

Frameworks Vs. Standards

The UK is gradually moving away from Frameworks with many being 'switched off' over the coming years. If you were to employ an Apprentice now, you'll almost certainly be using a Standard rather than a Framework.

The progression and development of Standards is due to Government reforms that aim to increase the quality of Apprenticeship programmes and align them to the needs of industry employers, making them a much more attractive option for talent and careers development.

Frameworks

What are they?

Frameworks are qualification-focussed Apprenticeships. A bank of relevant roles, known as 'pathways', sit within these frameworks. The training provider and employer would select a group of skills and knowledge 'units' from this bank that the Apprentice would need to cover throughout their programme.

Once the box for each of these units has been ticked they wouldn't necessarily need to show they have these skills and knowledge again, therefore their training may not actually ensure they've gained the skills to perform their role after they've finished the programme.

Standards

Standards are lists of the skills, knowledge and behaviours an Apprentice will need to have learned by the end of their Apprenticeship. This list has been discussed, agreed upon and published by a group of experts in the relevant industries and occupations.

One of the crucial developments for Apprenticeships is the addition of behavioural measures. This means that not only will the Apprentice learn the skills and knowledge to perform a task, but they'll learn the best and most appropriate way to carry it out in relation to their behaviour.

Frameworks

Standards

What levels are available?

Available up to Level 4

Available up to higher and degree level (Level 2 – L7)

What are they for?

Multi-occupational

Job specific, developed by employers

Frameworks are designed in such a way that the skills and knowledge evidenced throughout the Apprenticeship wouldn't necessarily reflect the Apprentice's job role, or at least not in its entirety. This meant that Apprentices with different job roles could be enrolled onto the same course, be delivered the same training and gain the same qualification at the end, despite having completely different roles within a company and completely different needs in order to be competent at their job.

Standards focus on the specific job role Apprentices will be learning to perform throughout their programme.

How are they structured?

Made up of:

- Qualifications covering knowledge and skills e.g. NVQs, Diplomas, Technical Certificates
- Personal Learning & Thinking Skills, (PLTS)
- Employee Rights & Responsibilities, (ERR)
- Functional Skills at a specified level: English, maths, ICT

Made up of a list of knowledge, skills and behaviours that must be achieved by the Apprentice. In the majority of standards, occupational qualifications are not mandatory. Only those stipulated in the standard are funded. (English and maths, to be achieved prior to end-point assessment, are still included.)

What are the timescales for completion?

Set timescale for achievement e.g. 12 or 18 months.

Recommended timescale for achievement, agreed by employers, that includes the end-point assessment period.

What are the professional registration requirements for those involved?

Not always linked to professional registration requirements

Training providers must be listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). The End Point Assessment Organisation chosen to deliver the end point assessment must be listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations (RoAAO).

Frameworks

How much time is spent off the job?

The Apprentice has to undertake both on and off the job training (up to 100 guided learning hours or 30 %), which is relatively flexible

Who is in control of the training?

All on programme training is usually managed by one training provider.

The employer will have very little input into decisions about the training and delivery.

How is the apprenticeship programme completed?

On completion of the mandatory qualifications, PLTS and ERR the Apprentice has achieved the framework.

Standards

The Apprentice must undertake 20 % of their paid contractual hours undertaking off-the-job training. Time for studying the maths and English component of the standard is additional to that 20 %.

The employer is very much involved in the programme and will take the lead on decisions regarding training, deliver, EPA etc.

The employer will discuss and agree how the Apprentices training will be delivered, when and how the off the job training will take place, when the end point assessment will take place and which EPAO will deliver the end point assessment.

All standards contain gateway criteria – the set of knowledge, skills and behaviours that an Apprentice must achieve before they can progress to final end-point assessment.

Upon successful completion of the gateway criteria, the apprentice must undergo end-point assessment.

This is a synoptic assessment of the skills, knowledge and behaviours that the apprentice has developed. It is made up of a number of elements that may include an observation, knowledge tests, a project, a presentation, a professional discussion or production of a portfolio etc., according to the requirements of the individual standard.

The assessment is completely independent to the on programme learning that has taken place up to the gateway.

It is undertaken by a completely independent organisation, who will have no prior knowledge of the Apprentice.