

# Evaluating the Quality of Apprenticeship Education & Training Outcomes

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## OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

1. The College mission is to deliver the highest quality of teaching and training to meet the commitments set out in the strategy, to ensure the best outcomes for students, apprentices and employers. As part of the College's commitment to continually enhance and improving its delivery, it operates a cycle of evaluation and review of the key performance and success measures at all levels of delivery; individual student/apprentices, for each cohort and programme and at overall apprenticeship level.
2. By systematically reviewing both the quantitative data that is collected from monitoring alongside the qualitative information collected from students, apprentices and their employers will proactively identify risks and opportunities and spread successful practice across the wider institution. It is expected that the Programme Director (PD) for each apprenticeship and the Director of Apprenticeships (DA) are aware of issues and opportunities in their individual and whole programme view respectively at all times and are implementing plans to address underperformance in any aspect of the programme.
3. The College uses this cycle of evaluation and improvement to:
  - 3.1. Confirm that all students are progressing and achieving equally through the analysis of data by demographic and other core characteristics.
  - 3.2. Identify excellence in teaching and learning opportunities for development as part of the staff performance and development reviews based on staff, employer and apprentice feedback.
  - 3.3. To ensure that, through the collection and analysis of feedback, both learner and employer voice is at the forefront of how the College judges and assesses quality in delivery.
  - 3.4. Ensure that delivery is compliant with the rules and regulations that govern apprenticeship and degree delivery, and in doing so is efficient and effective for apprentice and employer.
  - 3.5. Inform the ongoing revaluation of the apprenticeship programme Quality Improvement Plan.

- 3.6. Escalate any risks and issues to NCH at Northeastern Limited Board of Governors (NCHNL Board) for action and investment where needed.
- 3.7. Inform the Annual Programme Review produced by the PD and the action plans arising.
- 3.8. Ensure that the college is systematically and consistently operating a cycle of improvements based on evidence and information from the range of sources needed to assess and for judgements about 'high quality'.
- 3.9. Ensure that the Head of Quality Assurance and Assistant Programmes Manager (APM) are held to account for decisions on quality improvement and that sufficient information is made available to ensure that decisions are effective in driving quality improvement.
- 3.10. Demonstrate that the College has implemented rigorous policies and procedures for evaluating the quality of training and outcomes for apprenticeships.

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

4. The *UK Quality Code, Course Design and Development*, identifies common practices for quality as:  

'The provider reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement. The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.'
5. The College has a robust annual quality cycle, where the individual students and collective body can provide feedback to the institutions through a variety of channels. This is described in-depth in AQF chapters 5: Annual Monitoring and Reporting, and 10: Student Voice.

### GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

#### APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME COMMITTEE (APC)

6. As each apprenticeship is established, the PD is identified to lead the development and delivery of the apprenticeship, will assume accountability for the success of their apprenticeship and for the general monitoring of student progress and programme KPIs.
7. The APM will chair termly APCs that include Programme Directors, faculty and Apprenticeship Advisers (AAs) to review the individual and collective progress made toward the programme objectives, consider data on the programme and feedback from employers and apprentices.
8. Individual apprenticeship progress, where red or amber RAG rating exist will be reviewed with action plans, and information on progress against KPIs will be supplied by the Director of Operations (Apprenticeships) (DOA)) for the

KPIs listed below. The PD must escalate risks and issues to the Apprenticeship Management Board (AMB) and produce a risk matrix and action plan for the programme.

9. The Committee will meet quarterly after the tri-partite review round to review KPIs including satisfaction, course reviews, attendance and retention, progress against planned outcomes, compliance, etc in order to identify possible quality issues for action. This action plan or any action plan arising from the Committee must be implemented as soon as possible following the session.
10. Any apprentice RAG rated red or amber will be raised by the AM for consideration of mitigating or supporting actions required, with the action plan proposed for tracking. The PD will operate a risk register on individual apprentices and general risks to delivery. These will be escalated to the AMB and to Academic Board dependant on the risk.

