

Employer Engagement in Apprenticeships Policy

1. Overview and Purpose

1.1

At t2 group we aim to provide very high standards in a positive, safe, and supportive culture that aspires to excellence for our learners. This is through a clear and realistic strategy for the planning, development, and delivery of our Apprenticeship programmes. To achieve this, engaging with our employers is essential at every stage of the process.

This Policy sets out:

- How t2 group engages with employers and their potential Apprentices (learners), to raise awareness and promote the benefits of Apprenticeships
- An overview of the entire employer end-to-end journey, detailing the specific requirements for employer engagement once a learner has enrolled in a fully joined-up approach to delivery. This is to ensure we can help our employers meet their recruitment and training needs and ensure that learners successfully develop the required sector knowledge, skills, and behaviours to enable them to become competent in their roles and then successfully prepare them for their next steps in education and/or employment.

1.2

The Head of Work Based Learning Operations has overall responsibility for managing our Apprenticeships and the engagement with employers in the delivery of our programmes and can act independently and take decisions.

1.3

This policy draws on a range of research and investigation into the marketplace each year as part of our quality and curriculum development planning process.

1.4

The aim of t2 group in engaging with employers is to ensure learners progress from their starting points and successfully achieve their Apprenticeships.

1.5

Employer satisfaction and feedback is essential to ensure that our learners successfully achieve their Apprenticeships, and our curriculums evolve and improve based on their feedback. To monitor employer satisfaction, we have developed the following quality indicator and feedback targets which employers grade us against during Teaching and Learning Reviews and through Customer Experience Management.

1.5.1

Teaching and Learning Reviews (TLRs)

Monthly employer feedback is gained from employer line managers at the end of each Teaching and Learning Review with every learner throughout the learning journey, this is a requirement when employers log into our employer learning management system (I Learn) to digitally sign TLRs.

| Quality Indicator | Target |
|--|--|
| INTENT Has the programme met the knowledge and skills development needs of you and your learner? | 95%+ of employers answering Yes to this question |
| IMPLEMENTATION Was the programme delivered in a way that was suitable and effective for you and your learner? | 95%+ of employers answering Yes to this question |
| IMPACT Has the programme led to sustained improvements in the learner’s application of new knowledge and skills at work? | 95%+ of employers answering Yes to this question |

1.5.2

Monthly Customer Experience Management (CEM)

Monthly employer feedback is also gathered by our team of account managers through our customer experience management (CEM) process. All employer contacts are contacted quarterly by their dedicated Account Manager to gain input into improving and aligning our delivery to meet their needs and to obtain feedback on the quality of training we are providing.

| Quality Indicator | Target |
|---|---------------|
| On a score of 1 – 10 how would you grade your experience of using t2 group to provide Apprenticeships to your business? | Score of 9+ |
| Do you have contact details for all t2 PDMs that support your business and the contact details of their line managers? | Score of 90%+ |
| On a score of 1 – 10 how reliable and punctual is this Personal Development Manager or Coach in scheduling Teaching and Learning Reviews with you and your learners? | Score of 9+ |
| Are you invited to attend each Teaching and Learning Review, so you are fully involved in the planning and review of each learner’s programme? | Score of 90%+ |
| Are you aware that off-the-job training must be in paid working hours and do you, your learner and t2 Personal Development Manager or Coach plan and agree this? | Score of 90%+ |
| On a score of 1 – 10 how happy are you with the professionalism of the Personal Development Manager or Coach that supports your learners? | Score of 9+ |
| On a score of 1 – 10 how knowledgeable, motivated, enthusiastic, and inspiring do you think your Personal Development Manager or Coach is? | Score of 9+ |
| On a score of 1 – 10 how happy are you with the level of feedback your Personal Development Manager or Coach provides to you at the end of each Teaching and Learning Review? | Score of 9+ |

| Quality Indicator | Target |
|--|---------------|
| Do you think that the targets and deadlines set by your Personal Development Manager or Coach are realistic and achievable? | Score of 90%+ |
| Are you aware of the importance of signing each Teaching and Learning Review and providing feedback on the Intent, Impact, and Implementation? | Score of 90%+ |
| Are you able to attend Teaching and Learning Review sessions every month or at least every other month? | Score of 90%+ |
| On a score of 1 – 10 how would you rate t2 group on keeping you fully up to date on the progress of your learners? | Score of 9+ |

Details of our rolling monthly grades for the above quality indicators are displayed on the Employer Engagement in Apprenticeships section of the t2 group website.

