northumbria IT with 3000+ computers available in 24/7 Open Access areas and IT Labs when on campus.

Student Representation

Programme Representatives are elected by their peers to represent the views of students to the University. They are trained and supported by the Students' Union to take forward any programme-wide feedback, and let the University know what students are enjoying on the programme, or what students would like to see improved. This includes taking part in the Student Staff Programme Committees (SSPCs). The SSPC is a formal, minuted meeting of academic, technical and professional support staff and student representatives. Minutes will be posted on the Programme Site on Blackboard (the eLP site) after the meeting.

Collecting Programme Feedback

Feedback is requested on every module the Apprentice undertakes. This can be informal but will also be formally requested towards the end of a module via an online questionnaire. This module feedback contributes to module evaluation, which also includes student performance on the module, feedback from external examiners and feedback from SSPCs.

Module evaluation is shared with students and informs any changes or developments to modules for the next delivery of the module.

Additionally, students will be asked for programme feedback on an annual basis also through an online questionnaire and for students on the final year of an undergraduate programme this will be undertaken through completion of the National Student Survey. At intervals during the year, students may also be asked to complete a short Pulse survey.

Student Engagement Forums

These are advisory and do not replace the formal NSU student representation system and happen at University and Department level. Students are stakeholders and partners in learning and should contribute fully to decisions affecting their academic and wider student experience. The University Student Engagement Forum is managed by the Northumbria University Students' Union (NSU) in partnership with and facilitated by the University. The Forum is a face-to-face consultation and a feedback opportunity between students, NSU and the University informing NSU and University plans and complements Departmental Student Engagement Forums.

Feedback on Work

Feedback on assessments will be provided to Apprentices within 20 working days (four weeks) following the assessment hand-in date. Hand-in and hand-back dates will be specified in the module information. As well as providing a mark for their work, students will be provided with formative feedback.

Referral and Deferral

If a student is referred in a module, they will be required to resubmit an assignment or re-sit an examination. As outlined in the [University Academic Regulations for Taught Awards](#) it is the student's responsibility to ensure that all referrals/deferrals are completed.

Deferral describes the situation when the Programme Assessment Board (PAB) decides that they should be given a first attempt at the assessment.

University Regulations allow a student who has failed at referral attempt to repeat the whole stage of a programme or individual modules. They are not allowed to progress to the next stage until they have successfully completed all modules. However, ESFA Rules and Guidance state funding is not available for students repeating any part of the programme if there is no new learning involved. In these cases, University tuition fees must be paid by the Employer as the Apprentice must not be charged.

Results

Following Programme Assessment Boards (PABs) students can access their end of level Student Module Record Form (SMRF) via the Student Portal on given published dates.

Marks received before a Programme Assessment Board (PAB) are subject to change and are not confirmed until they have been ratified at the Board.

End-point Assessment

The End-point Assessment is a holistic and independent assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours, which have been learnt throughout an Apprenticeship Standard. The requirements for End-point Assessment are set out in the Assessment Plan for the specific standard. An Apprentice can only take the End-point Assessment once they have met the minimum duration of an apprenticeship, satisfied the gateway requirements set out in the Assessment Plan and their Employer (in consultation with the Training Provider) is content they have attained sufficient skills, knowledge and behaviours. It is expected that all Apprentices who fulfil this criteria will attempt to undertake End-point Assessment.

Unless the apprenticeship has been identified as an 'integrated standard', the Employer will select an End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) to deliver the End-point Assessment from the Register of End-point Assessment Organisations (The Register).

Although the University will be involved in arrangements for End-point Assessment, the assessment itself must be independent. The End-point Assessment requirements are set out in the Assessment Plan for the [Standard](#). Some assessment plans give the Employer and the Provider specific roles but having been involved in delivering the programme Northumbria cannot make End-point Assessment judgement for that same group of Apprentices.

Funding

NB: Please refer to ESFA Funding Rules and Guidance found [here](#) and the relevant Apprenticeship Standard for greater detail. All Standards can be found [here](#)

The Apprenticeship Levy or Employer ESFA/Co investment fund (for non levy Employers) covers:

- Apprenticeship training
- End-point Assessment
- Registration and examination (including certification) costs associated with mandatory qualifications excluding any licence to practise
- Planned on-programme assessment (progress reviews)
- Funding to re-take mandatory qualifications or the End-point Assessment, providing additional learning takes place
- Materials (non-capital items) used in the delivery of the Apprenticeship Framework or Standard i.e. the equipment or supplies necessary to enable a particular learning activity to happen.

ESFA will provide additional funding for:

- Apprentices requiring level 2 Maths and English qualifications
- Apprentices who are aged 16-18 at the start of their apprenticeship
- Apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Apprentices who for a range of other reasons may be eligible for additional funding (see ESFA Funding Rules)

Costs which the ESFA does not cover include:

- Enrolment, induction, prior assessment, initial diagnostic or similar activity
- Training, assessment, exams or tests in any skills and knowledge solely and specifically required to acquire licence to practise (applies even where the licence is required in the Apprenticeship Standard.
- Repeating the same regulated qualification previously achieved *unless it is a requirement* for the apprenticeship or for any GCSE where a grade C or 4 or higher has not already been achieved.
- Registration, examination and certification costs for non-mandatory (not specifically listed in the standard) qualifications

As stated in the ESFA Funding Rules an individual Apprentice must not be asked to contribute financially to the cost of training, on-programme or End-point Assessment. This includes where the individual has completed the programme successfully or left the programme early. Costs include any co-investment or additional training and assessment costs, above the funding band, that you have paid directly to the main provider where this is part of the agreed apprenticeship.