### **APPRENTICESHIP MANAGEMENT BOARD (AMB)**

11. AMB is chaired by the Director of Apprenticeships, who is accountable for the performance and risk management of the apprenticeship programmes at the College, with the support of Academic Board. This Board includes representatives from all areas within the College involved in delivering a successful apprenticeship programme:
  - 11.1. Registry - Registrar
  - 11.2. Admissions – Admissions Manager
  - 11.3. Quality – Head of Quality Assurance
  - 11.4. Employer Engagement – Business Development Manager
  - 11.5. Data – Director of Operations (Apprenticeships)
  - 11.6. Finance – Financial Controller
  - 11.7. Curriculum – Assistant Programmes Manager
  - 11.8. Apprenticeships - Director of Apprenticeships
12. The Board meets quarterly (unless convened more frequently to mirror specific milestones) and owns the overall Risk and Performance Register. The Board will monitor KPIs, through a KPI data dashboard provided by the APC and reports and risk registers from the APM.
13. Decisions about quality improvements will be made and implemented by this Board, which has the authority to implement changes in response to successful practice, quality reviews or risk assessments in any aspect of apprenticeship delivery. The Board must intervene decisively where KPI or quality thresholds have not been met, and KPI performance is trending downwards. The Board must review the demographic pattern of engagement, progress and success by characteristics at least annually, to satisfy itself that the programme is delivering equality of opportunity, progress and performance.

14. Annually a quality improvement plan must be produced to address any shortfall in the programme. SSLC or apprentices must be actively involved in the action planning decisions and implementation.

### **ACADEMIC BOARD**

15. Academic Board receives Apprenticeship Performance and Risk reports about the overall programme, and is accountable for meeting overall programme priorities, galvanise the planning process and take decisions that cannot be taken by the APM alone to ensure programme success. This group reports NCHNL Board who in turn will receive a programme summary annually as part of the College's quality review process and must intervene where needed.

### **STAFF STUDENT LIASION COMMITTEE (SSLC)**

16. SSLC is an essential part of collecting the student voice and working collaboratively on options and solutions. SSLC meets quarterly and will review feedback from surveys and course evaluations and will make recommendations to AMB for any actions to improve quality of teaching and learning. SSLC may also refer issues up to the AMB or APC for action.

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS, MEASURES AND OBJECTIVES**

17. In addition to the KPIs for student under and postgraduate programmes, the College has identified a range of apprenticeship key performance indicators (KPI) which will be agreed by Academic Board as part of the annual planning process. The proposal for annual targets, thresholds and measurement for each are developed by the AMB for each of the KPIs that are relevant in each year and must include the following:
  - 17.1. Apprentices rated amber or red, and these as a proportion of the apprentice cohort.
  - 17.2. Apprentice retention and reasons for withdrawal.
  - 17.3. Achievements (and QARs).
  - 17.4. Achievements versus planned outcome.
  - 17.5. Absence, Break in Learning/Study Leave.
  - 17.6. Apprentice satisfaction.
  - 17.7. Compliance requirements are met and are of the quality required (including tri-partite reviews, OTJL, action plan achievement)
  - 17.8. Employer satisfaction.
  - 17.9. Apprentice complaints and compliments.
  - 17.10. Employer complaints and compliments.
  - 17.11. Employer engagement pipeline and conversions.
  - 17.12. Employer repeat business.
  - 17.13. Employer incentives or contribution (paid on time).

- 17.14. LAC Bursaries (paid on time).
  - 17.15. ILR error rate / lost and late funding.
  - 17.16. Apprentice destination and outcomes - including outcomes occurring on programme (promotions, awards etc)
18. The PD must include a progress report on trend analysis against these KPIs at termly course committees, and in their Annual Monitoring Report. The DA is responsible for providing data to the AMB and for managing and monitoring apprenticeship quality KPIs listed below on behalf of the College and taking action to address any quality issues or opportunities. The team will produce data dashboards at cohort and programme levels to the Apprenticeship Programme Committee, alongside overall data and quality dashboards to AMB and to the annual review at Academic Board.