1.6

Repeat Business from employers is a useful indicator of the quality of the programmes we provide. We have set the following target for repeat business from the employers we work with.

| Quality Indicator | Target |
|---|--------|
| Year on year starts from existing employers | 60%+ |

1.7

These quality indicator and feedback target grades are monitored and reviewed through our monthly Quality Improvement and CPD Meetings.

1.8

This procedure co-ordinates with t2 groups engagement activities with employers through the entire end-to-end Apprenticeship journey:

- Ensure all learners and employers are fully aware of the requirements of the Apprenticeship standard, especially in relation to the off-the-job training requirement
- Conduct a robust induction and assessment of prior knowledge and skills against the Apprenticeship standard to ensure that the Apprenticeship is the most appropriate qualification for the learner, and t2 group is not providing learning that the learner has already gained
- Confirm if the learner has the necessary English and maths to achieve their Apprenticeship
- Identify and plan any personal development requirements that need to be built into the programme of learning
- Organise any additional learning support needed to enable each learner to successfully complete their Apprenticeship
- Create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for each learner to ensure that they can achieve their Apprenticeship, demonstrate competency in their role, and successfully prepare them for their next steps in education and/or employment

2. Raising Awareness and Promoting the Benefits of Apprenticeships

2.1

The majority of the Apprenticeships provided by t2 group are in the Health and Social Care Sector. The sector has an ageing workforce and is struggling to attract new staff and retain existing staff. Due to an ageing population in the UK, it is estimated that an additional 520,000 care workers will be required by 2035. It is therefore essential that t2 group supports employers to attract new staff and retain their existing staff in the sector and to successfully prepare learners to replace the ageing workforce as experienced staff retire.

2.2

As a leading provider in the Health and Social Care Sector t2 group can promote 'real life' examples of learners who have entered the sector and developed long-term sustainable careers. To achieve this t2 group has developed a website to support employers in engaging with potential new entrants and to support existing learners with impartial advice and guidance about their potential careers in the sector. This website <http://www.careersinhealthandsocialcare.co.uk> is aimed at raising awareness and promoting the benefits of Apprenticeships and supporting national, local, and regional recruitment and skills requirements in the sector.

2.3

The majority of the awareness activity with employers is through our business development activity. A team of Business Development Consultants engage with new employers daily through tele-marketing to promote the benefits of Apprenticeships.

2.4

Existing employers are contacted quarterly as part of our customer experience management process to gain feedback about the quality of our delivery, input into how we can meet their emerging needs and to keep employers abreast of new initiatives in education and training in the sector.

