

## **Apprenticeship Scheme**

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The National Apprenticeship Scheme (N.A.S) is a nationally recognised work-based training programme, which helps to provide on the job training for the apprentice and also a relevant qualification through the Qualification Credits Framework (QCF).

1.2 Apprenticeships can be available on a 9 month, 2 year or 3 year basis, depending on which qualification the candidate is studying for.

### **2. Details of the scheme**

2.1 Apprentices are aged 16 + with no upper age limit. A large percentage of the Apprenticeship training is “on the job” and a local college or specialist learning organisation will provide the rest. The facilitator (from the N.A.S) will devise a learning plan and will regularly visit the Apprentice to ensure that they are meeting the criteria. Qualifications can be tailored to meet the organisational needs, which should in turn help us to plug a skills shortage gap in the public sector at a reduced cost. (not sure we should be that honest)?

2.2 Once a manager has made the decision to employ an Apprentice, Human Resources (HR) will assist you in the recruitment process. Apprentices will be employed on fixed term contracts on a band 1 or 2.(will they, they always start at 1?) Progression through the band will be linked to experience and gaining of qualifications. At the end of the contract, the apprentice will either:

- Be considered for a permanent post (if one exists)
- Remain with DBC and undertake further relevant training
- Seek suitable employment outside of the Council

2.3 Apprenticeships are available in many different business areas, but specifically:

Business Administration, Customer Service, Advice and Guidance, IT, Payroll, Finance

### **3 How can the scheme benefit DBC?**

3.1 The scheme is intended to:

- Help to address skills shortages and resilience issues
- Provide a more diverse workforce
- Promote Local Government jobs

#### **4. Recruiting Apprentices**

4.1 HR has a generic job description and person specification for Apprentices and managers should liaise with HR to list tasks specific for their Apprenticeship prior to recruitment. Recruitment must be carried out in line with the Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice in section 1 of the Employment Handbook.

#### **5. Monitoring Apprentices**

5.1 Managers will need to work closely with the facilitator in order to provide a full programme of support and training to the Apprentice. Regular assessments and appraisals should be carried out of the work and training undertaken in line with agreed time scales. A full risk assessment should be carried out by the manager regularly. Please see section 7 for Risk Assessments. If the Apprentice is under 18, refer to Protection of Young Persons and visit [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople).

#### **6. The Business Benefits**

6.1 A survey carried out by Populus in February 2009 showed that 92% of employers thought Apprenticeships resulted in greater employee motivation and job satisfaction. The Institute for Employment Research highlighted many benefits to employers who invest in Apprentices, including: (should this not be CIPD stats?)

- Increased productivity and quality of work
- A more innovative workforce
- Reduced staff turnover
- A better fit between employee skills and company requirements

#### **7. Apprenticeships outside of the National Scheme**

7.1 There will be occasions where the best candidate for the apprentice role does not qualify under the NAS due to the level of qualifications they hold. In these circumstances, the apprenticeship can continue on the basis that the Council will find suitable training outside of the scheme. This approach is more costly but the training can be more specific to the service and the individual's development. HR can assist in advising on suitable training courses and the process to follow.