

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) - Statement on the Quality of Apprenticeship Delivery Models – August 2011

1. NAS remains clear that delivery models should reflect and support the increased focus on quality and relevance of Apprenticeships and allow employers and learners to realise the full benefits of undertaking an Apprenticeship.
2. As part of the continued focus on improving the quality of the Apprenticeship programme the 2011/12 Apprenticeship Funding Requirements includes specific detail on certain areas of Apprenticeship delivery. These changes develop and strengthen the key messages in the NAS Statement on Delivery Models first published in February 2011. The following sets out the key areas that NAS believes will further reinforce the drive towards quality in Apprenticeships.
 - **The minimum hours of employment** for an apprentice must be at least 30 hours per week, except in the minority of circumstances where **the learner** cannot complete the full 30 hours. In these cases employment must be for a minimum of 16 hours per week.
 - **Employment** is a fundamental part of an Apprenticeship and in this context is more than just having a contract of employment. An apprentice must be employed in a job role with a productive purpose, which will allow them to have the wider employment experience key to an Apprenticeship. It is not acceptable for a provider or associated organisation to directly employ apprentices without such real work, purely with the intention of them achieving the Apprenticeship. The position on Apprenticeship Training Agencies is set out below.
 - Apprenticeship funding provided by The Agency cannot be used to **pay Apprenticeship wages**, as its primary function is to fund learning. Therefore, where the provider or an associate organisation of the provider is the employer, the provider must be able to demonstrate that Agency funds are not being used in this way.
 - **The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)** sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English Apprenticeship Framework. Compliance with the SASE is a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeship as set out in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009. SASE compliant Frameworks set

out the expectations and detail for the delivery of each Apprenticeship.

The majority of the frameworks have requirements in relation to guided learning hours above the minimum levels in SASE and also give an indication of the length of the programme. Providers must ensure that their delivery models are structured to deliver these framework requirements. The length of stay should reflect not only the guided learning hour requirements but also the wider experience an apprentice gains from their period of employment as an apprentice. This includes having sufficient time to embed their understanding of the job role and be confident in applying the skills acquired. NAS will work with the Agency and look critically at Apprenticeships delivered in a condensed way that do not reflect this. There will be a minority of cases where **the learner** does not need to complete the full programme because of the accreditation of their prior learning; this partial completion should be reflected in a reduction in the funding claimed by the provider for that individual learning programme

- The **Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATA)** model is designed to increase the engagement of employers in Apprenticeships, in particular small employers. All ATAs must work with providers offering high quality delivery including the features set out above. In addition the ATA must work to the standards set out in the ATA Quality Framework. NAS will be working to strengthen and clarify these requirements. The ATA model must not be used by providers merely to meet the employment condition for Apprenticeships; there must be employment with employers from the start.
3. Providers are responsible for ensuring that the obligations and requirements around Apprenticeship delivery and delivery models set out above are met by their sub contractors.