### **OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

#### **MANDATORY OPERATIONAL AND FUNDING RULES**

- 19. All apprenticeship programmes must be approved by the College Approval Panel. Submissions must follow the requirements set out in AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modifications.
- 20. It is a requirement that the PD and AAs hold a 'Red Amber Green' rating updated monthly for each apprentice and their progress against their apprenticeship trajectory, their attendance and achievement of their off the job learning.
- 21. The PD must maintain a risk register of apprentices with amber and green ratings and for other issues identified as current and possible future barriers to apprentices achieving their apprenticeship successfully. This risk register must be reviewed monthly by the PD to ensure that red and amber rated apprentices have live action plans in place.
- 22. The PD must hold an APC to review overall programme and cohort KPI statistics at least once per term, and more frequently where there are significant challenges to successful delivery within the programme.
- 23. The AMB must meet quarterly to undertake a KPI review at overall programme level, consider comparator information between programmes in order to assess performance, identify opportunities for good practice sharing and take action to manage risk.
- 24. All governance structures listed above must produce action plans and monitor these to speedy completion. Minutes, action plans and other documentation must be retained, in the central shared folders managed by the Quality Team, by the PD and made available should this be necessary for external quality reviews.
- 25. Data analysis is fundamental to the College's assessment of quality and delivery and in teaching and learning course directors, and DCAEE must ensure that all data sources are completed and dated in a timely manner so that live data is used as possible governance meetings. The PD is

accountable for taking action wherever data lacks exist to ensure that their programme data is valid and current.

26. The DA must conduct a schedule of compliance checks to confirm that the quality of record-keeping and documentation meet the standards set by the College to meets the ESFA funding rules. This will be reported at least twice yearly through AMB.
27. All reviews must include the minimum required data to inform the assessment and evaluation of quality.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

28. Accountability for delivering a high-quality and compliant apprenticeship programme that meets the needs of employers and apprentices sits with the AMB.
29. Accountability for the quality of teaching and learning and taking action to address risks and share successful practice sits with the APC working to support the direction and priorities set by the AMB through each PD.
30. Accountability for ensuring that the resources and decisions necessary to deliver the programme are made rest with NCHNL Board.
31. Accountability for the day-to-day delivery of high-quality teaching-learning apprenticeship sits with the PD.
32. Accountability for the apprenticeship programme as a whole, sits with Chief Executive Officer.
33. Accountability for continuous improvement processes sits with the Head of Quality Assurance.
34. Accountability for the continuous improvement of the overall apprenticeship programme sits with the DA, and with the PD for each programme.

### PROCEDURES

#### PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

35. In order to ensure that apprenticeship programmes are, from their inception, of the quality required by employers, programme development may only proceed where at least one formal consultation has taken place with employers, and where possible professional bodies or organisations and endpoint assessment organisations in order to establish and agree:
  - 35.1. The interest in and need for apprenticeship delivery, and in particular to explore whether an apprenticeship style programme is the right option to meet the sector and occupational skills needs identified.
  - 35.2. The map of proposed course contents and mode against the knowledge skills and behaviours required by the apprenticeship standard and endpoint assessment.