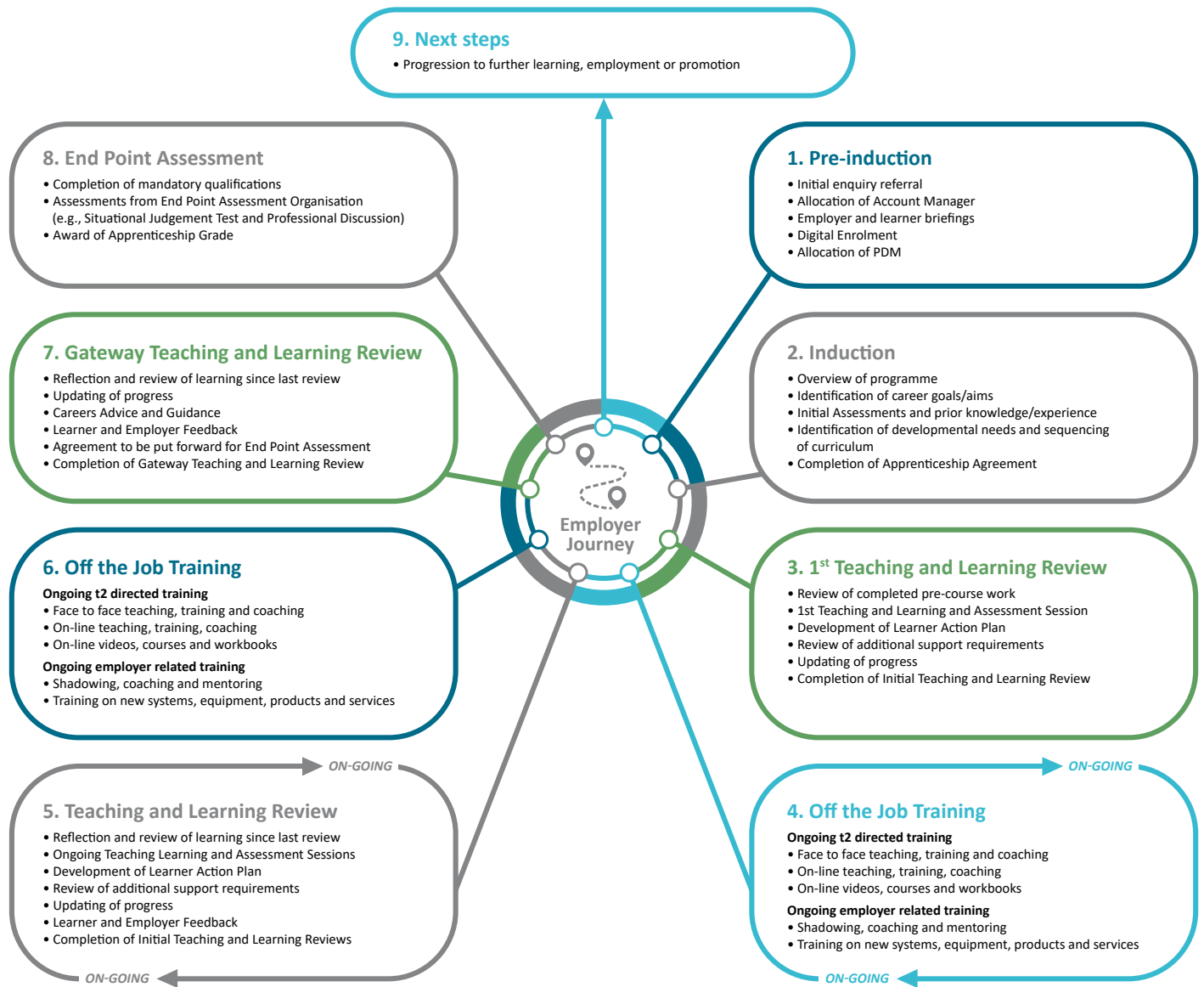
2.5

A range of social media is used by our marketing team to promote the benefits of Apprenticeships through our scheduled marketing activity plan. This is aimed at employers and potential new entrants to the sector.

2.6

The t2 group website provides a wealth of information to employers, potential new entrants, and existing learners about the programmes we provide, the benefits of Apprenticeships and this is through a range of promotional videos and downloadable marketing literature.

3. The Employer End-to-End Apprenticeship Journey



3.1

Pre-induction

3.1.1

Initial Contact

Initial contact may be through inbound or outbound enquiries from potential new entrants, new employers or existing learners and employers.

3.1.2

Potential new entrants enquiring about careers in the sector will be guided to suitable vacancies that are available to them from the employers that we work closely with. Potential new entrants will also be signposted to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

3.1.3

New employers are provided with a wide range of information about the Apprenticeships available to them by t2 group and any other organisation listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers. Where t2 group are unable to facilitate the required Apprenticeship route and/or level, employers will be signposted and guided to <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards>

3.1.4

Existing learners are supported throughout their learning journey by their Personal Development Manager or Coach with impartial careers information and guidance about their potential next steps in education and/or employment.

