

HENLEY BUSINESS SCHOOL
ESSENTIAL APPRENTICESHIP GUIDE

Onboarding a cohort



Henley
Business School

UNIVERSITY OF READING

Where business comes to life

Onboarding a cohort

Henley apprenticeships are designed to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will equip your apprentices to become effective managers and leaders. In creating cohorts of apprentices, Henley works with client employers to identify individuals who will benefit from an apprenticeship and whose development will have a positive impact on organisational capability and performance.

The purpose of this guide is to support you as an employer through the onboarding process.

Henley uses the term 'onboarding' to describe the process for selecting apprentices and getting them started on their apprenticeship programme.

Essential Apprenticeship Guides

This guide is one of a series designed to help our clients engage with apprenticeships and deliver best value to their organisation and their apprentices.

Further reading

Launching an apprenticeship scheme

henley.ac.uk/business/apprenticeships/essential-apprenticeship-guides

The onboarding process typically starts around 20 weeks before the start of an apprenticeship and is split into **four key stages**:

Inform: briefing for potential apprentices and other stakeholders. Employer selection process followed by nomination of potential candidates.

1

Qualify: assessment of potential candidates against eligibility criteria for the apprenticeship.

2

Commit: formalisation of the respective commitments of the apprentice, employer and Henley in undertaking the apprenticeship.

3

Prepare: getting ready for apprentices to start their programme.

4

At a glance

The onboarding process

Onboarding involves the steps we work through with you to select apprentices and start them on their apprenticeship programme.

Our aim is to have the right individuals on the right apprenticeship programmes, so they can enjoy their learning experience and deliver the right outcomes for both themselves and their organisation. The onboarding process engages potential apprentices, their line managers and wider organisational stakeholders so that all parties understand the apprenticeship, its components and the level of commitment needed to successfully complete it.

Onboarding is split into four key stages:



1 Inform

Activity	Description	Time to programme start
Programme launch	Henley informs clients of the start date for an upcoming programme.	20 weeks
Employer nomination process	Employers run internal nomination activities to promote and recruit potential apprentices.	12–20 weeks
Programme information sessions	Henley delivers a pre-programme webinar detailing the apprenticeship, its associated learning programme and the commitment required by the apprentice and their manager.	15–18 weeks
Nomination list	Employer sends Henley a list of potential apprentices, including initial information about each candidate.	12 weeks



At the start of the onboarding process, we work with you to brief your internal stakeholders and potential apprentices on the apprenticeship opportunity and associated commitments. We can help you identify where to target recruitment-related promotion efforts within your organisation and when to deliver promotional activities.



For closed cohorts, we typically run joint briefing sessions with clients to engage with potential apprentices and their managers. For open or consortium cohorts, we invite potential apprentices and managers to regular open information sessions.

You will lead your internal nomination or selection process to identify candidates for the apprenticeship, and we can offer support and advice along the way.

Around 12 weeks before the start of the apprenticeship, you should provide us with a list of candidates you wish to nominate.

2 Qualify



Activity	Description	Time to programme start
Initial nomination review	Henley reviews initial nominations against eligibility criteria and identifies potential issues.	12 weeks
Application packs sent to candidates	Henley sends application details and instructions to each nominated individual.	12 weeks
Application webinars	Henley delivers application webinars explaining the application process.	12 weeks
Applications completed and submitted to Henley	Individual candidates complete and submit application packs, evidencing criteria and providing relevant supporting information.	10 weeks
Application assessment	Henley assesses applicants against eligibility requirements for the apprenticeship and government funding.	7-10 weeks
Employer informed of successful applicants	Henley writes to employer informing them of the outcome of the application process.	7 weeks

To undertake an apprenticeship, an individual must meet a range of criteria to ensure that the programme is a good fit for them and that they are eligible for funding, where applicable. Full details of eligibility criteria are available at henley.ac.uk/business/apprenticeships/for-employers/the-application-process

We ask individuals for information or evidence to support their application, which typically includes some or all of the following:

- Highest qualification certificates and/or transcripts
- Leadership/management experience to date (including a CV and answers to programme-specific questions)
- Professional qualifications/memberships
- Statement of purpose (motivation for undertaking the apprenticeship)
- Baseline assessment: measuring current knowledge, skills and behaviours against the apprenticeship standard, prepared by the candidate and validated by their line manager
- Level 2 English and Maths (GCSE at Grades 9-4 or A*-C, or equivalent).