- 35.3. The schedule of learning and in broad terms the combination of on and off the job learning required by the minimum 20% threshold.
- 35.4. Employer consultation on content, mode and sequencing
- 36. This sector TNA and consultation must confirm how proposed programme supports both sector and local skills strategies and indicates the likely level of demand or potential market.
- 37. Programme design and development must meet pedagogical requirements for programme development at the College and respond to the feedback from employers during the consultation about the design sequencing and in particular elements requiring off the job input. The knowledge, skills and behaviours contained in the apprenticeship standard must be thoroughly mapped to the proposed curriculum to ensure that apprentices can achieve competency and confidence in each skill through the combination of on and off the job training and learning. Further details of programme and course approval processes for degree apprenticeship programmes can be obtained from AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modifications.
- 38. As an output of the development phase Programme Directors must produce:
  - 38.1. An Apprenticeship Course Map concluded breakdown of learning hours and mode for every element of the planned programme off the job learning. It must provide sufficient granularity in detail on the theories knowledge and skills include within each module to provide the basis for robust INA framework against which individual applicants, supported by their line manager can self-assess.
  - 38.2. A summary of the capacity and capability of the current academic and support team to deliver this apprenticeship in the context of the volume proposal this programme and the impact of these additional volumes on wider delivery in the faculty and in the Apprenticeship Team. This must include a training needs assessment for the proposed delivery team and training plan to up skill existing staff and/or a skills specification for recruitment and selection of additional deliveries skills (either full or part-time).
  - 38.3. Options for course content delivery to support those requiring additional learning or to repeat missed sessions

### **COLLEGE PROGRAMME APPROVAL**

- 39. Programme approval is the responsibility of Academic Board. Further information about course approval can be found in AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modifications.
- 40. It is the responsibility of the College Approval Panel to confirm that the proposed apprenticeship training meets the quality standards set by the College. This will include an assessment of:
  - 40.1. The likely marketplace and sustainability of programme volumes.
  - 40.2. Contribution of the proposed programme to local and sectoral skills needs, with particular reference to the opportunities for social

mobility and inclusion within the local population of employers and residents.

- 40.3. The capability and capacity and the planned delivery team proposed and a training plan to fill identified gaps in teaching or sector skills and knowledge.
- 40.4. How far the proposed programme and its design and content meets:
  - 40.4.1. Summary of employer requirements and priorities for delivery ascertained via employer and sector consultation.
  - 40.4.2. The knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the standard and its endpoint assessment.

### **ON-PROGRAMME EVALUATION**

41. Evaluation of the outcomes of training and education on programme is achieved through the cycle of course reviews, tri-partite reviews and the twice-yearly satisfaction surveys for employers and apprentices.
42. Satisfaction data is combined, collated and assessed then discussed at Apprenticeship Programme Committee as part of the KPI reviews and RAG rating discussions to identify options for addressing quality which either:
  - 42.1. Go forward to SSLC for further discussion and action planning - results are always shared with apprentice and employer forums.
  - 42.2. Go forward to individual or delivery team skills development plans in accordance with the staff development policy for action to meet any emerging training needs or confirm excellence in delivery for sharing.
  - 42.3. Go forward to [senior teaching and learning governance] for discussion and action planning
  - 42.4. Are escalated to AMB for discussion, resolution or decision.
43. The AMB is responsible for undertaking the Annual Programme Review (APR) which collates all sources of information about the quality of delivery into a single action plan for apprenticeships, led by the APM. The APR will encompass all sources of KPI data and qualitative information from employers, staff and apprentices; from NSS, feedback from external examiners, surveys, and will work closely with the PD in reaching conclusions. The APR development led by the PD should include apprentice and employer representation.
44. The AMB submits this to Academic Board with clear recommendations for action on any significant changes needed to address ongoing issues of underperformance, or to update the curriculum or make wider efficiency changes to the running of the programme in response.
45. AMB will hold a mid-point review of the APR action plan, where the PD reports on the progress made and identifies any obstacles which might need additional support or resources.

46. Academic Board meets, at least once annually, to discuss the outcomes of the Apprenticeship Annual Programme Reviews, SSLC meetings and termly AMB meetings.