3.1.5

Existing employers work with a dedicated Account Manager who provides a wide range of support and guidance through our customer experience management process which enables them to enrol new learners onto programmes seamlessly.

3.1.6**Pre-induction**

Pre-Induction Enrolment is managed by a dedicated contact; this may be a Business Development Executive for new employers or an Account Manager for existing employers. Enrolment always begins with an in-depth fact-finding conversation, completing an organisational needs analysis with the appropriate employer contact to identify the correct route and level for the potential Apprentice. Verbal eligibility will be discussed at the first opportunity.

3.1.7

The dedicated contact supports employers with the information required to ensure that they are initially eligible for Apprenticeship funding. This includes guiding employers through the on-line Apprenticeship service (<https://accounts.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk>) and providing initial information about the requirements for Apprenticeship funding in the Apprenticeship Commitment Statement.

3.1.8

The dedicated t2 group contact also supports learners with initial information about the programme they are interested in and in uploading initial eligibility information to a secure t2 group online enrolment portal (iEnrol). Learners will also be guided through an online basic skills diagnostic tool which must also be completed as part on the enrolment suite of documentation.

3.1.9

Once the employer is set up on the Apprenticeship service and the learner has uploaded the initial eligibility information and this has been checked an enrolment appointment is booked with the employer and learner with an occupationally competent t2 representative.

3.1.10

Health and Safety

t2 group has a duty of care to all learners to ensure employers are compliant with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, we are therefore required to have robust record-keeping procedures in respect of health and safety. The information required, which comprises an Annual Health and Safety Compliance Document and a copy of the Employers Liability Insurance Certificate, is initially obtained at pre-induction, this may be by a Business Development Executive or an Account Manager. Questions, queries and monitoring of health and safety compliance is the responsibility of the t2 Health and Safety Department.

3.1.11

Safeguarding

t2 group has a duty of care to ensure we safeguard the welfare of all learners on programme and as such has a dedicated safeguarding team that both learners and employers can access for support. We also provide a host of safeguarding and mental health resources on our Learner Support Website that both learners and employers can access. Where appropriate, you may be contacted by one of our designated safeguarding leads if a situation or concern arises in relation to a learner you employ, or if a concern is brought to our attention relating to your workplace. Our Safeguarding Policy can be found in full on the safeguarding section of our website.

3.2

Induction

The enrolment appointment with each learner, employer and t2 representative follows a 3-stage process.

3.2.1 Stage 1 – Induction

- Verification of learner ID
- Overview of the Apprenticeship standard
- Employer involvement requirements
- Off-the-job training requirements
- English and maths Functional Skills requirements
- Identification of learner's career goals and aims; analysis of how this programme can help meet them
- Initial Assessment - establishing the baseline level of knowledge and skills (starting point) to ensure that substantial learning is required and to build on any prior learning or work experience
- Analysis of employer related training to ensure a joined-up approach to delivery
- Development of initial Knowledge and Skills Development Measure
- Embedded required qualifications and choosing optional units required for Apprenticeship standard (e.g., Diploma)
- Sequencing of learning to meet employer and learner needs
- Additional personal development requirements
- Additional Learning Support Requirements

3.2.2 Stage 2 – Enrolment documentation and Individual Learning Plan

- Confirmation of eligibility and employment status including the number of paid hours the learner is expected to work each week
- Learner personal details
- Health and/or additional learning support requirements
- Review of prior learning and qualifications

- Confirmation of initial assessments
- Formulation of Individual Learning Plan with review points and milestone throughout
- Employment details
- Employer financial agreement for provision of training services for Apprentice
- Employer and Learner Commitment Statement
- ESF Funding Documentation
- Terms and Conditions
- Training provider responsibilities
- Employer responsibilities
- End Point Assessment
- Charges and Payments
- Refunds
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Data Protection
- Confidentiality
- Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption
- Limitation of Liability
- Termination
- Complaints

3.2.3 Stage 3 – Completion of Apprenticeship Agreement

An Apprenticeship Agreement must be in place at the start of each Apprenticeship and details:

- Apprentice name
- Skill, trade, or occupation for which the Apprentice is being trained
- Name of Apprenticeship standard
- Place of work
- Start date of Apprenticeship
- Start date of practical period
- Duration of practical period
- Estimated end date of Apprenticeship
- Estimated end date of practical period
- Planned amount of off-the-job training

The Apprenticeship Agreement will remain in place throughout the Apprenticeship. The end date is when end point assessment has been completed.