Note that as per clause 4.1.9 of the Apprenticeship Training Services Agreement, the Employer may be asked to provide payment where the Apprentice does not attempt End-point Assessment.

Accessing Funding

Apprenticeships are funded via the Apprenticeship Levy and/or Government co-investment funding. The agreed fee covers the End-point Assessment (EPA). Funding is normally released from the Apprenticeship Levy to the University on a monthly basis for the duration of the apprenticeship.

A schedule of payments will be agreed between the Employer and the University for any additional payments to be made by the Employer (for example co-funding payments).

The maximum funding band set by the Government for this apprenticeship is **£22,000**

Employers with access to the Digital Apprenticeship Service should link with Northumbria University by following these steps:

Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS)

Go to your Digital Apprenticeship Service account: <https://accounts.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk/service/index>

If you are adding the Northumbria University for the first time, go to 'Your Organisations and Agreements' section and select 'Add organisation'.

Before being able to add your first Apprentice, you will firstly need someone in your organisation to authorise the ESFA Agreement. You will also need to make a note of the University's UKPRN: 10001282.

In the 'Apprentices' section, you can begin adding your Apprentices, which will be passed to the University for review and approval.

You can ask the University to add the Apprentices on your behalf, which you can select in the 'add an Apprentice' form. If you do this, you will still have to approve any Apprentices added by the University before any funding is released.

You can also grant permissions in the “Your training providers” section on the homepage. This would allow the University to add apprentice details on your behalf without you having to make a request. Once the Apprentice or cohort details have been added by the training provider, you will still have to approve the Apprentice(s) before funding is released. This is particularly useful for Employers that will be sending apprentices to a training provider on a regular basis.

The following is a link to an online video which walks you through the process which may be helpful if you have not done this before: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XMgLFfGK0iM>

Other helpful support videos are available to assist with common themes and can be found at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCROOCs9OvIwqFOy5_E0Jtfg

Northumbria University’s Programme Quality Assurance

Programme review: internal (University and Employer)

Apprenticeship programmes will be subject to the same annual programme monitoring process as [standard Northumbria programmes](#). This process ensures that student learning opportunities enable the intended learning outcomes of the programme/s to be achieved and evaluates student attainment of academic and Apprenticeship Standards. It should consider how the student learning experience may be improved and identify strengths and good practice.

The process entails completion of a Programme Enhancement Plan (PEP), which will be informed by a number of triggers including statistical data relating to student performance and other output data. This will be completed in full collaboration with the Employer organisation. The process will be initiated by Northumbria staff, normally after completion of the academic year.

There will also be regular internal strategic reviews concerning all Northumbria Apprenticeship programmes.

Degree Apprenticeships will also be incorporated into the six yearly [Periodic Review](#) of Departments.

External Oversight

As part of ESFA Funding Rules, the University (as the provider) is required to maintain the evidence pack, which is subject to ESFA audit. This will be managed electronically and will require the Employer to submit a number of items to the University (see earlier section ‘The Employer’s Role in the Partnership’).

Accreditation and re-accreditation

Degree Apprenticeships with Professional, Regulatory or Statutory Body (PSRB) accreditation may require the University to submit data about the programme/students on a regular basis or for the purposes of reaccreditation. This will depend on individual PSRB requirements.

Appeals and Complaints

Employer Complaints

If you, as the Employer have a problem or issue regarding any aspect of the University's role in the apprenticeship you should follow the process below. Please note there is a separate process for student complaints and appeals and you may need to establish which is the most appropriate route for you particular issue.

Informal Issue Resolution

In the first instance, Employers should contact the Educational Partnership Team at rq.da.academic.support@northumbria.ac.uk with queries or concerns regarding the apprenticeship programme, Apprentice progress, funding or any other aspect of the partnership. The team aim to provide an initial response within 2 working days. If the issue cannot be resolved informally, the contractual dispute resolution process will be invoked.

Dispute Resolution

In the event of a dispute arising between the parties in relation to this agreement, either party may serve written notice on the other stating the nature of the dispute (a Dispute Notice). See clause 7 of the full Training Service Agreement for details and procedure.

In addition to the process set out in clause 7 Apprentices and Employers can contact the apprenticeship helpline regarding apprenticeship concerns, complaints and enquiries:

ESFA Apprenticeship Service Support

Email: helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk Tel: 08000 150 600

Student Complaints and Appeals

The University has set procedures for the Apprentice to appeal against decisions made by the University so consideration occurs and decisions are made in a systematic and transparent manner. These procedures apply to those elements of the Degree Apprenticeship that the University is responsible for.

In all cases, it is best to first raise any concerns the student may have directly with the person most directly involved with those circumstances. If the student remains dissatisfied he/she may raise your concerns formally (please refer to the relevant section of the ['Handbook of Student Regulations'](#) for further details).

Hopefully students will not need to use these procedures but, should they need to do so, they will find their concerns are listened to and considered in a fair manner.

The University 'Student Appeals and Complaints Ombudsman' is responsible for the operation of the University's student appeals and complaints processes and also investigates appeals on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor. Students having any questions about these procedures should contact 'Student Appeals and Complaints Ombudsman' by email. Alternatively, students may wish to contact the Students' Union Education Caseworker. The 'Student Appeals and Complaints Ombudsman' works closely with them to ensure proper, transparent, access to the University's appeals and complaints processes.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (the OIA) is the ultimate body to whom students in English and Welsh universities may take their cases. It is completely independent of the

universities. Students may only take their case to the OIA once all internal university processes have been completed and they have received a 'Completion of Procedures Letter'. Further information may be obtained from the University Student Appeals and Complaints Ombudsman or the [OIA website](#).

EXAMPLE