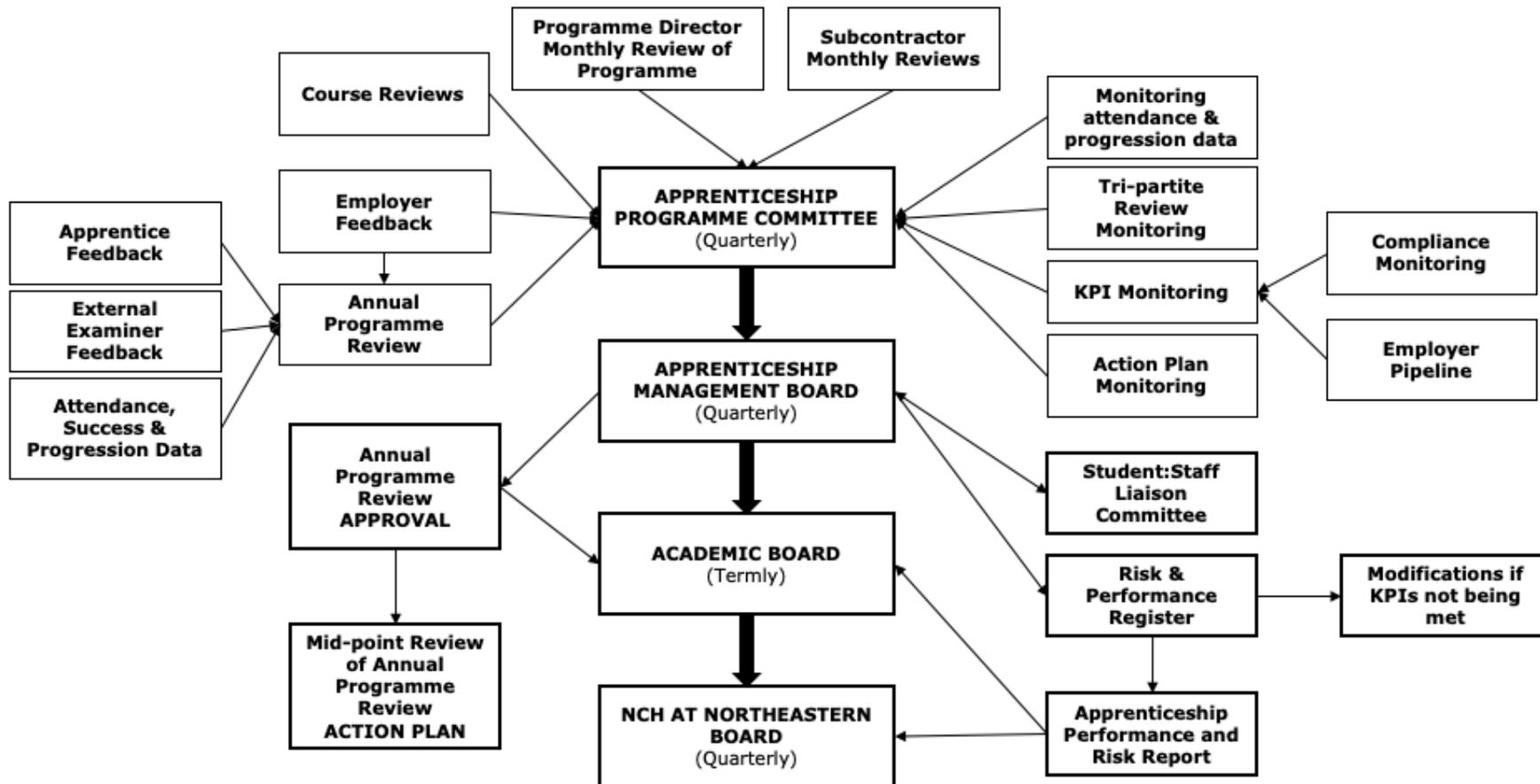
### **COMPLIANCE MONITORING**

47. As part of the quality cycle, the Apprenticeship Team complete a quality and compliance review of documentation for accuracy, compliance and quality. This is to establish that mandatory compliance and evidence is present, and that the content is useful, used and effective in its role as part of the apprenticeship. The review of tri-partite review and INA will be completed in partnership with the PD and AAs, to moderate across all programmes and establish a shared understanding of what represents quality in each case.

