

Case Study: Development of new apprenticeships standards in England and support for employers as they transition to the new standards



Background

Apprenticeships are a proven solution to help address key sector skills challenges. In 2013, the government set out its plan to implement reforms to apprenticeships in England to make the programme even more rigorous and responsive to employers' requirements.

People 1st International was nominated by 'trailblazer' employers to facilitate the development of the standards for the visitor economy and to act as the 'Governing Body' that would provide an impartial role to co-ordinate and deliver a collaborative apprenticeship strategy for the sector.

Solutions

As part of the new approach to apprenticeships in England, employers were put in the driving seat to design the new apprenticeships and, with the support and facilitation of People 1st International, used an industry-led approach to take them to a new level by setting professional standards of competence and robust assessment plans.

We worked with 'trailblazer' groups of leading employers to develop standards that form progressive career pathways, incorporating the knowledge, skills and behaviours employers defined for today's industry.

The trailblazer groups took on a huge task to develop standards and determine assessment, and as part of the process, conducted wider consultation with industry and stakeholders. People 1st International managed these activities on behalf of employers as well as helping to interpret and tackle the evolving policy around apprenticeship quality, funding and assessment approaches.

In the initial phase we developed 18 apprenticeship standards, including:



- Retail: Retailer, Retail supervisor, Retail manger



- Aviation: Aviation ground handler, Aviation ground operative, Aviation ground specialist, Aviation operations manager, Cabin crew and first officer pilot



- Hospitality: Hospitality team member, Hospitality supervisor, Hospitality manager, Commis chef, Chef de partie, Senior culinary arts chef, Production chef, Senior production chef



- Travel: Travel consultant

We also spearheaded an 'Apprenticeship Implementation Taskforce' to ensure that the visitor economy sectors were ready and in a strong position to deliver the new apprenticeship standards by Spring 2016 and to maximise their investment in apprenticeships.

Impact

The sector boasts 18 new employer-driven apprenticeship standards supported by a robust end assessment model. These form clearly defined progression pathways from operational roles through to management and senior positions. Designed so that they apply across the sector, they allow organisations to incorporate their own ways of working, products and services into the learning and development, whilst ensuring it meets one national standard. The benefits this offers include:

- Clearly defined progression pathways
- Apprenticeships are now based on ONE standard which defines the skills, knowledge and behaviours for job roles and no longer include a variety of different components and qualifications, that have been confusing in the past
- All apprentices have to do the same independent end assessment to ensure they are fully competent which will raise the quality and consistency of industry skills and knowledge

The apprenticeship strategy we developed for the sector helped to:

- Tell the apprenticeship story, helping new users to see the benefits of apprenticeships, and how to get the most out of them, through the experiences of other sector employers
- Deliver a live programme of activity to countdown to, and prepare employers and providers for, the launch of the new apprenticeships in Spring 2016, including monthly step-by-step guidance
- Bring together providers and other stakeholders to work collaboratively on a 'one-way' approach to delivering advice and guidance on sector apprenticeships. This ensured that existing employers using apprenticeships, and those new to the system, are clear about what the changes are, what they need to do, and what help is available to them

After developing the standards and implementing the strategy, we continued to play a leading role in apprenticeships after being nominated by employers to manage the external quality assurance process of apprenticeships on behalf of employer-led boards.

"People 1st have done a fantastic job of successfully bringing employers and the government together to address issues around implementation of the new standards and levy and share best practice. There are many issues to iron out before the levy is introduced and People 1st Apprenticeship Network provides significant practical benefits to help employers prepare."

- Therese Procter, People Director, Tesco Bank

About People 1st International

Our team of expert international consultants support countries with a true thirst for professional development, who are passionate about helping young people, challenging social and gender exclusion, addressing the barriers to work and supporting continuous professional development of the existing workforce.

To discover how we can support you with labour market intelligence, technical vocational education and training strategies and practical skills solutions, get in touch at info@people1st.co.uk or visit www.people1st.co.uk.

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