The employer and Apprentice are required to sign the agreement – it is an agreement between these two parties only. t2 group sign a separate commitment statement which outlines the planned content and schedule for training, what is expected and offered by the employer, t2 group, and Apprentice, and how to solve queries or complaints (this is detailed in 3.2.2).

3.2.5

Additional support for employers is provided through complimentary coaching and mentoring courses. In the Health and Social Care sector especially throughout the pandemic it has been difficult for some employer managers to attend the teaching and learning review process to ensure a fully joined-up approach to the planning and delivery of programmes. Complimentary coaching and mentoring courses are provided twice each month for employers to develop the skills of line managers, or suitable identified employer mentors to support each Apprentice in planning and reflecting on their learning. This is especially with regards to identifying and developing suitable employer related opportunities for off-the-job training.

3.3 1st Teaching and Learning Review

The 1st Teaching and Learning Review is completed with each learner at the end of their induction.

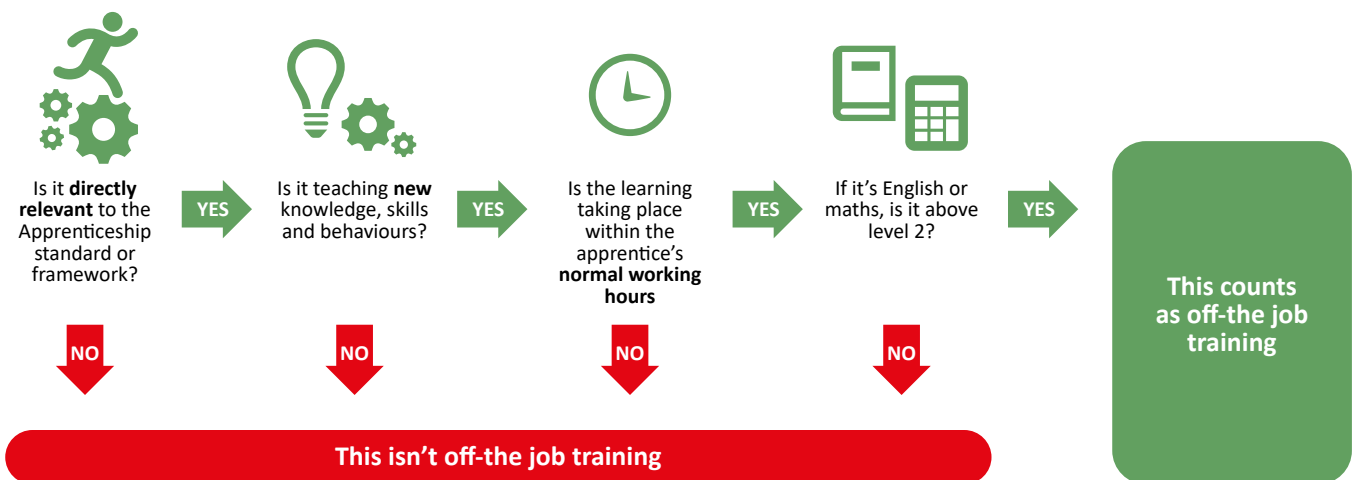
This includes:

- Review of completed pre-course work (if required)
- 1st teaching, learning and assessment session
- Development of Learner Action Plan (LAP)
- Review of additional support requirements
- Updating of progress
- Completion of Initial Teaching and Learning Review

3.4 Off-the-job training

Following each review, the learner completes the off-the-job training agreed in the LAP with support of employer. Off-the-job training is defined as training, which is received by the Apprentice, during the Apprentice’s normal paid working hours, for the purpose of achieving the Apprenticeship Standard connected to the Apprenticeship. It is not training received by the Apprentice for the sole purpose of enabling the Apprentice to perform the work to which the Apprenticeship agreement relates. More information, including examples of off-the-job training, can be found on gov.uk or from your Personal Development Manager or Coach.