### **APPRENTICE PROGRESS MONITORING**

48. The programme delivery team monitoring apprentice progress through assignments, absence, tri-partite reviews and tracking OTJL. The PD will receive monthly RAG assessments to triage. The Apprenticeship Programme Committee (PD and AMs) meet at least quarterly to assess the progress of apprentice cohorts and identify any apprentices that are falling behind against their predicted trajectory, whether this is performance or / and off the job learning or requiring additional challenge and stretch to fulfil their potential. Data on apprentice achievement and progression is also made available to employers.
49. Tri-partite reviews will confirm with apprentice and line manager how closely their progress is meeting the expected trajectory. During each tri-partite review the Individual Learning Plan in the Commitment Statement will be updated to confirm progress, projected outturn and to include any additional learning support requirements or other referrals that have been identified through the progression monitoring as offering support and assistance to the apprentice.
50. Apprentice achievement and progression data is provided by the Director of Operations (Apprenticeship) for the PD. Any individual underperformance or downward trend will be discussed with the apprentice and if needed, their line manager. Options will be explored, and an action plan agreed. This does not need to wait until the next tri-partite review.
51. By combining discussions at the tri-partite reviews and progress data, the AA and line manager will monitor the apprentice's achievement of the knowledge, skills and behaviour set out in the apprenticeship standard, and apprentice readiness for End Point Assessment. Action Plans to support apprentice arising from managing under performance will be monitored by the PD to completion.

**APPENDIX A: QUALITY CYCLE FOR DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES**



EVALUATING THE QUALITY OF APPRENTICESHIP EDUCATION & TRAINING  
OUTCOMES

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<b>Title: Employer Evaluating Quality of Apprenticeship Education &amp; Training Outcomes</b>					
<b>Approved by: Academic Board</b>					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Location	Proposed next review date
2.0	August 2020		Head of Quality Assurance	NCH Academic Handbook/ Apprenticeships	July 2021
1.0	December 2019	December 2019	Head of Quality Assurance	NCH Academic Handbook/ Apprenticeships	July 2021
Referenced documents	Apprenticeship Programme Quality Improvement Plan; Annual Programme Reports; AQF5 Annual Monitoring and Reporting; AQF10 Student Voice; AQF4 Programme and Course Approval and Modifications; Tri-partite Reviews; Initial Needs Assessment; Individual Learning Plan; and Commitment Statement.				
External Reference Point(s)	ESFA Funding Rules.				

## ANNEX 1 – APPRENTICESHIP EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE

It is important to note that in delivering apprenticeships, the College is operating within a number of complimentary but overlapping external quality and compliance frameworks. Each framework has interest in particular aspects of quality within apprenticeships, and all must be achieved through the operation of this policy and procedure. These frameworks and their accountable bodies are listed below:

- **Education & Skills Funding Agency** – accountable for apprenticeship funding and eligibility rules under which all apprenticeships must be delivered and by doing so is executing the Department for Education’s apprenticeship policy and strategy
- **Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education** - accountable for the approval, design and development of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans which must be met through the apprenticeship content that we design and deliver
- **Ofsted** - accountable for the formal inspection and assessment framework for apprenticeship delivery, teaching and learning quality from level 2 to level 5. Where apprenticeship delivery takes place at level 6 and above, the college is subject to existing QAA quality standards
- **Ofqual** – apprenticeships that include qualifications which are listed on the Register of Regulated Qualifications are subject to Ofqual regulation.
- **Office for Students** – Regulates apprenticeships at levels 6+ (‘Degree Apprenticeships’) and will provide Ofsted with relevant information to inform inspection judgements on apprenticeships at levels 4 & 5.
- **Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)**– the body designated to undertake quality standards assessment of Higher Education provision, including Degree Apprenticeships.
- **The Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers** - the college must apply successfully to the register in order to be approved to deliver apprenticeships. This application requires that there are formal procedures in place for the evaluation of outcomes and that there is a cycle improvement. Our commitments in the our RoATP is to the consistent application of this policy across all of our apprenticeship programmes.