Once we have received the completed application, we carry out a full assessment against criteria for government funding and for the relevant programme. We advise applicants of the outcome of their applications and, at the same time, we provide a report to you on your candidates and the results of their applications.

3 Commit

Activity	Description	Time to programme start
Formal offers sent to successful apprentices	Henley provides a formal offer to each applicant. This includes a request for the applicant to complete the learner commitment statement and the apprenticeship agreement.	7 weeks
Statement of work	Henley provides a statement of work to the client for signature and return. For closed cohorts, this will be conducted ahead of the programme launch.	7 weeks (open cohorts)
Offers completed	New apprentices return their completed learner commitment statement and apprenticeship agreement confirming they are committed to the apprenticeship and all its components.	5-6 weeks

A formal commitment between the apprentice, their employer and Henley is made through the following agreements:

- Learner commitment statement (a tripartite agreement between the apprentice, the employer and Henley, covering: the planned content and schedule for training; what is expected and offered by each party; and how to resolve queries or complaints)
- Apprenticeship agreement (an agreement between the apprentice and the employer, setting out the employment arrangements that apply to the apprenticeship)
- Statement of work (a contract between Henley and the employer, detailing the obligations and commitment from all parties, including the number of apprentices who will complete the programme).



In these agreements, the employer and the apprentice both commit to using apprenticeship levy funding in accordance with government requirements to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the individual to meet the apprenticeship standard. The employer also commits to allowing each apprentice time for both on- and off-the-job training. (The minimum requirement for off-the-job training is six hours per week (equivalent) of an apprentice's working hours).

The apprentice commitment includes:



- Attending workshops and other scheduled sessions
- Undertaking on- and off-the-job training
- Preparing assignments and work-based projects
- Recording off-the-job training and evidence of development in the portfolio
- Undertaking an end-point assessment (EPA)

4 Prepare



Activity	Description	Time to programme start
Digital Apprenticeship Service set-up	The employer and Henley work together to register apprentices on the Digital Apprenticeship Service.	5-6 weeks
Line manager webinars	Henley provides an introductory webinar for line managers of incoming apprentices to improve their understanding of the apprenticeship and how they can provide effective support.	5 weeks
Enrolment	Apprentices are enrolled onto the programme and given full access to Canvas, Henley's online learning platform.	2-4 weeks
IT clinic	Henley runs a pre-programme clinic to check that apprentices can access Canvas.	1 week
Programme start	Henley runs an induction and orientation day to start the apprenticeship.	Programme start
Contextualisation (closed cohorts)	Henley leads workshops to identify how the learning programme can be contextualised to the organisation.	Varies

Ahead of the start of the programme, we work with you and the apprentice to prepare for a smooth transition into learning. This includes:

- Enrolling the apprentice as a Henley learner, giving them access to Henley systems like Canvas, the virtual learning environment
- Registering the apprentice on the government's Digital Apprenticeship Service
- Communicating with the apprentice's line manager to explain what they need to do to support the apprentice and enable their development and success on the programme

For closed cohorts, apprenticeship programmes can be contextualised to reflect the needs and challenges of the organisation. Contextualisation is typically achieved through a series of workshops with senior leaders, enabling them to identify relevant issues and helping Henley to align the content of the programme. This often leads to the identification of topics suitable for the apprentice's work-based project, which then has the potential to facilitate the resolution of challenges and create improvements for your organisation.

Where business comes to life

Henley is a triple-accredited business school with over 75 years' experience in developing confident, resilient business leaders and supporting organisations in reaching their strategic and transformational goals.

We are one of the largest providers of leadership, management and digital apprenticeships. Our programmes support around 1,600 learners and are enriched by the cutting-edge research and wide-ranging commercial experience of our academics.

The depth and breadth of this knowledge base equips learners with an extensive understanding of leadership and, along with the latest sector-specific insights, enables them to become the strategic and responsible leaders of the future.

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Guide reference | 2.2
Information valid at the time of publication. Sept 2022.
21.MIS.038