The following infographic outlines more information about what types of activity count as off-the-job training:



If you are interested in finding out more about off-the-job training below is a link to a webinar to off-the-job training from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOP4BukUST8>

*Please be aware that from the 1 August 2022, since this webinar was produced the 20% off-the-job training requirement for all Apprenticeships has been amended so the maximum off-the-job hours that would be expected is an average of six hours per week across the Apprentice's time on their programme. It means Apprentices who work more than 30 hours per week can now spend less than 20% of their time doing off-the-job training. The ESFA has stated that this move, part of a package of changes to Apprenticeships, 'must not dilute the existing requirement, but provide the right level of training to every Apprentice'.

3.5 Teaching and Learning Reviews (TLRs)

On-going Teaching and Learning Reviews are completed every month for the duration of each programme with the t2 Personal Development Manager or Coach, the learner and it is essential that the employer is present. This is to review the learning and progress, provide feedback and plan the next steps in learning.

This includes:

- Reflection of learning and application to practice since last TLR
- On-going teaching, learning and assessment in line with ILP
- Development of LAP for forthcoming month
- Review of additional support requirements
- Updating of progress
- Careers advice and guidance about potential next steps
- Learner and employer Feedback
- Completion of Monthly TLR

3.6 Learning Resources

Resources are provided to each learner to develop a 'flipped learning approach' for the duration of the programme.

This includes:

- Introductory videos to develop each learner's research skills and ensure they are fully prepared for each TLR session ready to deepen their level of knowledge, skills, and behaviour
- Interactive teaching and learning videos, which are utilised in each TLR combined with coaching from the Personal Development Manager or Coach to develop new knowledge, skills, and behaviour. This ensures a standardised high-quality approach to delivery in each region of the UK
- On-line workbooks, which are provided to learners to complete as part of their off-the-job training to consolidate their learning and to develop their written skills preparing them for their next steps in education and/or employment
- Learners studying for some management programmes may have a slightly different format to those at level 2 and 3 as they may be required to attend on-line workshops
- Learner Support Portal – A dedicated learner support portal on the t2 group website provides learners with a wide range of additional resources and on-line support from a team of Learning Coaches

3.7 On-going

The process of monthly TLRs with a LAP to outline additional required off-the-job training continues for the duration of the programme.

3.7 Gateway TLR

Once the employer, learner and t2 group Personal Development Manager or Coach agree that all the on-programme learning to meet the knowledge, skills and behaviours in the Apprenticeship standard have been met a gateway meeting is arranged.

This includes:

- Reflection of learning and application to practice since last TLR
- Updating of progress
- Confirmation of completion of mandatory qualifications
- Learner and employer Feedback
- Agreement that the learner is ready to be put forward for End Point Assessment
- Completion of Gateway TLR
- Careers advice and guidance about potential next steps

3.8 End Point Assessment

An End Point Assessment is completed by an external End Point Assessment Organisation chosen by the employer.

This includes:

- Completion of mandatory qualifications
- Assessments from End Point Assessment Organisation (e.g., Situational Judgement Test and Professional Discussion)
- Award of Apprenticeship Grade

3.9 Next steps

The t2 Personal Development Manager or Coach will have provided a wide range of careers information and guidance about potential next steps in education and/or employment throughout the programme and this will be discussed again at the end of the programme.

4 Employer Intervention

If an employer is not actively engaged in the programme the following process will be initiated:

- Conversation with the employer line manager and t2 Personal Development Manager or Coach to re-enforce the requirements of the Apprenticeship Commitment Statement
- Employer Mentor Requirements for Apprenticeship Programmes reminder letter issued to employer
- Removal of learner from programme if employer continues to not meet the requirements agreed to at the outset which are outlined in the Apprenticeship Commitment Statement